**A PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON DISCIPLINE: LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF CHILDREN AND PARENTS.**

BY

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**DECLARATION**

I, Lizette Mathilde van Rooyen, declare that A PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON DISCIPLINE: LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF CHILDREN AND PARENTS is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SIGNATURE

31 January 2019

# ABSTRACT

The topic of parents disciplining children is very relevant in our South African society since the removal of Corporal Punishment in our country. The question came to be: "Does their religion have an influence on how parents discipline their children?" This question became the focus of my research.

The research is a qualitative, Postfoundational, Practical Theological inquiry of listening to the narratives of parents and children about the influence their religion has or does not have in the way the parents discipline their children. It was carried out in a narrative social constructive way, considering the ethics of doing research with children and the sensitive topic of discipline.

The research traced the history of theologians, across time, on the theology of the child. This enriched the research in terms of the theological outlook on children, parents and especially infant baptism and its role in child discipline.

I also engaged in a dialogue with interdisciplinary experts from educational sciences and the social sciences to enrich the study and thicken the research narrative. This brought to light the effects that the transition in 1994 had on discipline in schools and families across South Africa, as well as the different parenting styles and discipline techniques that parents apply. It also brought a discussion on Corporal punishment to light.

The research consists of a multireligious study, including African religion, Christian religion, Islamic religion and Jewish religion, although the focus are primarily on the Christian religion. The research is therefore, done in a non-judgmental and respective way.

This research has found that religion definitely has an influence on the way parents discipline their children. But even more than that, discipline is dependent on religion (as a means of something to believe in) and families (parents and children that can socially construct) for it to take place.

2

3

**DEDICATION:**

I am thankful to my Lord the Almighty

I wish to express my deep gratitude specifically to the following people that accompanied me on this journey:

My husband, Roelof van Rooyen, thank you for your ongoing support in everything that I endeavour. I love you!

Anroe and Shamara, you did not always understand why I had to work. Thank you for your patience and unconditional love. Always remember that life might be tough but being without Jesus Christ is worse. Live for your calling or vocation in this world and teach others of His love. I love you!

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

14

# CHAPTER 1 THE PRACTICAL SIDE OF VOICING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHILD DISCIPLINE AND RELIGION

Each one of us has a story that will never leave our minds and hearts about the discipline we had to hand out or had to receive. Disciplining children is not a new topic, but rather a tapestry of thoughts and traditions handed from one generation to another or figured out by parents. In my own search for meaning in the pool of advice given by the world around me, I also have thought about this topic long and hard.

The topic of disciplining children is always linked to narratives (When he/she does this, you then …) possibly because one-way of disciplining children would not meet the need parents have for discipline. This is then why I choose to do this research in terms of qualitative narrative research. In this first chapter I will describe the methodology and epistemology I used in the research I did.

## 1.1    The voice of reason

My research goal is to understand what the connection is, between the way parents discipline their children and their religious beliefs. The action field of my research is how parents of young children (between the ages of birth to 12 years) are disciplining them and specifically if their beliefs (religion) have anything to do with the way they carry this out. I carried out this research with families from different backgrounds and religions, and who live in the surrounding communities of Durban, in other words: a city context. These families came from a lower, middle- to upper class context. I asked the families about narratives (stories) of how the parents discipline their children. I chose to do the research with families who had children up to the age of 12 years or in other words up to grade 6 because this is the age group of the children that I minister to.

## 1.2    The two focal points: Religion and discipline.

### 1.2.1   The voice of Religion

The focus on religion is not to define different religions. It would rather be to ask families how their religion influences the way the parents of that household, discipline their children. I would therefore not define religion, but look at the narratives of the families, so that they can reflect on their own beliefs and religion in their own way and in their own words.

I will use my own religious experience as my personal narrative and my reference point, but at the same time seek to be as open as possible for the different narratives of my co-researchers. I will leave space for the families, that will be the co-creators of my research, to define and reflect on their own religious thoughts. During my research and reflection, I will create a safe and respectful place for the people involved to speak freely about their religion, without the fear of being criticised, marginalised, or to be converted.

The families I interviewed are affiliates of the religion that they choose. They are therefore not an exact example of how the certain religion looks, functions or can be described. They are only to be seen as affiliates of the religion, with their own unique way of interpreting and living out their religion. There may be other affiliates of the same religions who can and may differ with them on certain things they say or do. My aim in listening to the data of the affiliates are to get to know people that are affiliated to the different religions and get their narratives on how they discipline their children and see their religion in terms of this.

19

### 1.2.2. The voice of Discipline

The discipline that I am researching will be the kind of discipline that parents use in the upbringing of their children. I chose to leave space for families to further reflect on this matter in their own words and their own way. My motivation is for them to speak freely and be comfortable in describing their situation in their own words.

The context of disciplining children is known to me, because I serve in a children's ministry. I am a part time pastor in an Afrikaans speaking church, in the north of Pretoria, Gauteng. I chose not to do my research in Pretoria, because of the fact that I struggled to do my research while in Pretoria, because I was kept busy with ministry and my day to day life activities.

While I was trying to get people to interview in the Pretoria context, I talked to one of the missionaries in our church, Fred Nel, from Eternal Life Outreach. He introduced me to Pastor Billy from the "Pentecostal Outreach Fellowship" Church in Newlands-West in Durban. After talking to Pastor Billy and his daughter Marche, I decided that I will go to Durban to do my research, to focus for two weeks on my research, while also ministering in Pastor Billy's church. My family and I stayed on the second floor of the church building where there was a flat.

It was a very enriching cultural experience – in the afternoons we could hear the African drums of the Zulu people, at night we could hear the Islam people that was called to go to the mosque to pray, and in the time, we were there the Hindu families celebrated Diwali. This helped me not just to interview people but also be in the midst of the cultures and people I interviewed, and to experience their ways of life. This was an experience that I will never forget. I was not just interviewing the people for my research but also experiencing their ways of life.

20

I think that living in a predominantly white middle class community, I would not have had this experience if I did all my research in Pretoria where I stayed. This culturally rich experience, where me and my family stayed in an Indian community, surrounded by townships, was a very unique and enriching experience for me personally, and my research. It helped me to experience first-hand, what I am writing about in my research.

I chose to go to Durban, to focus more clearly on the research. When I was there everything I did was focused on the research. This helped me to do the interviews with the families, within two weeks. I also had the privilege to tell my research partners that I had only a few days to focus on the research. The fact that I did my research in Durban also helped me to think broader than my own context in interviewing people.

In Durban it was in a way a lot easier to get to interview people from different cultural backgrounds than I believed I would have done in Pretoria. In Pretoria a lot of the people that was introduced to me to interview, was white people (coming from a white Afrikaans background) who converted to other religions. When I got to Durban I met people not just of different religious backgrounds, but also different cultural backgrounds. This helped me to broaden my horizons and challenged me to get to know people's different religious and cultural backgrounds better. It was an enriching experience to walk with people, and talk with people from different backgrounds, and to learn from them.

In my ministry, parents ask me often to help with advice on disciplining their children. I work with a lot of parents that struggle with disciplining their children. I have also been invited by pre-schools and primary schools as well as other groups to talk about the topic of creative discipline and teaching young children to have sound values. Together with a colleague, who is an Educational Psychologist, I have been giving parental guidance to most of the primary schools in my community, which is four schools.

21

I have also completed my education qualification (PGCE), and had been a teacher from 2004 to 2007. During my time as a teacher I realised that discipline is a great problem in schools. I also noticed there are a lot of theories about disciplining children in schools, particularly since the teachers cannot use corporal punishment any more. I believe that discipline starts at home and that the teacher's focus must be on education in a class and not on discipline.

I have realised through the talks and the meetings I had with parents that we need to help them as parents think of new and innovative ideas and approaches to discipline our children. If we can help parents to rewrite their stories about this topic, for them to make a bold stand, we can also guide our children to be the best they can.

When I was teaching primary school children, I also realised that there is a connection between what children perceive as discipline and how they look at it in terms of the religious beliefs, at home. This made me curious, because none of the educational books I studied made a correlation between religion and discipline. In the present day, where children are taught different religious norms and values it is important to look at how and in what way religion and discipline has an influence on parents' and children's perception thereof.

## 1.3    The voice of my research

I chose postfoundational practical theological positioning. I am looking forward to developing a postfoundational Practical Theology out of the narratives of parents disciplining their young children. I agree with Müller who says that Practical Theology happens whenever and wherever there is a reflection on practice from the perspective of the experience of the presence of God. (Müller 2005:5).

In the following part of the chapter I will describe my thoughts on Practical Theology (1.3.1.1.), Postfoundationalism (1.3.1.2.), Social Constructionism (1.3.1.3.), transversal reality (1.3.1.4.), narrative research (1.3.2.), qualitative research (1.3.2.1), the seven movements (1.3.2.4.) and Pastoral family therapy (1.3.3.).

I would like to describe my thoughts on my research and my theology in terms of a voice.

According to Wikipedia, ("human voice" 2016) the mechanism for generating the human voice can be subdivided into three parts; the lungs, the vocal folds within the larynx and the articulators. I want to use these three aspects, the lungs, the vocal cords and the articulators that is needed to create a human voice, as a metaphor to describe my research further.

The human lungs (the pump) must produce adequate airflow and air pressure to vibrate vocal folds (this air pressure is the fuel of the voice). ("Human voice" 2016) In the same way the fuel or air of my research is my thoughts on Practical Theology. This fuel my way of thinking in my research as well as the way I will be doing the research.

The human vocal folds (vocal cords) are a vibrating valve that chops up the airflow from the lungs into audible pulses that form the laryngeal sound source. The muscles of the larynx adjust the length and tension of the vocal folds to 'fine-tune' pitch and tone ("human voice" 2016).  In the same way the narrative way of looking at my research will be like the vocal cords. The stories that people tell, from where I derive my research will give a narrative sound to my research.

The human voice's articulators (the parts of the vocal tract above the larynx consisting of tongue, palate, cheek, lips, etc.) articulate and filter the sound emanating from the larynx and to some degree can interact with the laryngeal airflow

to strengthen it or weaken it as a sound source. ("Human voice" 2016).  In the same way the my focus on pastoral family therapy, and especially families with young children will articulate my focus of my research and narrow it further down, to focus on the articulations (words/voices) of parents and children.

I would use the lungs of my research (Practical Theology), the vocal cords (The narrative way of doing research), and the articulators (pastoral family therapy) to give a voice to my research.

I would like to explain it as follow:

The lungs of my research:
Practical Theology
Postfoundational
Social constructionism
Transversal reality

The vocal cords:
Narrative research
Qualitative research
The seven movements

The articulators:
Pastoral family therapy

## 1.3.1. The Lungs of my research: Postfoundational Practical Theology.

I agree with Osmer (2012:67) that claiming the pluralistic and ecumenical nature of contemporary practical theology is an important part of re-narrating the story of this

field. Osmer (2012:68) challenges Practical Theologians to live more fully into the new chapter of Practical Theology's story. He urges us to do more in terms of welcoming individuals and communities whose theologies are quite different to the conservative ones.

With this he gives the good news, that contemporary practical theology does not have to start from scratch. It is already characterized by a high degree of pluralism, with a number of different perspectives that conceptualize practice and the theory/practice relationship along varied lines (Osmer 2012:68). This is because of the fact, that for well over a century, practical theology has engaged in interdisciplinary work (Osmer 2012:71).

Contemporary practical theologians have already begun to develop a range of genres to carry out their constructive work. As Osmer (2012:77) calls it: "We do not write commentaries, as in biblical studies, or comprehensive systems of doctrine, as in dogmatic theology. We use forms appropriate to our distinctive task: to investigate, assess, guide, and transform Christian practice in the present. Becoming clearer about these genres and their unique contribution to the theological enterprise as a whole, poses a challenge that the field must take up."

Taking the above into account together with my research goal, I chose to do the research in terms of the Postfoundational Practical Theology. For me the focal point of the research is on the disciplining of children more than in the different religions I studied. The whole aspect of the disciplining of children falls into the research area of Pastoral Marriage and family therapy, which in its turn falls under the discipline of Practical Theology.

Like I already explained in Osmer's thoughts on a new story of Practical Theology, the boundaries between the different disciplines in Practical Theology has been more fluent in the resent years, especially between disciplines like Practical Theology and Missionology. Therefore, it doesn't have to be handled so rigidly as in the past.

25

I also chose the Postfoundational Practical Theology. This means I will start working with the smaller or individual narratives. I will also take the background narratives and discourses very serious because of the fact that I will be working from the social-constructive standpoint. The Social Constructive standpoint leaves the freedom for me, not to exclude anything. This then also makes it possible to do the research on different religions.

## 1.3.1.1 Practical Theology

As a Christian Reformed Theologian, I believe that the Scripture are the means by which God reveal His involvement in this world and reveals Himself to us. The actions of God in relation to people occur in the dialectics between existing and non-existing elements (Heitink, 1993: 153). God is working through his Word and Spirit in the religious life of people. His grace, through the working of the Spirit in our lives, initiate the change for the better. The chosen love of God is the source of change. God is always part of our reality. I stand with De Wet (2009: 247) on the fact that God opens our minds through His Spirit, in that people are moved to serve God and fellow man innovatively.

I would describe what I believe in the words of "The Apostles' Creed". This creed I carry with me in my hart and as a mother teach my children to also know it by heart for it's the basis of what we believe.

"The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father, almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary,

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and was buried;

He descended to hell.

26

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the true Christian church, the communions of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting.

Amen."

Like I already mentioned I stand with Demasure, Muller's (2006: 8) description that Practical Theology happens whenever and wherever there is a reflection on practice, from the perspective of the experience of the presence of God. They also go on to say that there are various levels of Practical Theology, that can be very spontaneous, informal and local. On the other hand, it can also be very formal, systematic and organized, part of ministerial activities on the congregational level, or it can be highly academic on university level. It is always guided by *the moment of praxis (always local, embodied, and situated)*.

In terms of research, being a practical theologian means that our research investigates what is happening in a field of social action. The practical theologian also interprets what he/she discovers in terms of their own theological framework. He/she also needs to focus on their own theology that is drawn from things such as scripture, tradition, experience, and reason.

There are thus two sides to Practical Theology. We must be more forthright about our own theology, while also welcoming new theologies and stories from other religions and ways of thinking about religion to be part of my research. I will be very forthright about my own theology and my identity as a Christian. I will do this in a

manner of respect towards other religions and theologies, while identifying myself firmly in my theology.

Because I will carry out my research on different religions, I will not only reflect on the different religions, but also make a point to reflect clearly on my own theology, especially as a Christian practical theologian. I will do this in a non-judgemental and respective way in terms of my coresearchers from different religions, in such a way to say what I as a Christian (and practical theologian) can learn and take from the research.

I accept Osmer's idea that when we do Practical Theology and are in a pastoral relationship with people, that people transform others to their identity narrative. In my context, I would like to talk about my Practical Theology as part of my identity. My research will enrich rather than totally transform my theology. I would not try to transform the theological or religious identity of any of the people involved in my research. But rather let the research open our minds to the fact that people may think differently about religion and discipling their children.

As a researcher, I will have respect for new, alternatives and stories. This will be transforming in opening my thoughts and the way I perceive religion and discipline. I do not want to change or transform the identity narratives of others to be like my own through my research. Rather I would have a Practical Theology that learns from, listens to, and mostly respects other theologies and religious thoughts, especially regarding other religions.

Osmer also says that if we are to live more fully into the new chapter of our story, we must do a much better job of welcoming individuals and communities whose theologies are quite different from the assumptive frameworks dominating the guilds, theologies that, often, are more conservative than these frameworks. (2012:68). At the very least, this means that we must be forthright about our own vantage point, especially about something as central as what we mean by practice.

For Andrew Root (2006:53) Practical Theology specifically directs itself towards a contemporary moment. It puts the church's historical theological confessions in
28

conversation with the present conflicts and contemplations of the contemporary church and the larger society in which it is found, opening lines of mutual conversation and critique. This means that Practical Theology has argued that theology is in continual and constant development, moving and advancing within this convergence of past reflection and present confrontation. In our society at large, we have different religions that have different ways at looking at theology and religions. That is why I feel comfortable to bring conversations into play with other religions, in my way of thinking about Practical Theology.

## 1.3.1.2.    Postfoundational

Postfoundationalism is a way for me to further describe my thoughts on practical theological research. The postfoundational way of thinking can be explained against the foundational and non-foundational way of thinking. I want to use three images to explain this.

### 1.3.1.2.1    The foundationalists approach

This approach believes that we all must pursue this one truth. It thus believes that it has the "God's eye view". According to Schrag foundationalism finds its mission in a quest for certainty. He says that unimpeachable knowledge-claims are what it's after (Schrag 2006:21). This makes it difficult, and almost impossible to do interdisciplinary work.

The foundationalism approach takes it for granted that absolute truth is available for all of us. According to this approach there is only one truth that must be pursued. Such an epistemological position can easily lead to an over estimation of one's own discipline and its possibilities. This understanding and use of it provides the "God's eye view". Interdisciplinary work is therefore extremely difficult. The only possibility is to seek for a universal perspective and therefore work towards assimilation and

29

incorporation. This position is not flexible and holds on to core thoughts and knowledge. Lyortard (1984:18) refers to it as "grand narratives". In other words: the foundational way of thinking, says that there is only one truth - I have it and you need it. It doesn't see any truth other than the one truth they have a hold on. I choose not to follow this line of thought in terms of my research.
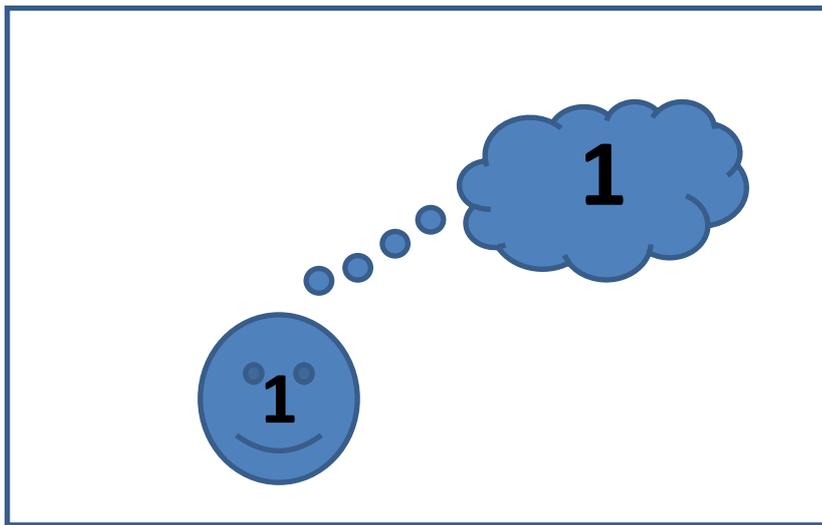


### 1.3.1.2.2.    Postmodern / non-foundational approach

The postmodern approach is also called the non-foundationalist or diverse perspective. According to Thiel (1994:10) the postmodern view, rejects the traditional rationalist definition of truth, as correspondence between self and the world. For the postmodern thinker, there is not a strong foundation of belief systems. This line of thought sees the community and context as very important.

The postmodern, non-foundational approach realises that other people may think about things in another way, and that they may even have another way of looking at things. Everyone thus has a diversity of opinion.  And to them it is perfectly acceptable. This approach brings a lot of tolerance towards others, but on the other hand it tends to be without direction.

I used this approach to describe my thoughts on Practical Theology in my Master's degree. I did not choose the postmodern line of thought again, because I agree with Park who said, that the non-foundationalists claim, that no authoritative givens exist, is incompatible with theological claims of reasoned attempts to understand the authoritative givens of God's revelation in the scripture, or its interpretation in sanctioned religious traditions. (Park 2010:1)
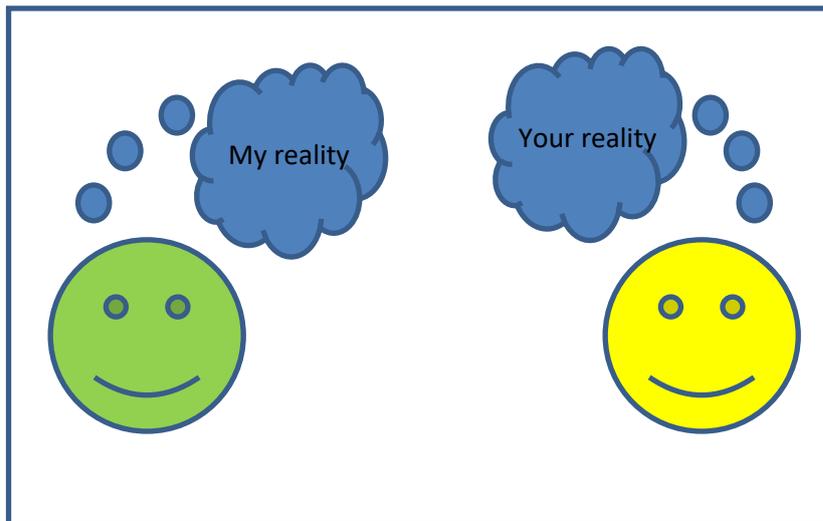


### 1.3.1.2.3.    Postfoundational

We all have narratives about how God is involved in our lives, and especially in and through our struggles. These narratives are constructed in relation to other people. This doesn't mean that we have different realities that stand apart from each other. On the other hand, it also does not mean that we have one reality that fits every one like a glove. We live in relation to different people and in different ways and depths of relationships. That is why we need to realise that even if we all have similar narratives, there will be places where our realities do not overlap, because of the influence of other narratives in our lives.

This is not to confuse us, or to leave us in a place where everyone must figure out how God is part of their reality. It helps us to rather help each other find new narratives from the present narratives in our lives. The present narratives are like presents we can use to shape new and better realities for our future. This is where

we as practical theologians play a big role. We are there to help people find new narratives of hope and healing, in helping them to discover the presence of God in their narratives.

This can only happen if we create a safe place where we can share our realities. This must be a place where all our realities can come together - a safe, non-judgemental place.

To further explain postfoundational reality in the context of Practical Theology, we must understand that there will be a specific context that is local, embodied and situated. When we listen to people's narratives, we do so in a specific context of their life situation. Their narratives do not stand apart from other people's narratives. It is rather constructed in relationship with other people, and thus in relationship with other people's narratives. The narratives of our lives thus become the action field. And out of this action field and the narratives we share with each other come new narratives and new realities.

There is something transversal in our rationalities. Therefore, we can build a stronger and thicker story together. We are building a new more truthful story. Out of this, new stories are emerging in growing respect for each other.

I agree with Müller that says to practice theology in the postfoundational line of thought requires intellectual and emotional flexibility. (Müller 2011:4-5) He also refers to it as the edge effect of transversal reality. Which he does in terms of this metaphor that is used relating to an ecotone- a transition area between adjacent, but different plant communities. This is also the metaphor I want to use for postfoundationalist Practical Theology.

For me the postfoundational line of thought creates the space for people to have different as well as overlapping or same lines of thoughts. The difference between

32

the foundational and postmodern way of thought lies in it, that it does not believe that there is only one truth, nor that truth, is what people make of it (that the truth can differ from one person to another, and that is acceptable).

In this line of thought we can say that there are two kinds of truth in our lives. Certain truths are socially constructed and are things that we share with others. Another kind of truth is not necessary socially constructed and are the things we will not change our minds about. This kind of truth includes things like religious truths and cultural truths. They are part of the truth we build our life on.

For me as a theologian, God will always be part of my truth. My whole way of thinking begins and ends with God. His revelation in my life through His Word and His Spirit guides me in the truth that I will stand by, no matter what happens.

If I am in a conversation with a fellow Christian, the reality that God has the prominent part in our lives will be in both of our lines of thinking. If I am in a conversation with a non-believer, there will be some truths we share – things like we need to do the best we can for our children and "it takes a village to raise a child". But on the other side there will be certain things that I will see as the truth – the truth about my relationship with God and beliefs in God, that they would not see as the truth.

By accepting the postfoundational way of thinking, I accept that there are people that describe the truth about certain aspects of their lives differently from me. This helps me to be open to people who may think differently from me, who may even see the truth about certain aspects in their life differently – like some of my co-researchers who are affiliated with different religions. This doesn't mean that I need to take the things they see as the truth and accept it, nor the other way around. It simply means that we will have respect for the fact that we can agree on certain truths and disagree on other truths that are vitally important to us in our lives.

The postfoundational line of thought, creates a space for people within the same contexts and in relation with each other to agree on certain things and have the same overlapping thoughts that are socially constructed. But on the other hand, it also creates a space for people to have different thoughts and opinions. This line of thought makes it possible to agree and disagree with people.

This approach is sensitive for relativity, subjectivity, rigidity and false claims of the universal reality/foundationalism. It also forces us to listen first to the stories of people in real life situations. It confronts us with a specific and concrete situation.
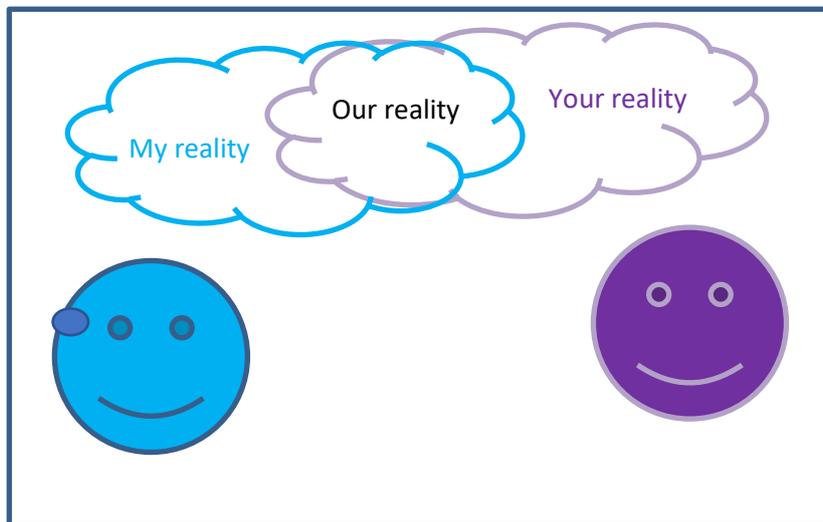


Van Huyssteen (2006a:22) refers to the postfoundationalist notion as "a form of compelling knowledge", which is a way of seeking a balance between "the way our beliefs are anchored in interpreted experience, and the broader networks of beliefs in which our rationally compelling experiences are already embedded."

According to Müller (2009:6) the shift of emphasis from individual to social, from subjective towards discourse, which constitutes a new epistemology in the social sciences, is also part of the postfoundationalist movement. For him it is also important to notice that contextuality is a key concept in the postfoundationalist approach, and that experience is situated and always interpreted.

### 1.3.1.3. Social Constructionism

I like to think about Social Constructionism as people digging together to find words and meanings, characters, and ideas to form a story together. None of us lives without having relationships with other people. In these relationships, we make up the ideas and thoughts of our realities. Therefore, the idea of socially constructed interpretations and meaning is clearly part of the postfoundationalist approach, where we create our own meaning that differs from other people, but also leaving space where we can create a shared meaning. We live and think and find meaning in relationship with other people.

**Social constructionism**

**Interviewee**

Co-construction of meaning
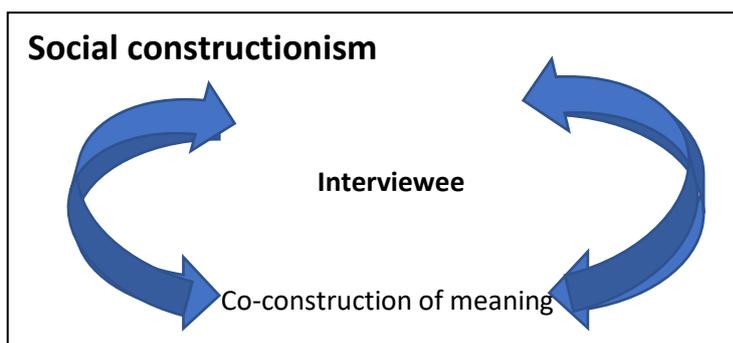
### 1.3.1.4. Transversal rationality

For me the transversal rationality is the space in between different people's thoughts where they agree on something. It is the place where people create a shared truth that is socially constructed. It's not a "my reality"- place, nor a "your reality"-place. It is a place where "our reality" is socially constructed and can also be explained as the part where transversal rationality takes place. It's the space that people meet each other in a shared truth in their thoughts. It goes hand in hand with the postfoundational and social constructionist way of thinking.

Müller describes the notion of "transversal rationality" is a proposal by Schrag, Van

Huyssteen and others. It is a way of providing a responsible and workable interface between disciplines. (Müller 2009:6)

In my picture explaining the postfoundational notion, I would describe the place where people's truth intersects, and overflows each other in a similar but not necessary identical narrative, that there is the place where transversal rationality takes place.

This then leads to the fact that people can or cannot have a shared reality of God in their lives. Even though I believe that God is present in everyone's reality, not everyone will agree with me. If I am in conversation with a fellow believer the place where transversal rationality takes place, and socially constructed truths and realities are shared will be the place where we share our narratives about the reality of God being prominently part of our lives. When we on the other hand, talk to non-believers, the place where the transversal reality takes place, there where truth and realities are shared through being socially constructed, will not be the place we talk about religion. This is because the beliefs that we stand on will differ from each other.

God will always be part of my reality, but I may never force my beliefs about Him onto someone who is not a believer. In my interactions with non-believers I must have respect for their own beliefs and ways of thinking, especially in the way I did my research.
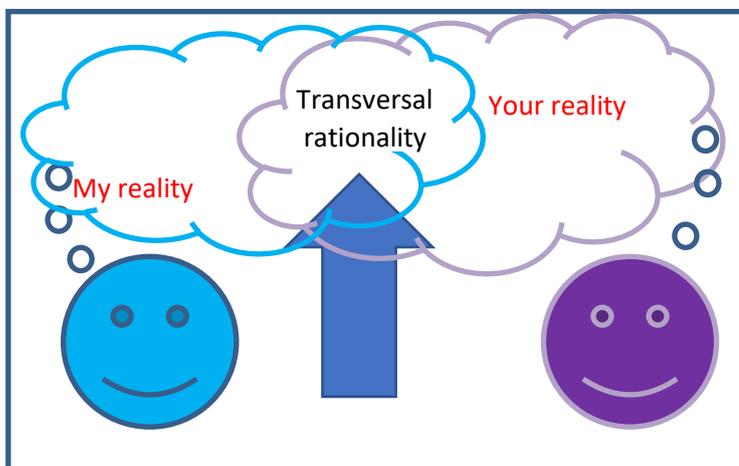
### 1.3.2. The vocal cords: The Narrative way of doing research.

For me the narrative approach is about people's stories and the way they voice them to give meaning to their and others lives. In the stories (narratives) new meaning is formed and created.

Narrative research is about looking at the narratives of people that they socially construct. The narrative way of doing research then specifically about the transversal realities that people create between them and others through the narratives they tell.

This may be narratives where they agree or disagree on things that comes out of the narratives that they tell each other, which involves themselves in one or the other way, together with others. This then flows out of the postfoundational way of thinking. This is the place where shared truths and shared differences enhance the art of hearing data. I decided to use a similar picture than the picture that I used to describe the postfoundational way of thinking.

The narrative approach is not just about stories, but about storying. Narrative research is about being storied, not just about using stories to find data or to understand the context. It is not just about us telling stories, but about stories telling things about us. In narrative research, the emphasis shifts from the dominant stories to the small, even marginalised real life stories.

Because this narrative research flows out of the postfoundational Practical theoly, but is specifically about the narratives of people and God's revelation within the stories of people, I changed the thought bubbles of the postfoundational picture into speech bubbles. Patricia Leavy (2009: x) says that the narrative approach relies on

"words" as its main communication tool and (re)storying as the way of writing a new story. According to her: Narrative inquiry draws more explicitly on the arts than traditional qualitative research, but still relies on "the word" as its main communication tool and "(re)storying" as its mode of writing. (Leavy, P 2009: x)

We live our lives and find meaning in the listening and telling of stories. Polkinghorne (1988: 160) gives a great definition to the narrative when he says that all these stories are reworked into the story of our lives, which we narrate to ourselves in an episodic, sometimes semiconscious, virtually in interrupted meanings of our past actions, anticipating the outcomes of our future projects, situating ourselves at the intersection of several stories not yet completed.

The narrative approach is not just about stories, but about storying. Narrative research is about being storied, not just about using stories to find data or to understand the context. It is not just about us telling stories, but about stories telling things about us. In narrative research, the emphasis shifts from the dominant stories to the small, even marginalised real life stories.
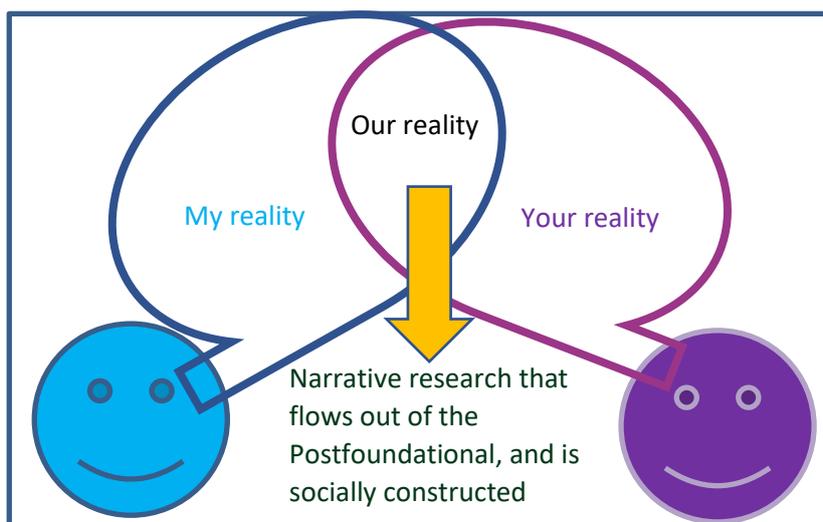
I choose to not use other methods than narrative research for my research, because I do not want to lose touch with the life experiences of people. I believe that I will not be able to hear all the voices that I want to, and only hear a part of the data if I choose other methods. Narrative research helps to get to the heart of the relationship and connection. Social constructionism is central to the narrative research, because a story is shaped by many characters and told by many people.

The narrative approach is not just about stories, but about storying. Narrative research is about being storied, not just about using stories to find data or to understand the context. It is not just about us telling stories, but about stories telling things about us. In narrative research, the emphasis shifts from the dominant stories to the small, even marginalised real life stories.

Connelly and Clandinin (2006:477) wrote that arguments for the development and use of narrative inquiry come out of a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives.

People shape their daily lives by stories. This is stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. They describe this story, in the current idiom, as a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. They argue that the narrative is the phenomenon studied in inquiry. Narrative inquiry, described as the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience.

As a methodology, narrative inquiry entails a view of the phenomenon. For them, to use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular narrative view of experience as phenomena under study.

The challenge is to create a situation where people's narratives can be listened to and heard in a respectful manner; a situation where it is not only possible to hear the

meaning of the narrator, but where the narrator is respected and not exposed by the research itself.

The aim of my research, will be to listen to stories and to be drawn into those stories. I therefore do not strive to be objective at all, but rather strive for subjective integrity, with a method of participatory interaction.

### 1.3.2.3.      Qualitative research

It is easier to understand qualitative research in the light of the meaning of the opposite way to doing research, namely the quantitative way of doing research. In the light of how researchers analyse (ask questions to the text), we see that quantitative researchers analyse in a deductive way - from a "knowing" position. This means that they focus on the theory, themes, and framework. The researcher will ask the text questions.

The qualitative researcher analyses indicatively (from a "not knowing position"). This means that the researcher does not have structured questions constructed beforehand, but tries to be open, ask questions to the narrative and gives the narrative the focus and a voice. The researcher will ask what the narrative is telling us.

Quantitative research is more about collecting numbers, facts, and conclusions while qualitative researchers are using words to create a piece of art. Just as Leavy puts it: "Qualitative researchers do not simply gather and write; they compose, orchestrate and weave." (Leavy, P 2009: 10)

This does not mean that truth and meaning gets lost in the narratives of qualitative research, because just as Leavy puts it "… the writing of qualitative research, as with the work of artists, is ultimately about (re)presenting a set of meanings to an

40

audience." (Leavy, P 2009: 11). These narratives are formed by the socially constructed meanings that the researcher and co-researchers develop.

If the narratives are then socially constructed, it also means that you cannot generalise, like quantitative research does.

The qualitative approach will be the best approach for my research because it gives me the space to listen to the stories of families, and through that discover the words to create a new story together with them.

### 1.3.2.4.    The seven movements of Practical Theology

To go on an accountable research journey, I chose the seven movements. This seven movements, when conducted, result in achieving the outcomes for the minimum requirements for a postfoundational Practical Theology (Müller 2005:78). Specific methodological guidelines were developed for each movement (cf. Müller 2005:82). Each movement is accompanied by specific methods that were used to collect, describe, and/or interpret the data.

Müller (2004:300) carried this out through "translating" Van Huyssteen's (1997:4) description and summary for postfoundational Theology for Practical Theology (the left column), and re-phrasing it to develop a practical theological research process, consisting of seven movements as follows: (Müller, 2004:300)

| POSTFOUNDATIONALIST THEOLOGY | POSTFOUNDATIONALIST PRACTICAL THEOLOGY |
|---|---|
| ... a *postfoudationalist theology* wants to make two moves. First, it fully acknowledges **contextuality**, the epistemically crucial role of **interpreted experience**, and the way that **tradition** shapes the epistemic and nonepistemic values that inform our reflection about **God** and what some of us believe to be **God's presence** in this world. At the same time, however, a postfoudationalist notion of rationality in theological reflection claims to point creatively **beyond the confines of the local community**, group, or culture towards a plausible form of **interdisciplinary conversation**.<br><br>(Van Huyssteen 1997:4)<br>(Phrases in bold J Müller's emphasis) | **The context & interpreted experience**<br>1. A specific context is described.<br>2. In-context experiences are listened to and described.<br>3. Interpretations of experiences are made, described and developed in collaboration with "co-researchers"<br><br>**Traditions of interpretation**<br>4. A description of experiences as it is continually informed by traditions of interpretation.<br><br>**God's presence**<br>5. A reflection on God's presence, as it is understood and experienced in a specific situation.<br><br>**Thickened through interdisciplinary investigation**<br>6. A description of experience, thickened through interdisciplinary investigation.<br><br>**Point beyond the local community.**<br>7. The development of alternative interpretations that point beyond the local community. |

The seven movements of Practical Theology have been developed as an example of doing Practical Theology and according to Müller (2004: 301-305) can be seen as:

## POSTFOUNDATIONAL PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

### The context & interpreted experience

1. A specific context is described.

2. In-context experiences are listened to and described.

3. Interpretations of experiences are made, described and developed in collaboration with "co-researchers".

### Traditions of interpretation

4. A description of experiences as it is continually informed by traditions of interpretation.

**God's presence**

5. A reflection on God's presence, as it is understood and experienced in a specific situation.

**Thickened through interdisciplinary investigation**

6. A description of experience, thickened through interdisciplinary investigation.

**Point beyond the local community**.

7. The development of alternative interpretations that point beyond the local community.

### 1.3.3 The articulators: Pastoral Family Therapy

I chose to do my PhD in the field of family therapy, more specifically: Therapy with children and their parents. I also chose to do it in a narrative way as narrative pastoral family therapy. It's about hearing families' narratives in creating a new research narrative.

### 1.4. Voices to listen to

Every parent has their own stories about why and how they discipline. It is almost as if it became unheard of to talk about it these days. After corporal punishment was banished in schools and the possibility became known that parents will not be able to spank their children, people almost stopped talking about how they disciplined.

A few generations ago, hitting children to discipline them was the norm. I remember parents bragging about the wrath of the "*rottang*" or wooden spoon (stick for hitting), when I was growing up.

Nowadays parents need to look at how they can punish their children without necessarily hitting them. Within the postfoundational position, I am free to look at people's narratives regarding discipline, without being judgemental about their thoughts, and by being able to voice my own opinion, without forcing it on anybody else. Through this we socially construct a new way of thinking and helping each other with this issue all parents of small children must deal with.

### 1.4.1. My inner voice

### 1.4.1.1. Voicing my own narrative as a parent

My personal story links up with the theme. I am a mother of a boy (10 years and in grade 5) and a girl (7 years old and in grade 2). I also want the best for my children, and to discipline them accordingly. I am therefore faced with the same challenges every parent is faced with on this matter.

I agree with Patricia Leavy who said that holistic approaches to research are also about the relationship the researcher has with his or her work (Leavy, P 2009: viii). I therefore choose an epistemology that also grants me the space to have a relationship with the context and the research.

If I describe my relationship with the context, I would say that I have a professional and personal relationship with this context.

## 1.4.1.2 A Professional voice:

I have a close relationship with the context, because of my work. I am a children's pastor. If I talk about discipline and parenting, I do it from a religious position and I also work with children and parents. This is especially true for the work that I have done as a pastor and as a teacher, as well as my work in local schools and at the CMR/CSC ("*Christ like Maatskaplike Raad*" also known as Christian Social Council).

Through this I have realised that I need to make a stand to help parents to think anew, about this subject, so that we can raise our children with good morals and sound values.

I read a lot about disciplining children and try to stay on top of what people say and the theories they have. I am also discussing it a lot with the people I work with, which include parents, pastors, educational psychologists, social workers, teachers, and headmasters.

## 1.4.1.3 A Personal voice

My children are still very young (7 years and 10 years old). I would like to try and discipline my children in the best possible way. I know that my religion plays a significant role in the way I discipline my own children.  At the same time, I can already feel the pressure that is being put on parents through the media and the culture in terms of values, morality, and discipline. I feel that parents do not all have the same moral values and ways of disciplining children and would easily criticise each other. Disciplining children in the present has new challenges for parents and authoritative figures.

Because it seems that a lot of people use their religion to debate that they have the freedom to discipline their children the way they want, I am curious to see what the correlation is between a persons religion and the way they discipline their children.

## 1.4.1.4 Giving a language to the voice of my theology and research

Because I am doing this research together with families from different religious backgrounds, I am very open to my own religious beliefs and understanding. I will not be carrying out this research in a way to convert or evangelise any of the families, because then I will miss the aim of the research totally.

I would rather be open about my own religious beliefs, my theology and understanding in a very respectful way, for me to be able to build meaningful and honest relationships with the people who will be going with me on the journey. I will be honest about my own religious thoughts to also be credible and earn the trust of my co-researchers.

In the narratives of the stories, I will also look out for places where my co-researchers are talking about G(g)od. I will handle these narratives with the utmost respect and ask my co-researchers to respect my own and other's narratives about their (G)god(s) and religions.

## 1.4.2. The voices of the co-researchers

I invited eight different families to go on the journey with me. I chose families with children aged between birth and 12 years of age, that have different ways of thinking and have different religious outlooks. I also prefer to keep the families anonymous to keep them safe from any criticism and to help them to be open about their thoughts

on the sensitive topics of discipline and religion. It is thus a random selection of families with different religious backgrounds.

The narratives was interpreted on a social constructionist basis (interpretations will thus be made together with the "co-researchers"/ interviewees). I did it through listening to parents and children's narratives and through that trying to understand the world of these families. I used a literature study to gain more insight into the research. My focus is on the narratives of religion and discipline.

## 1.4.2.1.     Protecting the voices of children and families

It is important that the co-researchers feel confident and secure to co-create the research. They knew beforehand that it will be published. For me it will be important to acknowledge that these families own the stories. We must have respect for that. It's very important to also reflect at the end, on my own research, which I will do in the last chapter.

To make sure that people will not be exploited by my research, I handed out an informed consent statement. (Included as annexure A). Because I have also involved children in my research, I asked the parents beforehand to sign consent forms for the children. I did all of the research where children were involved, with their parents being present and with their parent's full permission. I also made it clear that I do not want to harm any relationship between the parents and their children and want the parents to be present when I do research with the children. I would not involve children in the discussions on how they are disciplined, they will only be able to tell me about being disciplined. I would only have these discussions with the parents, because I would not want to harm the relationship between the parents and children. I would only ask the children how they are disciplined, through asking them to write or tell me a story, or to draw a picture and tell me about it, when I interview them.

According to Rubin and Rubin (1995:95) an informed consent statement describes the purposes of the research, provides background on the researcher, and points out both the benefits and possible risks to those involved. In this consent statement, I also promise to share the results with those being studied if they wish to, indicate the degree of confidentiality of the findings, and most important, emphasise that participation is fully voluntary. I have also put with it a kind of resume and contact numbers where they can reach me if necessary.

I asked the co-researchers to sign these forms to show and confirm that they understand the risks described in the statement and agree to be part of the research. I gave these consent statements by hand to each of my co-researchers, explaining everything to them.  The next step was to make sure that they have signed it, before I started to conduct the interviews.

I will also keep the family's identities anonymous, because I do not want to expose them in terms of their private religion.  I will also give them a free opportunity to attend a parental guidance course at a school close to them.

Clandinin states: "Ethics in narrative research … is not a matter of abstractly correct behaviour but of responsibility in human relationship". (Clandinin, D. 2007:538). I agree with him that consent must be constructed as an aspect of a relational process, deriving from an ethics of care rather than rights (Clandinin, d 2007:540). When considering that all the families I will interview, will be kept confidential, I am keeping a code book with their names, contact numbers and consent statements in a safe and private place where only I can access it. I will change their names and surnames in all the texts that I publish and share with others. The narratives and stories derived from the interviews will be shared with people involved in working with me on the research project and then only with the names, places and identifying information removed or disguised. (Clandinin, D.  2007: 542)

When the participant's stories become the reconstructed text, it will then fall under my authority. This means that it will be my understanding and interpretation of the narratives. The participants will be able to reflect on the interpretations and

48

understandings I have. What I will write, depends on the conclusions and interpretations of myself and my co-researchers.

## 1.4.2.2. The voice of ethics

I would like to use the following basic principles of Dr Salomé Human-Vogel (2007) for doing research with children by the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee, specifically regarding the inclusion of children in research projects:

First, the research needs to be carried out in the best interest of the child. The Children's Act 38 of 2005 [par. 10] makes provision that the right of every child is of such an age, maturity, and stage of development to participate in a matter that involves that child, has the right to participate in an appropriate way and views expressed by the child must be given consideration.

Children have the right to participate in research that involves them, but it remains important for me to demonstrate that their participation will be appropriate for their age, maturity, and stage of development. I agree with Dr Salomé Human-Vogel (2007: 25), who says that, children will only be invited to participate when the information sought cannot be obtained from other sources. Children are never involved simply because they are available or because it is convenient for the researcher. It is important to provide protection and advancing the best interests of the children who will be participating in this research.

I would also keep children's human rights in mind: rights that include but are not limited to, the rights to equality, human dignity, freedom, and security (especially the right to body and psychological integrity), privacy, freedom of expression, to be protected.

Human-Vogel (2007) states: "As far as is possible within the constraints of the law, children should be treated as autonomous agents with the right to self-determination. They have the right to be consulted in matters affecting them and with consideration to their age and development, have a right to be heard with respect to matters involving them."

The Children's Act (38 of 2005) Section 2 also requires that, all actions or decisions involving a child must

- Respect, protect, promote, and fulfil the child's rights
- Respect the child's inherent dignity
- Treat the child fairly and equitably
- Protect the child from unfair discrimination
- Recognise a child's need for development and to engage in play
- Recognise a child's disability and create an enabling environment

As a researcher, I also take the responsibility to minimise the possible risks of harm to the children and to maximise the benefits of participation.

I will not involve a child in an interview without being assisted and in the presence of their parents. I believe that families – parents and children should be treated with honesty and integrity.

Because discipline is such a sensitive issue, I would not discuss the way children are disciplined with them (the children), but only allow them to tell their story or draw a picture of a time that they were disciplined. I will discuss the discipline story or picture with the parents. This I will do, because I know that disciplining children is a sacred issue and can't be criticised. The discussion will therefore focus on the role religion played in the discipline, without criticising the means or methods used.

As with the parents and family members, the children's names will be kept anonymous and confidential, to keep them safe.

### 1.4.2.3.    Voicing corporal punishment

To understand the path that corporal punishment took in our South African legal system I made a time line about the legal decisions about corporal punishment in our legal system in South Africa, which I derived from the report of the "Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children" (2016). This will help us to better understand the place that corporal punishment has in South Africa, and the journey it took over the past years.

**1913**

Under Common Law, parents have the power "to inflict moderate and reasonable chastisement on a child." (R van Janke en Janke)

**1996 & 1998**

Provisions against violence and abuse in the constitution 1996 and the Domestic Violence Act 1998 are not interpreted as prohibiting all corporal punishment in childrearing.

**1996**

Corporal punishment is prohibited in Schools in the South African Schools Act 1996 (art.10)

**2000**

Committee on the Rights of the Child (23 February 2000, concluding observations on initial report, paras.3, 8 and 28). The committee recommended that the State Party take effective measures to prohibit by law

the use of corporal punishment in the family and in this context, examine the experience of other countries that have already enacted similar legislation.

## 2005

The Children's Act 2005 defines abuse in relation to a child as "any form of harm or ill-treatment deliberately inflicted on a child" and exposing or subjecting a child to behaviour that may harm the child psychologically or emotionally"(art.1) but the Act does not explicitly prohibit all corporal punishment.

## 2007

The Children's Act was amended to provide for prevention and early intervention programmes which must focus on, among other things, "developing appropriate parenting skills and the capacity of parents and caregivers to safeguard the well-being and best interest of positive, non-violent forms of discipline." (art.144 (1) (b)); a clause which would have prohibited corporal punishment in the home was removed from the Amendment Bill before Parliament passed it, pending further investigation.

## 2008 – Child Justice Act

There is no provision for corporal punishment in the Child Justice Act 2008.

## 2008 - First cycle Universal Periodic Review

South Africa was examined in the first cycle of the Universal Periodic Review in 2008 (session 1). Slovenia made the recommendation to South Africa to remove the defence of reasonable chastisement, criminalising corporal punishment. The government neither accepted nor rejected the recommendation. (23 May 2008 Report of the working group on the Universal Periodic Review: South Africa, para. 67 (1))

**2012 - Second Cycle Universal Periodic Review**

In the Second Cycle examination of the Universal Periodic Review in 2012 (session 13), Mexico made a recommendation to prohibit and banish corporal punishment in the home and public institutions. The government accepted the recommendation but implied that the existing law is adequate.

They stated: "Corporal punishment is outlawed in South African government system and perpetrators of this inhumane form of punishment and violence are reported to law enforcement and accordingly punished." (18 September 2012, A/HRC/21/16/Add.1, Report of the working group: Addendum, annex.)

The government showed its commitment to law reform in accepting the recommendation of the Universal Periodic Review and in the support of the Department of Social Development for proposals to include explicit prohibition made in the context of the review of the Children's Act. (9 July 2012, A/HRC/21/16, Report of the working group, para 124(88))

**2014**

The government reiterated its intention to prohibit corporal punishment. Amendments were drafted which would explicitly prohibit all corporal punishment and repeal the common law defence of "reasonable chastisement". (National Department of Social Development, Media Statement, 3 June 2014)

**2014 - African Committee of Experts on the Rights and welfare of the Child.**

In October 2014, concluding observations on the initial report, paras.35 of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child:

"The Committee recommend that the State Party speed up amending the Children's Act to explicitly ban corporal punishment in all settings including the home. The Committee also calls upon the State Party to promote positive disciplining to support families through awareness raising, and to train those who are working for and with children such as teachers and care givers. Moreover, the committee advises the Government of South Africa to harmonise its national laws such as the common law which entitle parents to reasonably punish their children."

## 2015

In May 2015, the Minister of Social Development tabled the Children's Amendment Bill and the Children's Second Amendment Bill in Parliament, neither of which includes prohibition of corporal punishment or repeal of the "reasonable chastisement" defence. According to the South African Human Rights Commission, the purpose of the Bills was primarily to align the Children's Act with Constitutional Court judgements, and a Children's Third Amendment Bill addresses corporal punishment in the home though there are no indications when this Bill will be published for public engagement.

## 2016

21 January 2016, The South African Human Rights Commission published its decision on a complaint brought against the Josua Generation Church concerning its promotion of corporal punishment by parents in "disciplining" children.

The commission ruled against the church and, in doing so, called on the state to meet its human rights obligations by initiating law reform to prohibit corporal punishment in the home. *(South African Human Rights Commission in the matter between Adrian Mostert, Hannah Mostert, Sonke Gender Justice and*

*Carol Bower (complainants) and Josua Generation Church (Respondent) File Ref. No.: WP/1213/0887, published 21 January 2016)*

**2016 Human Rights Committee**

([April 2016], CCPR/C/ZAF/CO/1 Advance Unedited Version, Concluding observations on initial report, paras.24 and 25)

"The Committee is concerned that corporal punishment in the home is not prohibited, and is traditionally accepted and widely practised, and that it is still lawful in private education institutions and continues to be used in certain schools as a mean of discipline, despite its legal prohibition (arts.7 and 24)

"The State Party should take practical steps, including through legislative measures, where appropriate, to put an end to corporal punishment in all settings."

**2017**

Because there is a possibility that there could be new laws in the close future about corporal punishment, I decided not to make corporal punishment part of my studies as a theme to be explored. If it comes forward in the interviews I have with the families I interview, I will listen, and search for alternative ways of discipline to corporate punishment. Also in terms of the sensitive matters about corporal punishment, I will choose not to talk about corporal punishment, except if the parents choose to talk about it. It will not be a theme that I will further explore. But if it becomes known I will take notice of it.

### 1.4.2.4.	Giving words to the voice of the co-researchers

The methods I used to do the intended research with my co-researchers (families) are as follows. I had the first part of the interview together with the parents and their children. Because my research will be carried out with families of different religious backgrounds, I will execute each family's interview on their own (separately). In the first interview, I will ask the parents to tell me about how they think their religion influences the way they discipline their children. While I talk to the parents I asked the children to draw me a picture of the last time they were disciplined by their parents. I asked them to think of a time when, or the last time that they did something wrong that mommy or daddy had to discipline them about. I used the word discipline here. Some of the children had difficulty in understanding the word, but the parents also helped me here. Every time I asked the children to draw me a picture or write me a story, the parents also helped me to make it clear to the children. The children thus were sure of what they had to draw or write, and the parent's way of helping to make it clear to the children also helped to know for sure that the children was definitely sure about what to draw. This also helped with the conversation that I had later with the parents about the picture, because they already knew what the child drew, wrote and talked about. It really helped a lot to have the parents not just present in this, but also to get them involved.

The second part of the interview with the family, I asked the parents and children to reflect with me on the parents' narratives and the children's pictures of the first part of the interview.

After collecting the narratives from the parents and children, I reflected and researched the unique outcomes that we found in the previous interviews with the families, together with my interdisciplinary co-researchers. All the families I interviewed were content with only one interview. I got the feeling that this was a sensitive topic and that the families had already made up their minds to where they stood in terms of discipline and their religion. It was as if they became suspicious if I

asked for more interviews. Therefore, I didn't see the need to force them for a second interview. I then structured the interviews, to make time to reflect on the children's stories and art work, when they participated. I also made time at the end of each interview to reflect on the narratives and unique outcomes.

### 1.4.3.  Moving from "listening" to "voicing" narratives

I conducted the interviews from a social constructionist point of view as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| In collaboration with the family - and interdisciplinary co-researchers. | Interview<br><br>    Take notes on interview or/and record the interview<br><br>Transcribing<br><br>    Discuss the work.<br><br>Preparing for next interview<br><br>    Consider the interviews already done and work out a revised design, set a more focused set of questions. |
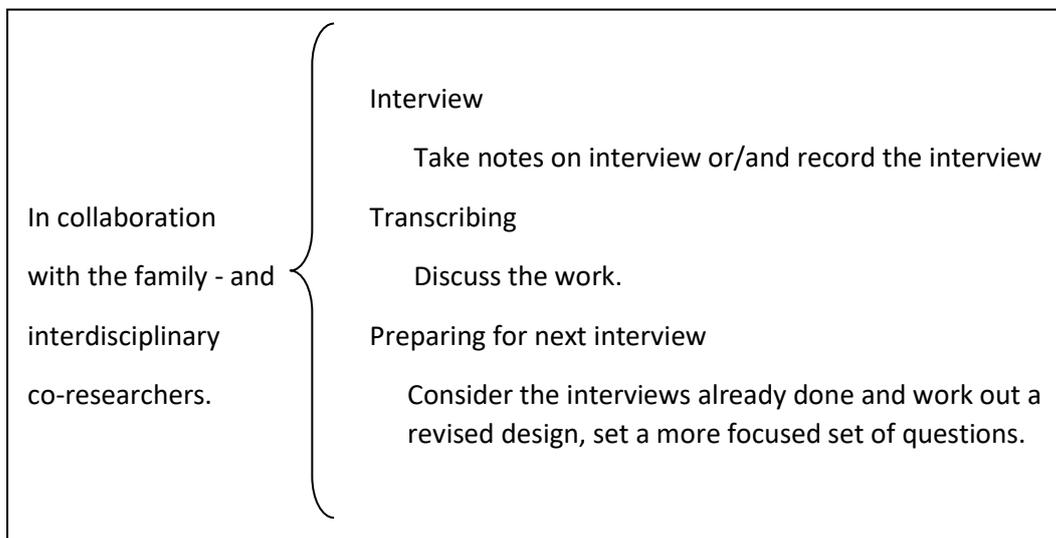
### 1.4.3.1    The voices of interpretation

I listened to all my co-researchers before making my own interpretation. I then asked the interviewees to reflect on what was said, at the end of each interview. I asked myself throughout the research if I truly heard their voices, or only mine? I will ask my interdisciplinary co-researchers to reflect on my transcripts and to comment on them. I will remind myself to not only look for interpretations but for meaning given by my co-researchers. This will put an emphasis on me to not only collect narratives and just reflecting on it, but rather working together with the co-researchers to find

meaning to make a new story. It will be the telling and retelling stories, and about exploring, interpreting, discovering – all in terms of collecting meaning.

## 1.4.3.2    My Co-researchers' interpretations

In looking back and reflecting, I also helped my co-researchers with rewriting their experiences and stories. I asked for feedback and reflected at the end of each interview with my co-researchers about their narratives. I will also use interdisciplinary co-researcher's reflection and self-reflection in my research. I will think and write about, what I did, what I do, and what I can do better. I will make use of recurring feedback loops. This means that I will be constantly in the process of interviewing, collecting narratives and reflecting and (re)writing. This is a dynamic process of collecting new meanings out of the narratives that my co-researchers bring forth.

Creating new meanings:
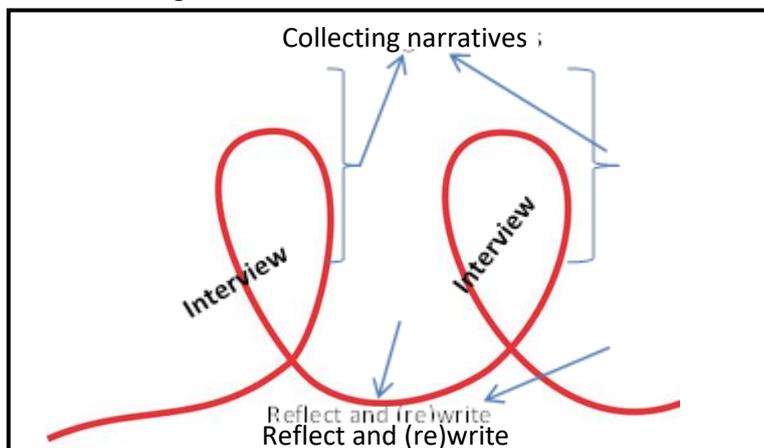
### 1.4.3.3    Listening to the voices in the wilderness: Traditions of interpretations

Every context has their own theories, discourses and traditions and every community creates their own knowledge. Especially listening to families from different religious backgrounds, I know that there are different traditions of interpretations. This is like listening to different voices in the wilderness (a different context from my own) and listening to what they want to say.

According to Müller (2004: 302-303) there are specific discourses/ traditions in certain communities that inform perceptions and behaviour. I will thus have to identify these discourses and try to gain some understanding of how current behaviour is influenced by such discourses, by listening to my co-researchers, but also by listening to the literature, the art, and the culture of the context. I tried to find the discourses in the narratives that reverts back to the family's narratives, about religion and discipline. I will look at the perceptions that come forth in the narratives that can lead to a unique outcome.

I will also listen to how the interdisciplinary co-researchers are reacting to the discourses that I discuss further. I will start the conversations with the context of my research and ask for an in-context experiences. Research is like looking through a magnifying glass at narratives, but on the other hand, I also would like to give the interdisciplinary co-researchers the space to thicken their own stories and to let it grow dynamically into more meaningful reflection on the context of my research. I will trust my co-researchers to decide what and when to share their narratives. The emphasis will be on the depth of the stories and not the quantity. How good the story is told, will be more important than how many stories I have.

I will listen to my co-researchers. I will listen for things that they describe as meaningful and important. These would be the discourses and traditions I will focus

on. I will also look out for these discourses and traditions in other narratives that have been shared by my co-researchers and the literature. Together with my interdisciplinary co-researchers we will deconstruct these discourses and traditions by listening and reflecting on the different stories.

At this point of the research, I will also ask my interdisciplinary co-researchers and the literature for reflection on the discourses.  The literature will bring forth theories that are like scholars in the literacy, that I will also consider as co-researchers. The discourses and traditions that will be collected will be enough at the point where the collection stops adding insight and the researchers are at risk of being inundated.

### 1.4.3.4.       Listening to how the in-context experiences are voiced by tradition

I will analyse the discourses that I discovered in the families' narratives. With that I will also revisit the narratives that I already have and look for other narratives in the literature, art, and other cultural phenomena (Müller 2004: 303). I will also look at and ask about the traditions of faith and how it impacts the lives of the families. I will reflect on this relationship between the context and the tradition, especially as I will be looking at the traditions of religion and how it impacts parents disciplining children.

### 1.4.4. The voice of God/god(s)

### 1.4.4.1       The language of God/god(s)

One of my focal points in the context of my research is religion. I will therefore listen to what the co-researchers (families and interdisciplinary co-researchers) tell me about their religion and about how they perceive their (G)god. I will never force my

co-researchers to share something of their religion that they do not want to. I would rather trust them to share what they think is important with regard to the context of my research.

This can only be done if there is a safe place that is being socially constructed by everyone where we can talk with respect and without criticism about our religions. The place where the new meaning will be shaped will be the place where the transversal rationality takes place. This will be a place where people agree to agree and to disagree.

### 1.4.4.2 "God-talk"

I will start out from the "not knowing" position and ask my co-researchers to help me to understand what they perceive as their religion. I will not try to define my co-researcher's religion but will ask them to use their own narratives to voice it. I will be honest with my co-researchers about my own religion. I will do this through putting a resume about myself on the information and consent letter that I will hand out to them before I start with the research. I will also be open to be asked questions by my co-researchers about my experiences with God.

In my interviews, discussions, and reflection with all my co-researchers, I will try to truly hear what they say and to understand what they are trying to tell me. I think it will be difficult to impose my own religious language on the family's narratives, because we will be talking about our different religions. The similarities between the religions will make it easier to impose my religious language, but that is where it will be important to ask my co-researchers to reflect constantly on what I hear in their narratives.

Together in a socially constructed way I will ask my co-researchers to reflect with me on religion and our experiences of (G)god. I know that I need to be very open and

61

clear about religious matters in my research. There will be no place in the research for criticism, only for reflection; otherwise I will miss my point. Because I will have open and honest questions about people's religion, I need to be honest and open about other people's religious stories and respect the differences. Without respect and a safe open space to speak with integrity about our parenting narratives in a religious context, I will not be able to do this research.

## 1.4.5. Thickening the narratives through the interdisciplinary voice

### 1.4.5.1.    The place of the interdisciplinary voice

I will also make use of the interdisciplinary process together with my co-researchers.
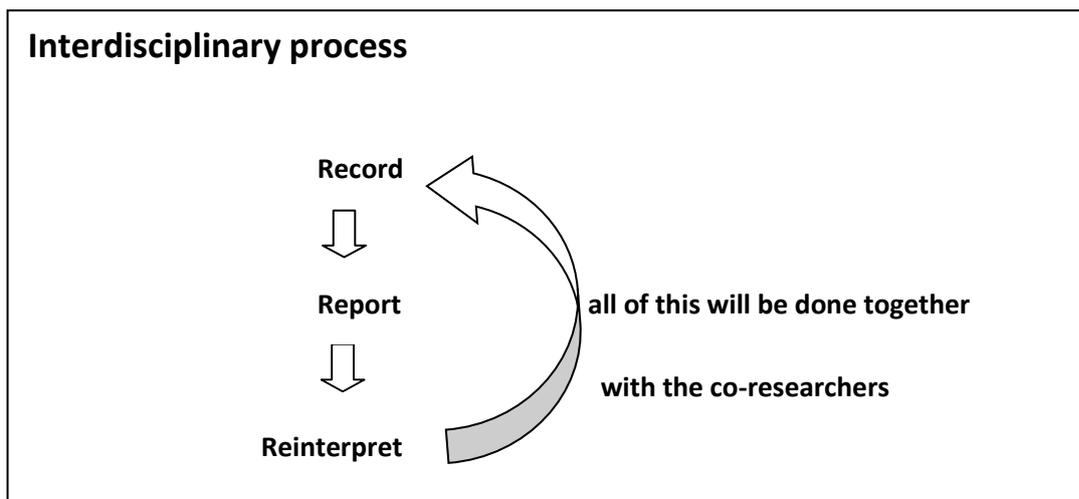


#### 1.4.5.1.1.    Interdisciplinary in Practical Theology

Osmer describes the correlational approach as that it 'views theology as standing in a mutually influential relationship to the intellectual resources and/or emancipator praxis of culture' (Osmer 2006:339). Second, he states that van Deusen Hunsinger's (1995) transformational approach requires the practical theologian to allow the social

sciences to have their say about social reality while retaining the distinctive language and disciplinary perspective of theology. For him this approach, integration between theology and social science occurs in the person of the practical theologian, not at a systematic disciplinary level, as different fields of social science bear on problems or situations. Last, he describes, Van Huyssteen's transversal approach also argues that interdisciplinary must remain person and perspective specific in light of the pluralism of today. Instead of generalised statements about the relationship between theology and social science, concrete accounts of their relationship and interactions are preferred (Osmer 2006:338-341).

I agree with Osmer and van Huysteen's transversal approach. This will mean that my interdisciplinary work must remain person and perspective specific in the light of the pluralism of today. There will not be generalised statements about the relationship between theology and social sciences, but there will be concrete accounts of relationships and interactions.

According to Root (2014:71), Practical Theology conceptualised the interdisciplinary task as one of bringing Practical Theology into dialogue with fields that are not theological. I agree with him that we must begin to broaden our understanding of interdisciplinary to include Practical Theology's dialogue with biblical studies, Philosophical ethics, Christian ethics, church history and systematic theology. I see interdisciplinary as including the dialogue between practical theological disciplines like Dogmatics, youth ministry, Old and New Testament studies and ethics.

I want to include this dialogue to broaden my understanding of interdisciplinary and to address the complexity of the conversation across theological fields in the same way as I would do with the social and natural sciences.

Root (2014:73) notes that it is also important that we should do our best to make sure that this is a genuine dialogue. In its constructive theological work, Practical Theology has something important and unique to offer theological disciplines. Therefore, it needs to be a dialogue and not a one-way monologue, with other disciplines. To be true to the postfoundational way of doing research, I will ask my interdisciplinary co-researchers to help me discover the themes to investigate further. This will be done in terms of the context of my research – and the themes that we investigate further must help to give meaning to the concepts of religion and discipline, and become the voices of the parents and children.

Interdisciplinary work is difficult and that is why I must trust my interdisciplinary co-researchers to provide narratives that have developed from the families' narratives, to the table, so that we can discover and explore new and unique themes. The themes will then open the data to new interpretation and alternative meanings. Leavy (2009: ix) argues that arts-based approaches to research offers researchers new pathways for creating knowledge within and across disciplinary boundaries from a range of epistemological and theoretical perspectives. (Leavy, P 2009: ix)

## 1.4.5.2. Listening to the voice of the scientific community

The postfoundational notion, points beyond the local community or culture towards interdisciplinary conversation (Van Huyssteen 1997:4). This happens through transversal rationality. Through our knowledge about certain aspects, me, and my interdisciplinary co-researchers, create a shared meaning about the context of the research. This would be done through Social Constructionism. There can thus be widely different points of reference between me and my co-researchers. But through the reflection on the families' narratives, we socially construct a space where transversal rationality opens our eyes to new understandings.

I will invite co-researchers from different fields of study to reflect, comment and analyse the stories of my co-researchers. Through this they can also recommend certain literature for executing further research on the discourses and traditions.

### 1.4.5.3. To find a relevant voice from other fields

To accomplish this, I will start at the context and ask for reflection on the narratives, and reflection on the context. I will not just keep the material for myself but ask the interdisciplinary co-researchers to reflect on the relevant material that I received from other fields. I will also reflect on the literature that I can find, on the themes. I will also measure my own understanding against those of my co-researchers (families and interdisciplinary co-researchers).

### 1.4.5.4. Balancing theological and non-theological voices

Because of my focus on different religions I must also look at non-theological evidence. I would stand firm on my theology, but also have the respect and openness for my co-researchers to share their stories from different religious backgrounds. I would listen carefully to the different stories and make it part of the one research document. Müller argues that this interdisciplinary movement is part of Practical Theology. It includes the conversation with other theological disciplines and with other relevant disciplines. The researcher must listen carefully to the various stories of understanding and make an honest effort to integrate them all into one. (Müller 2005:11)

### 1.4.6 Uniting the voices into a new narrative

I would do this through group work, to also get the accumulated insights of my co-researchers. In the group work sessions, I will focus on the deconstruction and

reconstruction of the discourses and themes. I will see to it that I work together with my co-researchers in finding a new meaning and unique outcomes. For me one of the most important things will be to give the stories enough time and space to develop into a new and open story, with a new understanding that points beyond the local community (Müller 2004:304). Here patience is needed. Not too much, and not too little. You cannot force understanding, because then you will not find the depth and richness to be found in postfoundational narrative research. You can also not leave the narratives out in the cold, because they are dynamic and important to those who own them. That is why I believe that in the time that you give the narratives, themes and discourses to develop into new understanding, you must continue analysing and interpreting their meaning in a social constructionist way. Through the analysing and interpreting the story thickens.

## 1.5. In Conclusion

I did my research in Practical Theology, in a Postfoundational mind-set, using Social Constructionism to co-construct new and alternative narratives through the transversal rationality between me and my co-researchers on the topic of parents disciplining children.

I chose to do this research qualitatively in a narrative way, with the seven movements as guideline. My focus are on Pastoral family therapy looking into the ways that parent's religion influences the way they discipline their children. I looked at different religions to enlighten the research. I interacted with great respect towards all people with religious affiliations, I came across. Because of the fact that I am doing this research in Practical Theology and Pastoral family therapy, I chose to focus more on my own religion, the Christian religion.

In chapter 2 I will give a broad description on what writers of the Christian religion wrote on parenting and especially on how it influences the way children are disciplined.

The research I did on the Christian way of thinking about parenting and child discipline, after I gathered the research narratives from my co-researchers. This is then part of the literature study I did on the topic. I chose to put most of my literature studies in front of the descriptions of the research narratives, so that it can enlighten the narratives. The themes I explore in my literature study, and thus in the following chapters (chapter 2-5) came out of the narratives of my co-researchers, that I studied further.

## CHAPTER 2. BACKGROUND: CHRISTIAN RELIGION

I decided to write this chapter separately from the rest of the backgrounds on religion and discipline, because I am doing this thesis in Practical Theology in Pastoral family therapy, which focuses on the Christian religion and because this is about my own religion.

For us to understand the Christian way of thinking about our topic it is important to look further into the way the Bible and also theologians see children and families.

We will therefore next be looking into what the Bible (especially the New Testament) tells us about children and families, and then look at the different ways that theologians have interpreted children and families in their theology.

The theologians I chose are ten theologians that all have had an important impact on my own thoughts of children and families in theology. Most of these theologians have already passed away, but the last three still live today. I will end this chapter by describing my own theological thoughts on children and families.

### 2.1. A Biblical perspective on discipline, children and parenting

We read in the scripture, that God disciplines us because He loves us. The Bible says that this discipline is for our own good. Similarly, Barna (2007: 135) said that if we love our children, one of the most important things we do is discipline them. There are not many Bible verses about parenting and child discipline. Barna (2007: 129) says that if you have sought scriptural guidance on this topic, you might have been surprised to discover how little instruction God gives us in this regard.

The reason he is giving for this is first, that if God can get adults to adopt appropriate ideals, then they will be likely to incorporate those standards into their parenting efforts. I agree, because few parents would willingly teach their children morals, beliefs, and behaviour that they did not personally embrace these as a legitimate foundation for life.

The second, reason he gives is about the cultural context of the early church. It was one in which adults were the people focused upon. During those times it was understood that parents took the task of raising children seriously. Parents were expected to turn to God and their spiritual communities to gain the insights and assistance they needed to raise their children as devotees to God (Barna 2007: 130).

Barna (2007: 130) further argues that the absence of specific methods of training children is consistent with the Bible. I side with him, in that while the Bible is a "guidebook for life", it does not tell us specifically how to do most things, only those matters that are significant and those outcomes that honour God. Barna (2007: 130) ends, by claiming that he thinks that to make life more exciting and challenging, God gives us room to develop creative biblical solutions to the problems we face.

I agree with Barna (2007: 131) that the Bible provides a simple and clear notion of what the family ought to do to raise godly children. It tells us that parents should provide the primary spiritual training of children. They may receive encouragement, training and resources through the church, but parents are intended by God to be the primary provider of spiritual direction and care (see Deut.1:31; 6:4-9; 11:18-21; 21:18-19; Ps. 78:5-8; Luke 8:39; Eph.6:4). (Barna 2003: 82)

Where the Bible meets our topic of discipline, is at the part of the parental responsibility, to introduce appropriate discipline into children's lives as well as parameters in the other parts of life (see Prov. 3:11-12; 13:1,24; 19:18; 23:12; 29:15-

69

17;21; Col.3:20). It is also important to know that parents are called to introduce their children to appropriate behaviour, as modelled by the church and Bible (see Num. 18:11; Deut. 15:20; 16:11) (Barna 2003: 82).

## 2.2. Browning's thoughts on families and children

According to Browning (Browning Eds 1997: 5), families are not just passive realities; they shape their environments even as they are shaped by them. For them, the debate over the crisis of the American family is divided as much by different understandings of the issue as by alternative visions of the solutions (Browning Eds 1997: 50). Accordingly, diagnosing the problem is as important as prescribing a remedy. Four competing social science explanations of today's family crisis are being advanced in their debate:

1. Our changing culture values.

2. Changing economic patterns.

3. Psychological causes.

4. Patriarchy (declining yet still visible).

### 2.2.1. The importance and limits of the intact family (Kin altruism)

Browning (Browning Eds 1997: 71), developed the live ethic of equal regard in close relation to the concept of kin altruism - the preferential treatment people tend to give to their biological related family members.

Pope (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:59) points out here that Browning's thoughts on the socio-biological theory of "kin altruism" holds that organisms can be expected to prefer to aid other organisms to the extent to which they share genetic similarity.

70

Browning accepts this basic outline of "kin altruism" without reducing every component of the family life to the logic of natural selection. He clearly understands that evolution has shaped our emotional capacities and needs. But this was not in a way that makes culture and personality of little significance. This is because both culture and biology can make the family a place of imbalanced power and unhealthy competition. The positive benefits that can come from kin altruism to the family and also the potential for harm and injustice, are recognised by Browning as a descriptive matter.

Pope (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007: 60) makes it clear that Browning's normative framework takes this descriptive framework into account but it is not derived from it. Accordingly, the family moves in the direction of increased mutuality of friendship and is always to be based with respect for every person within the family and with justice that promotes the well-being of each as an individual. He also argues that justice binds relations outside the family providing a hedge against unjust favouritism.

For them this helps, to show why the family intact, biologically related parents should be given *prima facie* priority in our cultural, ethical, and educational scale of values. They claim that the fundamental family issue of our time may be how to retain and honour the intact family without turning it into an object of idolatry and without retaining the inequalities of power, status, and privilege ensconced in its earlier forms.

## 2.2.2. Reciprocal altruism and marriage

Pope (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007: 60) calls on Robert Trivers' theory of "reciprocal altruism" to explain this, for it holds that biologically unrelated individuals will trade beneficial acts under certain circumstances. Pope (Witte, Green, Wheeler

eds. 2007:61) illustrate the threefold rule of "reciprocal altruism" as those who cooperate are rewarded with continued assistance, those who refuse to cooperate ("grudgers") are denied assistance, and those who defect ("cheats") are punished.

Browning is critical of the underlying socio-biological model of the human person as essentially self-interested, but he is also appreciative of the fact that reciprocity is a fundamental feature of human social life. Reciprocity is fundamental to marriage.

According to Pope (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:61), Browning interprets the normative significance of our evolved inclination toward reciprocal altruism in the context of the "equal regard marriage." Therefore, the moral ideal of the "equal regard marriage" lies in deep interpersonal companionship and mutual love. This is an ideal captured most profoundly in Christian and other religious symbolism.

Browning, in Pope's words (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:62) appreciates Aquina's realism about human emotions, while he also rejects his Aristotelian theological biology, the "physicalist" aspects of his natural law theory, and his patriarchal view of women.

This understanding of practical theological ethics provides for Pope (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:67), a rationale for inter-religious as well as interdisciplinary approach to families. In marriage and modernisation Browning argues that Christian churches and other religious communities ought to participate in the ongoing interdisciplinary discussion about family. They must reflect carefully about what might constitute a helpful and plausible normative understanding of the family.

### 2.2.3. Families and the kingdom of God.

The word family comes from the Latin *familia* and signifies, "all persons subject to the control of one man, whether relations, freedmen or slaves, according to Browning (Browning Eds 1997: 132). The Greek word used to describe household family, or *oikos*, has a very similar meaning. In Hebrew, the word most frequently used for family is *mispaha*. This has the meaning of the intermediate clan standing between tribe (*sebet, matteh*) and household (*bayit bet at*) (Browning Eds 1997: 133). We must realise that the family that Jesus sometimes criticised was not the modern, nuclear, companionate family, differentiated in varying degrees from the extended family.

Browning describes the family in Jesus' time as a patriarchal clan and kindship structure that functioned as a religio-political unit that valued the blood relatedness of both nuclear and extended family, and was generally in tension with other clans, the state and the national cult.

Therefore, it is stated that the modern nuclear family looks weak, puny, and extremely fragile in comparison to the clan structures and households of the ancient world. Although it can sometimes have ideological control over the people similar to that which Jesus criticised.

### 2.2.4. The motifs that can inform a Practical Theology

First, Browning (Browning Eds 1997: 153) finds that Christian love (*agape*), even as applied to families, should point in the direction of love as mutuality or with equal regard. Furthermore, equal regard according to them, must be achieved inter-subjectively. Second, for Browning, (Browning Eds 1997: 154) self-sacrifice or self-giving is an important part of love as mutually or with equal regard. One thing not to forget is that it is subordinate to and supportive of love with equal regard. The third

73

point he makes, is that the concrete meaning of love with equal regard must be determined in the concreteness of specific contexts within the human life cycle. Fourth, he shows that families as important as they are, are subordinate to the larger common good, whether this is the idea of the kingdom or reign of God or the common good of the civil society. He still clearly states that families are important to the righteousness and goodness of the reign of God.

## 2.2.5. A Practical Theology of families

### 2.2.5.1. An ideal of the family and Christian Irony

Browning portrays that the genius of authentic Christianity has been its capacity to project commanding ideals and point toward perfection, on the other side he admits that sin leads us to fall short of that which is expected (Browning Eds 1997: 271). Even though we are not saved by the degree of health in our families, Christians should definitely be interested in the health of families as an extremely important proximate good.

### 2.2.5.2. Mutuality and Narrative identity

MacIntyre and Paul Ricoeur have argued that the self is self because, it can tell a story about itself, that is, it can locate itself in a narrative history (Browning Eds 1997: 282). According to MacIntyre, the idea of selfhood, requires two concepts. First, "My selfhood- my identity – is a synthesis of what I and others take to be the story (or stories) which give my life coherence." The second, "I am the subject of narrative history that is my own and no one else's."

Therefore, narrative selfhood is a combination of the stories we are born into and the stories we create as we live our lives. To love the other as oneself, means to regard

74

and empathise with the narrative identity of the other just as one regards and empathises with one's own. The theological affirmation that personhood reflects the goodness of God means that a child of God is constitutive of one's story in and through all particular narrative identities.

For Browning (Browning Eds 1997: 271), this emphasises that parents have to exercise authority with their young. They must trust that their values, their view of life, and their commitments are worthy grounds for the guidance of their children.

This sense of authority is best anchored when it reflects not only the convictions of a father and mother but those of a community of interpretation to which the parents belong. Religious communities are communities of interpretation, at their best, which also model love and care. Therefore, these sacred texts and traditions of these religious communities should be constantly interpreted and reinterpreted in the light of contemporary challenges. Browning (Browning Eds 1997: 271) makes it clear that parental authority is best established when it comes out of such communities of interpretation from which parents can learn and which they use to model their convictions.

Browning's (Browning Eds 1997: 308-309) model, grounds parental authority in a dialogue between parents' own covenant with God and the church's covenant. This assumes God has a covenant with both the church and the family. Browning makes a powerful statement in saying that parental authority should therefore evolve from a dialogue with a church that itself is dedicated to an appreciative yet critical inquiry into its traditions.

## 2.3 The place of evolutionary Psychology in a Practical theological ethics of family

### 2.3.1. Evolutionary Psychology and its ambiguities

According to Stephen J Pope (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:56), the phrase "evolutionary psychology" refers to a school of thought developed in the 1980's. It has the ambition of explaining the deepest roots of human behaviour in evolutionary terms. It does this primarily through an understanding of the functioning of "evolved psychological mechanisms." Evolutionary psychology, could further be described as the next generation of the evolutionary approach to human nature, constructed a theory of evolved "mental modules", acknowledging the power of culture on social arrangements and behaviour, and avoiding extensive discussion of morality and politics (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:57).

### 2.3.2. Evolutionary Psychology and Practical theological ethics.

Pope states that (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:58), Don Browning's most important contribution to the discipline of theological ethics consists in his ability to use evolutionary sources without accepting the unwarranted reductionisms with which they are often, but unnecessarily, joined.

### 2.8.5.3. A description of Browning's "practical theological ethics".

Browning, in Pope's words (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:58) believes that we need to think about how to live in the world as members of vital religious communities that are instructed by rich traditions. At the same time we need to be open to creative movements and insights emerging from contemporary experience and culture. Practical theological ethics is therefore ultimately judged by its effectiveness and wisdom in shaping our conduct and policies.

Browning adopted the image of "levels" to describe the central concerns of practical theological ethics.

The first level is the visionary level. It is expressed in terms of narratives and symbols, such as the symbol of the Garden of Eden or the narrative of the passion story. The second level is the level of moral principles that deals with ethical principles, rules and obligations such as the "love commandments." Browning's third level pertains to fundamental human tendencies and needs, to what is sometimes and controversially called "human nature." The fourth level deals with the social and historical circumstances in which we are immersed. It can be things such as economic patterns. Finally, the fifth level, is where the concrete rules and roles in social practices and social institutions are applied through casuistic reflection within the context of concrete situations.

For Browning (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:58), practical theological ethics must consider all five of these levels and give proper weight to each.

### 2.8.5.3. Childhood studies, hermeneutics and theological ethics

In relating this work to the field of childhood studies, John Wall (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:95) builds on Browning's achievements but also takes them to new areas. For him, Christian ethics in particular has a long history of this kind of child centred self-reflection. It is such as Jesus' placing a child "in the midst" of his disciples to explain the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 18:1-5). Also like the early church fathers using childhood to describe the ideal human image of God. Accordingly, also Augustine's beginning his ground breaking *confessions* through his original sin in infancy and youth, and Friedrich Schleiermacher's exploration of the "feeling of absolute dependence" in relation to the notion of the child as a gift.

The difference for Wall today is both a changed situation for children around the world and the possibility for greater empirical sophistication about the nature of childhood and its relations to family and society. Therefore, he calls on a new ethical focus that is needed regarding childhood today (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:97). This is evident from a child's uniquely marginalised status under contemporary conditions of pluralism, individualism and globalisation.

## 2.8.5.4. The contemporary field of childhood studies.

Although the term "childhood studies" is relatively new, Wall (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:101) states that the interdisciplinary field of study that is described has deep roots in the twentieth- century academy and continues to evolve.

## 2.8.5.5. Emerging Theological ethics of childhood

The earliest work on Christian ethics of childhood goes back to the 1980's in what Wall (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:102) calls "communitarian" approaches. He argues that children fare poorly in the contemporary world. This is primarily because they lack strong families, traditions, and social narratives under which to develop civilised and meaningful social values. Accordingly, he sees that child rearing itself places children under the disciplinary tutelage of normatively grounded adults, particularly parents. The strength of his model is that it manages to break through the virtual silence of Christian ethical voices on childhood in the late twentieth century. This is done by demonstrating the importance of substantive child rearing aims and communities.

For Wall (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:103) this arguably opposes much of the very Christian tradition on which it stands, which has frequently learned a great deal from the scientific observations of time. This includes such as Thomas Aquinas's use of a medieval stage developmental theory and Aristotelian socio-biology. This

approach can also be seen to underestimate the impact on children's lives of larger economic, political and global conditions.

He also express that it is not clear from this perspective how (indeed if) one would views children as having their own moral agency or voice.

## 2.8.5.6. A Postfoundational hermeneutical circle of childhood studies.

Wall (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:107) claims that Schleiermacher is the founder of both modern theology of childhood and modern hermeneutics. For Schleiermacher, childhood, serves as a divine gift from God to the world that epitomises this subjective hermeneutical mystery. Therefore, childhood becomes a vital hermeneutical concern in part because it embodies the kind of sacred human inwardness that hermeneutical understanding seeks to approach.

Wall (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:108) points to Browning, as he has shown, Paul Ricoeur develops a complex hermeneutical theory. Ricoeur never addresses the study of childhood, but his hermeneutical circle involving "distanciation" clearly proves significantly more useful for childhood studies. For Wall this is because, in Ricoeur's view, the historically effected interpretation of human being in the world cannot be carried out apart from a larger circular dialogue with the empirical test of actual experience.

For him, such a critical hermeneutical circle, has two advantages for childhood studies (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:109). The first advantage includes both "child" and "adult" perspectives as sources of meaning: pre-reflective historical horizons that shape adult's and children's worlds alike, and reflective textual and scientific modes of reflection that are more distinctively adult and toward which children only gradually develop. The second advantage is that a critical hermeneutical circle of this kind shows, methodologically, how children may be

studied as participants in their shared social worlds and distinctive objects of empirical inquiry.

These two sides of the hermeneutical circle can operate as one for adults: we belong to a moral history that we can also interpret critically for ourselves. On the other side, for children this relation or tension of belonging and reflection is relatively underdeveloped. Wall (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:110) states that children perhaps more than any other group are prone to having their "saying" capabilities overshadowed by what is "said" by others about them. He therefore calls children the most easily marginalised segment of society. This is because of the fact that the study of children is of necessity originated and conducted not by children themselves but by adults.

Wall (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:111) have an interesting argument where he states that the underlying problem is not how to make children equal research participants. The problem is how to interpret the meaning and status of children in their "otherness" when children more than any other group cannot fully interpret their own otherness for themselves.

The hermeneutical circle of childhood studies should therefore include what Wall would call a de-centring or asymmetrical moment. He argues that it should, perhaps, be a hermeneutical ellipse orbiting not one point but two: the interpreter and the interpreter's irreducible other. The need for an asymmetrical hermeneutical circle is especially evident in the problem of interpreting childhood in society. Wall makes the statement, "children's experiences must be allowed to disrupt and constantly open up even the interpretive assumptions adults bring to them." (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:111).

### 2.8.5.7. The Theological ethics of childhood

From this perspective the theological ethicists, should seek to engage in the field of childhood studies through the fullest possible dimensions of such a hermeneutical circle.

### 2.8.5.8. Family faith formation at the Nexus of Practical Theology and Christian Education.

Research indicates that many parents today look to congregations for help in raising their children, especially with regard to the area of morality. They believe that their children face issues that are more difficult and, potentially, deadlier than they faced while growing up. Parents also believe they receive less support from other institutions in raising good children than did their own parents. Congregations that forge a strong partnership with families in this task are responding to a felt need of parents with children and youth.

I have no doubt that congregational leaders, particularly pastors and Christian educators, are one of the keys to forging a stronger partnership between congregations and families.

### 2.9. Jack O. Balswick and Judith K.Balswick's Christian perspective on the contemporary home

### 2.9.1. The Family

For Balswick & Balswick (1989: 19) the relationship between God and the children of Israel has proven to be the most fruitful model for the development of a theology of the family.

They call on Myron Chartier (1978) who has suggested that parenting of children will be characterised by loving, caring, responding, disciplining, giving, respecting, knowing, and forgiving, if God's actions toward Israel are taken as a model for parenting (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 20). An important focus in developing a theology of the family is therefore the establishment of a covenant between God and the nation of Israel.

In applying the concept of covenant, they argue in favour of a covenant love that provides the basis for family. Consequently, "family means much more than consanguinity, where blood ties provide the only basis for belonging. They describe that the family is where you are loved unconditionally, and where you can count on that love even when you least deserve it" (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 20).

For Balswick & Balswick (1989: 20) the concept of covenant is the fundamental and essential element developing a theology of the family.

**2.9.2. Elements in a theology of family relationships.**

Balswick & Balswick (1989: 21) propose a theology of family relationships which involves four sequential, but not linear, stages: covenant, grace, empowering and intimacy. They further suggest that family relationships will either be dynamic and maturing, or stagnant and dying.

The four elements of growth in a family relationship are considered by Balswick & Balswick (1989: 22) as separate sequential stages for analytic purposes only.

Consequently, in practice, covenant, grace, empowering and intimacy often overlap in family life.

### 2.9.3. Covenant: To love and be loved

The central point of covenant for Balswick & Balswick (1989: 23) is that it is an unconditional commitment which is demonstrated supremely by God in the role of parent. They refer to the first biblical mention of a covenant that is found in Genesis 6:18; where God says to Noah, "I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark" (NIV).

The second biblical reference that they refer to, in which God makes a covenant is Genesis 15:18, where a covenant is extended to Abraham.

They argue that the establishment of the covenant was based entirely on God's action. God's offer was in no way contractual. This means that it was not based upon either Noah's or Abraham's keeping his end of the bargain. God's commitment was there. It did not rely on whether it was accepted or not. Second, they argue that God did desire and even commanded a response from both Noah and Abraham. This covenant which God offered was to remain "an everlasting covenant". It was regardless of what Noah or Abraham did. Third, they argue, while the covenant itself was not conditional, the potential benefits or blessings it provided, were.

God gave both Noah and Abraham an option, in the covenantal offer. They had to agree to fulfil their end of the bargain, if they were to benefit from the offer. Their receiving any of the blessings or the fulfilment of the covenant was conditional, even though the continuation of God's love was not conditioned upon the nature of Noah's or Abraham's response. Here Balswick & Balswick (1989: 24) states clearly that there is the offer and the responsibility to react favourably in order to receive the blessing of the covenant.

83

Fourth, Balswick & Balswick (1989: 24) noticed in the passage cited that God extended the covenant to more than just these two individuals. Their families were included in the covenant.

### 2.9.4. Grace: To forgive and be forgiven

They (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 26) voiced that it is especially difficult to distinguish between covenant and grace. They illustrate this by saying that by its very nature, covenant is grace. Grace means unmerited favour.

They make a very important statement, by saying that family relationships as designed by God are meant to be lived out in an atmosphere of law, while family life based upon covenant leads to an atmosphere of grace and forgiveness. We can forgive others as we have been forgiven. Moreover, the love of God within makes it possible for us to love others in the same unconditional way.

### 2.9.5. Empowering: To serve and be served

The most common and conventional definition of power according to Balswick & Balswick (1989: 27) is the ability to influence another person. For them, (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 28) empowering is a biblical model for the use of power which is completely contrary to the common use of power in the family or in society at large. They define empowering as the attempt to establish power in another person.

Empowering is the action of God in people's lives, if covenant is the love commitment and grace is the underlying atmosphere of acceptance. The power given by Jesus is power of a personal order. This is a power which is mediated to the powerless. God gives us the ability to become children of God, in our sinful and

powerless condition. For Balswick & Balswick (1989: 28) this is the supreme example of human empowering.

They (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 29) argue that Jesus rejected the use of power to control others, and instead affirmed the use of power to serve others, to lift up the fallen, to forgive the guilty, to encourage responsibility and maturity in the weak, and to enable the unable. They describe empowering as life in action. For it is the mark of Jesus Christ which family members need to emulate the most.

This empowering in relationships is thus born out of the covenant and grace offered in God and Christ. The Spirit of God indwells believers and therefore enables them to enable others. It is possible for them to serve and give to each other in unlimited ways, in extraordinary ways, as this spiritual growth goes on in family members. Family members will build each other up using their areas of strength. Balswick & Balswick (1989: 29) calls this the essence of 1 Corinthians 8:1 "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up." (NIV)

Balswick & Balswick (1989: 30) argue further that God empowers us, by the Holy Spirit, to empower others. They describe that the biblical ideal for all our relationships, then, is that we be Christian realists with regard to our own sinfulness and proneness to fail, but Christians are optimistic in the light of the grace and power available to live according to God's intended purposes.

**2.9.6. Intimacy: To know and be known.**

Shame is born out of the fear of being known intimately according to Balswick & Balswick (1989: 31). And therefore, when shame is present, family members put on masks and begin to play deceptive roles before each other.

By contrast, they illustrate that when we examine how Genesis describes the nature of the prefill human family (which is the only social institution that belongs to the order of creation), we find an emphasis on intimacy- on the knowing of the other. This leads to members of a family based on a covenant and lives in an atmosphere of grace and empowerment will be able to communicate and express themselves to those they intimately know and are known by. This is then what it means to be a servant. It is to empty oneself as Jesus did when he took the form of a servant.

The unconditional covenant love therefore is the cornerstone for family communication and honest sharing without the threat of rejection. The security that is established will lead to deeper levels of intimacy, as family members offer their love unconditionally to each other.

For Balswick & Balswick (1989: 33) it is desirable that family members verbally communicate feelings of love and affection toward one another, as well as ask for forgiveness and forgive each other. They illustrate that this maturing of relationships eventually enables family members to reach out to persons beyond the boundaries of the family.

**2.9.7. A biblical model of parenting**

Balswick & Balswick (1989: 101) believe that a biblical model of parenting can be derived from the scriptural depiction of God as a parent. They argue that taken as a whole the biblical emphasis is clearly on the love and grace which God so freely gives. For them this unconditional love is not free of expectations and demands - God's love includes disciplinary action for our good.

They further illustrate that in an ideal situation, the four elements of the parent/child relationships are in a continual process of maturing: intimacy leads to deeper a covenant love, which enhances the atmosphere of grace, which strengthens the

86

empowering process, which leads to deepened intimacy and so on. For them empowering is obviously the central element in their biblical model of parenting.

### 2.9.7.1. Jesus came to empower others to have abundant life.

Balswick & Balswick (1989: 103) argues that Jesus refined power by His teaching and by His action in relating to others as a servant. They state that He rejected the use of power to serve others, to lift up the fallen, to forgive the guilty, to encourage responsibility and maturity in the weak and to enable the unable. Therefore, they say that parents who are empowered will help their children to become competent and capable persons who will be active and intentionally engaged in various pursuits – teaching, guiding, caring and modelling – which will equip their children to become confident individuals able to relate to others.

### 2.9.7.2. Discipline

Balswick & Balswick (1989: 128) points out that the Bible uses words like "love" and "honour" to describe the ideal parent/child relationship. For them one very helpful method of discipline is the concept of natural and logical consequences which is espoused by Rudolf Dreikus (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 129). Because God dealt with the children of Israel in a similar way, this method is familiar to us. They illustrate that God's people had to face the consequences of their choices and behaviour.

Therefore, the blessing of the covenant was conditional in that they reaped what they sowed (although his gift of love and grace was unconditional).

God has laid down laws for us, such as the Ten Commandments. If we abide by these laws, we will find meaning in our lives, since God has our best interests in mind. But, there are consequences to be reckoned with when we disobey.

Children learn the best through the consequences of their behaviour, in the same way, if they realise that the rules are a product of their parent's love and concern for them. Therefore, children should be given a limit which is reasonable and told that a specific consequence will be applied whenever they go beyond that limit.

Arguably the consequence is logically related to the misbehaviour and carried out in a clear and pleasant manner.

There is then no need for a verbal reprimand, which might well lead parent and child into a useless power struggle and would also side track attention from the child's responsibility for the consequence.

For Balswick & Balswick (1989:130) the main point is that the parent does not need to scold or punish, but to see to it that the child becomes fully aware of the consequences of the behaviour. This will allow the child to accept limits and eventually to achieve self-discipline.

A crucial point is obviously how the consequences are set up and carried out. Consequences should, off course, be appropriate to the child's age and maturity.

The mode of discipline Balswick & Balswick (1989: 131) have suggested entails personal empowering. The goal is mutual empowering between all family members. Naturally, the onus of responsibility will initially be on the parents. For them these principles of the empowering process have to do with serving and being served.

They operate most successfully in an atmosphere of acceptance and forgiving grace, resulting in intimacy through deep knowledge of and communication with one another and they are built on the foundation of unconditional loving and commitment. People who have been empowered, Balswick & Balswick state, have a competence and self-esteem which they can share both in the family and with their community, society, and the world at large. God's covenant serves once again as an analogy. Unconditional faithfulness and love from the foundation. God provides the Holy Spirit to encourage, empower, and enable us to live according to the law so that the blessing may be ours according to (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 132).

The empowering model Balswick & Balswick (1989: 233) have in mind is: "by building others up and valuing who they are and what they contribute to the situation and relationship, a mutual respect is achieved".

They convey that parents who have the respect of their children have legitimate power (authority). On the other hand, parents who do not have the respect of their children must resort to force and coercion (dominance).

## 2.9.8. Empowerment

Balswick & Balswick's (1989: 237) last model of family power is empowerment. They describe that it assumes that the task of the more powerful family members is to enable the less powerful family members. Further Balswick & Balswick (1989: 238) argues that even though empowerment is rarely recognised in sociological literature, they believe that it is exemplified in Christian family life at its best.

### 2.9.9. The basic nature of Empowering.

For them a way of describing empowering is that it is an attempt to develop power in another person. They argue that the person who is empowered has gained power because of the encouragement of the other. There is then an interactive process between the two.

Balswick & Balswick (1989: 239) calls on Eric Fromm (1956:79) who has observed that the socialisation of children is the process of getting them to want to do what they have to do. They argue that from this perspective, empowering can be understood as the process whereby external control (the wishes of the more powerful, eg., the parent) is transferred to internal control (the child actually wants to do what the parent desires). For them (Balswick & Balswick (1989: 240) the message of the Bible is that the power of God is available to all human beings in unlimited amounts. Consequently, increasing another person's power will not decrease one's own, but will instead multiply one's potential for further empowering.

### 2.9.10. Empowering as a component of Utopian societies

Balswick & Balswick (1989: 241) suggests that by His teachings and life Jesus refined power. According to them, He rejected the use of power to control others, and instead affirmed the use of power to serve others, to lift up the fallen, to forgive, to encourage responsibility and maturity, and to enable the unable. Therefore they (Balswick & Balswick (1989: 243), propose empowering as the model for use of power in family life. Parents are in a position of control, for children are born totally dependent upon them. Arguably, while trust is one of the first things a child must learn, parents must also learn to trust their children. For Balswick & Balswick (1989: 244), this is a key component of the empowering process. Consequently, parents who do not trust their children will seek to maintain control over them.

Balswick & Balswick (1989: 306) declares that the family is the cornerstone of the moral order of society. Accordingly, any crisis we are currently experiencing in the moral order of society may well be due to the breakdown of the family. For them it is hardly an overstatement, then, to argue that the hope of society must begin with a recapturing of the biblical concept of family life.

## 2.10. The theology of the child according to Bonhoeffer

When looking at the theology of the child, I choose to reflect together with Root (2014), on the work, thoughts and life of Bonhoeffer. He dedicated his life to youth ministry. Root (2014:6-7) believes that youth ministry, seeks to reflect deeply on the action of God in and through the lives of young people who are both within and outside the church. He also goes on to say that a youth ministry bound in technology seeks to increase numbers and behaviour. A youth ministry that turns to theology, seeks to share in the concrete lived experience of young people as the very place to share in the act and being of God.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer is the forefather of the theological turn because he incomparably weaves together youth work, attention to concrete experience, and commitment to the revelatory nature of God's continued action in the world through Jesus Christ.

Bonhoeffer shows that God takes the form of personhood in Jesus Christ, and it is now in and through the reality of personhood that we encounter the living Christ, who is person with and for the Father, by being a person with and for humanity. Jesus is the Son of God that overcomes sin and death, making us children of God (incarnational theology). For Root it is, even today, in and through the reality of personhood that we encounter Christ. Therefore, it is the church community that takes Christ's form by being a community of persons in relationship.

91

Root (2014:7) also quotes Clifford Green, who says: "Revelation, that is, the person of Christ, exists in a social form: the church. Revelation is not an idea, a past historical happening, a doctrine or an entity. It is a person, and since person and community are inseparable, the revelation of Christ is present in a personal-communal form."

For Bonhoeffer personhood can only be constituted in community, for community takes the shape of something like a family, making each member a person, a distinct child, where each person is bound to but distinct from one another.

Children in families are described as distinct individuals, valued in and for themselves; they are not to be swallowed in the collective. For him, even small children have distinct wills, and parents encounter this distinct will revealing their children as a distinct self. Children nevertheless have their being only in and through others, through the sharing of wills, through parents who relationally share in their person by being willing to embrace them and share in their lives.

For Bonhoeffer what it means to be a person, is to belong (is to have our very being) in and through others. There can be no such thing as a singular human, we are persons who have our being in and through I-Thou relationships. In *Sanctorum Communio* Bonhoeffer says that, "individuals exist, only in relation to an 'other.'… For the individual to exist, 'others' must be there."

Therefore, persons are fundamentally bound to others, but as such are distinctly themselves, just as parents are to children and children are to their siblings, bound to one to another as wills in communion. A person's distinct will is honoured, as it is in a family. We are not enmeshed and drowned in a relationship. The I-Thou relationality honours the distinct will as a *barrier* of difference. For Bonhoeffer to be a person is to be bound one to another in and through our respect of the barrier between us. The

other person is bound to us. They are bound to us as a distinct other and respected as such.

This then means that persons are free. They must be free from enmeshment, for personhood is a barrier between us. This barrier reminds us that we must not cross it, that we must honour the other person and act responsibility for the other in love. (Root 2014:31)

According to Bonhoeffer love is only possible through respect of the other's barrier, by honouring personhood as free (Root 2014:32). He describes that this freedom is not a freedom from but a freedom for the other, a freedom much like the love of brothers and sisters – or like a children's minister for his or her Sunday school class. For we have our own personhood and find the living Christ when we enter others' lives, encountering their persons as wills that are a barrier, reaching out to them in a freedom that draws near to them.

Bonhoeffer says that the child can be seen most clearly as a person, for the child stands less obscured by western individualism (Root 2014:32). Because the child cannot be without the belonging of others; a child is a distinct will in the world that is given personhood through the will of those who act in freedom to be for him, therefore the child reveals personhood. In and through the acts of others who will love and care for him, the child has his being. He shares in others' persons – his mother and father – and these other persons share in him. This gives him/her personhood through acts of love and care.

The relationship that the child is invited into (even elected into) exists in and through barriers, also in and through the encounter of distinct wills. This is reliant on parents being parents and children being children. Their distinct difference must be respected, honoured, and even obeyed. Both the parent and the child remain free, but in this freedom is the freedom for each other. Root (2014:33) states that

Bonhoeffer argues that being a child is not simply a stage of life, but the form of our eschatological being.

Bonhoeffer follows Tönnies in seeing community as distinct from society, seeking a church that takes the shape of *Gemeinschaft* (community) over *Gesellschaft* (society) (Root 2014:34). For it's the *Gemeinschaft* that upholds and even creates personhood. In this way the *Gemeinschaft* wears at least some of the stripes of the family.

Bonhoeffer (Root 2014:34) points to the child, to show this. For him all communities are life-communities, meaning that communities are constituted in concrete, lived acts of belonging, and this belonging happens through participation, through shared life. A community is entered, by entering its life. Bonhoeffer says, "*Thus, even young children can sense it, for example, through an act of love, trust and obedience.* (Root 2014:34)"

Bonhoeffer shows that even young children are taken into the centre of communities, not through rational consent, but through persons acting with and for the child's person. He makes a great statement saying that children are not the future or even young members of our church communities; they are full members. He puts it even more directly - that only a community (*Gemeinschaft*), not a society (*Gesellschaft)*, is able to carry children. The implications of this are direct: a church that seeks to embrace its children in and through the revelation of Jesus Christ, a church with a truly rich children's ministry, is therefore not the church with the flashiest children's programme. (Root 2014:34)

Root describes this further by saying that ministry is not only the running of games, crafts and hand-motion songs but more so the embracing of the deepest fears, hopes, and questions of the young mother and father, for they with their child, are a

collective person. These collective persons therefore experience Jesus Christ as they are drawn into the life-community of the church (Root 2014:35).

## 2.11. Barna's perspectives on families and children

Barna (2003: 13) said in one of his books on parenting: "God meets you were you're at and leads you to where you need to go."

### 2.11.1. The responsibility of the Parents

In the Christian religion we believe that God gives us the responsibility as parents to teach our children His way of life. Barna (2007: 135) puts it that God wants parents to prepare their children to lead a godly life.

Thomas Groome (Osmer and Schweitzer eds., 2003:204) says that God expects parents to teach children obedience to the ways of God and respect for others. For him these are foundational values that will serve children well as they advance to adulthood.

For Barna it is expected that parents will empower their children to make good decisions and to live righteously by offering them advice (whether solicited or not), teaching them simple discernment, instilling respect, and helping them to choose good friends (Barna 2007: 138). These actions are related to parents' responsibility to prepare their young children for independence and obedience when they grow up to be adults.

Groome said that to take our responsibility to educate our children in faith seriously, parents need to (1) debunk the schooling paradigm and (2) imagine the family as a "domestic church." (Osmer and Schweitzer eds., 2003:205).

Parents must start to pull up their socks and take on their responsibility of parenting. The church, schools and other educational institutions are only partners in children's education. The people who must take the main responsibility for children's education and discipline are the parents.

**2.11.2. Barna and Myers's approach of "Fearless parenting".**

In Barna and Myers book, "*Fearless parenting*" (Barna & Myers 2017:4) they say that families have never been as lost, confused, and doubtful about the future as they are today. For the first time in the past century, the majority of Americans believe that today's children will not experience as good a life as did their parents and grandparents.

Therefore, parents feel as if they have the short end of the stick. Barna & Myers (2017:4) say that in counselling sessions, not a single day goes by that they don't have a heartfelt discussion with parents about how unprepared they feel to deal with their children's issues. In most of the cases, the issues they're facing didn't even exist just a few years ago. It seems like everything we believe and do is up for grabs in this rapidly changing society, without stable and widely embraced moral foundations. It is as if nothing is certain anymore. The massive amount of uncertainty has caused well-meaning, highly educated Christian parents to start questioning their own motives, actions, and purpose (Barna & Myers 2017:5).

For Barna and Myers this is why parents today have a daunting challenge: rewire our cultural brains, starting with the minds of our children, to reclaim the Christian principles that made this a great nation. In fostering that cultural about-face, the role of parenting is perhaps more central than anything else (Barna & Myers 2017:6).

On the other hand, Barna and Myers tell parents, that our children are your legacy-your gift to God and the world (Barna & Myers 2017:8). Through the Lord's guidance and empowerment, families have the capacity and potential to significantly influence the world.

Parents have been assaulted with an unrelenting barrage of insulting images and depictions of parents, year after year. For Barna and Myers that assault has been buttressed by a parallel stream of attacks on the traditional family launched by the liberal media, progressive politicians and university faculty. (Barna & Myers 2017:9)

For them the rise of postmodernism is a self-centred emotion – and experience driven worldview that minimises the role of God and denies the existence of moral absolutes. They describe a philosophical ballast to a hypersensitive, politically correct culture that cautioned parents against disciplining children or exposing them to traditional ways of thinking. With this, adding to the chaos, the advertising industry aggressively used children as sexual objects to sell products and ideology, seemingly focused on destroying the remaining morsels of youthful innocence that has not shredded in the previous decade (Barna & Myers 2017:10).

For them the culture wars of the late twentieth century expanded to include an all-out battle for the souls of America's children. Because of the direction the American nation is headed, the pace of cultural change, and the significance of the transformation now in progress, the impact of parenting may be greater than ever. According to Barna and Myers these shifts are only likely if today's parents accept the job of raising their children as their greatest gift to the world and perhaps their most significant service to God. I agree with them, that what you do today, next month, a year from now, and even five years from now will imprint critical ideas, values, beliefs, and behaviour on your children that will dramatically influence who they become and how they live for the rest of their lives. It's clear that teachers, relatives, pastors, community leaders, and other people who know and regularly interact with your children have an impact on them. But parents must realise that

nobody has greater potential to transform the lives of children than their parents. (Barna & Myers 2017:11).

It is important for Barna and Myers that the three key institutions – family, church and government – co-exist. (Barna & Myers 2017:17). For them parenting is not simply about serving as a guardrail against your child's potential derailment on the highway of life. It's also not to simply watch the development process, transpire without parental involvement - this is not God's plan for our children. Parenting is also not a spectator sport; it is a full-contact immersive commitment to honouring the God who breathed life and purpose into your child.

Parenting matters, because it may be the single most important task you take on in your entire life. They describe that children is indeed, a gift from God (see Ps. 127:3), but that we also have the chance to mould their lives. Parent's gift back to the Lord can be the manner in which they mould their children's lives (Barna & Myers 2017:18).

They say that for many Christian parents today, it seems like the Lord is not their refuge and strength (Barna & Myers 2017:20). These parents don't possess that peace that surpasses all human understanding. They continue to live by sight rather than by faith and are therefore consumed by fear. Therefore, they suggest that we would do well to focus on preparing children to take on this increasingly secular society and win the culture war (Barna & Myers 2017:21). This will ask of us to no longer protect and separate them from culture but prepare and train them to engage and ultimately transform culture.

### 2.11.3. The protective/fear-based Christian parenting strategy of the past.

Barna and Myers describes the protective/fear-based Christian parenting strategy of the past, as follows (Barna & Myers 2017:43-44):

98

1. Clearly identify and define the sin.
2. Demonise not only this sin but also the perpetrators of said sin.
3. Teach about the danger of being even in close proximity to this sin or these sinners.
4. Construct protective walls to separate our children from this sin and these sinners.
5. Feel pride that our children never participate in this sin or feel shame if they do.

### 2.11.4. The Biblical-based parenting approach to sin.

They start describing it by saying that many of us have chosen to model our faith after the Pharisees, those who stood against everything Jesus stood for, is hard to fathom. These responses to sin - segregation and judgement - have never been proper Christian response to sin. If we take an overarching view of the New Testament, they propose that we might find a more Christ-centred parental approach (Barna & Myers 2017:46-51).

### 2.11.5. Identify God's behavioural boundaries

This is about teaching children the joy of obedience. It's about following Christ's teaching not to avoid punishment but to experience the joy that comes from obedience. This means that obedience is simply our opportunity to say thank you to Jesus for all He has done for us (Barna & Myers 2017:24). We are given the chance to say thank you dozens of times a day, through the choices we make- choices that either please our Lord or pull us away from Him. In John 14:15 Jesus put it this way: "If you love me, keep my commands."

### 2.11.6. Emphasise the power of God, not the fear of man.

Barna and Myers (2017: 47) calls on the story of Jesse, David's father. David, taught probably by his father, already in his young life, learned great faith in the power of his heavenly Father. He learned to trust God rather than to fear man – he ran fearlessly onto the battlefield while all the grown soldiers were running away from it.

### 2.11.7. Maintain the boundaries and enforce consequences

The Bible tells us that God established clearly defined boundaries and lovingly enforced consequences when those boundaries were violated. Barna and Myers (2017:48) quotes Hebrew 12;5-6 as an example of this, "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines the ones He loves, and he chastens everyone He accepts as His son."

### 2.11.8. Teach our children to love sinners more than they hate their sin.

Barna and Myers (2017:49) have a great illustration to explain this point. They tell the story of how they remember seeing a cartoon that had two televangelists standing in the middle of a barren, deserted street. It was clear in the picture that the rapture had occurred, all the believers had been taken up to heaven, and these two famous preachers were the only two left on earth. Clearly everyone had been taken to heaven to meet the Lord – except them. The one then turned to the other and said, "I don't get it. We hated all the right people."

This brings us to the point that twenty-first century Christians are known more for who and what we are against than who and what we are for. This is so odd. Currently, we are not known for loving people, which Jesus commanded us to do.

100

We are known for the direct opposite - judging people, which Jesus commanded us not to do.

For Barna and Myers this attitude is taught, first and foremost, in the home. Parents, in their zeal to keep their kids away from harm (which is important), urge them to stay away from sinners (which is not a Christ like thing to do). The kids unknowingly begin to equate the repulsion of sin with the repulsion of friends and classmates who commit those sins. This attitude is in contrast with that of our Lord when he saved the women caught in adultery (John 8:10-11) (Barna & Myers 2017:26).

## 2.11.9. Offer total love, forgiveness, and acceptance of people regardless of their choices.

Barna and Myers end their discussion on the biblical approach to sin by saying that we are to love people regardless of the choices they make. They argue that we can't judge other people just because they sin differently from us (First Corinthians 13:1-3). Therefore, it is critical that we begin teaching children to stop being afraid of culture and to love and accept all their friends- the good ones as well as the ones who are struggling. To do that, the grown-ups, must first do the same. It's important that children will learn non-judgemental, unconditional love, not from the pastor, or their youth minister, but from their parents.

## 2.12. My theology on children

### 2.12.1. The child in theology

#### 2.12.1.1. Children are wonderful blessings to the faith community and a gift from God

I want to agree wholeheartedly with what Schleiermacher said, that children are wonderful blessings to the community of faith. I also back his argument that children in their vulnerability and dependence, mirror the relationship between God and humanity. Childhood thus forms possibilities for the future life of faith (Bunge ed 2001:348).

Calvin's remarks that children are the gifts of God (Bunge ed. 2001:170), are very important in our theological thoughts. Through this we can see children in this manner and recognise God's role in child rearing.

## 2.12.1.2. The ages and stages of life

Bonhoeffer (Root 2014:6-7) had a very important argument on this point. I agree with him that being a child is not simply a stage of life, but the form of our eschatological being. The child is a person that lives and has its being in terms of the belonging of others. I am not a supporter of the "ages and stages" way of thinking about children. I believe that every child grows on the journey of life in their own time, own place and in such a unique way to write their own life narrative.

A child is formed by the will of those who act in freedom in his/her best interest. The being of the child is therefore formed by the acts of others who love and care for him/her. This forms the narratives of a child's life and is a result of a mutual sharing of personhood, and also that place where a person is formed. This is also a place where the unique personhood of each person must be respected, honoured and obeyed. This creates a familial freedom, where they are free for each other, through each other.

Thomas Aquinas believes that childhood is not simply a phase to be tolerated on the way to true personhood (Bunge ed. 2001:130). He voices that it is an appropriate

and necessary stage within the lifelong journey toward perfection in which adults too are engaged.

### 2.12.1.3. Childhood

Luther describes children in terms of what they need to become: mature, seasoned confessors of the evangelical faith and responsible members of family and community. In order for children to do this, we as adults, parents and church and community should commit to care and educate them on their journey.

I agree with Luther and would like to call it the journey of childhood. I also want to stand with Luther when he claims that faith is a gift of the working of the Holy Spirit in the believer. It is important to note that the result of faith, in Luther's words, could not be guaranteed no matter how carefully constructed and controlled the process of catechising or religious education.

### 2.12.2. Parents, children and families

### 2.12.2.1. Theology of parents and children

In writing on the theology of parents and children I want to call on Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Calvin and Schleiermacher's thoughts on this subject.

Thomas Aquinas made an argument that I side with, that parents have a "natural" human obligation toward and love for their children. He goes further to say that parents also have the responsibility to educate and care for their children. Calvin makes his argument from the origin of children. He says that unless men regard their children as the gift from God, they are careless and reluctant in providing for their support, just as on the other hand this knowledge contributes in a very eminent

degree to encourage them in bringing up their offspring (Bunge ed 2001: 171). Calvin therefore sees the primary obligation of parents, is to teach godliness. He also sees the parental obligation to fulfil God's commandment and diligently instruct the children. On the other hand, children ought to be morally upright, submissive to authority and self-critical.

Schleiermacher looks at the dark side of parenting when he claims that the most tragic consequence of parental failure is the child's loss of trust (Bunge ed 2001:342). For him a parents love, should be self-sacrificing and should seek to nurture the unique individuality of children, which is God's gift (Bunge ed 2001:343).

Luther's words hold as much truth as encouragement for me, in that the work of mothers and fathers are regarded as a most holy calling and obligation. It has a twofold importance for me. First, in terms of family ministry in our time we must realise that parenting is a holy calling. We cannot fulfil this calling without the help and guidance of the Lord. Second, if we help parents to understand that we have an obligation towards not only our kids but also to the Lord, we can help parents to understand the utmost importance of the work that we as parents are doing.

### 2.12.2.2. Families are at the centre of children's education

I want to start out by looking at Barna & Myers (2017:18) who described that children are indeed, a gift from God (see Ps. 127:3). A parent's gift back to the Lord can be the manner in which they mould their children's lives. Their (Barna & Myers 2017:11) argument follows that today's parents need to accept the job of raising their children as their greatest gift to the world and perhaps their most significant service to God.

I agree with them, that what you do today, next month, a year from now, and even five years from now will imprint critical ideas, values, beliefs, and behaviour on your children that will dramatically influence who they become and how they live for the

rest of their lives. It's clear that teachers, relatives, pastors, community leaders, and other people who know and regularly interact with your children have an impact on them. But parents must realise that nobody has greater potential to transform the lives of children than their parents do.

Luther (Bunge ed. 2001:146) describes that the family are the natural locus of education. This for Luther meant that parents had the responsibility to catechising their children and household dependents, joining them in prayers, teaching them their proper duties, and administering discipline. I maintain Luther's idea that this recognises that parents, in addition to their obligation to promote the spiritual health of their children, also have the responsibility for their social welfare, especially in the area of education (Bunge ed. 2001:150).

This coincides with Calvin, who said that the family was the primary context for the moral, intellectual, social, spiritual and physical nurture of children (Bunge ed. 2001:171). For him, the primary obligation of parents, especially fathers but also mothers, is to teach godliness. He sees the parental obligation to fulfil God's command and diligently instruct the children in the family are of utmost importance. In ending, I want to call on Schleiermacher who relates on this topic. For him the Christian home is the first and irreplaceable school of faith (Bunge ed 2001:344). Parents do not undertake the religious formation of children alone. Pastors and schools must also participate and help with it.

### 2.12.2.3.  To love and honour parents

I believe, like Barth (Bunge ed. 2001:399), that the divine commandment that children honour their mother and father is of utmost importance. Barth further describes that it consists in a divinely appointed spiritual mission to carry and mediate a promise of grace to one's children (this is the first commandment with a promise). Luther (Bunge ed 2001:146) made a vital statement in this regard, saying

that if God's will is observed, nothing is more important than the will and words of our parents.

I also stand with Barth (Bunge ed. 2001:399) in that parental love is distinguished from "every mimicry of love" by the way it communicates to children that their lives "are under the guardianship and guidance of the One who really undertakes for them." For him this positively means that love is "unconditional" as it points to God's love, which penetrates all roles, expectations, and worldly valuation in pursuit of the genuine good of the person in his or her irreplaceable identity.

### 2.12.2.4. Love within families

I like to adopt Browning's (Browning Eds 1997: 71), concept where they developed their life ethic of equal regard in close relation to the concept of kin altruism - the preferential treatment people tend to give to their biological related family members.

They rightfully claim that the fundamental family issue of our time may be how to retain and honour the intact family without turning it into an object of idolatry and without retaining the inequalities of power, status, and privilege ensconced in its earlier forms.

Browning (Browning Eds 1997: 153) finds that Christian love (*agape*), even as applied to families, should point in the direction of love as mutuality or equal regard. This equal regard according to them, must be achieved inter-subjectively.

### 2.12.2.5. The relationship between God and Israel as a model for families

The way that Balswick & Balswick (1989: 19) talked about the relationship between God and the children of Israel has proven to be the most fruitful model for the

development of a theology of the family, had me thinking a lot. I would like to use this metaphor in my own ministry in explaining the relationship that God has with our families. The establishment of a covenant between God and the nation of Israel, is for me an important focus in developing a theology of the family.

In applying the concept of covenant, they (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 19) argue in favour of a covenant love that provides the basis for family. Consequently, family means much more than consanguinity, where blood ties provide the only basis for belonging. They describe that the family is where you are loved unconditionally, and where you can count on that love even when you least deserve it.

The four elements of growth in a family relationship are considered by Balswick & Balswick (1989: 22) as separate sequential stages for analytic purposes only. Consequently, in practice, covenant, grace, empowering and intimacy often overlap in family life. I do not agree with them on the fact that it can be separate sequential stages. I see the four elements (covenant, grace, empowering and intimacy) of growth in family relationship, as elements that need to be founded constantly and at the same time, on the path of the family's journey of life. These elements must be part of the family's way of life.

### 2.12.3. The Church and children

I believe that children are of utmost importance to church and society. Calvin's writings, bear witness to this. He declares that it was society's duty to provide the right conditions for raising children to be godly. Barna (2007: 135) have a similar argument, in that he describes that God wants parents to prepare their children to lead a godly life.

Root (2014:6-7) also argues in definite favour of a church community, in saying that it is even today in and through the reality of personhood that we encounter Christ.

This constructs the church community that takes Christ's form by being a community of persons in relationship.

Religious communities are communities of interpretation, at their best, which also model love and care as described by Browning (Browning Eds 1997: 271). Therefore, these sacred texts and traditions of these religious communities should be constantly interpreted and reinterpreted in the light of contemporary challenges. He makes it clear that parental authority is best established when it comes out of such communities of interpretation from which parents can learn and which they use to model their convictions.

Browning's (Browning Eds 1997: 308-309) model grounds parental authority in a dialogue between parents' own covenant with God and the church's covenant. This assumes God has a covenant with both the church and the family. He makes a powerful statement in saying that parental authority should therefore evolve from a dialogue with a church that itself is dedicated to an appreciative yet critical inquiry into its traditions.

Browning, in Pope's words (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:58) believes that we need to think about how to live in the world as members of vital religious communities that are instructed by rich traditions. At the same time we need to open to creative movements and insights emerging from contemporary experience and culture.

Root (2014:7) also quotes Clifford Green who says: "*Revelation, that is, the person of Christ, exists in a social form: the church. Revelation is not an idea, a past historical happening, a doctrine or an entity. It is a person, and since person and community are inseparable, the revelation of Christ is present in a personal-communal form.*" Bonhoeffer (Root:2014:7) states that the personhood can only be constituted in community, for community takes the shape of something like a family,

making each member a person, a distinct child, where each person is bound to but distinct from one another. For him, children nevertheless have their being only in and through others, through the sharing of wills, through parents who relationally share in their person by being willing to embrace them and share in their lives.

He takes it further by saying that to be a person is to be bound one to another in and through our respect of the barrier between us. The other person is bound to us. They are bound to us as a distinct other and respected as such. This then means that persons are free. They must be free from enmeshment, for personhood is a barrier between us. This barrier reminds us that we must not cross it, that we must honour the other person and act responsibility for the other in love (Root 2014:31).

### 2.12.4. Baptism

### 2.12.4.1. Baptism is of utmost importance

As for Augustine who believes that baptism is of the utmost importance. I love the fact that Augustine described the baptised Christian as a pilgrim. Also the fact that he described it as that baptism admitted one into the hospital of grace, where one spent a lifetime convalescing. This metaphor of healing is reinforced by Augustine's repeated references to Christ "the Physician". He described that baptism only pointed to the final deliverance from a terminal disease; the corrosive effects of a sin had penetrated the human nature to its core.

Luther describes the whole of Christian life as a daily return to baptism, and death itself as the completion of its promises. Like Luther, I also comfort myself in times of temptation and despair, not only with the assurance that I am baptised, but also that my children and family are baptised.

Strohl (Bunge ed. 2001:143) states that for Luther, salvation occurs when baptism is received. I do not side with Luther in the statement that he makes that salvation occurs when baptism is received (Bunge ed 2001: 143). I wholeheartedly agree with Luther, that what makes the baptism valid is not the faith of the recipient, but the promise of God attached to the sign (Bunge ed 2001:141). But for me salvation doesn't come through the sign of the baptism, although the sigh is a sign of the promise of salvation. Salvation is a gift of God, through the grace of Jesus Christ that we receive in faith (Acts.4:11, Ephesians 2:8, 2 Corinthians 7:10).

Luther said that baptism, through which we are first received into the Christian community, speaks not only to the individual receiving it. It also speaks to the whole believing community celebrating the sacrament. For him the effect of baptism is to bestow God's Holy Spirit, and the chief work of the Spirit is to create and sustain the church, as he makes clear in his explanation of the third article of the creed.

He further describes that the two most defining relationships in a baptised person's life are with the God of the gospel and with the church. Therefore, to use baptism aright is to immerse oneself in the various means of grace – worship, prayer, proclamation, sacraments – so that one is constantly exposed to the working of the Spirit.

I don't agree with Calvin that in baptism the non-elect receive only an empty sign and not the promise (Bunge ed 2001: 184). Calvin said that the primary justification for baptism lies not in the claim that sinful humanity's need for cleansing from sin but rather in the claim that all Christians (children included) receive God's promise of reconciliation. I believe that the claim that all people (children included) receive God's promise of reconciliation, for Jesus Christ came for all people, to give them the opportunity to repent. There are no such thing as people that are non-elect, for Christ includes all.

Thomas agrees with Augustine that original sin renders the unbaptised unworthy of salvation, he envisions grace as completing rather than, correcting nature. Hence, he tends to emphasise children's potential for spiritual growth with the aid of grace rather than, like Augustine, their capacity for true devotion and virtue in the absence of grace.

I disagree that the unbaptised can be unworthy of salvation, because I believe that the Lord works faith in us, through the Holy Spirit, from even the times we didn't know God, and gives us the gift of salvation. Salvation cannot depend on a sign of baptism. Although the sign of baptism reminds us of salvation, it is only a sign. The true work of salvation is not by our deeds but by the grace of God.

### 2.12.4.2. Infant and child baptism

I side with Augustine on his argument for infant baptism. Augustine found ample evidence that even infants were non-innocent. They were clearly infected by some evil, although they possessed no personal sin. I would therefore agree that it will be a cruel and unjust punishment to withhold baptism from them, because according to Romans 6:3 all who are baptised are baptised into Christ's salvific death (Bunge ed 2001:98-99).

Luther is described by Strohl (Bunge ed. 2001:141) as a ferocious defender of the practice of infant baptism. For him what makes any baptism valid is not the faith of the recipient, whatever her age, but the promise of God attached to the sign. He makes a strong statement that the church must include children, having received the command to offer the gospel and baptism to everyone.

He sees baptism as the utmost importance and its clear from the way he describes it as one of four duties manifested in the responsibility to serve one's children as their "apostle" and "bishop". Two of the other three duties are things that I believe that follows after baptism. They are to form children in the true faith as they mature and

to tend to their education for vocation. The third thing that Luther mentions is not something I totally agree on. He says that it is the responsibility of the parents to finally provide them with a suitable spouse. I feel that we can guide our children and help them to make the right decision on choosing a spouse. But at the end we as parents can't provide a spouse for them.

Luther's link between discipleship and baptism is very important to me. In his argument that the primary task of discipleship is to learn to "use baptism aright", to practice making its gifts one's own and to forge a life that confidently builds on this. I believe that baptism is a reminder to us of the promise God makes to us, and our reaction is the responsibility is to live a life of discipleship, because of that promise.

This includes individuals who is baptised, parents who promise at their child(ren)'s baptism that they will raise them as disciples of Jesus Christ, as well as the community of believers (family and friends included) present at the baptism, who also promise to assist the parents in the faith formation of the child(ren).

Calvin rather did not go so far as to idealise the faith of children, as did his own spiritual descendant, Friedrich Schleiermacher. He considered young infants as capable of not merely manifesting but indeed proclaiming God's glory. Finally, he based his theology of baptism on the conviction that the elect are from birth total inheritors of God's covenant and therefore members in the church (Bunge ed 2001: 164)

Calvin upheld the traditional practice of infant baptism as well as recognised the validity of baptism in the Roman church (Bunge ed 2001:182).

For him the motive for baptism is not to cleanse from original sin, and consequently seek to avoid damnation. He, rather again like Luther (but to a much greater degree), draws an analogy between baptism and circumcision to argue that children have a

right to baptism. For Calvin, this one reason, alone is sufficient to refute all opposition to the practice of infant baptism. His primary justification for infant baptism, in other words, is not the sinfulness of children, nor even their need for faith or perhaps their latent possession of it, but the fact that God has commanded it *because they are already members of the covenant* (Bunge ed. 2001:185). The child is fully Christian. Not because the faith expressed in his answers has yet been experienced by him, but because it is his by right of God's gracious covenant.

Werpehowski (Bunge ed. 2001:392), notes the related point that, "what drives Barth's objection to infant baptism is his insistence that the life of Christian discipleship "cannot be inherited"".

### 2.12.5. Faith formation

Luther makes a clear and strong argument that I also adopt, in that although the growth of the faith formation of children must be left to God, the church and parents (I would say in partnership with each other) are responsible for planting and watering the faith. I, like Luther, also believe that although catechising and faith formation is important for everyone, that children are the most susceptible to formation.

I would like to also call on Schleiermacher and Strohl to talk further about faith formation. Schleiermacher (Bunge ed 2001:345) claims that the most important duty of a pastor in catechising, is to lead children in developing sound and sophisticated abilities in reading and interpreting scripture. Strohl (Bunge ed 2001:148) feels that catechisms initiates youth in the faith, the believing community's vision of life and distinctive discourse, it gives them a clear point of orientation in the world.

### 2.12.6.  The village where children are raised.

Like Luther, I also believe that the work of mothers and fathers is a most holy calling and obligation. Children cannot be without the commitment and care of adults. Children also need the wider community and the civil authorities to play a critical role in the vocation of parenting. This is also true in fostering Browning's (Browning Eds 1997: 5), idea that families are not just passive realities; they shape their environments even as they are shaped by them.

In Barna and Myers book, "Fearless parenting" (Barna & Myers 2017:4) they say that families have never been as lost, confused, and doubtful about the future as they are today. Wall (Witte, Green, Wheeler eds. 2007:102) similarly argues that children fare poorly in the contemporary world. For him this is primarily because they lack strong families, traditions, and social narratives under which to develop civilised and meaningful social values. Accordingly, he sees that child rearing itself places children under the disciplinary tutelage of normatively grounded adults, particularly parents.

They (Barna & Myers 2017:8) tell parents, that our children are your legacy- your gift to God and the world. Through the Lord's guidance and empowerment, families have the capacity and potential to significantly influence the world. Connecting to this, Browning claims (Browning Eds 1997: 5), families are not just passive realities; they shape their environment even as they are shaped by them.

On this point I agree with Luther, who said that God deliberately created the human realm to be social – everyone is born as someone's child, educated as someone's pupil, governed as someone's parishioner (Bunge ed 2001:139) and usually becomes someone's parent in turn – starting the cycle over. For Luther there is no neighbour closer than one's children, no claim upon society more pressing than that of the young (Bunge ed 2001:159). This links to what Luther believed that parents

have a responsibility for their children's social welfare – especially in terms of education (Bunge ed 2001:150).

Calvin's writings, bear witness to the importance of children in church and society (Bunge ed 2001:161). Calvin was involved often quite personally in the implementation of public policies that had important implications for children. I also side with Schleiermacher, who wrote "sermons on the Christian household", where it was clear that children present a wonderful blessing to the community of faith (Bunge ed 2001: 240).

### 2.12.7.  Disciplining children

### 2.12.7.1. Thoughts on sin and children

I like Augustine's way of describing that sin consisted in the repetition of sinful acts or personal sins in its exemplary character. This he variously described as a habit of sinning (*moles donsuetudinis*), a frequency of sinning (*frequentation peccandi*), or the continuation of pleasure (*adsiduitas voluptatis*). Augustine's contemporaries had no quarrel with this exemplary character of sin: they would have regarded this as sin in full.

Augustine further argued that even infants, who could hardly be said to have sinned by force of habit, belonged to this mass of sinning and were corrupted by the original sin. For this reason, he claimed that infants were non- innocent and assumed greater accountability for their actions as they matured. Consequently, it would be cruel to exclude infants from baptism: they too needed access to baptism for the forgiveness of sin (Bunge ed. 2001:94)

Thomas attempted the apparently impossible: he embraced simultaneously the pessimistic Augustinian vision of the human will fatally flawed by original sin and the optimistic Aristotelian vision of the rational person with natural capacity to grow in virtue and wisdom.

Calvin is very clear, especially in his commentaries, that the younger the child, the less he or she manifests the effects of sin. Pitkin (Bunge ed. 2001:166) tells that Calvin views very young infants on the other hand, as mature proclaimers of God's goodness

I love Schleiermacher's statement that children are born with as much potential for sin as for salvation. De Vries (Bunge ed. 2001:342) states that Schleiermacher is clear that it is the whole manner of life in the home that teaches, and he does not hesitate to blame parents for their children's sins. He argues that in older children, parents should encourage whatever signs of strength they observe in their children's religious life.

We already noted that Augustine claims, infants are born with evil tendencies by virtue of original sin, and that this view fused biological ideas of heredity with the idea of the juridical liability of humankind. Barth opposes this fusion, emphasising instead that children are bearers of promise by grace by virtue of God's will to make, and all humanity, covenant partners in Jesus Christ (Bunge ed. 2001:389).

Barth does not accept original sin: defined as "the voluntary and responsible life of every man which he brings on himself so that as the one who does so, he is necessarily and inevitably corrupt" (Bunge ed. 2001:390). He prefers to emphasise that the sin of humanity is really known as it has already been set aside by divine mercy in Christ. It is thus part of our past, not our future. Consequently, we discover the double contradiction of sin. It is a fact founded on a power that human creatures do not have as such, an "impossible possibility", what God, the source of all there is,

rejects. The contradictory being of sinful humanity is now for once and for all put to death in Christ - yet, still, absurdly, "lives".

Bart does not linger on the question of the specific "nature" or "being" of children. For him they, too, are creatures of God (Bunge ed. 2001:390). Like all human creatures, they possess impulses and desires that must be respected and ordered to responsible existence. They should under no circumstances be identified with inherited strain of original sin.

Werpehowski (Bunge ed. 2001:391) clearly states that Bart rejects outright hereditary transmission of sin as an extremely unfortunate and mistaken doctrine that would rule out a human agent's responsibility for the evil he or she does or becomes. He also does not accept original sin: defined as "the voluntary and responsible life of every man which he brings on himself so that as the one who does so, he is necessarily and inevitably corrupt. He prefers to emphasise that the sin of humanity is really known as it has already been set aside by divine mercy in Christ. It is thus part of our past, not our future.

The contradictory being of sinful humanity is now for once and for all put to death in Christ - yet, still, absurdly, "lives". Barth believes himself prepared theologically to affirm the depth and terror of sin. This he does as it maintains its absurd reality as fundamentally our human act, and never merely our inherited "fate".

Although the theology of Luther is characterised by the paradox of the believer as saint and sinner, I find that it holds truth. I agree with him that although in God's sight we have been made wholly righteous by the grace of God, the sin that deformed our nature at the fall continues to ensnare us (Bunge ed 2001:34).

Calvin and Augustine, assumes graduated guilt as children move with age to greater accountability for acts of wrong doing (Bunge ed 2001:164). Calvin on the other hand

117

does not dwell on evidence of corruption in small children. He claims that compared to older children and adults, small children demonstrate a lack of malice.

Calvin and some of his contemporaries, especially Luther and Melanchlon understood original sin to consist of an inherent corruption of the entire human nature, especially of the will the senses and the body. Therefore, from God's grace, humans could do nothing to rid themselves of sin and be restored to divine favour (Bunge ed 2001:167). Therefore infants are not innocent, but sinful and would not be saved unless grace intervened.

## 2.12.7.2. Discipline through the ages

I agree with who Augustine did not lobby for harsh treatment of children, despite this rather dour assessment of childhood. Turning to the question of punishment itself, Calvin emphasised the need for parents to be patient and exercise forbearance in dealing with rebellious offspring. Although he differs with Augustine and admits that parents must in some cases apply harsh discipline ("put the bit" in their children's mouths), he also clearly emphasises that this must be done with love and gentleness, not with wickedness and cruelty. For him the essence of good parenting is in the instruction in piety.

According to Schleiermacher, nurturing the higher self-consciousness of the child cannot be accomplished through reward and punishment. He rejects external enticements as inconsistent with Christian faith. He specifically denounces the use of corporal punishment with children. He gives a clear argument for it saying that discipline is not about punishment but about promoting an ordered life. Consequently, parents should instil in their children a love for the good, irrespective of reward or punishment. Parents must be as concerned about the manner of play their children engage in as about their formal education. Children should be exposed to all kinds of people. They should learn to be tolerant of others.

118

Accordingly, the most important duty of a pastor in catechising, then for Schleiermacher, is to lead children in developing sound and sophisticated abilities in reading and interpreting scripture. A living faith in Christ is what children need more than anything else. Therefore, he urges that parents, teachers and pastors must devote all of their energy and enthusiasm to presenting Christ to their children. This would best be achieved through the whole of life itself, lived with children. I agree with De Vries (Bunge ed. 2001:386) that the word of theologians like Schleiermacher who speaks against violence and abuse needs to be integrated into the story of Christianity's treatment of children.

For Barth, to raise children, "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" excludes provoking them to anger, resistance and rebellion that emerges through the assertion of Law, or the execution of judgement." The admonitions in the book of Proverbs not to spare the rod of correction must be transformed by the duty to know and correspond in thought and deed to grace, and in that light to summon children to repentance. He calls on Barth who said that a mother and father's training and advice are to be a "joyful invitation to their children to rejoice with them" in Jesus Christ (Bunge ed. 2001:399).

Balswick and Balswick (1989:101) sees unconditional love as not free of expectations and demands - God's love includes disciplinary action for our good. They (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 128) point out that the Bible uses words like "love" and "honour" to describe the ideal parent/child relationship. For them one very helpful method of discipline is the concept of natural and logical consequences which is espoused by Rudolf Dreikus (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 129). Because God dealt with the children of Israel in a similar way, this method is familiar to us. They illustrate that God's people had to face the consequences of their choices and behaviour. Therefore, the blessing of the covenant was conditional in that they reaped what they sowed (although his gift of love and grace was unconditional).

God has laid down laws for us, such as the Ten Commandments. If we abide by these laws, we will find meaning in our lives, since God has our best interests in mind. But, there are consequences to be reckoned with when we disobey.

Children learn best through the consequences of their behaviour, in the same way, if they realise that the rules are a product of their parent's love and concern for them. Therefore, children should be given a limit which is reasonable and told that a specific consequence will be applied whenever they go beyond that limit.

For Balswick & Balswick (1989:130) the main point is that the parent does not need to scold or punish, but to see to it that the child becomes fully aware of the consequences of the behaviour. This will allow the child to accept limits and eventually to achieve self-discipline.

Thomas Groome (Osmer and Schweitzer eds., 2003:204) says that God expects parents to teach children obedience in the ways of God and respect for others. For him these are foundational values that will serve children well as they advance to adulthood.

### 2.12.8. The role of power in discipline

### 2.12.8.1. Parental authority

Browning (Browning Eds 1997: 271), emphasises that parents have to exercise authority with their young. They must trust that their values, their view of life, and their commitments are worthy grounds for the guidance of their children. This sense of authority is best anchored when it reflects not only the convictions of a father and mother but those of a community of interpretation to which the parents belong.

### 2.12.8.2. Empowerment

Barna expects that parents will empower their children to make good decisions and to live righteously by offering them advice (whether solicited or not), teaching them simple discernment, instilling respect, and helping them to choose good friends (Barna 2007: 138).

Balswick & Balswick (1989: 103) mentions that parents who empower will help their children to become competent and capable persons who will be actively and intentionally engaged in various pursuits – teaching, guiding, caring and modelling – which will equip their children to become confident individuals able to relate to others.

The mode of discipline Balswick & Balswick (1989: 131) have suggested entails personal empowering. The goal is mutual empowering between all family members. Naturally, the onus of responsibility will initially be on the parents. For them these principles of the empowering process have to do with serving and being served.

They operate most successfully in an atmosphere of acceptance and forgiving grace, result in intimacy through deep knowledge of and communication with one another and they are built on the foundation of unconditional loving and commitment. People who have been empowered, Balswick & Balswick state, have a competence and self-esteem which they can share both in the family and with their community, society and the world at large. God's covenant serves once again as an analogy. Unconditional faithfulness and love from the foundation. God provides the Holy Spirit to encourage, empower, and enable us to live according to the law so that the blessing may be ours according to (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 132).

The empowering model Balswick & Balswick (1989: 233) have in mind is: "by building others up and valuing who they are and what they contribute to the situation and relationship, a mutual respect is achieved".

121

Empowering can be understood according to them (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 240), as the process whereby external control (the wishes of the more powerful, eg., the parent) is transferred into internal control (the child actually wants to do what the parent desires). For them (Balswick & Balswick 1989: 240) the message of the Bible is that the power of God is available to all human beings in unlimited amounts. Consequently, increasing another person's power will would not decrease one's own, but will instead multiply one's potential for further empowering.

### 2.12.9. Conclusion

I want to end in the words of Barna and Myers (2017:6) who claim that parents today have a daunting challenge: to rewire our cultural brains, starting with the minds of our children, to reclaim Christian principles. Today the role of parenting is perhaps more central than anything else. For many Christian parents today, it seems like the Lord is not their refuge and strength (Barna & Myers 2017:20). These parents don't possess that peace that surpasses all human understanding. They continue to live by sight rather than by faith and are therefore consumed by fear.

Therefore, I want to suggest to them, that we focus on preparing children to take on this increasingly secular society and win the culture war (Barna & Myers 2017:21). This will ask of us to no longer protect and separate them from culture but prepare and train them to engage and ultimately transform culture in the name of Jesus Christ.

In this chapter I gave space for Christian writers to have their say on how they see parenting and the discipline of children. Through this it is then clear that Christian parents, under the authority of the Lord, have the responsibility to teach their children to grow spiritually. Christian parents need to teach their children the ways – morals and values, of the Christian religion and discipline them accordingly.

In the following chapter we will look at how writers and some of my co-researchers that are affiliated with either the African -, Hindu-, Islam or Jewish religion see parenting and the discipline of children.

# CHAPTER 3. A VOICE OF DISCIPLINE FROM AFRICAN, HINDU, ISLAM AND JEWISH RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

In my research journey, listening and writing to the voices of the religions that differ from my own religion enlightened me a lot. It is very interesting to see on the journey that we have a lot in common, even though we also differ a lot. In my gathering of this literature study of the different religions and their thoughts on discipline I write it with a lot of respect for each religion. Although the religions may differ on some points, I do not want to judge or compare any of them in any means, to each other. If I show some of the differences, it is not to say that one is better than the other – each one is unique in their own way. These are the voices that I chose to study further, as a literature study, after I gathered the narratives from some of my co-researchers - I have a lot of respect for each one of them and for the themes they brought forward in my conversations with them.

I want you, as reader to remember that everyone who's voice is heard in this chapter, whether they are a writer or a co-researcher, are affiliated with the religion they are voicing. Therefore, they may also differ on some of the same views that others may have within the same religion.

## 3.1. Background: African religion

### 3.1.1. An African view of religion

In terms of the interconnectedness of everything in life in the African way of thought, one can say, like Byers (2010:6) put it, that religion is reality and reality is religion. In African thought there is no separation between spheres of reality. The transcendence (God(s), powers, spirits) is just as much part of reality as the visible elements in the world. Religion can never be perceived as a separate fragment focused on a different 'reality'.

The distinction between culture and religion is our western understanding of religion. African Traditional Religion differs with this, for it sees religion as the foundation of all life. Everything in life has to do with religion. This holistic understanding of reality holds that all elements in nature (i.e. animals, plants, rivers, mountains etc.) have religious significance and must be treated with respect (Beyers, J., 2010:6).

I would like to describe the African worldview as a religious worldview. Because in this worldview everything in the world and life is perceived religiously. Beyers (2010:7) puts it nicely when he says that religion is interwoven with human (cultural) existence in the world and that meaning, is always understood in a spiritual way.

Masango (2016:1) says that African spirituality shapes a person in such a way that they grow into the concept of *Ubuntu* (humanness). In other words, an integrated African spirituality is a spirituality in which who we are, and what we do, are intimately related.  In short in an African understanding of religion to be human is to be religious; to live is to be religious (Beyers, J., 2010:7).

## 3.1.2. African world view

## 3.1.2.1. African Traditional Religious Mind-set in general

I had a lot of conversations with Johannes Aucamp (Aucamp J. 2017:5-8) of TOPIA (Training of Pastors in Africa) on the African way of thinking. He designed a few pictures to explain the African world view. I would like to use them to further explain this world view.

In the world today, there are many people that claim to be Africans. This has created real confusion as to what an African is? For clarity sake I would like to agree with

Thabede (2008:233) that African in this context refers to African (black) people who are residents of South Africa and fall within the Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Tsonga and Venda ethnic groups. I would like to make it clear that African in this context excludes the white, coloured and Indian populations residing in South Africa.

I would do this in the same manner as Thabede (2008:233), he says that the exclusion of white, coloured and Indian from the African worldview is based on the understanding that these racial groups have their own unique and distinct worldviews which deserve a separate in-depth enquiry.

### 3.1.2.2. African Traditional Religious mind-set about the world

Aucamp (2017:5-8) explains African thoughts about the universe as that the universe is chaotic and unpredictable, because it is controlled by unpredictable spirits. The African mind-set around time, differs from our western outlook, because the African mind-set focus on the past (backward looking). He uses the term "fatalism" to describe this worldview – this implicates the thought of being trapped in poverty and there is nothing to be done about it.

For the African way of thought history is something that happens to us. That is why al lot of African people would think that they are cursed due to the spirits that control creation and people's lives. Nothing can be done about this. Aucamp described that in the African mind-set work is a curse, and they work to survive. Tribalism is very important, almost like saying "my tribe is better than your tribe".

I understood this when I realised that in the African mind-set women and children are of less value than men. Even though everyone is part of one community there is a hierarchy where to everyone belongs and in this interconnectedness of the hierarchy everyone has its place. Men were superior to women and children.

126

Traditional African view of life
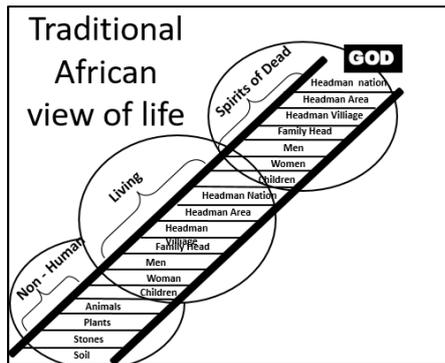
Aucamps first picture will spread some light on this. Here we can see that everything is connected according to its force or power. Like Byers (2010:5) puts it, the holistic worldview of Africa that portrays humanity as being connected to all living and non-living entities. There are two spheres of the universe (the visible and invisible world) in the African mind-set. The maintenance of this balance and harmony is humanity's greatest ethical obligation and determines the quality of life (Magesa 1997:73 as quoted in Byers 2010:5)). Humans live through the connectedness with the life force that God, the Supreme Being, provides.

Everything therefore has a force or power. Everything is clearly ranked from high to low. The higher the rank, the more force or power the person or thing has. The lower the rank, the less force or power the person or thing has. God is the highest rank and non-living things are the lowest.

The higher and lower ranks don't mix. A person only has access to the closest ranks to him/her. In the social structure of African cultures, it is difficult for a person to approach a higher-ranking individual, for instance the village chief (Beyers, J., 2010: 5). Therefore, intermediaries are necessary.

In the African worldview there is a spiritual bond between humans, animals and plants. That's why animals, plants, stones and soil are also included in Aucamps picture. For Beyers (2010:6) the African understanding of religion is an understanding of the connectedness of all things.

The other side of the coin is that humans are part of the world where spirits and gods reside. Religion is therefore not a separate entity existing to be defined apart from life (Beyers 2010:7) it would rather be seen as part of everything.

Masango (2016:6) has written about this when he says that the difficulty of some Africans speaking to a hierarchy is a problem in certain rural areas. They use a system of Induna's or mediators, especially when they speak to a king. That same process of communication was brought into Christian practices by some of them.

From the African mind-set, people find it difficult to talk directly to a higher being without a spokesperson. When they share their problems, they will always seek a mediator, because they feel that they are talking to someone who is not their equal.

If we think about the concept of hierarchical structures (of African world ancestors), it makes sense that one can only speak to the King (God) through ancestors or mediators, especially the good ones who lived life to the fullest (Masango 2016:6).

With that in mind, we need to understand that only good role models are respected, especially those who have shared their good behaviour with others in the village. The moral code and prescriptions for an ethical life are found in the tradition (Beyers, 2010:3) and therefore also the culture and the religious outlook on life.

### 3.1.2.3. African Traditional Religious Mind-set about God
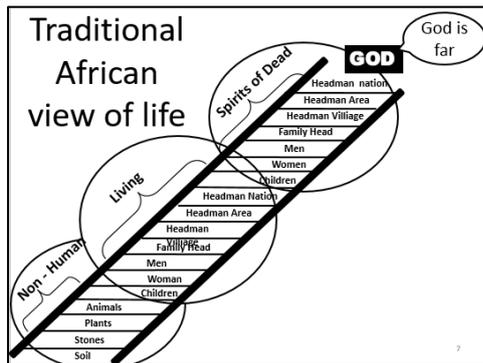


Aucamp's (2017:5-8) second picture takes the explanation of the African World view further to explain how God is seen in African traditional thoughts. Byers (2010:4) like Aucamp, also says that God takes the highest possible position. He describes that the African mind-set sees God as being far away.

Other thoughts on how the African mind-set sees God is that he doesn't care about people, that he doesn't want to heal them, and that they cannot sin against God, and that God can't judge them. Byers (2010:3), points out that the structure of African Traditional Religion is based on morality. Morality originates with God and flows into the ancestors. Aucamp shows in his picture that the realm of non-living, the living and the spirits of the dead are all part of the reality, in the African mind-set.

For Beyers (2010:4) the conviction that reality as perceived by humanity is merely a part of reality, and the fact that an invisible spiritual world co-exists with the visible world characterises African Traditional Religion as animistic. For him the spirits of the deceased ancestors reside in this deistic and dynamistic spiritual realm.

129

## 3.1.2.4. African Traditional Religious Mind-set about Spirits, Magic, Witchdoctor, Ancestors
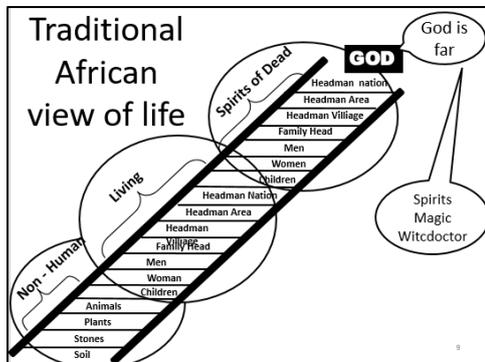


### 3.1.2.4.1. Who are the ancestors

African people talk about visiting ancestors and expecting them to do something.

The ancestors are mainly seen as the spirits of the dead family members or of the lineage or clan. Beyers (2010:4) states that they automatically acquire a kind of supernatural power. This way of thinking is based on the dynamistic and animistic worldview in Africa. From a psychological point of view, it seems as if there is a close bond between ancestors and descendants. (Beyers 2010:5) In this light I want to look at the ancestors, as individuals frequently consult the ancestors for advice on daily decisions in the African culture.

For Thabede (2008:239) the natural relationship between the ancestor and the earthly descendants is usually that of parent and offspring. Children consider their parents and grandparents as their direct ancestors. He also states that the ancestors are regarded as positive, constructive and creative presences. They can mete out punishment when they have been wronged or ignored.

Beyers (2010:4) agrees with this in saying that the same ancestors that can bestow gifts of good fortune can also cause harm and misfortune for those who neglect to acknowledge the ancestors.

Beyers (2010:5) calls ancestors "companions on the journey of life". For Africans, life is the rhythmic progression through the stages of life. Therefore, to assist the successful completion of the cycle of life, the ancestors act as guides on this journey. Ancestors have set the example of a successful completion of the process. Now they can provide advice on how to travel on this journey. (Beyers 2010:5) By ignoring the ancestors, one demonstrates arrogance and self-reliance during the journey of life. Neglecting the ancestors in this way is punished with misfortune.

### 3.1.2.4.2. What is the role of the ancestors?

#### a) Sacred communication and mediation

Ancestors remain in contact with descendants for a long time, and some believe that they still take part in the daily routine of the family. Ancestors are mostly acknowledged for up to four or five generations, whereupon the memory of these ancestors dies out and they are considered to be truly dead (Beyers 2010:4).

Ancestors are, from a higher hierarchical position as humans, inferior to God and can therefore act as mediators between God and humans. Ancestors are not seen as divine or godly, but rather as spirits around us, it is therefore also possible for them to worship God (Beyers 2010: 5). They act mainly as mediators between God and humans.

### b) The privilege to be an ancestor

As seen by the pictures of Aucamp and also stated by Masango (2016:7) the African world has always been an interaction between the world of the living and the dead. The process sometimes even begins even before the last breath of the elderly has been breathed out.

Masango (2016:7) gives an example when he tells the story about elders, in certain villages, that become living ancestors as they reach the prime age in their lives. They already then, become spiritual advisers to the youth. This starts by them sharing their spiritual gifts or insights while they are still alive, and then proceed to do so when they pass on to the other life. At the point of death or passing to another world, some of the villagers believe that they (ancestors) share the image and likeness of God - In short, they are closer to God (Masango 2016:7).

Ancestors need to be good models for human behaviour. The living relies on them to educate them (the living) on proper social behaviour (Beyers 2010: 4). Masango (2016:7) describe that life plays an important part in forming a good person, especially towards entry into the world of ancestors. That is why living a good life, as well as sharing your values with others, creates a good personality that will remain within villagers even when you have died.

Masango (2016:7) further explains that living a good life as well as sharing your good values with villagers, even when you have died, leaves good memories that are internalised and used when the difficulties of life approach. Africans can then during these times of struggle, use the wisdom shared by good ancestors. Masango (2016:7) concludes that the passing on of knowledge or wisdom from the ancestors to the living, creates a world of humanness (*Ubuntu*) among other people.

132

Masango (2016:5) takes this further by saying that there is a great belief among Africans that if a person lived a good life and dies (divine life), that person, according to African belief systems, becomes a good ancestor. He or she can then connect a person to higher powers.

For Beyers (2010:4), to become an ancestor is not a given - not all the living has the privilege of becoming an ancestor. He describes the two conditions that are identified by Sarpong (cited in Stinton 2004:134–135 in Byers 2010:4). These two conditions are, (1) The person must pass through all stages of life to attain adulthood, which is only considered to arrive once one has had children and therefore transmitted life and (2) that the person must die a natural death. Death by accident, suicide, unclean diseases or in childbirth is not considered a good death (Beyers 2010:4).

Masango (2016:7) agrees with that, saying that not everybody becomes an ancestor in the true African life. Those who lived bad lives can never be considered as ancestors when they die. In African thought, death does not represent the end of human existence, but rather a change in its status. The notion of death creates a continuity between the living and the dead.

### c) Guardians of traditions

It would seem as if ancestors function as the social conscience of a community (Beyers 2010: 4). The norms and moral values given by the ancestors leads the living to live a proper life (Magesa 1997:35). The example set by the ancestors ensures a harmonious community where everybody knows and understands their place and function. In doing so, there is continuity with the past and the social structure of the extended family is maintained. In this way, the ancestors are guardians of traditions (Mbiti 1990:85).

Morality is also seen different from our western view. Morality is not a selfish action directed at one's own benefit (Thabede 2008: 242). In the community a lot of rites and rituals are celebrated. This happens then as communal activities that occur when the individual celebrates relationships with the other (the community, the transcendental and the self) (Beyers 2010: 6).

### d) Witchcraft

Thabede (2008: 242) describes the belief in witchcraft witches or sorcerers are persons who use their power and the forces of nature to harm other people.

### 3.1.2.5. African Traditional Religious Mind-set about Family and community
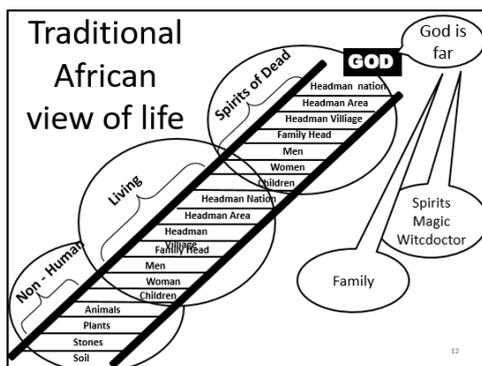


In most of the literature I read on the African mind-set and worldview, there was a strong suggestion that the family and the community is very important. A person is a person through another person like Aucamp put it in one of our conversations. A person's identity is thus not seen as an individual like I see it in the western way of thought. A person is defined by his/her family and community.

You cannot have an identity without belonging to the group. The group is also then the place where religion happens. The membership to a social community

immediately means membership of a religious community. This means that religion binds and not divides the community.

The African worldview consists of a lot of rituals and rituals thus become the symbolic actions that define the relationships in which humans stand; not only relationships with the divine, the ancestors or spiritual beings, but also societal relationships with other humans and with nature and everything therein (Beyers, J., 2010:7).

Beyers (2010:5) describes it that the sanctity of the community stretches across the borders of life and death. Every generation and every individual are thus merely a part of a never-ending chain that stretches back into the past and forward into the future.

This is a very important way of thinking, because the connection with the past places the responsibility for the continuation and preservation of the traditions of the past on the shoulders of the current community. Therefore, in the African way of thinking, life almost never ends; so also does the continuity of the religious heritage which knows no beginning and no end.

Beyers (2010:5) goes further to say that there is sanctity in a unified society. African Traditional Religion exhibits a specific social understanding of the place of the individual in community. There is a dynamic natural bond between the individual, the extended family, the clan or the tribe, and the ancestors, nature and God (Beyers 2010: 5). In African thought, individuals can only exist when they are part of a group.

## 3.2. Background: Hindu religion

In her article about moral education and the Hindu Rashtra, Peggy Froerer (Froerer, 2007:1046) notes that being a good Hindu does not depend very much on what individuals think or what scriptures they revere, but it does depend on what they do.

Therefore, she says that one could argue that it is the acting out and 'doing', or performance of discipline, that plays into the creation of a disciplined child, more than the actual ideological message, the understanding of which will come later on.

### 3.2.1. Children in the Hindu religion

When I read more about the way the Hindu religion looks at children it became clearer to me why they choose for upliftment rather than corporal punishment. Menon (2013: 215) writes that Hindu people idealise young children as being close to divinity and therefore deserving of every indulgence: children are the epitome of innocence (*saralata*), unaware of the entanglements and responsibilities of life. This makes it clear that the Hindu religion sees children as being very precious and therefore they need to be taken care of very well.

For Manjrekar (2001:353) the child's place in the family, community and nation is very important. The Hindu religious writings claim that the child is the centre of all our aspirations. For them, the child is the protector of their country, *dharma* (religion) and culture.

The development of their culture and civilisation is implicit in the development of the child's personality. It's so important that they say that a child today holds the key for

tomorrow. Therefore, to relate the child with its land and its ancestors is the direct, clear and unambiguous mandate for education for them.

They believe that they must achieve an all-round development of the child through education and *sanskar* i.e. inculcation of time-honoured values and traditions. Therefore, the discipline of children is about teaching the children the values and traditions of the ones that has gone before them. Out of this we can realise why the Hindu religion disciplines their children with a lot of love, respect and care (Manjrekar 2001:353).

Mardemootoo (2009:2) makes an interesting point, when she says that Hindu children are always treated with great respect and awe, for one does not always know who they are. For they may be incarnations of a grandmother, grandfather, aunt or uncle, dearly beloved mother, sister, brother, respected father, a yogi or rishi returned to flesh to help humankind spiritually.

She says that as parents and teachers, we must ask, 'Who are these souls? What is their destiny to fulfil in this life? How can I help?' Parents love their children, or at least they should, and the principles of *ahimsa*—non-violence and no hurtfulness, physically, mentally or emotionally—do apply in the parent-child relationship.

### 3.2.2. Hinduism as a monism

For us to understand this better we need to look at the Hindu religion. Devega & Gaurkee (2012: 72-73) helps us to understand this better. They describe Hinduism as a monism. For them monism is the belief that there is one essence or ultimate reality, Brahman, which is within many forms. It is important to note that this should not be confused with monotheistic traditions in which one god is worshipped.

137

With monotheisms, the concept of God is intact and separate from all other spirits. With Hinduism, on the other side, Brahman is so huge that it would be impossible to worship; therefore, Hindus worship many deities who represent different attributes of Brahman. Hindus can fully encounter the divine, by breaking down the parts of Brahman into many unique identities. They describe that their deities have human-like appearances as well as those who look like animals, they are both male and female deities as well.

### 3.2.3. No evil or hell in Hinduism

Devega and Gaurkee (2012:73) also notes that in Hinduism, there is no evil or hell, though there is an acknowledgement of demons. Also, this is seen in another light than we westerners see it – for demons are not defined as evil; rather they reject their religious duty (*dharma*) and instead act selfishly. This selfishness distinguishes them from *devas* (the Hindu deities), who are flawed and sometimes makes mistakes, but who still ultimately submit to *dharma*. So even though Shiva is the god of destruction, that doesn't mean that Shiva is evil; rather, this focus on the destruction is merely an acknowledgement that things come to an end. (Devega & Gaurkee 2012:.74).

Also, the concept of karma is seen differently from what we as westerners see it, for it is not just the idea of 'what goes around comes around'. For Hindus, the concept of karma is rather more complex. In a person's life, both positive and negative things happen as a natural consequence of that person's actions, not only in this life, but past lives as well.

In Hindu thought these positive and negative consequences are the result, not necessarily of whether a person has been 'good or bad', but rather of how well he or she has observed his or her religious duty, or dharma.

### 3.2.4. Darma, Samsara and Moksha

This *dharma* is also a concept that we must keep in mind if we think about discipline. A person's *dharma* is determined by his or her caste and life stage. *Dharma* will guide the choices of a person in gaining positive karma, and minimising negative karma.

One of these convictions is the belief in the repetitious transmigration of the individual soul (*atman*) in a cycle of birth, death, and rebirth (*samsara*). Another central belief is that life means mainly suffering. Therefore, reaching salvation (*moksha*) from that cycle and becoming one with the world soul (Brahman) – i.e., the absolute reality behind the visible and misleading phenomena of the world – is the ultimate goal of the Hindu practitioner.

The driving force behind the process of *samsara* is the accumulated sum total of the individual's good and bad deeds (karma). This quality of a person's karma is subject to the natural law of action and reaction, of cause and effect. Good karma is achieved by living according to the cosmic law of being (*dharma*).

In the cycle of samsara, the atman is reincarnated and given repeated opportunities to build positive karma. Over several lifetimes, the atman that has eliminated negative karma will be liberated from samsara and reunited with Brahman. This liberation is called *moksha*.

Many Hindus focus less on the quest for *moksha* and more on the life of the religion, which includes ritual practice, holiday celebrations and community interaction.

Usha Menon (Menon, 2013:203-204) writes about this, when he writes about the Odia Hindus. He notes that throughout the life course, through daily practices

139

(*nityakarma*) and life cycle rituals (*samskaras*), Odia Hindus regulate, manipulate and transform themselves. For him, realising that people are always mixed—the consequence of living in this world and continually exchanging substances with one another—Odia Hindus of the temple town recognise the sheer impossibility of making radical separations or perfect purifications. They see impurities to be part of everyday life and while most humans alternate between relative purity (*suddhata)* and relative impurity (*asuddhata*), the attempt is always to move toward the former rather than the latter.

## 3.2.5. Chakkarath

According to Chakkarath (2005:35-36), the term "Hinduism" refers to innumerable sects, mainly on the Indian subcontinent, that follow many different ideas, but share some central convictions which are derived from a vast corpus of sacred writings (with the Vedas and the Upanishads at the core).

Chakkarath (2005:42) states that according to Hindu psychology, human development begins at conception and continues until one reaches salvation (*moksha*) from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth (*samsara*). In contrast to western assumptions, Hindu theory presupposes not only one, but thousands of lives that each individual goes through. Thus, it does not acknowledge death as the end of a person's existence.

Chakkarath (2005:43) has another way of thinking about Hindu childhood. According to Chakkarath (2005:43) it seems that the Hindu model regards childhood primarily as a stage of physical, not mental, development. This is very different from more recent western theories about child development.

Some researchers (e.g., Saraswathi & Ganapathy, 2002) have interpreted the indulgent attitude of Indian caretakers towards their children as an expression of the

140

view that children are considered divine and nearly perfect during their first years. However, against the background of Hindu views as outlined above, the child can also be seen as the result of karma-directed processes and therefore having deficits.

These deficits are characteristic of the human condition and cannot be overcome before the child is capable of understanding the concept of duty and how it is related to the important goals in life. It seems that the child is not considered a person before he/she is able to study and understand what the scriptures convey. That is why early adolescence marks the first stage in the Hindu model of human development.

Since the Hindu teachings convey many of the intellectual beliefs of Hinduism as well as a system of morals upon which the society's code of conduct is founded, it is not surprising that adolescence is regarded as the key period for moral development. Also, it is the period in which the adolescent learns to set, pursue, and maintain personal goals. Since very little research has been done on this topic in India, it is unclear whether or not the goals set by adolescents correspond with the main aims in life as derived from Hindu worldview and ethics. The main developmental tasks in the second stage (early adulthood) are to get married, have children, and support a family.

### 3.2.6. Discipline starts at home

Children must be taught at home how to portray themselves. The foundation is laid and taught at home. Especially in their houses it is important to show that they are Hindus. Most Hindus have household shrines. Devega & Gaurkee (2012:77) describes the household shrine as typically devoted to one central deity and contains a picture or statue of that deity.

141

### 3.2.7. Code of conduct

Since one of the main aspects of *dharma* is the representation of a just world in which everything has a precisely defined place and function, each Hindu must follow certain rules and norms and fulfil his or her duties. This well-defined code of conduct involves doing that is right for the individual, the family, the caste (*jati*), the society, and the universe.

The rules of conduct have been laid down in various *dharma shastras*, compilations of laws that cover the realms of religious and social life in order to give Hindus orientation throughout their life course. The most famous among these is the *manava dharma shastra*, said to be written by Manu, a sage who lived thousands of years.

This short sketch of some of the basic tenets of the Hindu worldview may be sufficient to understand why Hindus themselves call it *sanatana dharma*. This approximately translates to "eternal rules" and does not mean a religion in the western sense of the word, but rather a code of conduct.

### 3.3. Background: The Islam religion

During my time of reflection, I went to see an Imam in Pretoria to talk to him about the conversations I had with the Islam family in Durban. He explained the Islam religion in terms of child discipline to me.

He told me that the prophet Mohammed explained – all of you (Islam believers), are a shepherd and every shepherd is going to be asked about his flock. Everyone will be asked about their responsibilities. That means everyone have responsibilities on

their shoulders. Everyone at the day of judgement will be asked about his or her responsibilities.

The husband in the family is responsible for the house and in the same way the wife is responsible for taking care of everything in the house - everything that happens in the house. He further explained that the children grow up according to what they see. He said that most times parents can be blamed because the small ones, are the small ones even in the brain. There is nothing that they won't hear, unless you teach them this is good, and this is bad. Because for them everything is the same.

For him parental teaching is well known in Islam. The Islam thought describes it that if the tree is small it's much easier to make it right. If the tree is bent and its smaller you will be able to make it straight, but if the tree grows up then it is really difficult to make it straight because it has already grown. You can't move the tree then. That's why they say you have a responsibility. It is the responsibility of the parents.

Parents should always be the example. He emphasised that the Quran does explain, indeed you have a very good example from the prophet of Allah Mohammed.

In the other verses they have an example from Abraham, also the prophet of Allah. In Islam, whatever these people, teach them, they are the people they can always follow. He told me that Allah sent them to us for this purpose to guide us to do good things, and to stop us doing wrong things. They came, they showed them everything. In the same way parents are the people that most of the children, when they are in the smaller age group, look up to. Whatever the parents do in the house the children see. If the parents are doing good things, the children see it, and also do it themselves, especially in the part of remembering God.

The Imam told me that children are meant to do good things, they are not corrupted. He said that if the parents are therefore *"not smoking inside the house, not doing*

143

*drugs in the house, and therefore setting a good example -then the children will automatically follow their ways"*. The Imam refers here to parents setting a good example and not doing drugs in a home where children lives. According to the Imam the words we use have more power and have more effect, especially if the person says it honestly and truthfully. People's actions speak loader than words. He told me the following story that I wrote down, in my own words, to explain it further:

*You see there was one of the companions of the prophet in the name of Alli. So this companion, Ali, may God be pleased with him, there was a time, that a woman, or a person, came to him, o please Ali, leader of the believers, I've got a request for you.*

*So he says "What is the request?" She says, "You know what, my children are overeating sweets, so I want you to give him some advice". At that time, he had a sweet in his mouth. And he tells the woman, "You must come tomorrow, I will give good advice." So tomorrow came. The women went with the baby to him. And she says, "I have brought the baby now, what do you say?" So he says, "O, son don't overeat sweets. Because sometimes they can be harmful to your body." Then this woman was shocked. She said: "Yesterday when I came it was easy for you to say the same thing. But today you come in and you give me the same advice." So he said, "Yes I'm giving the same advice, because yesterday, when I wanted to give the advice, when you asked me for the advice I had sweets in my mouth. Now if I was going to give advice while sweets are in my mouth it was not going to have any affect because I am in the same way." From that day when we give advice we do the same.*

The Imam told me that when someone came with a problem like that to him, it will be the day that he will restrict himself from eating lots of sweet things. As long as he is not doing the thing the person has a problem with, he knows his words are going to have a lot of affect. For him it is the same way in the home, if the father or if the mother is not doing anything, they're not doing drugs, they're not into drugs, if they give advice to the child, saying, "You know my child doing drugs is very bad, it will destroy you, it will damage your life it will give you wrong impact in any way", if the parents are not doing it and they are giving this advice to the children it will be easy

144

for them to copy. But if the parents are always into drugs then he will be calling the child, saying: "Don't be doing drugs. It won't work it won't even have an effect".

### 3.3.1. Discipline starts at home

For the Imam the beginning of everything is at home. They say charity begins at home. For everything must start from there.

Abdullah (2017:73-74) agrees with the Imam. He says that obedience nevertheless is simple and easy. For him the child needs training and practise for how to obey. The Islamic method of education commences by laying down fundamental rules that concord with the children's development for training about obedience putting into consideration the mental and physical ability with the children. With regard to training for prayer the prophet (peace be upon him and his descendants) said: "Order your children for prayer when they attain seven years of age and beat for leaving it when they attain nine years of age" (a quote by the Imam from his holy scriptures). What is meant by beating is either the real beating or psychological punishment even though the punishment has a negative effect on the child, but the effect is temporal and will quickly seize to exist.

Abdullah states that it is impossible to consider it harmful compared to the greater advantage that is training for prayer (Abdullah, I 2017:73-74). The Imam went further in saying that it is better that the training should not be difficult for the child because it leads to disinclination from prayer and creates psychological partition between him and prayer.

Abdullah (2017:73-74) agrees with this. He says that it is incumbent on the parents to observe the physical and psychological preparedness of the child and don't burden them with what they are not able, you should commence with them the compulsory prayers and not recommended ones. If they are trained and familiarity

145

occurs between them and prayer, they will be able for others if when advanced in age.

Another point from Abdullah (2017:75) is that it is recommended to train youth for good deeds like giving of Alms (*Sadaqah*) to the poor and needy.

### 3.3.2. Child discipline in Islam

Islam, (2015:21) notes that the Islam religion emphasis parents to discipline their child but physical and corporal punishment may not be appropriate for correcting. He quotes Allah which reminds us that, "Believers, there are enemies to you from among your spouses and your offspring, so beware of them. But if you forgive and overlook their offences and pardon them, then surely Allah is Most Forgiving, Most Compassionate." (Quran 64:14), the prophet also advises us to be kind and affectionate to child, he said: "He is not one of us who does not have mercy upon our young, nor knows the honour of our elders." Therefore, Islam believers should avoid corporal punishment as much as possible.

Alternative techniques of disciplining the child are available, such as; giving advice, temporary separation, admonition, warning, withdrawing rewards, denial of play time and so on. One or more of these penalties are much more effective for the child than corporal punishment.

### 3.3.3. Islam is a way of life.

When I talked to the Imam, he also emphasised this. He also said that everything is based on the Quran. Another name for the Quran is the *Hadiv*. It contains the actions and the words of the prophet Mohammed.

146

He told me the following story according to the *Hadiv.* He told me that, one day they asked the prophet's wife, "Can you tell me about the prophet? What is the behaviour of the prophet?" The wife of the prophet then said: "The behaviour of the prophet was that of the Quran". In other words, whatever the Quran says you need to follow it - that is what life is about.

The Quran is the book that reveals the life of Islam and can be understood to be the Word of God revealed to the prophet Muhammad, the "Messenger of God," the honoured founder of Islam. The Quran is believed to be God's revelation to humankind. Although the Quran states that Allah communicated with prophets recognised by Jews and Christians, both considered "People of the Book," the Quran is God's final, immutable revelation, and consequently, the primary source of *shari'a* (Hodge 2017:2).

According to Hodge (2017:5) for the Muslim, God is at the centre of existence (Altareb, 1996). God is understood to be omnipotent and personal. Thus, nothing happens to the Muslim apart from God's will (Husain, 1998 as quoted in Hodge 2017:5).

The Imam said that a person can only have life if you are connected to your God. The only time you will get peace is if you are connected to your creator. That is why in the Quran there is a verse where Allah says you that should know everything with the remembrance of Allah, this is the only time that the heart will get tranquillity and the heart will get peace. It can only happen when you have connected yourself to Allah. Without that, life for him is nothing.

### 3.3.4. The mosques and the Madrassas

From the mosques side they always tell the parents to send the children to *madrassa. Madrassa* is like their time, when we teach them about our religion. There

147

they teach them what the prophet used to do and how the prophets used to stay in the world. They teach them how the companions of the prophets used to live in the world. How they followed the prophet. For the Imam it is the only way - When children know their religion, when they know how the prophet used to live they will never have any problem. They will learn how to respect. They will learn how to be humble. They will learn how to walk. They will learn how to eat. They will learn what to eat. They will learn what not to eat. They will learn what to do and what not to do. If they learn all these things they will exactly know what is wrong and what is right.

Gatrad and Sheikh (2000:1) say that life's very purpose then is to realise the divine, a purpose that is achievable only through a conscious commitment to the teachings of Sacred Law. They describe the Sacred Law for Muslims as an all-embracing entity, dealing with all aspects of human existence. For Hodge (2017:1), Islam is not so much a belief system as a way of life that unifies metaphysical and materialistic dimensions. The word Islam means submission, specifically submission to Allah, the supreme and only God. Individuals who practice this submission are called Muslims.

Out of gratitude for Allah's goodness and compassion, Muslims seek to follow the straight path of God's precepts, the *sharia*, which governs all aspects of life. In essence, Islam provides adherents with a discrete meta-narrative, a grand totalising story that provides a unique lens through which to understand reality.

### 3.3.5. Islamic manners

The Imam told me that in Islam all the rules are part of their religion. He gave me the example of the wearing of specific clothes for women. This is of the covering they do, it is part of their religion. Because in Islam they believe that the ladies, the women are counted as the gold. He told me that if he takes gold in his hands and walk down the street, he believe he will come back without a hand. Because people would grab it. Now when he has a wife and wants to go out and walk with her, she must be covered. When he then later takes it off at home, he knows she is safe. In the same

way in Islam they teach the women, that at least when she's leaving the house she must cover her body. She must cover her body in such a manner that gives her dignity and honour. It must not be something that when you see, you see right through it. They don't do that. It must also not be something that when she wears it, it's so tight that you can see her body through it. And they don't allow them to wear anything short. If they wear it and goes out they are disobedient.

For him it's because a lot of bad things are happening, because they are leaving Allah and the ways of Islam. In living the Islam way, a lot of women are safe. Women are safe as long as they are obedient to the rules of Allah - to the rules of God. In the house a woman can even wear shorts. She is free to wear whatever she wants to wear. But the moment that she is going to be in front of men, this is the rules.

What was also interesting for me was the use of Allah's name constantly. The Imam explained it by saying: "In anything you do you mention the name of Allah. If you do this you are saying that you are under the protection of Allah. Allah is looking at you."

### 3.3.6. Accountability and judgement:

I asked the Imam: "What happens when someone does something wrong?"

He replied they give the child advice, wherever they can help. Most important they try to talk to the parents.

I would like to give the Imam's reflection on accountability in the next paragraphs.

The Imam explained that Allah created death and life. Allah gave us life for a purpose, to test us to see which one of you is going to do something good. If you do well it is known that you will go to paradise. If you do badly it is known that you will

149

go to hell. In Islam they say that we belong to Allah and to him we shall return. Life is thus the journey from Allah to Allah.

So, whatever you are doing here on earth you must remember that you are on a journey. You are going to Allah. Whatever you do here, you are going to be asked about there, in the next life. Because in Islam they believe that when you die, you leave this world. It doesn't mean everything is finished.

There is a life where a person is going to be asked about what he has done while he was living here. You go from here to the other life where you get everything there according to what you did here. If you did something good here, then wherever you are going is perfect. But if everything you did here was wrong and you did a lot of wrong things, then you have to face it in the life hereafter. In Islam, all parents are going to be asked what they did here in this life.

I also asked the Imam what is paradise and what is hell in Islam?

He explained it as follows: In Islam we believe that most of the time Allah says: whoever stays in this world, without in the remembrance of Allah - Allah says he would make his life horrible. A person, whoever stays in the paths of Allah, he will always have peace in his heart. He will have a good life.

Jena is the paradise in Islam. According to Islam paradise is the place that Allah prepared for those who do good things in this life. It is the place that Allah prepared for those who have done good things. There will be a day of judgement where all will be asked about their life in this world. In paradise there are homes and there are places that Allah has prepared.

The Quran explains this. Allah says, give glad tidings, give goodness, to those who do good things and believed in Allah. In paradise they are going to have gardens and palaces and everything. There will be rivers moving in the gardens of milk and water and good things. There is no more working there. A person is going to be given everything there, that no one ever received, and no one can give. There a person will be enjoying everything when they are in paradise. There will be things that no human has ever seen before or crossed our minds before.

There are things that Allah explained and other things that he didn't explain, because it is beyond our thinking and imagination. The angels will be feeding the people in paradise.

The Quran also explains that men who do good things will have a good wife there in paradise. The women who have done well in this life would not have their monthly period. They will be beautiful ladies there. These ladies who have done good things will be more beautiful than the ladies Allah has prepared for the men. You will have in paradise everything your heart wishes. The believers of Islam that have done good will be there for ever.

But if you have done bad things you will have to be punished in the fire of *jehanam*. The Quran explains that a bad person is going to be thrown in there. Allah says that all who believe must prevent themselves and families from the fire of *jehanam*. Its fuel will be human beings and there is going to be stones. Allah says in that fire he's got angels.

Those angels who are guarding it do not disobey Allah. Whatever Allah tells them to do - they do it. Those angels are so brave, that they are harsh. No matter how much you scream no matter how much you cry they won't have mercy on you. Allah explained that our fire in this world is just like a portion of the heat that that fire has.

That fire is seventy times hotter, than the fire here on earth. Whenever a person's skin is finished burning, Allah will give them another skin. A person that is going to be there is not going to have life or death -It will be in between. But you will be burning there forever. The Quran explains that in the fire of *jehanam* there are many things to punish human beings.

There will be no nice food there. The food will be like thorns. Those thorns will get stuck in your stomach. The water that will be given to drink is going to be very very hot. When a person drinks it, he is going to be cleaning his intestines. The intestines are going to come out the other side. And then you will again get intestines. The punishment Allah is going to be giving you, will be forever.

He ended out conversation about accountability and judgement by saying that everything starts here in this world. Sometimes the punishment can even start here before you die.

### 3.3.7. Emulating the prophet Mohammed

The Imam has put it a different way, he said that in everything we do we follow the Quran. He explained it through the words of the prophet Mohammed. Before he left the world he said: I have indeed left behind two things: 1st the book of Allah, the Quran and the 2nd thing the way of the prophet. In other words, the ways and the actions of the prophet, what he used to do, how he stayed with his family. If you follow these things. Then you will never go astray. Whatever they do in life - they follow the prophet Mohammed and they follow the Quran. But not only the one prophet, have they followed all the prophets, from Adam to Mohammed, even Jesus.

Abdullah (2017:79) wrote about emulating the past ones. From this point of view the prevailing necessity to emulate is that of the past righteous ones, they are the prophets, the Imam from the Ahlulbait, the righteous ones among the companions

and the followers and the righteous ones among the religious scholars. They are top in virtue, honour and magnanimous in status. Among the factors that assist in likening and emulating them is their spiritual effect on different categories of people that glorified and sanctified them.

A child can be a great human being based on whom he is following and imitating.

### 3.3.8. Relationships

### 3.3.8.1. The Parent–child relationship

For Gatrad & Sheikh (2000:3) the parent-child relationship is considered the most important of all human relationships, this forming a reference point for all other human encounters. Both children and parents have mutual rights and responsibilities.

Love and respect are the guiding principles underpinning this most special of relationships. Any form of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse of children is thus considered abhorrent within Islamic Law. Islamic teachings, however, do recognise that children may at times need to be disciplined, both in their own interests and also in the interests of the wider society, and this may on occasion involve physical punishment.

There are three groups of people that do not count under this law: the sleeper until he awakens, the (male) child until his first wet dream, and the insane person until he can reason.

In terms of the accountability for parents and carers in Islam Ayatullah (2008:13), says that the Islam religion urges adults to encourage children to play and at times

get involved in their play. He also goes on to say that in the eyes of Islam, one of the most important factors contributing to the success of children in various areas, as well as their march towards goodness and prosperity, lies with constant respect, compassion and mercy towards them. Ayatullah (2008:15)

Islam (2015:16) says that the noble duty of parents is guiding the future generation. Islam commands that, duties of parents or guardians are not limited to physical well-being of the child only; they must be vigilant to educational, moral and spiritual development that makes his soul with a clad of piety and the fear of Allah.

Allah says, "O you who believed, protect yourselves and your families from a fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels harsh and severe…" (Quran 66:6)

The Imam describes that Islam is the sole religion which makes moral values, pious feelings and good thinking in any one's heart. A child should be given a decent, adequate, suitable, reasonable and satisfactory religious, moral and ethical supervision to sustain its whole life. They should possess a real concept of right and wrong, real and false, correct and incorrect, appropriate and inappropriate and so forth.

The prophet said, "Honor your children and educate them well." In this regard Al-Nawawi said: The father must discipline his child and teach him what he needs to know of religious duties. According to Al-Shaafa'i, if there is no father, this teaching and guidance is also obligatory upon the mother, because it is part of the child's upbringing and the costs for teaching may be reserved from the child's own wealth. (Al-Nawawi)

It has been narrated that the prophet said: "… A man is a guardian over the members of his family and shall be questioned about them (as to how he looked after their physical and moral well-being). A woman is a guardian over the household of her husband and his children and shall be questioned about them (as to how she managed the household and brought up the children).." (Muslim 4576) This is

154

authentic indications of Islam that, virtuous deeds of a righteous son will continue in the hereafter for his parents.

The Messenger of Allah said, "When a man dies, his deeds come to an end, except for three: A continuous charity, knowledge by which people derive benefit, righteous son who prays for him." (Muslim 4076) Al-Qurtubi said, parents (He) should teach child what is halaal (lawful) and what haram (unlawful) is and make him avoid sin, and teach him other rulings. (Islam 2015:20)

For the Imam it is very important that the Islamic home has books. Parents are advised to have some child appropriate Islam books. Whatever the children are taught at the *madrassa* must also be taken home. He advises that parents take 15 minutes every day, reading to their children, to give them some Islamic stories and to teach them about their religion. If the house is Islamic it is very difficult for children to do wrong things. All the stories will be giving them the way of life.

The Imam also told me that one of the most important things in Islam is, that every prayer that parents say for the children is acceptable. The prayers that the parents say for their children will always be accepted by Allah. He told me a story to explain this:

One of the Imams, told this story about himself. He says when he was small, he played with a bird and he broke his leg. When the mother comes, she was very angry. She said: "Why are you treating this animal like this? Why do you do this to this bird? I wish your leg must also be like that. You must also feel how it feels." These words she didn't mean it. But when the child grew up he found that he had a problem which made his leg to be cut off and be amputated.

In the same way, in everything that the parents do, they must not forget Allah. They must sustain and pray. They must pray for their children. Because most of the time Allah is the one that gives everything. If you pray to Allah, Allah can produce

miracles. This is one of the creative things that the parents must always do. The parent's prayers have more effect on their children than any other man's prayers will have.

### 3.3.8.2. Family

For the Imam families in Islam is very important. In Islam they've got to kinds of families. They've got blood families. But on the other hand the prophet also said that a believer and a believer - they are like one body. Therefore, the believers must always be in one unity. As long as people are together, there is nothing that can break it.

Hodge (2017:4) agrees that "family" is often conceptualised broadly to include relatives or even the whole Islamic community. It is the family, most particularly the husband and wife that is understood to be responsible for reproducing spiritual and social values. Thus, family, both nuclear and extended, is essential to the spiritual and social health of the broader ummah.

The Imam told me that Allah says that all of us are going to be asked about our relationships. Breaking relationships in Islam is totally wrong. The prophet explained that this person would never enter into paradise. So, it is very strict in Islam. He says that everyone should be able to tolerate one another. No matter what problem develops the relationship should always be there. The fact that Islam tells parents that they will be held accountable, helps parents to know and remember their responsibility.

### 3.3.8.3. Community

Community is a fundamental Islamic value (Hodge 2017:4). He states that rooted in the belief that all people are equal before God, Muslims tend to emphasise

156

benevolence, care for others, cooperation between individuals, empathy, equality and justice between people, the importance of social support, and positive human relatedness.

### 3.3.9. The Child in Islam

The child is the centre of all our aspirations according to Manjrekar (2011:4)
The child is the protector of our country, *dharma* (religion) and culture. A child today holds the key for tomorrow. To relate the child with its land and its ancestors is the direct, clear and unambiguous mandate for education. We have to achieve the all-round development of the child through education and *sanskar* i.e. inculcation of time-honoured values and traditions.

Islamic Law considers every person who has not reached puberty to be a child for all purposes of religious and legal responsibilities. Childhood under Islamic Law is therefore not strictly defined by age, as different children reach puberty at different ages as a matter of fact. (Almihdar, 2008) However, most jurists have fixed the age of nine for girls and the age of twelve for boys as the minimum age of maturity below which there is an indisputable assumption that majority has not been reached. They have also placed the age of fifteen to be the upper limit for childhood beyond which there is an undisputable assumption that majority has been reached (Islam 2015:3).

### 3.4. Background: Jewish religion

### 3.4.1. *Tikkun Olam* – Gods people are called to restore the world

For Rosenthal *(*2005:239) the Tikkun Olam has become the synonym for social action. Social justice groups everywhere consider their programme as part of *tikkun ha-olam*. For them it is then virtually the equivalent of the struggle for justice and peace, brotherhood and racial equality, and economic opportunity and ecological responsibility.

157

Sacks, J. (1997:10) Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth in 1997, on talking about *Tikkun Olam*, says that there is no formula, no *Shulkhan Arukh*, and no response governing how to be mistaken *ha'olam*. For him, the orthodox community needs not only masters of the law but also *ba'alai nivuah* – people with historical insight. He says that, that is the challenge of our time.

They have done magnificently on the two great challenges of Jewish history: Israel and Jewish children. But now what stands before them is the third great, untouched challenge of *Tikkun Olam* that they, in a secular age, should become role models for spirituality. That they in a relativistic age should be able to teach people once again to hear the objective "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not".

In an age in which religion so often brings conflict he says that they should teach once again that Shalom, peace, is the name of G-d and that the mighty is one who turns an enemy into a friend. If they do these things there will surely come to all of them that experience of living a Jewish life and knowing that those around them, those with whom they have dealings are blessed by that life, and they will return to us saying: you have been a prince or princess of G-d in our midst. He says that to do that will begin to perfect the world.

### 3.4.2. Religious identity

Strong religious identity sets the bar for the morals, values and identity where the child is shaped through discipline. It sets a basis to where the discipline can be measured and how discipline can be achieved.

For Shapiro (Shapiro S, 2015:3), finding our way to a more peaceful world will mean constructing a world that is just more compassionate, more democratic and more reverential of all life. Therefore, he says that education can and should be an important component in pursuing this goal. What and how we teach our children is surely a critical dimension in the social and moral changes that we so urgently need.

But it will mean a bold and radical re-visioning of both the purpose of education and the way we seek to teach.

### 3.4.3. Chinuch (education)

Wolbe (2000:11) agrees with this in saying that *Chinuch* (education), is a mission of the highest priority, a mission whose success has guaranteed the continuity of the Jewish people and its Torah.

He further describes that *Chinuch* is also a responsibility assigned to every father and mother, and one cannot excuse oneself from it, saying "This isn't my job." *Chinuch* is therefore seen as a task that parents naturally long to perform; from deep within themselves, parents yearn to educate their children properly.

Wolbe (2000:11) takes it even further when he says that even though education is a natural yearning and responsibility, it is also a deep wisdom. He explains it with the metaphor of a seed growing into a plant (Wolbe 2000:17-18). He starts by saying that a child is a living creature. If we want something particular to sprout out of this seed, we must be careful to plant precisely what we want, and afterward the seeds will sprout from themselves in a natural process. But his is not the only thing we need to do, because there is also construction. It is impossible to depend on sprouting alone.

Wolbe (2000:18) says that if he builds the child and helps him to acquire *maálos*, but he does not relate to his *koach ha-tzemichah* (innate growth potential) then the child will be like a robot. He will probably do what he must, but he won't possess any internal vitality. When he/she grows up they won't possess individual initiative, since initiative flows from *koach ha-tzemichah*, and the *koach ha-tzemichah* has then long ago withered way and rotted. All that is left is a human robot.

Therefore, if we allow a child to sprout and grow without building him, the result is a wild man. If we build a child without relating to his *koach ha-tzemichah*, we turn him into a robot. *Chinuch* consists of both the *koach ha-tzemichah* and the action of building. That is, we must build a child while cultivating his spiritual potential.

### 3.4.4. The roles of men and women

Dor, A & Cohen-Fridel. (2010:8) says that it seems that beyond cultural differences, women still bear most of the responsibility for home and childrearing. Women assume a greater part in their children's upbringing than do men and do so at the cost of their profession, career, and personal advancement, our findings might insinuate this phenomenon.

It is possible that Jewish and Arab women are still more involved than men in the issue of childrearing and that more than men they attribute more importance to setting clear limits, at the same time providing the child with warmth (authoritative parenting). Accordingly, men better identify with dominance, which is expressed in their preference of authoritarian parenting. (Dor & Cohen-Fridel. 2010:8)

### 3.5. In conclusion

Meylahn (2017:1), said that there is never only one story, but always multiple stories, and if given a chance to be heard, these multiple stories disrupt the dominant story. In our country full of diverse religions, I chose to also listen to narratives on religion and child discipline. These narratives challenged me to look in a new way to my own religious narratives, and to define in detail my own thoughts on my religion and disciplining children. In a way I would say that my dominant Christian narratives on disciplining children was disrupted – in a good way. These narratives that I gathered

160

in my research of other religions than my own, made me look with new eyes at my own way of thoughts. It made me think, but also made me clearly define my thoughts on discipline.

Meylahn (2017:1) also says that to every text, there is more than one interpretation, although there are often interpretations that have the necessary power to dominate, and therefore, it is the challenge of radical hermeneutics, or a narrative approach, to expose the power of dominant interpretations and create a space for alternative voices, or the voices of the Other and the other. In this chapter I voiced the themes that came out of the narratives that I gathered of affiliates of the different religions. It didn't only enrich my research but also the way I think about child discipline and religion. It was and is very inspiring to me, because each one of the co-researchers - whether it was in the literature or in the conversations – made me to define my own way of thoughts in a new, enriching, non-judgemental light.

# CHAPTER 4: A VOICE OF FAMILIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

The uniqueness of South African families is part of the rich heritage of our people's diversity as well as unity. This study would be incomplete without listening to the different voices of families in South Africa.

In this chapter I would like to talk about South African families in general and then describe the different family narratives that are commonly found in South Africa. Thereafter I would like to look at some of the influences on families in South Africa, such as poverty and the legacy from apartheid, HIV/AIDS, absent fathers, female households, Marriage and divorce. I would like to end this chapter by looking at how families and parenting can influence children's behaviour.

## 4.1. Voicing South African families

South African families are unique. They can be a large, multi-generational network of people including children, cousins, grandparents, aunts and uncles who are linked by blood, marriage or ties of co-residence and who share a home (or neighbouring homes). For Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.) (2018:23), a South African family can be two parents and two children in a three-bedroomed house; or separated parents with new partners and an assortment of biological and non-biological children who move between homes; two fathers with an adopted child; a mother with children and grandchildren; or siblings living together.

Although traditionally the family has been defined as a group of people linked through blood, marriage, or adoption, typically centred around a married couple and their dependents and relatives, I agree with Lippman, Wilcox & Ryberg- Bethesda (2013: 3) that non-traditional families are made up of people linked by neither blood nor by marriage that are now established in growing numbers.

They (Lippman, Wilcox & Ryberg- Bethesda. 2013: 3) further describe the family as a core social institution that occupies a central place in the lives of men, women, and children around the world. Families are a source of support, and sometimes an obstacle, for individual and collective achievements. It is also a unit of economic production and consumption, an emotional haven that can sometimes be a source of emotional strain; and a vehicle for extending caregiving and culture across the generations, for better and for worse.

Another description of families by Roman, Isaacs, Davids & Sui (2016:9), describes the family as instrumental in the development of its members and giving meaning to societal constructs, including constructs such as the way marriage is perceived, bearing and raising children, education methods, and the rights and 'obligations' of family members and hence society in general. Within the family, each generation is replaced with the next generation.

The focus of Amoateng & Richter's (2003:244) description of families are that they perform a number of vital social functions, like the socialisation of children and the inculcation of moral and social values; the provision of material and emotional sustenance for family members and care of dependant family members, including children, older persons and sick and disabled individuals; antisocial behaviour and the infringement of taboos; the maintenance of family morale and identity, which creates mutual obligations and responsibilities and the motivation to perform pro-social roles inside and outside the family; and the launch of young people into roles and functions in wider society.

Families are regarded as the building blocks of communities and the source of individual development and identity among young and old members, men and women, providers and dependants (Amoateng & Richter, 2003:244). Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.) (2018:22) state that families are not just about biological relationships and parenting is not simply about reproduction. It serves a social function as one of the great, enduring institutions of organised human life.

Part of South African family uniqueness is the number of distinctive circumstances that not only affect their family structure but also extends to the socio-economic and relational dimensions of families (Roman, Isaacs, Davids, Sui, 2016:10). Some of these circumstances may include (and are not limited to) poverty, substance abuse, unemployment, crime and violence, breakdown of communication, and other social issues, together with the HIV/AIDS pandemic that has also profoundly affected the structure and well-being of South African families.

The South African government has developed a White Paper on Families in South Africa. The focus of the White Paper is on strengthening families. According to Roman, Isaacs, Davids & Sui 2016:10, three key principles are identified in the White Paper on Families in South Africa: the promotion of healthy family life, family strengthening, and family preservation. For Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds) (2018:27) the White Paper defines a family broadly as a societal group that is related by blood (kinship), adoption, foster care or the ties of marriage (civil, customary or religious), civil union or cohabitation, and goes beyond a particular physical residence.

### 4.1.1. Households and families

To understand families in South Africa it is necessary to understand the use of the words: households and families. These two words are used interchangeably to describe certain aspects of families, and it is therefore necessary to understand the differences and commonalities in the use of these two words.

Households are according to Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds) (2018:24), expressions of the material and social strategies of families, used by all or parts of the family at different stages for different purposes, for example to access housing and secure tenure, to access education and income, and to provide care to the very young and the very old.

If one tries to distinguish between the terms: household and family, then "household" could be defined as an arrangement of co-residence with shared consumption and production (even though household members may not be co-resident all the time), whereas "family" would refer to social groups that are related by blood or bonds of marriage, non-marital union, adoption or some other affiliation, and which endure over time and space. Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.) (2018:32-33) state that both constructs may incorporate degrees of kinship, forms of emotional attachment, and relations of dependence and reciprocity. Still "the household" cannot be understood simply as the residential dimension of "the family".

Households and families are dynamic, changing over time with births and deaths, the union and separation of partners and, in the case of households, the arrival and departure of members. Therefore, although co-residence is not necessarily a key characteristic in traditional patterns of family organisation, researchers often use household survey data to study family structure.

## 4.2. The uniqueness of South African Families

Families, like individuals, have a life course and are constantly developing and changing. They expand and contract with births and deaths, they merge and grow through union formation, shrink with dissolution, expand through reunion and develop offshoots as family members move away to form new families of their own.

For Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.) (2018:24), families have intergenerational continuity, and most children grow up from infancy to adulthood within a family, even though they may move between households and have different caregivers at different times of their lives.

Budlender & Lund (2011:926) state that in South Africa, only about 35 per cent of children live with both their mother and father, while at least an equal number live only with their mother.

Most women have children, but many of them do so outside of marriage and with different fathers for successive children. They go further to say that almost one fifth of children have lost at least one parent. About one third of the 12.7 million households conform to the 'nuclear norm' of children and parents, with about one fifth having three generations or more present in one household (Budlender & Lund 2011:926). Many grandmothers take care of their grandchildren, often in the absence of the children's parents.

I agree with Amoateng & Richter (2003:261) that consistent with its multicultural and adaptable nature, there is not one family form that can clearly be identified with South Africa.

We have a multiplicity of family forms in our society, of which two family patterns predominate, namely the nuclear and extended family forms. The nuclear family is culturally further clearly identifiable with whites, while the extended family pattern is identifiable with Africans, Coloured and Indians who exhibit a mixture of the two family patterns. While the analyses of the rural-urban variations in household types suggests that non-family households are likely to increase among all population groups as result of both macro- and micro-social forces, Amoateng & Richter (2003:262) states that most South African households are still family orientated.

It is important to notice in the discussion the uniqueness of families, that the households that are sometimes regarded as particularly vulnerable, such as child-headed households, youth-headed households and skip-generation households (where the middle generation is missing), could apply to many of the other household types (Hall Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds) 2018:35). Therefore, a child- or youth-headed household could be a nuclear family (when two young people have a baby and form a family), a single-person household (if a young person lives alone) or an extended household (if young siblings or cousins live together).

## 4.2.1. Nuclear families

The concept of the nuclear family has never accurately captured typical South African families. Recent research (Roman, Isaacs, Davids & Sui (2016:10); Holborn, Eddy, 2011:5) suggest that there is an increasing prevalence of South African children being raised by a mother in a single-parent (or lone-parent) household, child-headed households, and children living in households with unemployed adults.

When we therefore speak of South African families, we can't refer only to the nuclear family but also need to refer to extended families, lone-parent families, and caregivers and/or guardians. When we speak of South African families, we talk not only of the nuclear family, but also of extended families, as well as caregivers or guardians.

## 4.2.2. Single-parent families

Research carried out by Holborn & Eddy (2011:5) state that in South Africa, the 'typical' child is raised by their mother in a single-parent household. Amoateng & Setlalentoa (2015:44), found that the increasing prevalence of non-traditional family structures in Africa leads to where children are increasingly living in single-parent households, either headed by the father or the mother.

Further research (Hosegood, McGrath & Moultrie 2009:3), showed that the migration of both men and women created separate spheres of living, where the different social, physical, and cultural worlds inhabited by the couple were incompatible or even threatening to each other. In this context, migrant men and women took on other partners and formed second families at the places where they worked.

Women entered the labour force in large numbers and were able to provide for themselves and their children with or without the support of male partners. For

167

Hosegood, McGrath & Moultrie (2009:3) one outcome of this separation was the increase in the instability of marriage, not merely because of physical separation, but by altering the roles of husbands and wives.

One of the biggest challenges for single-parent families according to (Magnuson K, Berger LM, 2009:2) are that the single-parent often faces the dual demands of fulfilling both caregiving and breadwinning roles, which may limit the amount and quality of time they spend with their children.

### 4.2.3. Extended families

The extended household is described by Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds) (2018:35) to include multiple-generation households (for example, children, parents and grandparents) as well as many other permutations, such as a mother living with her child and her sister, or households where cousins are included. These extended households are not necessarily large: a two-person household with a child and her aunt would fall into this category, for example.

Many grandparents assume the role of co-caregivers or primary caregivers, in the context of labour migration and non-marital childbearing (Budlender & Lund 2011:927). In South Africa large numbers of children are being brought up away from their mothers, and in households where they are being taken care of by other (largely female) relatives.

### 4.2.4. Child-headed families

In 2017, about 58,000 children were living in 48,000 households where all the resident members were under 18 years, according to Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.) (2018:36). They further argue that children in child-headed households may be vulnerable in multiple ways: they tend to be extremely poor and have low access to social grants, they may to struggle for access schooling or to achieve

168

academically, they may be vulnerable to violence, abuse and exploitation, and experience high levels of anxiety, stress or grief.

Therefore, it is important that responses and support services for child-headed households distinguish between those that need intervention in their household arrangements (for example by placing children in alternative care) and those where family strategies should be acknowledged but where other services are needed (such as counselling or assisting with access to school and social grants).

Section 137 of the Children's Act defines "child-headed households" differently from the common definition where households consist only of children under 18 years, for it refers to a household in which a child over the age of sixteen has assumed the role of primary caregiver for other children in the household, even if there is an adult living in the household who, for example, is too old or ill to take on that role (Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds), 2018:36).The purpose of the Children's Act definition is to give them legal status and formally to recognise child-headed households as a family form.

A comparison of children's household types over the period 1993 to 2017 by Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds) (2018:35-36) found no increase in the prevalence of child-headed, youth-headed, skip-generation and single-adult households. Rather these household forms, already a small minority, decreased slightly while "extended" household forms increased over the two post-apartheid decades.

There have been persistent and widely held assumptions that parents or adult caregivers are "permanently absent" and that child-headed households are without family support. Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.) (2018:36) state that the dominant narrative about orphans and vulnerable children has suggested that children in child-headed households are mainly orphans, and that they have proliferated because of HIV-related orphaning. While it is true that South Africa has high rates of orphaning, and that the rapid increase in orphaning during the 2000s was driven by HIV, this does not explain the phenomenon of child-headed households.

The research by Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.) (2018:36), has shown that in 2017, 80% of children living in child-only households had a living father and 88% had a living mother - only 5% were double orphans.

This suggests that orphans are overwhelmingly cared for by family members, while child-headed households may be an outcome of family strategies (for example, to access education, or to maintain a rural homestead while adults migrate for work). For Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.) (2018:36) child-headed households can be temporary arrangements, and they are not necessarily without family support. For example, there may be neighbouring relatives, and migrant adults may return. Even in the relatively few cases where children are orphaned and living alone, the "child-headed" status of the household may be transient, just until new family care arrangements are made (Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.), 2018:36).

The research of Holborn & Eddy (2011:5) has shown that levels of violent deaths could help to explain the prevalence of paternal orphans over maternal orphans - more than a third (11 314) of non-natural deaths in 2007 were caused by violence, 87% of which were male perpetrated.

### 4.2.5. Same-gendered families

South Africa has a long history of family life that in the past were sanctioned by law. For Lubbe (2007:265) this has, however, changed over the course of the last decade.

In 1996 South Africa was the first country in the world to safeguard sexual orientation as a human right in its Constitution (Van Zyl 2011:335).

Although members of the gay community have in the past usually been associated with a childless lifestyle, Lubbe (2007:260) states that gay people are increasingly opting for motherhood and fatherhood by creating families of their own or by

continuing to live with their children from former heterosexual relationships. Lubbe (2007:261) notes that a person with a gay orientation or preference is a healthy, normal individual with essentially the same dreams, passions, hopes, fears, ambitions, aspirations, and the possibility of creating a spiritual richness in being alive as anyone else.

Living the life of a gay person is not always easy because of historically negative constructions of homosexual people. For Lubbe (2007:261), every person with a sexual orientation other than heterosexual needs to reconcile his or her sexual orientation somehow with the heteronormativity of society. In the same way that gay people need to do this, so the children of same-gendered parents need to engage in such a process of reconciliation and negotiation.

The research Lubbe (2007:274), has prepared also suggests that same-gendered families present new challenges to the traditional nuclear family as well as to the extended family structure. He argues same-gendered couples have to consciously negotiate agreed definitions of boundaries, meanings, and the attributes of parenthood that they wish to implement in their lives and families.

Same-gendered parents and their children transgress the normative status of heterosexuality in relation to reproduction and the organisation of parenting roles. Activities that are traditionally divided between mother and father needs to be redefined or incorporated. This offers more opportunities for cooperation and creativity, and in doing so demonstrates the viability of non-heterosexual parenting models.

Lubbe (2007:274) makes the argument that we 'do' the family through performing various acts in life, just as we 'do' or perform gender. Just as gender is constructed, so also are families constructed. He therefore argues that both parenting and family

171

are constructed and performed. For him gender and parenting should be regarded as fluid variables that shift and change to suit different contexts at different times.

He ends his argument by saying that the twenty-first century invites societies, as never before, to consider the great variety of possible ways in which people may live out their lives. For him same-gendered families are exemplars of the increasingly rich and diverse forms that modern Western societies are allowing to emerge (Lubbe, 2007:275).

## 4.3. Poverty's influence on families

Poverty can make parenting a very difficult task, and parenting that is harsh and inconsistent can increase the risk that young people continuing to live in poverty. This is because such parenting is more likely to lead to poor health and risk behaviour in children that will negatively affect their ability to perform well at school and find employment.

Many parents in South Africa according to Ward, Makusha & Bray (2015:69) face considerable barriers in their efforts to fulfil the task of parenting. Poverty increases the stress that parents experience when trying to provide for and protect their children, and makes emotionally distant, harsh and inconsistent parenting more likely.

Parents living in poverty are also likely to be poorly educated and thus less able to support their children's educational development. The definition of poverty also reduces the ability of parents to provide adequate nutrition and to access good educational opportunities for children, on a consistent basis necessary for healthy development (Ward, Makusha & Bray 2015:69). Poverty can therefore significantly undermine parenting, decrease the life chances of children, and thereby transmit poverty from one generation to the next.

About 5.6 million children aged between 0 and 17 were living in overcrowded households in 2008, just under a third of all children in this age category. An overcrowded household is defined as one in which there are more than two people for each room in the house (excluding bathrooms but including communal living areas such as sitting rooms and kitchens). This figure has risen by about a third since 2002. Only 34% of children under the age of eighteen were living in households with an employed adult in 2008. In other words, two thirds of children are growing up living in households in which nobody works. Families living in poverty and those who experience unemployment are more likely to have dysfunctional family environments according to Holborn & Eddy (2011:6).

In many African countries, there is a long history of child fosterage practices and household structures are complex and fluid (Young and Ansell, 2003; Notermans, 2008).

From Senegal to South Africa, many families live in large, multi-generational households, especially in rural areas (Bass and Sow, 2006; Schatz and Ogunmefun, 2007). These may be headed by an older or middle-aged male 'patriarch' who is generally expected to provide shelter and financial support, while women are usually responsible for basic household needs, including domestic chores, food production and preparation and caring for children and sick or elderly relatives (Oheneba-Sakyi and Takyi, 2006). Men and women often have separate budgets, investments and different responsibilities for household expenditure, and wives, daughters and other female relatives may have considerable autonomy to earn their own income and to provide for their children.

Children and young people in Africa have long been expected to contribute to the household from an early age, according to gendered and age-based norms of productive and social reproductive work (Evans, 2010). The family home is thus a crucial site where gendered and age-based identities and generational power relations are reproduced and contested (Evans 2015: 5).

173

Processes of urbanisation and economic crisis have led to a substantial increase in marital dissolution in many African countries in recent years, and growing numbers of women head or principally maintain households, particularly in urban areas (Oheneba-Sakyi and Takyi, 2006).

There is also considerable mobility between rural and urban households and intra house hold exchanges of resources. For example, family members of different generations move to live with relatives for temporary or longer periods to gain access to care, material resources, education, training and employment (Evans 2015: 5).

Although the really poor often live outside households (homeless, street children), few data captures and measures their well-being, because not being attached to households makes them statistically invisible.

Many researchers, according to Randall & Coast (2015:162) see poverty, particularly persistent poverty, as fundamentally a household level problem. They (Randall & Coast 2015:172) see household 'openness' as a key dimension of short-term poverty avoidance and a long-term strategy for insuring against poverty by building and consolidating networks of obligation. 'Wealth in people' remains critically important in both urban and rural settings, because successful people attract others. Therefore, coping, would be medium-sized, households may become large households with many dependents because of their (relative) economic success. By becoming larger and absorbing impoverished kin, any relationship between household size/structure and economic security becomes difficult to disentangle.

On the other hand, Randall & Coast (2015:173) state that closed households seem to take three forms: Closed households, with no kin to call upon through bad luck or previous poor management of developing links and obligations, have been observed to struggle to emerge from poverty because of their limited social networks. Others may not seek help because of pride or shame, conflict or tension. Equally, there may be successful households who do not support less fortunate kin because they want

to invest their resources into their own children in order to maximise further success; these may also be more likely to control fertility.

'Wealth in people' remains a powerful social value for open households (Randall & Coast 2015:174). The supporting of vulnerable kin is an obligation for many which may bring potential future benefits. The strong social networks with multiple ties of obligation and support offer good insurance against unknown future perils and the predictable problems of old age and potential incapacity.

Amoateng & Setlalentoa (2015:45) describe a study by Statistics South Africa (2009), which shows even though poverty levels in South Africa decreased between 2000 and 2006, it increased between 2006 and 2009. Specifically, the poverty headcount, based on the food poverty line, a situation which reflected the effects of the global economic recession.

## 4.4. Apartheid's influence on families

The South African family is neither simple to describe nor easy to understand, as a result of South Africa's unique socio-political history and diverse cultures. As Flatø, Muttarak & Pelser (2017:44) puts it, the legacy of apartheid was well-reflected in family disruption.  Historically, South African families, during apartheid, were seen only as 'the white nuclear family', this was not appropriate for the whole of South African families. Roman, Isaacs, Davids & Sui (2016:9) states that for black families, the term 'family' meant being separated from fathers and often mothers too because parents were compelled to leave their families to work in towns.

During the apartheid dispensation in South Africa, social policies and political pressures directly impacted household formation and family cohesion and aggravated the negative impact of urbanisation and industrialisation on the family (Flatø, Muttarak & Pelser 2017:44).

One particular destructive legacy of apartheid on the family was the large number of single-parent families, particularly among black women, that resulted largely from divorce and from pregnancy outside marriage. As a large proportion of children were raised in female-headed families with little financial support, black families during apartheid South Africa suffered considerably more disintegration than families elsewhere in Africa. Goldberg (2013:1) states that family members who were not employed had to remain in rural areas, and men and sometimes women were separated from their children for extended periods of time. In the post-apartheid period, patterns of circular labour migration have continued, accompanied by a rise in female labour migration. Children still rarely accompany migrants, due to the precarious nature of employment and cost of living.

The resulting urbanisation, and subsequent politically imposed residential and work restrictions, affected black families in particular, and reinforced dual urban-rural homesteads and circular migration as organisational mechanisms of economic and social adaption. For Amoateng & Richter (2003:247), it was against this backdrop of colonial domination and racial oppression in society that structural – functionalist family theory, with its evolutionary flavour, held sway.

Children remained in the reserves with family members, while parents faced the daily pain and hardship of not having their own children live with them. Many grandmothers care for their grandchildren, often in the absence of the children's parents.

Where children are living with their parent/s, Budlender & Lund (2011:927) state that fathers tend to play a much smaller role than might be expected. Africans, in adhering to their cultural beliefs about family life and kin relationships, have continued to live in extended families, even in the face of countervailing forced in the urban industrial milieu (Amoateng & Richter, 2003:248).

With respect to demographic dynamics, one major driver is gender-specific migration that results in "left-behind" female heads in the sending area and the creation of households headed by women in the receiving area in the case of female out-

migration. The migrant labour system that characterised the South African economy in the apartheid system is regarded as one of the most important factors that historically contributed to the rapid increase in female-headed households across southern Africa. In addition, the erosion of patriarchal norms and cultural tradition has fuelled a new consciousness of independent living among the youth and single women, in particular (Flatø, Muttarak & Pelser 2017:44).

The hallmark of black family life, between 1948 and the early 1990s, according to Roman, Isaacs, Davids & Sui (2016:9) was centred on arrests, violence, brutality, detentions, murder, and executions by the apartheid government as South Africans strove for liberation of the country, the rights of people, and an end to separatism and segregation.

The late 1980s was a period of profound socio-political change in South Africa. It was clear that the apartheid state was crumbling and, among acts of civil disobedience which characterised 'the struggle', black Africans began to disregard restrictive legislation that constrained where they lived and worked. Very rapid unplanned urbanisation began, and shanty towns mushroomed around formerly white cities and towns. (Richter, Norris, Pettifor, Yach & Cameron, 2007:504)

The family in South Africa was understood in the context of this intellectual tradition for close on a century until well into the late 1980's. Based on the assumption that a Western, independent and isolated nuclear family had evolved from a supposedly complex, multi-generational type, the nucleated family type was held up as the ideal form to which every modern person or group aspired. Within this theoretical tradition, family theory and research sought to define as a family a social unit that comprised a husband, his wife and their dependent children living in the same dwelling. Amoateng & Richter (2003:247) say that by this view, any domestic unit other than the idealised nuclear family was seen primarily as a deviation from an essentialist or universalistic notion of the family. This politically – biased paradigm of family life began to shift as the apartheid edifice began to crumble in the face of mounting social crises generated from the political left.

177

It was anticipated that this rapid urbanisation, with urban growth estimated at the time to be 3.5% per year would have profound effects on children's health and development. While improved access to health care, education and employment in urban areas could decrease preventable childhood morbidity and mortality, the inability of government to establish and maintain services to meet the needs of the growing urban population could exacerbate existing infectious diseases, such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. Non-infectious conditions related to the interaction of lifestyle, urban stressors and socio-cultural changes—for example, childhood injuries, substance use and obesity—were predicted to increase. (Richter, Norris, Pettifor, Yach & Cameron, 2007:504)

## 4.5. HIV/AIDS's influence on South Africa

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has shaped the experience of family life in South Africa, which currently hosts the largest number of infected individuals in the world according to Goldberg (2013:4). The most extreme way HIV/AIDS affects children's family lives is through the death of a parent or other caregiver. Further HIV/AIDS-related family change can be produced when children's parents or other caregivers are too ill to care for them or when ill migrants return home for care.

From a Western perspective, Ansell (2016:167) shows that the scale and possible consequences of orphan hood is unsurprising. In the early 2000s, a third or more of adults in some African countries were believed to have contracted a disease that would kill them within a decade. This has led to many children being left with neither biological parent. The spectre of the AIDS pandemic constructed it as an issue of global concern, although orphan hood had been relatively common in poorer countries. For Ansell (2016:167), the AIDS orphan has become the quintessential vulnerable child, following a line of others (street children, trafficked children, child soldiers), that justifies a 'child saving' mission.

In Eastern and Southern Africa, three decades of the HIV epidemic have taken a considerable toll on the ability of families and communities to care for large numbers

178

of people living with a chronic life-limiting illness, orphaned children and youth and older people whose adult children have died. Evans (2015: 6) showed that the loss of the parental 'middle generation' has led to the emergence of new household forms, such as 'skipped generation households' (where the older generation live with orphaned children without any co-resident middle-aged adults) and 'child- and youth-headed households' (where siblings live independently without a co-resident adult relative). grandmothers play a crucial role in caring for widows living with HIV and children who have been orphaned by AIDS, in the context of stigma and changing kinship responsibilities (Evans 2015: 7).

Children's responsibilities to provide care for adults call into question conventional norms of generation and parenting. Adopting an ethic of care perspective, the research of Ansell (2016:167) has shown, however, that caregiving is not a one-way process, but rather children, parents and other family members provide reciprocal care within the household. Indeed, caring relations and responsibilities may strengthen emotional connections between members of different generations, which may help to protect 'care givers' from negative outcomes.

The reciprocity and mutual emotional support that characterised parent child caring relations refutes negative assumptions about the competence of parents living with HIV to provide good care for their children and notions of 'parentification' (that caregiving children become their 'parent's parent') this phenomenon has been discussed by some authors (Evans 2015: 7).

Furthermore, mothers with HIV and grandparents maintained their position of moral authority in the household and were responsible for decision-making, the allocation of resources and providing emotional support, discipline and informal education for children, despite children's responsibilities for income-earning and domestic, health-related and personal care tasks.

Unsurprisingly, adults continued to occupy positions of power and have higher social status than children, despite their illness and/or infirmity in old age (Evans 2015: 7). Orphaned siblings heading child-and youth-headed households usually developed

interdependent caring relations and shared domestic duties within the home (Evans, 2011:8).

## 4.6. Absent fathers in South Africa

What is evident is that although HIV/AIDS has had a profound effect on the number of single-parent households, there is another worrying trend – the increase in the number and proportion of absent, living fathers. International research echoed by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and described by Holborn & Eddy (2011:4) on the effect fathers have on their children's development suggests that the presence of a father can contribute to cognitive development, intellectual functioning, and school achievement.

In South Africa many children are raised without fathers (Makofane, 2015:22). He (Makofane, 2015:24) describes that absent fathers refer to those who do not interact with their children regularly and thus do not play an important role in their development.

After 2009 orphaning rates (and particularly maternal orphaning) started to decline (Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.), 2018:39), directly related to the roll-out of antiretrovirals. But for Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.) (2018:39), orphaning is not the main reason for the absence of either fathers or mothers. Nearly 5 million children do not have a co-resident mother, but only 22% of these are maternally orphaned, while 78% (3.7 million) have a mother living elsewhere. A much larger number of children – 12 million – do not have a co-resident father, but only 18% of these children are paternally orphaned. Nearly 10 million have a biological father living elsewhere.

Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds) (2018:39) describe that parental absence may be related to a range of reasons such as non-marital childbearing, adult employment strategies and labour migration, urban housing constraints, limited availability of affordable care, schooling opportunities, choices about who is best placed to provide

180

care for children, divorce or separation, and any combination of these. They (Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.), 2018:40) also show that when these numbers are extrapolated to all children under 15, only 1% of have no contact with or financial support from their biological mother even though she is known to be alive. An even larger share, 13%, have no contact with their living father. Although it would include men who do not know that they are fathers (for example if the mother chose not to inform them about their paternity), as well as fathers who are in prison or mental institutions, or who live elsewhere but are too poor or sick to visit or send money, this is an indicator of possible paternal abandonment.

Another argument that came forth is that households were indeed becoming smaller on average (decreasing from around 4.4 members in 1993, to 3.2 in 2014). But this is not because they were becoming more nuclear. Rather, as Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.) (2018:40) put it, alongside the high prevalence of extended family households, a marked increase in single-person households seems to have contributed to a decrease in average household size, with many of these single adults having children living elsewhere.

Ms Linda Richter of the HSRC (Holborn, Eddy, 2011:4) has said that the influence of a father is both indirect and direct. The indirect influence includes the support of the father for the mother as well as on influencing all major decisions regarding health, well-being and education of children. This for example are things like access to health services, nutrition, as well as the length of time spent in school. A father's influence also has a direct influence in terms of educational level or length of time spent in school, educational achievement and self-confidence, especially among girls, as well as adjustment and behaviour control among boys.

The South African Maintenance Act as interpreted by Budlender & Lund (2011:930) states that a non-resident biological parent must provide for his or her child, whether or not either parent of the child was married at the time of conception or birth of the child, or at some other point. The Act, however, brings little relief to the many women who bring up their children without the father's assistance. This is because many men simply deny paternity or 'disappear', while those who are deceased obviously

cannot provide. On the other hand, even if the father is identified and acknowledges paternity, the Act places an obligation only on those non-resident parents the courts consider able to afford the payment.

The latest available data (Holborn, Eddy, 2011:4) about fathers in South Africa, shows that the proportion of fathers who are absent and living increased between 1996 and 2009, from 42% to 48%. On the other hand, over the same period the proportion of fathers who were present decreased from 49% to 36%. In all countries for which data are available, Holborn & Eddy (2011:4) shows that men are found, on average, to be significantly less involved in childcare activities than women. The problem is rather that the situation in South Africa is extreme.

Analysis of the Time Use Survey of 2000 (Statistics South Africa, 2000 as quoted in Budlender & Lund 2011:929) reveals that men aged 15–64 years spend an average of three minutes a day on care of persons while women in the same age category spend an average of thirty-nine minutes per day caring for children in their own households. The relatively low figure is explained by the fact that only about a third of women of this age spend time on childcare in an average day. The average time thus includes large numbers of women who do not fulfil any direct care duties.

South Africa's estimate for men, however, is unusually low when compared to other developing countries. For Budlender & Lund (2011:929) the 'average' situation in South Africa can be at least partly explained by the fact that most children are still living apart from their biological fathers—fifteen years after the end of apartheid and two decades after the abolition of the pass laws. In 2008, only 35 per cent of children (0–17,1 years) were resident with both their biological parents 40 per cent were living with their mother but not their father. Thus Budlender & Lund (2011:929) describes that the fractured family set-ups cannot easily be explained by orphan hood due to AIDS-related deaths.

## 4.7. Female-headed households in South Africa

The years of colonialism followed by apartheid left South African society with a legacy of disrupted family life which has, and will continue to have, long-term consequences on care givers' responsibilities and ability to care for children. According to Budlender & Lund (2011:942) the gendered patterns of care remain, in which men take little responsibility for financial or other forms of support, while women try and reconcile the need to be both carers and income earners.

Mothers' parenting played an important role in young children's problem behaviour, whereas fathers' parenting had only a marginal role according to Aunola & Nurmi (2005:1155). They explain it by saying that one reason for the importance of mothers' parenting style is that, because mother – child interactions are characterised more than father – child interactions by warmth, responsiveness, and intimate exchanges, children are more open to maternal than paternal influences.

A female-headed household as defined by Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.) (2018:37) is a household where there are only adult women and no adult men, or where there are both women and men, but a woman is identified as being the nominal household head. They further argue that female-headed households are not a new phenomenon in South Africa. The recent 2011 census and the 2016 Community Survey however found that 41% of all households in South Africa were now headed by women. A child-centred analysis of household's puts the number of female-headed households even higher - in 1993, 47% of African children lived in female-headed households and this had increased to 54% in 2014. On average, female-headed households are larger than male-headed households and have more child dependants. They are also more likely than male-headed ones to have nobody employed. Even with increased employment rates among women, the income differentials between women and men mean that poverty has remained strongly gendered.

The construct of the "female-headed household" according to Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.) (2018:37) is sometimes cited as a cause for concern, and

183

both Stats SA and international agencies like the World Bank report on female-headed households among their social indicators. Concerns about large numbers of "female-headed households" may arise partly because it is known that women tend to earn less than men and so households without adult males may be poorer on average, with a greater burden on women to maintain the household, care for dependents and provide financial support. There may also be concerns about the absence of men in child-rearing or as role models for children.

A description of the economic disadvantages of female-headed households by Flatø, Muttarak & Pelser (2017:42), has a triple burden for three main reasons. First, it is a disadvantage for a household to have a woman as the main earner given that women have lower average earnings, fewer assets and less access to productive resources such as land, financial capital, and technology than men. Second, female household heads are often the single earner and are consequently more likely to carry a higher dependency burden by lacking a male provider. Third, displayed by a higher total dependency ratio comprising of both a higher proportion of dependent children and a higher proportion of the elderly, these households often contain a higher ratio of non-workers to workers as women who are heads of households with no other adult help have to carry a ''double day burden" where they have to fulfil both domestic duties and the breadwinner role.

Interestingly Flatø, Muttarak & Pelser (2017:45) also argue that, more recent studies have cast doubt on how general the disadvantages of female headship are. Not only have inconsistencies been found regarding the relationship between female headship and poverty, some empirical works have also shown no or even a negative association between female headship and poverty, that is, female-headed households are sometimes richer than households headed by men.


## 4.8. Marriage narratives


Marriage has always been seen as an important family event in South Africa regardless of race and/or ethnicity, as indicated by the fact that the bulk of

childbearing in society occurs within the context of marriage (Amoateng & Richter, 2003:253).

In South Africa, contemporary tribal, religious, and legislative structure and processes are favourable towards marriage and seek to promote it as the preferred family institution (Hosegood, McGrath & Moultrie 2009:1). In demographic change, marriage has played a pivotal role - it marks the start of one form of family activity and identifies a critical transition in a person's history from which intervals to subsequent family events can be assessed (Amoateng & Richter, 2003:252).

Marriage brings about changes in the lives of mothers that can impact parenting-related stress (Cooper, McLanahan, Meadows, Brooks-Gunn 2009:4). The changes associated with entering a marital or cohabiting relationship are typically expected to increase the economic resources of mothers and their children. Mothers who are single at the birth of their child are more likely to be poorer than married mothers (Cooper, McLanahan, Meadows, Brooks-Gunn 2009:4). When single mothers enter into a residential relationship, they can however also increase their chances of moving out of poverty. If marriage or cohabitation leads to the pooling of resources and the sharing of expenses, and if mothers are better able to provide for their children as a result, then these relationships may decrease parenting stress.

Marriage according to Goldberg (2013:4) has also affected the youth experiences of family. High levels of non-marital fertility lead to a situation in which many children grow up never co-residing with a biological father. Although scholars highlight the social and financial involvement many non-co-resident fathers maintain with their children over time.

The marital status of the parents is very important as to whether the children will have both parents in the household (Holborn, Eddy, 2011:5). Children born to unmarried parents are more likely to live in single-parent households, than those with married parents.

## 4.8.1. Marriage rates

Marriage rates have been declining and for those who do get married the age of marriage has increased (Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds.), 2018:40). In South Africa and elsewhere in the world, childbearing is increasingly delinked from marriage.

Examination of census statistics by Budlender & Lund (2011:930-931) revealed that the marriage rate among Africans has been declining since at least the 1960s. They suggest that the decline is not simply the result of a higher age at first marriage. Instead, greater numbers of women are remaining unmarried throughout their lives.

The reduction in the proportion of married adults in reproductive ages is according to Hosegood, McGrath & Moultrie (2009:8) being largely driven by non-marriage rather than widowhood or divorce despite increasing young adult mortality.

For Hosegood, McGrath & Moultrie (2009:2-3) of the many reasons that have been suggested for the decline in marriage and increases in marital instability among African South Africans, most relate directly or indirectly to the oppressive social and political structures and processes created during the apartheid-era. The labour migration system created during the apartheid-era has been a profound force of instability and change in African family life. Not only, did the apartheid-era policies require most couples from rural areas to live apart, but when one or both partners took up paid employment actively sought to prevent them staying together or visiting each other elsewhere.

For a large proportion of young couples, the perceived costs of marriage appear to outweigh the benefits, and the limited sanctions against extra-marital childbearing in many families reduce marriage as a necessary entry to parenting (Hosegood, McGrath & Moultrie 2009:12).

The factors ranged against marriage appear to foster cautiousness in starting, and a lack of haste in finishing, the marriage process. Waiting for the 'right' time to marry, means waiting for the right partner as well as more education, work, income and housing etc. Hosegood, McGrath & Moultrie (2009:12) state that for many young adults in rural KwaZulu-Natal, the desired constellation of circumstances does not, it seems, come in to line.

The role of changing cultural values in the rise of female-headed households is closely linked to the system of lobola—a customary southern African ritual whereby the prospective groom pays a bride price to the family of his future wife for her hand in marriage. Flatø, Muttarak & Pelser (2017:45) argue that the changing economic circumstances that have led to down-scaling and job losses in many industries in recent times have made the payment of lobola unaffordable for thousands of prospective grooms. This further contributes to a general decline in marriage rates among African women and possibly to an increase in the number of single households since co-habiting partnerships are less stable. These conditions, in turn, triggered certain family dynamics, including an increased number of female-headed households, fragmented and unbundled households, out of wedlock births, and a rapid rise in the number of households, furthermore, accompanied by a decline in household size.

The absence of males in the marriageable age range in the African community, coupled with persistent poverty in the face of increasing commercialisation of the lobola (bride wealth), meant either the postponement of marriage or its absence altogether according to Amoateng & Richter (2003:253). Conversely, the relative privilege and affluence of groups such as whites and Indians, and to some extent coloureds, ensured that marriage was maintained among them.

This brings about that the marriage rate in South Africa is relatively low, especially among Africans and coloureds. Moreover, Amoateng & Richter (2003:262) found evidence of the decreasing prevalence of marriage in society, especially among the

younger generation, although the importance of marriage is underscored by the fact that the bulk of childbearing still occurs within the context of marriage.

Non-marital cohabitation appears to be increasing, especially among the younger groups, in the place of legal marriage. This also brought about the decrease in marriage-coupled childbearing that has resulted in a progressive increase in non-marital fertility over the years. According to Amoateng & Richter (2003:256) almost one third of births among Africans occur outside of marriage, compared to only two percent of non-marital births among whites and three percent among Indians; coloureds have 24 percent non-marital births.

I like to agree with Amoateng & Richter (2003:252,262), that people may be reluctant to marry in South Africa but once they do so, they tend to remain attached, judging by the relatively low rate of divorce. They also state that while marriage has declined, there has been a steady increase in the rate of non-marital cohabitation over the years among all race groups, suggesting that, increasingly, younger generations of South Africans are choosing this type of living arrangement.

### 4.8.2. Marriage law

Calling on post-apartheid South Africa, Yarbrough (2015:6) argues that within the first twelve years of democracy, South African marriage law incorporated two family forms. African marriages excluded under apartheid law: marriages under indigenous or, as it is known in legal parlance, "customary" law; and same-sex couples. This makes South Africa the world's first jurisdiction to recognise both same-sex and (some) polygamous marriages, an intriguing enough feature on its own.

On the other hand, Yarbrough (2015:6) also states that Muslim marriages remain largely unrecognised today, despite law-reform efforts that, as with their customary-

and same-sex marriage counterparts, stretch back to the post-apartheid transition and beyond.

The post-apartheid recognition of Customary Marriages Act, Act 12 of 1998 was according to Hosegood, McGrath & Moultrie (2009:4) a radical attempt to recognise the diversity of cultural and religious traditions in South Africa, at the same time as increasing the role of the state in protecting the rights of women within marriage, particularly with regard to children and property. They further state that the 1998 Recognition of Customary Marriages Act permitted marriages solemnised only through customary or traditional laws to be recognised as legal marriages. Previously, only Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal) had permitted, or rather compelled, Africans to register customary unions. The 1998 Act, which came in to effect in 2000, declared that all customary unions could be considered as legal marriages provided that criteria relating to consent and community of property are met, and that the marriage is registered. The result was that the 1998 Marriages Act recognised polygamous unions.

Although there is a tradition of polygamous marriage in Zulu society, Hosegood, McGrath & Moultrie (2009:9), state that the majority of marriages were reported to be monogamous. According to them the level of polygamy is higher than that found in the 1998 South African DHS (KwaZulu-Natal sub-sample) where 7% of married African women reported that their husbands have other wives.

These Polygamous marriages are highest in the oldest age group. Polygamy's prevalence is declining across all age groups though it remains higher than in the country as a whole. Most households are not expected to report polygamous married members given that they follow religious traditions that do not permit polygamous marriages.

189

However, in qualitative research conducted by Hosegood, McGrath & Moultrie (2009:9), they have occasionally observed men reporting non-marital partners as additional 'wives'. While most marriages in the population are now civilly registered, the opposite is true of polygamous marriages despite provision being made for such marriages in the Marriage Act.

## 4.9. Divorce

Divorce is a relatively rare occurrence in South Africa according to Amoateng & Richter (2003:257), although race groups exhibit different patterns of divorce. For them it is generally believed that African marriages tend to be stable. The stability is attributed to the role of lineage or extended family in marital arrangements and, in some cases, practices such as endogamy.

In contrast with African marriages, individualism and the ethos of romantic love that prevails in Western societies makes marriages in such societies relatively unstable. Amoateng & Richter (2003:257) describes that whites have the highest divorce rate at 35 per 1000, compared to Africans among whom only eleven marriages in 1000 dissolve through divorces; coloureds and Indians have 22 and 19 divorces out of every 1000 marriages respectively.

Goldberg 2013:4 agrees that divorce has been a primarily white phenomenon in South Africa, but he also argues that the proportion of African couples divorcing has been increasing over the past decade, with the converse occurring in white families. Divorce is still relatively uncommon among coloured couples. Amoateng & Richter (2003:257) suggests that the younger generation of South Africans is choosing to stay in marriages longer than their older compatriots.

The concern is that divorce brings about changes in the lives of mothers that can induce stress and diminish the capacity for warm, involved, and consistent parenting

are raised by Cooper, McLanahan, Meadows, Brooks-Gunn (2009:3). For them among these changes is the loss of socio-economic, social, and health resources.

Mothers and children experience a substantial drop in their standard of living, in part because of the loss of economies of scale and in part because many non-residential fathers fail to pay adequate child support, following a divorce. These mothers take on the wide range of parenting responsibilities they once shared with their husbands after a divorce. For some of these mothers, the challenges associated with single parenthood (e.g., difficulty supervising or disciplining children) may lead to parental stress. The mothers may also experience a loss of social resources through reduced connections to family, friends, and contexts of support in the community, because many divorced mothers are forced to move, and because their new neighbourhoods often have fewer community resources. The lowered access to these various forms of physical and emotional support is a likely source of parenting stress for divorced mothers.

## 4.10. Parenting and Children's problem behaviour

### 4.10.1. Positive relationships

Parenting is approached by Ward, Makusha & Bray (2015:69) as the caring interaction between close adult kin and young people. These practices, ideas and connections that comprise parenting evolve over time because they are dependent on the well-being of parents, that of adolescents and the health of the relationship between them.

Children who have received appropriate nutrition from conception onwards, who are attached to their parents, and who have received cognitive stimulation and warm, positive parenting with consistent limit-setting, are more likely, according to Ward, Makusha, Bray (2015:69), to succeed in their education; are more likely to be healthy as adults; and less likely to engage in risky sex, substance misuse and violent and

191

criminal behaviour. For them these are strands that run throughout the span of child development, from conception to adulthood, but adolescence entails new contexts for parenting as young people expand their social networks, diversify their occupations and experience rapid brain development that changes the way they think and engage with the world. Therefore, positive relationships with role models, access to social networks and to cultural capital become increasingly important as young people tread the difficult path between their aspirations and local realities.

### 4.10.2. Children residing with both parents

The research that Lippman, Wilcox & Ryberg- Bethesda. (2013: 72) has done, found that children living with two parents are no more likely to be enrolled in school than those with a single-parent, and they are more likely to be enrolled in school than children without any parents.

On average, two biological-parent families have higher household incomes and more assets than other family types (Magnuson K, Berger LM, 2009:2). Children in single- and social parent families may receive less parental time, attention, supervision, and monitoring than those in two biological-parent families.

Research done by Magnuson K, Berger LM (2009:3) has also found that children residing with a social parent or with both of their biological parents fare somewhat worse in cohabiting families than in married families. They have increasingly, however, also recognised that family structure is not static. Magnuson K, Berger LM (2009:11) also found that during middle childhood children who lived with two biological parents demonstrated larger declines in behaviour problems and larger increases in achievement than those experiencing single-mother families.

### 4.10.3. Single-parents

The research of Lippman, Wilcox & Ryberg- Bethesda (2013: 72), further showed that children with single-parents were sometimes at an advantage, and children without any parents were sometimes at a disadvantage, but sometimes not. The high prevalence of extended families, as well as other factors besides living arrangements clearly plays a role in education outcomes.

Family instability, as described by Goldberg (2013:5) is most commonly measured as the number of partnership transitions experienced by the child's mother or the number of transitions experienced by the child in co-residence with parents and their partners. There is some evidence that certain types of family instability are less harmful for children and youth than others, and that certain types of stability are more harmful than others (Goldberg 2013:5-6). He gives the example, of the transitioning out of a cohabiting stepfamily and into a single-mother family was actually related to improvements in adolescent school engagement relative to remaining in a stable cohabiting stepfamily.

### 4.10.4. Orphans

Orphans are more likely than other children to be living in poverty, less likely to access schooling, and less likely to be living with a parent – and these risks are greater for double orphans than for single orphans (Ward, Makusha, Bray 2015:70).

As with any other family, Ward, Makusha, Bray (2015:70) states that parenting and the context of parenting appear to play a key role in orphans' vulnerability. For instance, children who lost one or both of their parents due to AIDS-related illnesses, or who are living with a parent who has AIDS, are more likely than other children (including those orphaned for other reasons) to be living in extreme poverty and to suffer abuse.

Prior demographic research described by Goldberg (2013:4) has identified associations between father or mother absence and adverse health and schooling outcomes among South African children. Studies have also linked co-residence with

193

neither parent with poor schooling outcome. Nonetheless, researchers have found evidence that parental absence accompanied by migrant remittances can in some instances benefit children, particularly African and coloured children (Goldberg 2013:4). For example, for African children, migration has both a beneficial effect due to remittances and a deleterious effect due to parental absence, and that remittances can largely offset the negative consequences of having one, but not both, parents living elsewhere.

### 4.10.5. The stress of family transitions

Family structure – whether children live with both parents, one parent, or neither parent – can have marked influences on whether families are able to care adequately for their children (Ward, Makusha, Bray 2015:69). For instance, single parenting increases the risk for poor behavioural and educational outcomes for young people because single parents are more likely to be living in poverty and more likely to be stressed, and thus more likely to struggle with all the issues outlined above. Father absence also affects children's outcomes: while most studies focus on the role of the mother in parenting, there is mounting evidence that engaged fathering has independent, positive effects on children's behaviour. Family structure can thus play a significant role in whether families live in poverty, and/ or are able to accomplish the tasks of parenting.

Parents and children who experience family structure transitions and, perhaps to a lesser extent, those who experience stable single- or social parent families are likely to also experience elevated levels of family stress and conflict (Magnuson& Berger 2009:2). Family structure transitions encompass upheaval that might engender significant stress for children, reorganisation in family roles, and changes in parental employment, social support, and residence. This stress may have indirect effects on children by reducing parental warmth, support, and nurturing, thereby resulting in lower quality parent child relationships (Magnuson K, Berger LM, 2009:2). The loss of parental relationships and exposure to parental conflict, in particular, may be especially difficult for children, directly affecting their sense of emotional security and

194

psychological well-being. The social and behavioural sciences have accumulated a solid foundation of evidence that divorced and single parenthood, pose risks for the behavioural and emotional development of children and youth (Cavanagh S, Huston A. 2006:551).

Children who experienced instability had higher teacher and observer reports of problem behaviour than those from stable family structures (Cavanagh S, Huston A. 2006:551). Stability in family structure—regardless of a family's form—and the accompanying continuity in caregiving, family roles, and family resources may enable families to successfully cope with stress and adapt to their new family circumstances. In contrast, experiencing family structure transitions and concomitant upheavals may hinder positive adjustment (Magnuson K, Berger LM, 2009:3).

Growing up outside of a married, two biological parent family or experiencing family structure change during childhood may have detrimental effects for youth across their life course. Although most children living in single-parent, cohabiting, or stepfamilies have positive outcomes, they are at greater risk for behavioural, cognitive, and health problems (Ryan, Franzetta, Schelar, & Manlove, 2009:1). Furthermore, youth who experience a greater number of changes in their family structure tend to have more socio-emotional and behavioural problems, poorer educational outcomes, more instability in adolescent romantic relationships, and an earlier sexual debut.

## 4.11. Conclusion

Families and the world around them have changed dramatically over recent decades (Walsh 2012:3). When families are able to perform traditional caregiving functions it can positively determine higher levels of individual functionality than is usually achieved without family support and assistance (Amoateng & Richter, 2003:245).

There are a number of key factors that have impacted negatively on families over the

195

last century in South Africa (Patel, Hochfeld & Englert 2018:5). Apartheid's discriminatory policies, its exploitation of migrant labour, and its erosion of rural life were key factors in the rapid change in family structures and function in the twentieth century. In addition, capitalist development and urbanisation ensured that men were largely forced to search for wage labour far from family homes, and women, black women in particular, bore the burden of social reproduction and care. In the new dispensation since 1994, gender equality is constitutionally guaranteed. However, women in South Africa continue to be more vulnerable to poverty and get lower wages when they do access work (StatsSA 2018). Despite the extensive distribution of cash transfers, including the Child Support Grant system, widespread poverty among children and women continues to exist (Makiwane & Berry 2013).

Historical and current social factors mean that the majority of South African children grow up with fathers who are either non-resident in their homes or absent from their lives, and a third grow up without their biological parents. In addition, there are a range of social issues that impact negatively on families. Two stand out as having particularly pernicious outcomes: one is the public health crisis of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the other is the country suffering unacceptable levels of domestic violence at all socio-economic levels, which is extremely damaging to the individuals involved as well as their families.

Over recent decades, families have been in transformation, with growing diversity and complexity in structure, gender roles and sexual orientation, multicultural makeup, socio-economic conditions, and life cycle patterns. As family scholars have concluded (Walsh 2012:22), it no longer makes sense to use the nuclear family as the standard against which various forms of the family are measured. Families in our distant past and in most cultures worldwide have had multiple, varied structures.

What remains constant is the centrality, and the fundamental necessity, of relatedness (Walsh 2012:22). Our growing diversity requires an inclusive pluralism, beyond tolerance of difference to respect for many different ways to be families, recognising both their distinctiveness and their commonalities.

# CHAPTER 5. VOICES OF DISCIPLINE:   PARENTING STYLES, TECHNIQUES AND PATTERNS

To have a clear understanding of how people now a day think about child discipline, I chose to also look beyond the religious voices and voices on the South African families to find voices in the phycology and family therapy. These themes and voices I chose to describe in the next chapter are the themes that came out of the research narratives of the co-researchers I interviewed. Things that they said about parenting styles and discipline techniques motivated me to write this literature study.

## 5.1.   Diana Boumrind's parenting patterns/styles

Reading about parenting styles and patterns, one of the names that are very well known is that of Diana Baumrind. Baumrind's parenting styles typology represents the leading typological approach to parenting and has dominated the parent–child research agenda for the last 50 years. Although her work might be seen as an outdated source, it is still called on by many recent researchers because of the ground breaking work she did in terms of parenting patterns and styles. Therefore, I made an exception to call on her work, even though this research was carried out some time ago. She is a clinical and developmental psychologist known for her research on parenting styles and for her critique of the use of deception in psychological research.

In one of her studies Baumrind (1971:1-2), identified three groups of normal children, differing in social and emotional behaviour, in order that the child rearing behaviour of their parents could be contrasted. The findings of that study are the basis of most of the thoughts on parental styles, and can be summarised as follows:

> "Parents of the children who were the most self-reliant, self-controlled,
> explorative, and content were themselves controlling and demanding; but they

were also warm, rational, and receptive to the child's communication." *(Baumrind 1971:1)*

She called this unique combination of high control and positive encouragement of the child's autonomous and independent strivings, the authoritative parental behaviour.

"Parents of children who, relative to the others, were discontent, withdrawn, and distrustful, were themselves detached and controlling, and somewhat less warm than other parents." *(Baumrind 1971:1)*

She called these parents the authoritarian parents.

"Parents of the least self-reliant, explorative, and self-controlled children were themselves noncontrolling, nondemanding, and relatively warm." *(Baumrind 1971:2)*

She called these parents, the permissive parents.

The following is a representative of these three parental styles. It shows a fourth one that was added by Maccoby and Martin, namely *neglectful*.

*https://www.positive-parenting-ally.com/3-parenting-styles.html*
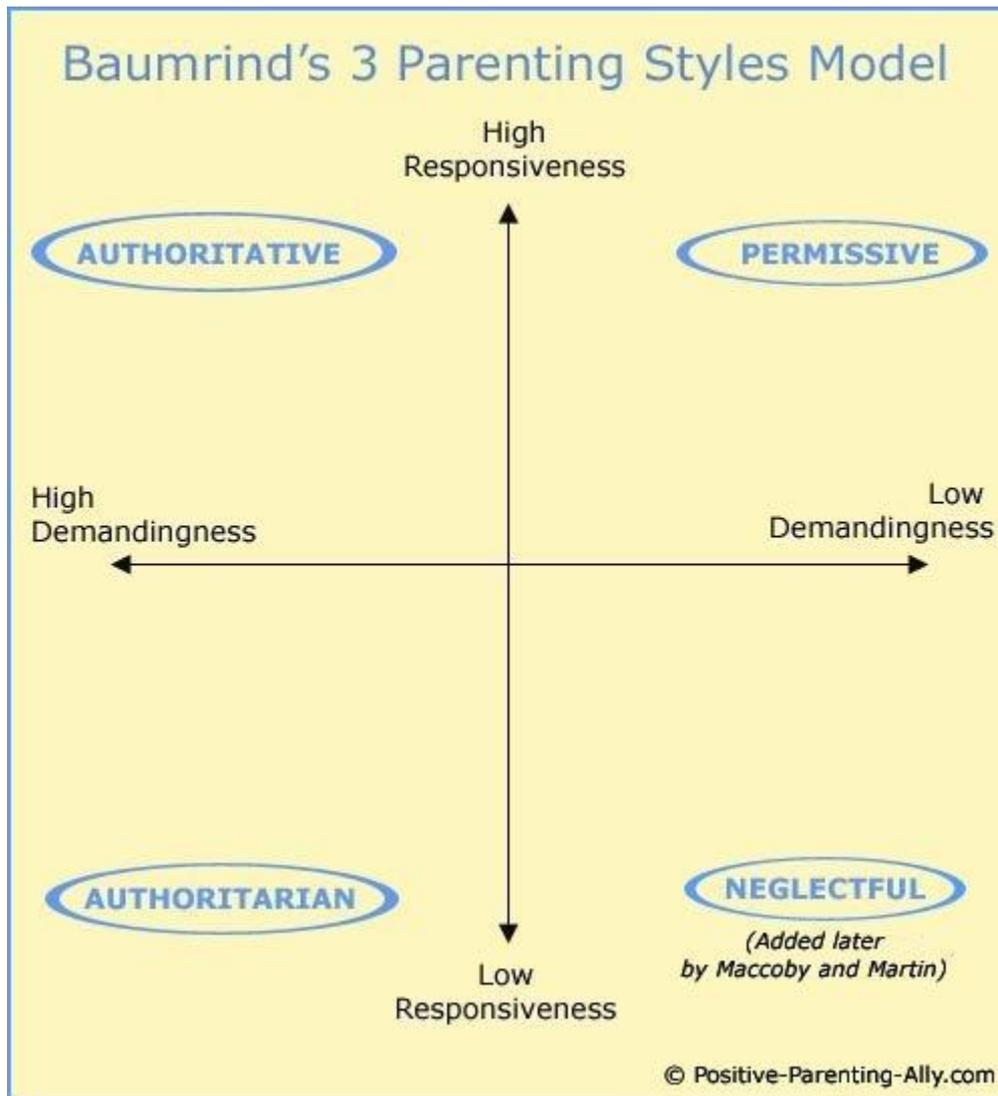
I would like to describe the three parenting styles of Baumrind, to get a clearer understanding thereof. I will not go deeper into the added fourth style Maccoby and Marten added, because I want to focus here on Baumrind's theories about parenting styles.

### 5.1.1. Authoritarian parenting style

According to Baumrind (1971:22) the *authoritarian* parent attempts to shape, control, and evaluate the behaviour and attitudes of the child in accordance with a set

199

standard of conduct, usually an absolute standard, theologically motivated and formulated by a higher authority.

These parents, values obedience as a virtue and favours punitive, forceful measures to curb self-will at points where the child's actions or beliefs conflict with what she thinks is right conduct. They believe in inculcating such instrumental values as respect for authority, respect for work and respect for the preservation of order and traditional structure. They do not encourage verbal give and take, believing that the child should accept their word for what is right (Baumrind 1968:261).

### 5.1.2. Authoritative parenting style

The authoritative parent, by contrast with the authoritarian parent, attempts to direct the child's activities but in a rational, issue-oriented manner. These parents encourage verbal give and take, and shares with the child the reasoning behind their policy. They value both expressive and instrumental attributes, both autonomous self-will and disciplined conformity. Therefore, they exert firm control at points of parent-child divergence, but does not hem the child in with restrictions. They recognise their own special rights as an adult, but also the child's individual interests and special ways.

The authoritative parent affirms the child's present qualities, but also sets standards for future conduct (Baumrind 1971:22-23). They use reason as well as power to achieve their objectives. They do not base their decisions on group consensus or the individual child's desires; but also, does not regard themselves as infallible or divinely inspired (Baumrind, 1968: 261).

### 5.1.3  Permissive parenting style

The permissive parent attempts to behave in a non-punitive, acceptant, and affirmative manner toward the child's impulses, desires, and actions (Baumrind 1971:23). They consult with the child about policy decisions and gives explanations for family rules. They make few demands for household responsibility and orderly behaviour.

They present themselves to the child as a resource for him to use as he wishes, not as an active agent responsible for shaping or altering his ongoing or future behaviour. They allow the child to regulate his own activities as much as possible, avoids the exercise of control, and does not encourage the child to obey externally-defined standards. They attempt to use reason but not overt power to accomplish their ends (Baumrind 1968:256).

### 5.2  The DDI: The Dimensions of Discipline Inventory (DDI) test

Murray A. Straus and Angèle Fauchier (Straus & Fauchier 2007:2-3) used Baumrind's parenting styles to classify parents, in the development of their instrument the DDI: The Dimensions of Discipline Inventory (DDI) test. Although I don't feel it is necessary for us to use this test in this research, I want to write about the discipline techniques that they identified. I choose to do this because there is not much written about different discipline techniques, and I feel it is vital to also understand which discipline techniques parents uses when they discipline their children.

This instrument provides information on some of the most frequently used discipline behaviour of parents, such as explaining, deprivation of privileges, and spanking. The DDI includes scales to measure aspects of context and modes of administration,

and parent's cognitive appraisal of discipline behaviour. A strength of the DDI is that it is both comprehensive and brief (Straus & Fauchier 2007:2).

Before we look more closely at the discipline behaviour, of Straus & Fauchier, (2007:4), I want to mention their thoughts on discipline. For them the concept of discipline has been delineated in many ways, and there is no predominant definition; or more usually, no definition.  They give an example of a non-specific definition:

> *"The word discipline means instruction or training. In the field of child development, discipline refers to methods of modelling character and of teaching self-control and acceptable behavior"*

According to this definition, "discipline" seems to be anything a parent does that affects the child's moral and psychological development. For them such a conceptualisation hinders scientific progress because it does not provide a basis for differentiating discipline from the myriad other aspects of child care that are necessary for healthy development. For them the purpose of the DDI is to provide a comprehensive assessment of corrective discipline. Therefore, they define corrective discipline as:

> *"Behavior by parents in response to, and intended to correct, perceived misbehavior by a child." (Straus & Fauchier 2007:4)*

Straus & Fauchier (2007:5) states clearly that Corrective Discipline Is Not Synonymous with Punishment. For them it is important to recognise that corrective discipline includes positive as well as punitive behaviour, and combinations of the two.

They also make an important conceptual distinction between the inductive versus Power Assertive Discipline. A key element of inductive discipline is that it focuses on cognitions concerning right and wrong, and especially on children learning the effects of their misbehaviour on others. Parents who use inductive discipline coach children by introducing claims and consequences and then supplying rationales that support them. This is done by limit setting, setting up logical consequences, explaining, and eliciting ideas from the child rather than by focusing on coercive means to regulate behaviour. (Straus & Fauchier 2007:5)

### 5.2.1  The discipline behaviour of the DDI.

I want to look at the discipline behaviours that the DDI describes, because I believe that it will give us insights to the discipline techniques and attitudes parents use when disciplining their children. Approximately half of these discipline behaviours are punishments of various types, and the other half are non-punitive methods of correction and control (Straus & Fauchier 2007:2).

The main discipline behaviour of the DDI, as described by Straus & Fauchier (2007:12-16) are:

a)  Corporal Punishment; and

b)  Deprivation of Privileges

This entails taking away a child's allowance, toys, or other privileges because of misbehaviour, sending a child to bed without dinner, withholding the child's allowance, toys, or other privileges until they did what you wanted them to do, "grounding" the child or restricting their activities outside the home because of misbehaviour.

c) Diversion

Things like "time out", sending the child to their room for a period of time, giving the child something else they might like to do instead of what they were doing wrong, are described here.

d) Explain/Teach

This is about explaining to the child what the rules are to try to prevent the child repeating misbehaviour, showing or demonstrating the right thing to do to the child.

e) Ignore Misbehaviour.

When parents deliberately not paying attention to a bad behaviour of the child, letting the child misbehave so that they would have to deal with the results, they are ignoring the misbehaviour.

f) Penalty Tasks and Restorative Behaviour

This entails giving the child extra chores as a consequence, making the child do something to make up for some misbehaviour; for example, pay for a broken window, to make the child apologise or say they were sorry for misbehaviour.

g) Psychological Aggression

Parent shouting or yelling at the child, trying to make the child feel shamed or guilty, holding back affection by acting cold or not giving hugs or kisses, when the child behaved badly, telling the child that they are lazy, sloppy, thoughtless, or some other name like that, is using psychological aggression as a discipline technique.

204

h)      Reward

This is about praising the child for finally stopping bad behaviour or for behaving well, giving the child money or other things for finally stopping bad behaviour or for behaving well.

i)      Monitoring.

Monitoring focuses on keeping track of the child's activities outside the home, like telling the child that you were watching or checking to see if they did something, checking on the child's behaviour to catch them doing something wrong.

Measures of Context in Which Discipline Occurs

j)      Confidence

        Feeling confident or guilty about the way you corrected the child's misbehaviour.

k)      Conflict with Partner

l)      Perceived Ineffectiveness of discipline

m)      Stress

Measures of Modes of Implementing Discipline


n)      Consistency


Things like checking to make sure how the child was behaving after the corrected misbehaviour, correcting the child again if they repeated misbehaviour, following through on what you said you would do.


o)      Impulsiveness


This is about parents that tend to act on the spur of the moment, feeling like you had "lost it" with the child.


p)      Warmth/Support


When correcting misbehaviour, this point is about doing or saying things to show that you love and support the child, trying to make sure that the child understands they were still loved, trying to encourage and support the child.


q)      Warning


Making the consequences of misbehaviour clear to the child, counting to warn the child that when you stopped counting, you would do something else to correct the behaviour.

r)      Responsiveness

This entails changing how you discipline the child as she/he gets older, making changes to your discipline style when something did not work for the child.

## 5.3.    Gershof et al's (2010:488), thoughts on disciplining techniques

Gershof et al (2010:488), also writes about disciplining techniques. They start of by saying that cultures differ in the value they place on different child qualities and behaviour and in their beliefs about which parenting practices will promote these qualities and behaviour. For them cultures also differ in their evaluations of what parenting practices are considered to be, either physically or emotionally abusive (Korbin, 2003).

Much of the research on discipline to date, has focused on parents' use of corporal punishment, most likely because corporal punishment is a controversial form of discipline (Gershoff, 2002). However, corporal punishment is but one disciplinary technique, parents use in trying to control their children's negative behaviour and promote their positive behaviour.

In a study of parents' use of 10 different disciplinary tactics, corporal punishment was one of the three least common techniques used by parents of pre-schoolers (Socolar, Savage, & Evans, 2007). The most common disciplinary tactics were monitoring child behaviour, talking with children, distracting, and modelling.

Gershof et al (2010:488) goes further to say that in order to understand parental discipline we must expand our focus to the full range of parents' disciplinary techniques, particularly those they use more frequently than corporal punishment.

The theories behind whether various discipline techniques should or should not be effective in promoting appropriate child behaviour have largely been developed by researchers in North America (e.g., Bornstein, 1995; Dodge & Pettit, 2003; Grusec & Goodnow, 1994; Hoffman, 1983; Lepper, 1983). It remains an open question whether parents in other countries differ in their preferences for disciplinary techniques and whether these techniques have similar associations with child behaviour across countries remain open questions. One reason discipline techniques may not have similar effects on children across countries is that the effects may depend on the extent to which the techniques are normative within a culture.

When children perceive a discipline technique to be normative within their culture or community, they may be less likely to evaluate their parents' use of it as aberrant or objectionable. Discipline is most likely to be effective when children perceive it to be fair and reasonable (Grusec & Goodnow, 1994); if children believe the discipline they received to be out of the range of what their peers receive, they will reject and thus fail to internalise the parents' intended disciplinary message. Discipline that is perceived by children to be non-normative is likely to be ineffective in promoting appropriate child behaviour and may inadvertently lead to increases in problematic child behaviour (Gershof et al 2010:489).

The frequency with which mothers reported using each of the11 different types of discipline was assessed through a measure that was developed for their study, adapted from other instruments that assess parents' discipline strategies (Gershof et al 2010:489).

The 11 discipline techniques described in their interviews, listed in the order they were presented to the mothers and followed by the abbreviations were:

"(1)  "teach your child about good and bad behaviour" (teach about good and bad behaviour);

(2)  "get your child to apologise or make amends" (get child to apologise);

(3)  "give child a time out or send him/her to his/her room" (give a timeout);

(4)  "take away privileges" (take away privileges);

(5)  "spank, slap, or hit your child" (use corporal punishment);

(6)  "say you are disappointed with your child, or say that his/her misbehaviour hurt your feelings" (express disappointment);

(7)  "tell your child he/she should be ashamed of her-/himself" (shame);

(8)  "raise your voice, yell, or scold your child" (yell or scold);

(9)  "tell your child you won't love him/her if he/she acts that way again" (withdraw love for misbehaviour);

(10) "threaten your child with some punishment" (threaten punishment); and

(11) "promise a treat or privilege to your child for good behaviour" (promise a treat or privilege). (Gershof et al 2010:490)

## 5.4.  Passini's views on discipline techniques

They examined the acceptance of specific discipline techniques (DTs), and their actual use in daily life. For them, discipline techniques refer to methods used to promote pro-social behaviour or discourage misbehaviour in the context of a discipline encounter. They go further to say that discipline effectiveness has generally been defined in two different ways in the literature. They explain it by saying that researchers with the cognitive approach consider effective discipline techniques as those which promote internalisation—the voluntary adoption of moral values, attitudes, and/or requests of the discipline agent (e.g., Grusec and Goodnow 1994; Hoffman 1983; Kochanska 1995 as quoted in Passini et al 2014:1340), while researchers with a behaviour-modification perspective consider discipline techniques

which increase immediate compliance and/or decrease noncompliance as being effective (e.g., Apache and Axelrod 1983; McMahon and Forehand 2003 as quoted in Passini et al 2014:1340).

These two approaches favour different discipline techniques. The cognitive-oriented perspective discourages using discipline techniques based on the use of power by the adult, but emphasises the need to provide a child with rationale for desired behaviour and for ceasing to misbehave. Whereas, the behaviour-modification viewpoint highlights the use of techniques such as positive reinforcement, (e.g., praise, reward), following desired behaviour, and negative sanctions (e.g., timeout, privilege removal, and planned ignoring), which are often power based, following misbehaviour (e.g., Forgatch and Patterson 2010; McMahon and Forehand 2003 as quoted in Passini et al 2014:1389)

There is supporting evidence from both research traditions of the effectiveness of their respective favoured discipline techniques in promoting the relevant child outcome. Data on the effectiveness of using reasoning in promoting internalisation in children has mostly come from the developmental literature. For instance, in a middle class sample, Hoffman and Saltzstein (1967) found the children of mothers who reported, retrospectively, using induction (i.e., reasoning with a child regarding the consequences of his or her misbehaviour for his or her peers or parents) when their child was aged 5, were more likely to be adolescents with increased internalisation of moral norms, as reported by multiple sources (adolescent, teacher, and mother). Similarly, in both well and mentally-ill populations, Kochanska (1991, 1995) found maternal use of gentle discipline, defined as discipline techniques which de-emphasises a parent's power (e.g., reasoning, suggestions, polite requests), was associated with increased voluntary adoption of maternal request by young children with fearful temperament.

The effectiveness of behaviour-modification favoured techniques has been demonstrated in several ways. One is the success in reducing young children's non-

compliant and oppositional behaviour of parent behavioural training programmes which teach those techniques as core skills. There is also supporting empirical data showing praise, timeout, privilege removal, and planned ignoring  are effective when used skilfully in diverse populations of young children, including anxious-withdrawn, conduct-disordered and community children (Passini et al 2014:1342).

The parenting styles described by Baumrind (1971) reveal parents who are more successful in raising socially competent and adjusted children jointly use discipline techniques favoured by either theoretical approach.

Baumrind's parenting styles are mainly based on two dimensions. One is responsiveness, which refers to being emotionally supportive of the child, expressing warmth, and responding favourably to the child's needs and demands. This in turn creates an emotional climate which promotes positive parent–child relationships. The second is demandingness, which describes parents' intentional promotion of their own codes of behaviour, their readiness to confront a misbehaving child and their refusal to back down on their demands as a result of their child's coercive acts.

Notably, Baumrind's conceptualisation of parenting situates discipline within a framework which incorporates the parent–child relationship quality. The three main styles proposed by Baumrind are authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive.

Both authoritarian (high demandingness and low responsiveness) and permissive (high responsiveness and low demandingness) parenting styles are associated with more adverse child outcomes. Whereas the authoritative parenting style (high responsiveness and demandingness) is associated with more optimal child outcomes.

In their discipline efforts, authoritative parents use discipline techniques favoured by either theoretical approach. They use positive reinforcement techniques (e.g., praise,

211

rewards) to promote desired behaviour, they use negative sanctions (e.g., privilege removal, timeout), which are not overly punitive, to enforce their rules and discourage child misbehaviour, and they use reasoning to legitimise their directives.

Authoritarian parents tend to rely overly on negative sanctions (including intensely punitive ones) which are often applied coercively (e.g., with yelling; Baumrind et al. 2010), without using reasoning to legitimise their requests or commands. Permissive parents avoid using negative sanctions and mostly use reasoning to deal with their children's misbehaviour. One discipline techniques, spanking, which is a subset of physical punishment, has been the subject of much controversy. While it is considered as ineffective in the cognitive-developmental approach, researchers with the behaviour- modification approach believe it is not more effective than less punitive negative sanctions, but that it has the potential to disrupt the parent–child relationship (Passini et al 2014:1340).

Authoritative parents have been reported to use normative spanking, which is mild and non-injurious, to correct their child's misbehaviour. Much research has focused on how parents differ on Baumrind's parenting styles. Such research, however, only provides global information in that it assesses parent's general orientation across different interactions, including care-providing, support-providing, and discipline. Darling and Steinberg (1993 as quoted in Passini et al 2014:1344) argue parents' parenting style determines the general emotional tone of the parent–child relationships, but does not tell us much about what parents do in specific domains (e.g., discipline). So, to understand better parents' discipline behaviour, one needs to examine their discipline practices.

When assessing Parents' Use of Specific discipline techniques in the Toddler Years, Passini et al, (2014:1391) found that examining discipline techniques of parents of toddlers is essential. Parents' interactions with young children often involve discipline situations where limits need to be set and sometimes enforced. This makes discipline one of the major aspects of interactions between parents and their young

children. Indeed, primary care health professionals, such as paediatricians, are recommended to counsel parents on child rearing and discipline during routine health visits.

To this effect, a conceptual framework has been proposed that considers effective discipline as a system which includes three vital elements:

(1) supportive positive parent–child relationship that promotes learning;

(2) pro-active discipline techniques for fostering desired child behaviours (e.g., positive reinforcement techniques: praise, rewards);

(3) specific discipline techniques for decreasing or eliminating undesired child behaviour (e.g., timeout, removal of privileges) when undesired behaviour is manifested.

Consistent with the spirit of Baumrind's conceptualisation of parenting, this 3-part conceptual system highlights positive parent–child relationships as a necessary condition for promoting children's pro-social behaviour by increasing children's self-worth, their sense of security and their willingness to cooperate with their parents. Indeed, much evidence indicates children are more cooperative, even in discipline issues, with adults with whom they have a positive relationship.

In contrast to Baumrind's demandingness dimension which is defined by firm control, a more general construct which does not always explicitly specify whether discipline techniques are used to prevent or to correct child misbehaviour, Stein and Perrin (1998 Passini et al 2014:1394) provide a rationale for simultaneously examining specific discipline techniques used by parents to either prevent or correct their children's misbehaviour. They argue positive parent–child relationships are unlikely to suffice to prevent or induce children to unlearn undesired behaviour. To achieve such aims, these authors advocate a need to rely on preventive discipline techniques (e.g., positive reinforcement strategies), to identify and strengthen specific behaviour

213

which parents value and which are incompatible with undesired behaviour and to rely on specific evidence-based negative sanctions (e.g., timeout) for inducing children to unlearn undesired behaviour and teaching children that engagement in undesired behaviour is associated with consequences. This 3-part conceptual model has the merit of drawing attention to the importance of examining preventive discipline techniques alongside negative sanctions for misbehaviour. More use of corrective than preventive discipline techniques may be associated with increased behaviour problems in children.

Such discipline pattern has been found in mothers whose children present with behaviour problems. Stein and Perrin (1998 as quoted in Passini et al 2014:1395) also assert that more punitive sanctions, such as spanking are, at best, effective only when used infrequently. Put together, within this framework, a comprehensive understanding of parental discipline implies knowledge of the quality of the parent–child relationship and specific discipline techniques used before (i.e., to promote desired behaviour) and after (i.e., to decrease/eliminate undesired behaviour) the occurrence of misbehaviour.

Parents' beliefs and values are believed to drive their parenting style (which impacts the parent–child relationships by the emotional climate created) and their acceptance of specific discipline techniques (Forehand and Kotchick 1996 as quoted in Passini et al 2014:1396). In fact, acceptance of discipline techniques are likely to be influenced by what parents consider important and are committed to follow. So, an essential complement to this comprehensive approach includes shedding light on: (1) the parenting beliefs and values which influence the parent–child relationship quality, (2) the general acceptance of commonly recommended or discouraged discipline techniques, and (3) their actual use in daily life. In the section that follows we discuss the potential usefulness of such additional information.

For any description of socialisation to be complete, it needs to include an examination of parents' beliefs about what they and their children are doing. The

beliefs parents hold may determine how invested they are in achieving positive parent–child relationships. Parents with more child centred goals (e.g., desiring to satisfy the emotional needs of the child) have been reported to actively avoid creating a negative atmosphere which could hurt the parent–child relationship.

Also, what parents think their parenting role entails, their thoughts about how a child should act, and how to best bring up their child have been shown to impact their discipline behaviour. For instance, Luster et al. (1989 as quoted in Passini et al 2014:1396) found mothers of infants (9–23 months) who valued conformity more than self-direction favoured more restrictive child behaviour control strategies. Other studies, however, suggest that beliefs and values are unlikely to be linked with parents' actual behaviour. Mental states underlying behaviour, it is argued, are often not tapped by the assessment of beliefs for the following reasons: (1) people tend to respond in a socially desirable way, and (2) beliefs are not readily accessible.

Nonetheless, the interest of studying parenting beliefs and values is not limited to the possible connection between parenting beliefs and their actions: It would also reveal the intuitive psychology of the group being studied, which may provide insight into their acceptance and willingness to use specific discipline techniques when included in a prevention or treatment package.

## 5.5    Positive Parenting strategy

Larzelere et al (2017:24) describes *positive parenting a*s the philosophy where parents attempt to influence their children should be limited to warm and supportive guidance. A lot of positive parenting advocates seem opposed to any disciplinary consequences, therefore many child development scholars within this thought, also seem reluctant to recommend any disciplinary consequences to parents (Larzelere et al 2017:31).

215

The thing that are questioning about this style to Larzelere et al (2017:32) is the putative scientific basis for an overgeneralised opposition to all disciplinary consequences that include any element of averseness or power assertion (e.g., timeouts, token fines, privilege losses, physical guidance). I also agree that an all-positive approach might work well with children who have easy temperaments, but it contradicts the fact that, in addition to reinforcing appropriate behaviour, *all empirically supported parenting interventions* for oppositional defiant children intentionally train parents in power assertive skills that many positive parenting advocates oppose.

## 5.6. Giles-Sims & Lockhart's four rival parenting cultures

Giles-Sims & Lockhart (2005:196) states that family researchers have increasing evidence that how parents discipline their children matters, but uncertainties remain about how different disciplinary strategies contribute to varying developmental outcomes. They seek to explain parental choices of disciplinary strategy in a manner that might be of some practical assistance to family professionals involved in various forms of family intervention. (Giles-Sims & Lockhart 2005:197) They offer a deductive causal argument, which predicts that the adherents of four rival cultures (i.e., hierarchy, egalitarianism, individualism, and fatalism) hold distinctive conceptions of family, adopt contrasting parenting orientations, and prefer different disciplinary strategies and which explains why they do so.(Giles-Sims & Lockhart 2005:201). Their four rival parenting cultures can be described as follows:

### 5.6.1. The hierarchical pattern

The hierarchises family—like other social institutions—requires clear yet inclusive boundaries and considerable internal stratification. These clear boundaries mean that family members are obligated to other members in more significant ways than to outsiders. Internal stratification means that some persons appropriately make

decisions binding on others. (Giles-Sims & Lockhart 2005:202) The children of these families are expected to submerge whatever personal reservations they may have and cooperate for the good of the family unit. Across broad stretches of time and geography, the hierarchical family has been more common than other types and therefore has acquired the label "traditional". Hierarchical disciplinary practices focus on the threat and application of punishment. (Goode, 1982; Tucker, l988).

### 5.6.2. The egalitarian pattern

The egalitarians family—like other social institutions—has clear boundaries. The clear family boundaries also help to signal that family members are more thoroughly obligated to each other than to outsiders, but among egalitarians, these boundaries are frequently less inclusive (i.e., encompassing one nuclear household) than those of hierarchical families (Giles-Sims & Lockhart 2005:203). Because these families believe in essential equality among humans and in natural human virtue, egalitarian parents have little reason to dissuade their children from developing their own ways of perceiving, evaluating, and behaving. They value their children instead as distinctive and, as the children mature, increasingly equal persons.

These 'egalitarian parents' disciplinary strategies also differ sharply from those of hierarchical parents. Although they often exhibit some hierarchy in their orientations toward infants and toddlers, these egalitarians gradually reduce this approach as children mature. According to Giles-Sims & Lockhart (2005:204) these parents focus on teaching their children to see the consequences of their actions and the need to make amends when these consequences harm others

### 5.6.3. The individualistic pattern

Families with individualistically oriented parents also exist, and individualistic conceptions of the family differ in important respects from the two other groups we

217

examined above. Among individualists, group boundaries are much more porous. Individual parents prefer affiliative networks chosen on the basis of mutual consent to associations based on kinship. Second, these individualistic families incorporate status differentials—but has a lot less dominance than their counterparts in hierarchical families. For them achievement, rather than ascription, leads to status. Overall, individualistic families are more loosely structured than their hierarchical or egalitarian counterparts (Giles-Sims & Lockhart 2005:205). In the frequent claims of school teachers and others who work with children, we see evidence of this, which many parents are relatively self-absorbed and disinterested in at least some of what others regard as the developmental difficulties of their children.

In comparison to parents who adhere to either of the other two groups we already discussed, individualistic parents—who exhibit a similar emphasis on responsiveness as do Baumrind's (1971) "laissez-faire" parents—are apt to be less concerned with shaping their children. Individualistic parents are less demanding of their children, allowing them instead to become individuals through their own trial-and-error efforts. They are less likely to think of family members as offering exceptionally valuable friendship possibilities, because friendship for individualists is a voluntary, often transitory form of human interaction. Giles-Sims & Lockhart (2005:206) points out that with these parents, when children's behaviour cannot be successfully adjusted through the application of carrots, individualistic parents have fewer reservations about applying sticks than do egalitarian parents.

### 5.6.4. The fatalistic pattern

The fatalist's family, represents a compromise, posed by necessity, with their scepticism about the reliability of their fellow humans. The fatalist's families distinguish between social relations within the immediate family and those in broader society. Supportive interaction is appropriate within the family, which, however flawed, is necessary for meeting various basic needs.

218

As with individualists, the fatalists' group affiliative position holds the potential for fostering open family boundaries and admits supervision of children by non-genetic caregivers (Gelles&Harrop,1991). Fatalists also share with hierarchists, beliefs in human inequality and inherent character flaws. When these families do interact with others—in family-related or other unavoidable situations in broader society (Mars,1982)—they are predisposed toward practices like those of hierarchists and are prone to seek order through a structure of rules and punishments or dominance. Fatalistic parents are thus likely to be isolated and inconsistent disciplinarians. They are moving back and forth between the application of the strict discipline associated with hierarchy and the relative indifference of individualistic parents. This inconsistency is bound to be confusing and frustrating to their children. According to Giles-Sims & Lockhart (2005:207), children in fatalistic families are likely to suffer from multiple social and family problems, holding negative consequences for their development.

## 5.7. Harsh physical punishment

Mustaine & Tewksbury (2014: 90) did research on the topic of harsh physical punishment, in their article on fathers' methods of child discipline. According to them a wide range of modes of punishing/disciplining children are used by parents. Thinking of ways that childhood discipline may be related to negative outcomes in the child's life, including delinquency/criminality, concerns are most clearly focused on the use of harsh physical forms of punishment. Research has shown that the use of harsh physical punishments by parents is largely driven by parent's attitudes (Dietz, 2000; Kirkwood, 1999; Vittrup, Holden & Buck, 2006) and/or by community norms (MacKenzie, Nicklas, Waldfogel & Brooks-Gunn, 2012).

The identification of the specific factors related to the use of physical punishment methods by parents has been very limited. Mustaine & Tewksbury (2014:90), points out that available findings suggest that Protestants are more likely to use physical punishments (Dietz, 2000; Gershoff, Miller & Holden, 1999; Grogan-Kaylor & Otis,

2007). Younger mothers and mothers who report more stress from parenting are more likely to use physical forms of discipline (Kirkwood, 1999; MacKenzie et al., 2012). Parents with depressive symptoms, similarly are also more likely to use harsh physical means of child discipline (Wissow, 2001). Numerous studies (Barkin, Scheindlin, Ip, Richardson & Finch, 2007; Dietz, 2000; Pinderhughes, Dodge, Bates, Pettit & Zelli, 2000; Wager, 2009) showed that lower socio-economic status and African-American mothers are more likely to use harsher forms of physical punishment than Caucasian mothers and mothers who are in more favourable economic situations.

Interestingly, Barkin et al. (2007) demonstrated that parents with higher educational achievement and those who had themselves been punished using harsh physical discipline were also more likely to discipline their children using physical means. And, finally, Rodriquez (2010) showed that parents reporting higher levels of stress are those more likely to use "over reactive" disciplinary methods (e.g., a harsh, angry, authoritarian approach). Mustaine & Tewksbury (2014: 90) clearly states that the use of physical punishment with children is widely recognised to be associated with numerous negative outcomes for children. These include externalisation of behaviour/problems (Ferguson, 2013; MacKenzie et al., 2012), cognitive performance impairment (Ferguson, 2013), and increased use of aggression/violence both during childhood and adulthood (Gershoff, 2010) and increased likelihood of mental health problems (Gershoff, 2002).

## 5.8. In Conclusion

Diana Boumrind wrote her parenting patterns/ styles in 1971 and till today she is still one of the names mostly mentioned when people talk about parenting styles. I believe that the styles and the discipline techniques that I discussed in this chapter can be a lot of help to the parents of today. Not in a prescriptive way, as to say that every parent must fit clearly into one or the other style, or that certain parents must only use certain discipline techniques.

220

Every family has their own story to tell. Every family has their own narrative, and in this narrative, parents can discover more of who they are, and how they discipline their children by looking at the different parenting styles. Parents can also get new insights on discipline techniques and new ways to try out to discipline their children in the discipline techniques that is described.

In our next chapter I will write on the voices on discipline from the education. This will help us to think about how the education see disciplining children and how it changed in the past few years.

**6.        VOICES ON DISCIPLINE FROM EDUCATION**

When thinking about discipling children, it is important to look at the thoughts on discipline in South Africa, and especially in the education. I agree with Nel et al (2016:2) who pointed out that seeing that children and communities differ greatly, there is need to find out what works for particular learners in particular schools and classroom situations.

I would like to take you on a journey with South African educational writers on their thoughts on discipline and how it was shaped by our history. Most of the articles I will be referring to comes from a time ago. I feel it is still important to look at these references, as it will give us more insights on how people and especially parents in South Africa perceive the disciplining of children.

**6.1    Discipline in schools**

According to Wolhuter & Van Staden (2008:392), school discipline has two main objectives, namely to insure the safety of staff and learners and secondly to create an environment conducive to teaching and learning.

Oosthuizen, Wolhuter and Du Toit (2003) provide an overview of methods to maintain discipline in schools. They divide these methods into two categories: preventive and reactive methods. The former includes safety measures at schools, aesthetic considerations, organisational arrangements and positive discipline. Reactive methods include a code of conduct, references to the school governing board, suspension, expulsion, detention and criminalisation.

Wolhuter & Van Staden (2008:392) notes that from educational considerations, should as far as possible, be given priority to preventive measures in order to ensure

a sense of safety for educators and learners and to ensure an environment to provide effective teaching and learning. However, the particular context determines what would be the most effective in a particular situation.


## 6.2    The "discipline problem" in South African Schools


Van der Walt (2007:290) describes that the debate on the "discipline problem" in schools in South Africa as well as elsewhere in the world creates the impression that educators are increasingly losing their grip on order and discipline and that important measures must be taken to address the problem. For him the conditions (sometimes referred to as "anomies" and "anarchists") may be attributed to the impact that prevailing social conditions have on the school as an institution.


In South African schools the severity and extent of the problem, is shown among other things, from the announcement of the minister of education, Naledi Pandor, on October 20, 2006 that she is considering disciplinary legislation to change schools in order to provide for the special treatment of learners with seriousness behavioural problems. She is considering this step as it seems to be current measures for discipline in schools is not effective, or whether principals and teachers do not understand how to discipline in schools (read: order) within the framework of existing regulations (Rademeyer 2006: 1).


The extent of the problem in South Africa is further apparent from the fact that almost 600 000 people between the ages of 18 and 21 are currently serving sentences for serious offences (Dimbaza 2007: 2 as quoted in Van der Walt 2007:290). For Van der Walt (2007:290), this is largely attributed due to inadequate school education.


As for the United States, Nienhuis (2006: 27) reports that thousands of parents are considering sending children to education camps as a form of judicial punishment. The Dutch MP van Hijum (2006: 26) also believes that if all other measures to

223

maintain order in schools fail, they will have to remove the troublesome youngsters from the schools and educate them in education camps.

## 6.3    Education's impact on society

The main reason for the seriousness with identifying and dealing with the factors that lead to the "discipline problem" in school, is the acceptance that education (among other things) has the socialising goal to bring home the norms and values of society with the youth. Disciplinary problems in the school are, however, also often redirected to social problems in the broader society - thus reflecting problems in the broader society (Van der Walt, 2007:290).

Cultural and social circumstances may also have blame for the discipline problems. Increasing discipline problems in developed countries are often a condition derived of anomy (Böhm 2005: 2-3 as quoted in Van der Walt, 2007:290).

According to Blackburn (1996: 18 as quoted in Van der Walt, 2007:290) anomy is characteristic of periods "Of loosening of social norms, when the loss of authority tends to release moral bonds". Anomy is in turn the result of deeper causes as evidenced by the observation of Middleton and Walsh (1995: 25, 37) that reversed the prosperity beliefs in these countries in a "Cultural winter" - a state characterised by feelings of fear, hopelessness, and the engagement in a postmodern approach to rules, in which rules as socially constructed and only seen as valid for those who find the situation acceptable. According to Hollick (2006: 351 as quoted in Van der Walt, 2007:291), this attitude reflects, among other things, relativism and anarchy.

The essence, the functioning and nature of the whole teaching-learning environment of a school is inseparable linked to a variety of societies(Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:362). One of the important activities of the teaching-learning environment that is discussed in this regard is surely learner behaviour. Consequently, the proposition can be made that learner behaviour is deeply rooted in societal relationships such as

224

the parent's home, the school and the surrounding community or society. Based on this, the factors that may be undermining learner misconduct among others in school-related, family-related and environmental related factors are categorised.

### 6.3.1  School-related factors

Some of the factors that are inherent in the school environment, and are related to learner misconduct, include the following (Wolhuter & Steyn 2003: 527):

- It appears that learner misconduct is related to the age and the associated maturity level of learners. For example, disciplinary problems occur more often among high school learners than among primary school learners.
- The educator's competence and style also influence the appearance of disciplinary problems.
- The organisational structure of the school.
- The physical appearance of the school, which includes aspects such as neatness and aesthetics.
- The organisational climate in the school, related to the management style of the school principal.

### 6.3.2  Family-related factors

Two important family-related factors related to the disciplinary climate at schools are according to Van der Merwe (2002: 4) and Wolhuter and Steyn (2003: 527), the following:

- The guidance that children receive from their parents.
- Parent involvement at school.

Although the link between learner discipline and the increasing appearance of broken families, single parents and restored families in South Africa have not yet been subjected to much scientific research, it probably also has an effect on learner misconduct in schools (Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:362).

### 6.3.3. Societal factors

The exposure of learners to a society and the media in which there are regular examples of violence, racism and other anti-social behaviour, definitely has a negative impact on learner behaviour and are identified by McHenry (2000: 35) and earlier Welsh research (Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office 1989: 16) as causes of learner misconduct. (Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:363)

### 6.4. The turn in education from 1994

In South African schools, the "discipline problem" can be attributed to the fact that society has been transformed since 1994 and the children struggle to find their place (Van der Walt, 2007:291). Other causes include the fact that many learners grow up orphaned due to HIV AIDS and other diseases (the absent parent problem), the fact that the traditional societal structures are breaking down due to migration to cities, the fact that violence is a normal way of resolving conflict (Timse 2006: 1-2), the fact that teachers feel that they lost control of the learners and lost their behaviour after corporal punishment was abolished (Hayward 2006: 1 as quoted in Van der Walt, 2007:291), the fact that the new curriculum bore the learners (Enoch 2006: 8 as quoted in Van der Walt, 2007:291), the influence of the media (Govender 2006: 6; Van Eeden 2005: 14 as quoted in Van der Walt, 2007:291) and many more.

The consequences of the anti-apartheid struggle and the advent of a human rights culture in 1994 also contributed to the calling for a new approach to maintaining discipline in schools. Although the core characteristics of discipline and education remained essentially the same, it became advisable to approach the actual enforcement of discipline somewhat differently. (Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:376)

The democratisation process in South Africa, which took place in 1994, has had a huge impact social, economic and political. This impact inevitably extended to the

226

education system with consequent far-reaching changes. The previous education dispensation, was characterised by rigid rules, strict discipline and a patriarchal relationship between teacher and learner (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:304). It made way for a new approach, namely Outcomes-Based Education.

The associated establishment of a culture of rights in the new democratic order, placed schools in the barrage of constitutional reform. In the new dispensation, corporal punishment - a former acceptable practice to discipline learners – abolished. Learners became increasingly made aware of this emphasis on rights. This resulted in, among other things, the authority of teachers and principals that were undermined. The effective maintenance of discipline is currently one of the biggest bottlenecks in education.

Especially the abolition of corporal punishment is widely regarded as a giant step forward in the so-called battle for children's rights, and although viewed from a human rights point of view, keep the reverse side of this coin with far-reaching implications for enforcement and application of effective discipline in schools. The postmodern era, with the emphasis on individual freedom, the exercise of rights and greater freedom of speech - including children - are all factors which, in addition to the abolition of corporal punishment, contributes to the authority relationship between teachers and learners, teachers and learners that have changed so that new methods of discipline needed to be applied (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:304).

The emphasis on child rights, with the consequent abolition of corporal punishment and the limitation of schools' ability to act in a disciplinary way, together with the maintenance of discipline in schools is extremely thorny problem. Although there is wide unanimity that education policy exists on many levels sufficiently and thoroughly captured to ensure democratic values and human rights, there is a lot of concern about the costly price of teachers, learners and education that must pay to get the South African goals of democracy and human rights realised.

227

A choir of protest has been summoned from various places about the lack of discipline in schools. Teachers struggle to be able to perform properly and do their work because of the pressure and trauma that made them to become increasingly motivated, constantly on sick leave and even being forced to resign from education. An overview of existing literature on behavioural problems and the effective maintenance of discipline - nationally as well as internationally - clearly shows that it is extremely sensitive and complicated problem to be approached with great caution (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:304). Locally it seems to be the abolition of corporal punishment in 1996 as the beginning of the downward spiral large-scale of huge behavioural problems in learners (Department of Education 2000: 5-7).

For Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes (2007:304), the problem is not that simple. To argue that a return to corporal punishment and other strict penalties will provide a quick fix for the current issues around learner misconduct would be short-sighted. Research findings over the last few years widely documented, both locally and internationally, indicates with worrying regularity on the disadvantages of reactive forms of discipline including corporal punishment (aggressive) verbal corrections, suspension and exclusion (Lytton 1997; Sprague, Walker, Golly, White, Myers & Shannon 2001; Gershoff 2002; Mc Curdy, Mannella & Eldridge 2003; Maree & Cherian 2004; Irvin, Tobin, Sprague, Sugai & Vincent 2004; Robinson, Funk, Beth & Bush 2005 as quoted in Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:304). Shaw and Braden (1990, as quoted in Robinson et al. 2005: 118) concludes that the application of corporal punishment fails to suppress negative behaviour or strengthen pro-social behaviour.

Gershoff (2002: 545) points out that, although the application of corporal punishment usually results in immediate obedience, in the long run leads to increasing aggression and lower levels of moral internalisation and mental health. Hunt (in Maree & Cherian 2004: 76) finds that corporal punishment in the early years of a child's life has a significantly positive correlate with violent behaviour later in an individual's life. These findings were confirmed in a study by Lytton (1997: 211-214).

She finds that discipline that in childhood is related to physical punishment and verbal aggression, positively correlate with juvenile delinquency, aggression, academic failure and other forms of pathology. Maree and Cherian (2004: 76) believe that corporal punishment is still widely applied in South Africa and has changed little since its abolition 1996. It seems particularly popular in rural areas at black schools - according to them the most vulnerable part of society that is being abused in such a way (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:304).

### 6.4.1. The Cause of the problem

For Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes (2007:310), it is insightful that the issues pointed out by the principals the investigative group correlates with findings widely reported in the literature. In both cases - the empirical investigation as well as the literature - largely fall into three main categories, namely problems that can be attributed to:

       (1) factors within the home,

       (2) factors within society (including the media), and

       (3) factors due to Policy Standards and Legislation of the National Department of Education. (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:310)

Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes's (2007:310) main findings regarding the causes of the problem can be summarised as follows:

### 6.4.1.1. Factors within the home

Ignorant parents and related problems - four out of five principals indicated it is by far the biggest cause of discipline problems at schools (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:310).

Louw and Barnes (2003: 20) state that parents are losing control in a society where the dividing line between law and wrong is no longer clear. An inability to hold the reins more firmly leads to an "Abdication" of their authority and the tendency to leave discipline and education to the school.

229

Chimenga (2002: 51) believes parents are no longer dedicated to discipline their children; they expect the school to do it. Rossouw (2002: 431) are on point with the next words:

"Some parents expect from the teaching profession to solve their problems, despite the fact that many are apathetic towards and disinterested in school and educational matters. Parents show a lack of tolerance and respect towards government authorities as well as educators, and some have a *laissez-faire* approach towards child education. They expect schools to teach their children proper conduct, but they do not realise their own responsibility."

## 6.4.1.2. Factors within society (including the media)

The moral decline of society, enhanced by media is next to the home, the main cause of discipline problems. (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:311)

All participants agreed with this, that there's a lack of a value-driven society. In addition, the decline in the sphere of influence of the church in society is also indicated as worrying. The general feeling is that the church itself is no longer so sure about fundamental truths and, consequently, parents no longer get answers to questions about the questions parenting of their children. A lot of literature confirms the tendency of a loser society in which values are relativised. Rossouw (2003: 415) refers to the modern man's search for personal freedom and autonomy as well as the unwillingness of people to settle for any form of authority or authority aimed at ensuring orderly coexistence.

De Klerk and Rens (2003: 354) says that inadequate discipline is the response to the lack of a value system that must be anchored in a particular value-driven world and view of life. According to them, self-discipline is the most important component of constructive values and norms. The reasons that they respond to the inability of the broad community to successfully address discipline problems, include the overlap of

230

individual rights, the neglect of personal responsibility, the absence of a public value system, the inability of the society to teach children to think and decide for themselves as well as the absence of self-disciplined role models in society (De Klerk & Rens 2004: 354). All these factors lead inevitably to the culling of a culture of teaching and learning at schools and necessarily a snowball effect on the behaviour of children.

For Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes (2007:311) it seems that a lack of respect - a value that can be regarded as the most important missing link in all cases involving misconduct – are highlighted as the main reason for the deterioration of previously well-disciplined individuals, schools and communities.

### 6.4.1.3. Factors due to policy standards and legislation of the national Department of education.

Education legislation, as well as the early implementation of outcomes-based teaching causes huge and profound problems for schools (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:311). The disillusionment of principals with the education department's policy regarding discipline is one of the biggest bottlenecks in maintaining a culture of teaching and learning at schools.

The abolition of corporal punishment in 1996 was followed by a comprehensive campaign to transform policies on discipline at all levels in education in line with the constitutional demands of equal rights and autonomy (Department of Education 2000: Foreword as quoted in Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:311). The power of principals and teachers to act in a disciplinary way were severely shortened. A further problem that has been mentioned throughout by all the principals relates to the limited powers of teachers and principals in the maintenance of discipline and the worrying lack of motivation among teachers.

Another headmaster expressed his feeling of powerlessness as follows:

231

"Looking at the Human Rights Bill, teachers have the right to teach, but they are not given the opportunity to do it. The children have rights, but what about the teachers' rights? "(Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:313)

The findings and recommendations that Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes (2007:314) proposes from the interviews regarding the possible solutions to the problem are:

A firm partnership between the school and parents must be established
Society must accept co-responsibility for the education task - "It takes a village to raise a child." Other forms of discipline enforcement must be found.
Principals and governing bodies need greater powers and executive powers to act in a disciplinary manner against offenders. The renewed focus on a value-driven approach to education is essential

## 6.5. The Human Rights Movement after 1994 in South Africa

In my discussion on this topic I want to refer to the research of Van der Walt & Oosthuizen (2008:379), according to them black learners in South Africa were involved in political activism since the late 1960s they were fighting against the apartheid dispensation. This activism grew over a period of years, so that after 1976 it elapsed almost entirely in anarchy, disorder and lawlessness.

Between 1985 and 1990, activism practically meant the end of school and school activities in many of the former black residential areas. Principals had in some cases lost their legitimacy to the learners and the parents, and even had to flee in some cases. Schools were disrupted, examinations could not take place; of education in schools were often not mentioned in many cases.

With the dawn of the democratic dispensation in 1994, much of the "struggle" mentality remains in the minds and hearts of many learners. A simple calculation shows that learners who started school in 1994 completed grade 12 in 2005. As little

children they were trapped in the "struggle" mentality, and according to all indications, learners still struggle and is still shaking off its consequences.

White learners had a somewhat different experience over the past three decades. Because they were not so involved in political activism, they went to school, which could be regarded as western-modernist, in a quiet context until 1994. Everything was neatly arranged, the schools were opened and closed at the appointed times, religious education has been offered in the designated periods, the teachers were strict and diligent, school duty was applicable to all (even those at that time in gr.8 to 10, felt themselves obliged to have school), children were in school every day, exams or not, bodily and other forms of strict punishment were handed out where necessary and so forth (Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:379).

With the arrival of the new dispensation in 1994, everything changes for the white learners as well. The schools were invaded by black learners who come from the struggle era. Everyone experienced adjustment problems. There was language, cultural and social issues in the classrooms and on the school grounds. The black learners come with a striking "looser", "self-employed" and "questionable" mentality towards schools, and this was strengthened by the demands of the new democratic dispensation and also the spirit of the time.

During that time teachers felt that they have been deprived of many of their powers; they also felt uncertain about where they stood in dealing with both the new curriculum 2005 and the problem of the new "undisciplined" behaviour among the learners. Teachers felt that the options they had to exercise discipline was reduced by the fact that corporal punishment was no longer allowed (cf. SA1996 Schools Act, Article 10; Christian Education South Africa vs. Minister of Education, 2000 as quoted in Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:379).

In a qualitative investigation that were done, among other things, learners said: "When the hero in the class aggressively confronts the teacher, everyone thinks he

233

is cool and has a strong personality ", and "When the teachers are angry with the class, some people in our class openly laugh at them". One Teacher, for example, said: "Since human rights have come to the forefront, the situation (learner behaviour) has changed dramatically. Learners now have too many rights " (Rossouw, 2003: 423-424). This illustrate the loss of power that was felt by teachers

The introduction of a human rights culture had obviously contributed to the feeling teachers that the learners are undisciplined. In a country where the inhabitants were not previously really aware of the necessity of such a culture, has Chapter 2 of the Constitution from 1996 (RSA, 1996 (b), especially articles 1, 7 and 39 as quoted in Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:380) waved like a fresh breeze. Human rights, on the one hand, made clear to all of them what rights they could claim and on the other hand it also made clear what the limitations was of these rights to the individual as well as for the group to which he or she belongs (cf. De Vries 2006b: 2; Petzer 2006: 7 as quoted in Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:380). However, the advent of the Bill of Rights probably also worked the spirit of disorder and anarchy in the schools. Learners abused the Charter on occasions and on certain rights leaving some teachers paralysed in their work and their relationships with the learners.

The Valuable Manifesto, conducted by the Department of Education in August 2001 (Dept. of Education 2001 as quoted by Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:379) had a tendency to "looseness" and even undisciplined. The reason for this is that the Manifesto focuses only on the national values that should be brought to school in formal education, but said little about the values that can be characterised by good education and education, such as sense of duty, responsibility, honesty, integrity, justice, respect for self and for others, precision, punctuality, good relationships, relationship, hard work, dedication, future-oriented cooperation (for example, building discipline in a school), a religious basis for expanding what is considered a disciplined school environment, and the like

For Van der Walt & Oosthuizen (2008:381) it is still uncertain if the present kind of intimate knowledge of the fundamental human rights has any influence on the so-called discipline of the learners - positive or negative.

## 6.6. The postmodern man

Van der Walt & Oosthuizen (2008:381) says that if you combine the effect of the less acceptable aspects of this thoughts to the postmodern spirit of mind onto the young person's mind, then you have a recipe for disorder and even chaos in schools. Add to this the problem of the inability of certain teachers, the absence of some teachers, the lack of punctuality among teachers, and the problems faced by teachers as well as parents and governing bodies with the new political dispensation terms of language medium and financing, it becomes clearer why the schools are weak learner discipline wrestling.

The following was observed by Van der Walt & Oosthuizen (2008:382) regarding the degree of "discipline" of the modern postmodern man. In the first place it is clear that the "modern" or "Modernist" manner of discipline, against which Foucault expressed him is unacceptable. Educators must therefore seek other ways to "discipline" their learners to stay followers of them.

The postmodern era spirit, which now, in the first decades of the 21st Century has been found to be the fullest in the world, especially in the world of the child and the young person (adolescent) no longer allows a class in classrooms and school premises militarist order and discipline rule. In his book Timeline, Crichton (1999: 400) asks: "What is the dominant fashion of experience at the end of the twentieth century? How do people see things, and how do they expect to see things?" And then he himself answers the question: "The answer is simple. In every field, from business to politics to marketing to education, the dominant fashion has become entertainment ".

Furedi (2004: 19) concludes when he types the contemporary young man as "living in an era of political exhaustion." and social disengagement ". The contemporary young man constantly makes personal preferences and constantly adheres to an opt-out clause. The present day child and young man are also typical of digital or cultural products.

235

According to Middleton and Walsh (1995: 39 e.v.), the young man lives today in a Disneyland culture, a "Cool Whip" society, in which everything is temporary, transient, and disposable. Contemporary young people consider themselves self-determinative or autonomous (Gr. Autos = self; nomos = law - a law in and of itself). The environment in which this person must make decisions is like a carnival, in which the entertainment comes and goes. The environment is experienced as extremely pluralistic, among other things because it is self- and socially constructed.

Because people feel confronted by a smorgasbord of religions and life visions, they are obliged to each have their own value system to construct. These values are (other than principles, which were characteristic of the modern / Lighting time) also of transient nature, disposable - like a plastic bag that has its purpose served it.

Contemporary people do not see themselves as persons with a certain permanent destination, but as creatures whose ego is socially constructed by others, the environment and the circumstances. Man is himself the social construct of the social culture concerned. In more technical language: man experiences himself or herself as centred - there is no longer a firm and definite "me"; "I" can be whatever I want to be, or how I am (late) construct. The postmodern human being, therefore, is someone without substance, says Middleton and Walsh (1995: 55). It goes without saying that this person is a constant consumer of the cultural goods he / she finds: the "I" is composed of what is on hand, and if not more diligence, it is thrown away. In a sentence, concludes Middleton and Walsh (1995: 61), the contemporary man is in a state of nomadic inconvenience.

It is important to understand how the contemporary postmodern human rule, order and understand discipline. According to Apignanesi and Garrat (2004: 50 as quoted in Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:382), the postmodern person accepts that there are no longer fixed rules or categories on which you can test things that you come across for the first time.

The postmodern means, in this sense, that you work without rules to determine in the end which rules you used when you did something or judged something. This sketch of today's young man, the learners who are on the school banks, makes it clear that we are not working here with a modernist-rationalist approach to how order and discipline can be worked out. (One could, however, if you were to have the power to do so, as Foucault correctly indicated if you could, force such an outdated view, for example in a school. The question of the postmodern young man will ask is, whose power legitimises what you expect from me to do?). The fact that young people are undisciplined, can be attributed, inter alia, to a sense of power loss at the teachers, their parents and the school authority (Wolhuter & Oosthuizen 2003: 451). In South Africa, the latter feeling, or experience is probably deepened by the advent of the democratic dispensation that began in 1994.

The qualifier "possible" in the previous sentence is essential because one is also the phenomenon of power loss in authority, which is also prevalent in other countries. Known in this regard are the student uprisings that broke out in Europe in 1968 and what afterwards spilled practically throughout the whole world as part of the so-called New Left Revolution. Nevertheless, it is possible that in South Africa, the arrival of the human rights administration in 1994 made a special contribution to the decay of learner discipline - in the conventional sense.

The modern-day learner in the school, is a more mature consumer in the carnival postmodern environment than children in previous times. This insight brings with it that educators, including teachers, should be aimed more at the constructive occupation of the learners through meaningful activities that suits the spirit of time. This means, among other things, that they have to "entertain" the learners creatively among other things, using new technological means available to everyone. In the process, educators should then rather become facilitators of learning opportunities as dispensers of knowledge.

## 6.7. Secularism's influence on discipline in schools

Increasing secularism in the western world was also regarded as a further contributing factor to the "discipline problem" in South Africa. According to Van der Walt (2004: 92-93) the phenomenon occurs in two main forms: denial (the church has no more involvement in the everyday behaviour of people) and the return of religion to the private atmosphere of human life (religious norms thus no longer affect public opinion life and behaviour of people - not even in school).

One of the reasons why retaliation and punitive measures are so deeply rooted in Western and Muslim-oriented societies may be attributed to the fact that it is in the Bible and in the Qur'an, in which large percentages of the citizens of countries believe worldwide (Tellinger 2005: 249-259 as quoted in Van der Walt, 2007:292), as a very important educational tool. Psalm 89:32, Lamentations 3: 1 and especially Proverbs 10:13, 13:24, 22:15, 23:14, 26: 3, 29:15 refer to the necessity of the use of discipline.

Paul also approves of the Corinthians' seriousness to punish the offender "(2 Corinthians 7:11). In the Qur'an, retaliation is also validly stated: "Retaliation is prescribed for you in the matter of the murdered; The freeman for the freeman, and the slave for the slave, and the female for the female. There is life for you in retaliation, O men of understanding that you may ward off (evil) "(Holy Qur'an Surah II: 178-179). These guidelines provide to many Christians and Muslims justification for applying retaliation methods in education situations. (These books, of course, also provide guidelines on love; a stewardship approach and is based on love, as will be further apparent.).

The word "discipline" relates to the word "disciple", which originated from the Latin for disciple (learner), derived from the infinitive of the word, meaning to discern (to learn) (Sinclair 1999: 409). The purpose of "discipline" is to guide people (in this case learners) to learn. In transcendental sense, "disciple" also means someone who follows the teaching of a teacher (Wehmeier 2002: 330), as one does the

followers of Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Buddha or Confucius (Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:378).

In conjunction with this second, more transferable meaning, Van Dyk (2000: 65-66 as quoted by Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:378) states that discipleship means hearing the word of the educator and following it wisely. Elsewhere (Van Dyk 1997: 20 as quoted by Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:379), in line with his view of discipline, says that all the efforts of the educator, thus the teacher, should focus on achieving one goal – to equipping learners for service and leading them to true discipleship. Discipleship means to do what you are called to do in this world - to fulfil their calling.

## 6.8. Two sides of a coin.

According to Oosthuizen & Van Staden (2007:362), South African education has found itself the past decade in a new socio-political and education law context, where the methods of discipline retention of the past no longer can be used. We must note that the South African school collection is a richly shaded mosaic of ethnicity and cultures. The historically advantaged and historically disadvantaged schools each show at first glance a distinctive social as well as school environment. There are however big differences between the two categories of schools for example in funding per learner, educator qualifications, learner-per-educator ratio and physical school facilities.

To explain this further I would like to refer to Wolhuter and Oosthuizen (2003) that investigated learners in Afrikaans medium primary schools' experience of discipline at their schools. Their finding was that learners realised the necessity of discipline and that their opinion is based on practical (prerequisite for learning) and religious grounds. Most learners believe that the state of discipline at their schools is good. The misconduct that does occur is of a less serious nature (ie not criminal misconduct) (Wolhuter & Van Staden 2008:392).

## 6.9. School violence

Van Louw & Waghid (2008:470) did research on the topic of school violence and I will refer to their research in this regard. With regard to the extent and nature of the problems, Patrick Burton of the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (during the Human Rights Commission's hearings about school violence in September 2006) said that the scope cannot be accurately determined, since all cases of violence not reported (Report 30 September 2006) while Rossouw (2003: 423) shed more light on its nature if he argues that problems vary from less serious "mistakes" such as disobedience, inertia, noises, failure to do homework and refuse to be quiet ,staying quiet if teachers want to talk to serious incidents of violence.

About the latter, Sewsunker (1999:6 as quoted in Van Louw & Waghid 2008:469) indicates in a discussion about violence in schools in KwaZulu-Natal, among other things, in cases of murder, armed robbery, damage and destruction of school property, battleground, stone throwing, knife attacks, assault of learners and teachers, detention of hostages, sexual harassment, fire assault, physical assault, firearms, drug abuse and cell phone theft.

Van Louw & Waghid (2008:469) stated the seriousness of the situation that was further litigated during the above-mentioned hearings with evidence that Childline gets monthly more than 8 000 calls from children who have been banned by schools; that's more than 20 deaths occurred in schools this year until the commission's hearings (in September) and that 61% of all schools in Cape Town are located in high crime areas.

It is therefore not strange that Jody Kollapen, chairman of the Human Rights Commission, commented during the commission's hearings violence in schools as follows: "Our schools are war zones. It's simply no longer safe places for children to be. Children cannot be taught in an area of fear "(Die Burger 28 September 2006 as quoted in Van Louw & Waghid 2008:469). It is against this background that the

authors now also belong to the debate about the worrying issue. The latter is especially apparent continued application of or craving for corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure, great cause for concern. The impression is hereby created that proponents of this form of discipline are totally unaware is that such action is essentially a continuation of the physical violence to children often exposed to unemployment because of social decline, sustained by unemployment and chronic poverty is.

Moreover, the fact that in addition, the said social decline (which likely has a negative effect on the psyche of children) with centuries-old oppression, exploitation and retaliation, further evidence of or an inability or a deliberate reluctance to study the cruel historical legacy of the country when studying discipline problems at school properly. The mentioned perception is further enhanced by the unscrupulous addition of the role of students in the liberation struggle as the core cause of discontinuation of discipline without regard to submission and discrimination which was characteristic of the country's colonial and apartheid past, being as forms of structural violence was the sparks that exploded the 1976 spray gun.

Apartheid as a form of constitutional violence has resulted in the normalisation of violent behaviour as a means of accessing power and resources. We cannot reflect on school violence without taking into consideration the impact of socio-economic and socio-political realities that exists in most communities in South Africa as a result of the apartheid legacy (Van Louw & Waghid 2008:470). School and discipline problems in school, as social realities, therefore is not possible to be separate from the social-historical development from which they arise. Schools reflect the communities in which they exist. Similarly, violence in schools reflects the character of the broader community within which they exist.

This view is confirmed in the report of the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention about violence in schools: "The findings underline the important symbiotic relationship that exists between what happens in schools and what happens in learners' homes and communities? (Burton 2008: 75 as quoted in Van Louw &

Waghid 2008:470). The constant complex interaction between the world of the school and the classroom and the world outside, must be discussed with constant care. It must be done against the disregard of the clarification of understanding by historical consciousness brought about - also in our search for the causes of behavioural problems at school and appropriate strategies to address such problems. Alexander (2002: 135 as quoted in Van Louw & Waghid 2008:470) emphasises the need to take into account the past, if he argues that it is fundamentally wrong to block the past and that in South Africa we will and will want to discuss the past for many years.

The possibility of clarification and understanding created by this, is according to Van Louw & Waghid (2008:470) important for addressing the social reality that we at all times have the misconception or oppression of the past (social-historical amnesia) with the necessary critical suspicion in attempting to underlying ideological dimensions.

The human degradation caused by colonialism and apartheid, is enormous and rebuilding requires more than ever been realised: more courage, more resources, harder work and greater perseverance. Davidoff and Lazarus (2002 as quoted in Van Louw & Waghid 2008:470) argue that many people are already courageously lost, but the battle is not over.

They argue that the possibilities for the country look virtually endless while there is a vision of a young democracy, where respect for and support for human rights of every citizen will rule. However, they warn that the levels of violence are extremely high and that the media reported about a furious, frustrated and impoverished society with large numbers unemployed people. These circumstances give rise to a host of social problems. The violence and rage, which overflows to schools and other educational institutions, can only be addressed with conditions in our society that link to the establishment of democratic citizenship.

Van Louw & Waghid (2008:472) states that the successful recovery of the South African society will of course be a slow and laborious process that is the fullest

cooperation of partners will be required. Without it, disciplinary problems and the violence on it will be often leading part of the daily experience of learners and teachers remains.

Although civil and political rights are extended to all citizens of the country, the same cannot be said of socio-economic rights. Poverty and inequality are escalating. The incidence of income inequality is among the highest in the world, the possibility that the situation can be addressed in the short term, blurs as soon as the situation regarding unemployment is being considered.

The situation gives rise to a sense of pessimism among young people often leading them to other methods of survival, such as crime, drugs and drugs prostitution (World Organisation Against Torture 2006: 6 as quoted in Van Louw & Waghid 2008:470).

As far as education is concerned, increasing pressure reflects the necessary correction. The system clearly explains the above-mentioned report. The enrolled learner number has between 1999 and 2002 increased from 150 000 to 280 000. This increase can be seen as an indicator of success but at the same time it indicates the struggle for classroom accommodation and sufficiently well-qualified seated teachers to provide.

Apart from the daily appearance of violence in the world of children the awareness of violence is being carried where children themselves are victims - this are further based on the factors to better understand discipline problems at school. Violence against children, including violence in the family as well as sexual violence are extremely high in South Africa (Van Louw & Waghid 2008:469).

The following statistics in Van Louw & Waghid article (2008:469) serve as further confirmation of the severity of the problem:

• One child is abused every eight minutes;
• One child is raped every 24 minutes;

• One child is assaulted every 14 minutes;

• One in four girls and one in five children under the age of 16 is sexually abuse;

• Of the 26 000 high school learners interviewed, 50% believe that is forced sex is not sexual abuse;

• In a township, all girls (aged 16.5 years) have been involved in the research participated already had sexual intercourse. Thirty-three percent's first sexual experience was that of forced or rape and 66% argued that they had sexual intercourse against their will. (World Organisation against Torture 2006: 15).

If it is assumed that schools reflect the communities in which they are located (Engelbrecht 2007), it goes without saying that the aforementioned disturbing conditions (also as the inheritance of the country's colonial and apartheid past) on the basis of what has already become known in the transitional language has as a "culture of violence".

## 6.10. The handling of misconduct

Oosthuizen et al. (2003: 457) gives an overview of methods that can be applied to discipline to maintain schools. They split the methods into two main groups:
• reactive; and
• pro-active measures.

The former includes corporal punishment, disciplinary hearings by the school governing bodies, expulsion, suspension, criminalisation, community service and detention (Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:363). For example, pro-active methods include aesthetic and organisational school management arrangements, the preparation of classroom rules, the level of preparation and the educator's skill, emphasis on values, regular prayer in class or schooling, encouragement of learner pride, safety measures and positive discipline. Wolhuter et al. (2003: 42) concludes that although the optimal choice depends on the special situation, as far as possible, preventive measures (above reactive measures) are preferred should be given.

Oosthuizen & Van Staden (2007:363-364) points out the necessity of the following for discipline in schools:

### 6.10.1. The educator as a professional (specialist)

If the assumption is made that the educator's professional competence is a determining factor for the successful management of learner discipline, then the recent research results of the Joint Education Trust (Taylor 2006: 8 as quoted by Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:363) is something to think about. The interviewed report shows that educators' professional knowledge in most cases does not meet the necessary requirements: "Because of their own poor education, the knowledge resources of most South African teachers are not strong" (Taylor 2006: 8 as quoted by Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:363). An aspect related to the educator's skill is his / her skills successful teaching of successful pedagogy. In this regard, the research findings also outlined by Taylor (2006: 8 as quoted by Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:363) gives a poor image of the South African educator.

### 6.10.2. Classroom rules

Although a governing body is required in terms of section 8 of the SA Schools Act (SA, 1996) to issue a code of conduct for the school, there is no particular reference to this particular provision that refers to classroom rules. The Guidelines for Governing Bodies for the Establishment of a Code of Conduct for Learners (SA, 1998), however, makes a distinction between general school rules and classroom rules.

### 6.10.3. Parent involvement

Mentz et al.'s (2003: 391) empirical research on the frequency and nature of learner discipline has shown that disciplinary problems are less common at schools where parent involvement in the school is high.

**6.10.4. Positive discipline**

The concept of positive discipline addresses a preventive approach in which it is attempted to form the learner's self-esteem to combat misconduct. This approach, is in the current international time, probably one of the most appropriate approaches to handling of discipline, in fact, it amounts to an approach that says to the offender (Oosthuizen 2006: 19): "I'm with you, though you're wrong."

**6.10.5. Morality**

De Klerk and Rens (2003: 359) speak of a moral crisis in schools that results from a lack of mutual respect. Values are inextricably linked to a religious subject. Consequently, the value system can be strengthened through regular religious practice in order to also strengthen the religious subject in a school.

**6.10.6. Detention**

Traditionally, detention implies the retention of learners after school in order to give them the opportunity to complete arrears of schoolwork. Essentially, this punishment involves that learner's free time must be sacrificed to complete unfinished work - thus the learner is forced to his / her (precious) free time to sacrifice his / her future behaviour to a more positive level exalted. Research by Andrews and Taylor (1998: 4 as quoted by Oosthuizen & Van Staden's 2007:366) indicates that there are mixed feelings in circles about the success of detention. One of the main reasons for its negative experience by educators is the fact that the educator is often punished himself because he / she is the detention class have to handle themselves.

The findings of Oosthuizen & Van Staden's (2007:363-366) research gives us further insights into the discipline in South African schools.

The respondents indicated that the following methods for dealing with learner discipline as the five most effective methods are considered:

246

Thorough preparation of the educator,

Thorough expertise of the educator,

conversation with the parents of the learner,

positive discipline and

a system of classroom rules.

The following methods are also experienced as effective:

emphasis on values,

regular prayer by educators,

encouragement of the learner's pride,

reference to school governing body's disciplinary committee,

reward of the learner for positive behaviour,

learner participation in drafting code of conduct,

encouragement of traditions,

references to headmaster,

extra work,

reprimand and

the deprivation of learner privileges for negative behaviour.

Then the respondents also indicated that the following five methods of handling of discipline as the most inefficient methods:

Isolation outside classroom,

Isolation within the classroom,

a system of merit and demerit,

detention and

corporal punishment

They (Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:365) also states that it appears from an analysis of the response that historically white schools to some extent concentrate on pro-active methods (such as the thorough preparation of the educator, thorough teacher's knowledge, conversation with the parents of the learner, regular prayer of the learner educators, compensation for positive behaviour, encouragement of traditions, etc.) while the historically black schools may concentrate more on reactive

methods. Secondly, it seems as if educators at historic black schools do not see the use of methods to maintain discipline at their schools as efficiently as educators at historical white schools judge the same methods at their schools (Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:370).

The fact that there is not a single method that is seen as very effective implies that the answer to dealing with learner discipline is not unambiguous, but probably lies in the whole - the combination and the alternation of techniques, methods and approaches. This may also imply that the effective management of learner discipline rather requires a contextual approach - an approach where the method is determined by the context of the situation or violation.

In the same way the personality, attitude, intellectual level and age of the learner should be taken into account. In the light of the findings, the following recommendations regarding practical improvement and further research are made: Educators who managed to get a firm grip on the disciplinary situation in their schools must be identified. Their practices must be subjected to an ethnographic and phenomenological research topic and the results of such research should be highlighted for other educators (Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:370).

## 6.11. A possible alternative approach to learner discipline.

When these facts are raised, one can reasonably doubt or teach strategies without proper consideration of the socio-historical context within which it is applied appropriate and sufficient to effectively address the behavioural problems that occur in schools. For Van Louw & Waghid (2008:473) the factors that cause such problems are undoubtedly too complex. This complexity requires necessarily that the state, those in schools, as well as the communities in which schools are situated work together to bring about social justice. This means that we are not just the rights of

248

others to acknowledge a better life, but also make real efforts (outside the school setting) what leading to the minimisation of social injustices.

The complexity of the origin and the nature of discipline problems at school makes it virtually impossible to address such problems effectively through ad hoc or isolated strategies. Medium and long term integrated programmes are developed and systematically delivered to behavioural problems at school (Van Louw, Snyders & Henda 2005: 6 as quoted by Van Louw & Waghid 2008:473). Those involved in education are extremely aware of the benefits of clustering to facilitate collaboration between schools and thus the sharing of resources and services and the exchange to promote ideas. School clusters can also serve as an excellent basis for the promotion of cooperation between government departments at local level. Networks that can be created in this way, should preferably consists of representatives of district offices of the education department (or even of smaller one's government units in the district), schools in the district, local government authorities, the Department of Social Development, Local Police Services, and other relevant community organisations. These networks can serve as platforms for the development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, reflection and possible adaptation of integrated multi-layered strategies to a specific context and what is based on first-hand knowledge of the context in question.

To conclude, Van Louw & Waghid (2008:473) particularly want to endorse the position that educators have the idea of a democratic society, where people can act autonomously and responsibly, both inside and outside the school. Such a democratic society is characterised by an attitude that speaks of "sharing and mutual care" (Bauman 2001a: 15 as quoted by Van Louw & Waghid 2008:473).

## 6.12. Van der Walt and Oosthuizen's proposal for an alternative approach to (restoring) learner discipline.

249

Van der Walt & Oosthuizen (2008:383) proposes the following outlines of an alternative approach to (restoring) learner discipline:

## 6.12.1 Abandon the conventional approach to discipline

It has become clear in the last decades that conventional forms of order and discipline no longer acceptable in schools and enforceable. The analyses regarding discipline and power from the pencils of postmodern thinkers like Michel Foucault have already shown that the writing is on the wall for the conventional approach. Because there is a certain inertia factor, that consists in education, teachers realise it only after about three or four decades of postmodernism (Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:383).

## 6.12.2. Consider the current times

For Van der Walt & Oosthuizen (2008:383) it seems important for teachers, parents, school boards and governing bodies to understand what the postmodern spirit of mind holds. In the postmodern man's carnival approach to life and the environment that are mainly set on entertainment, learner discipline will probably be from a traditional approach to discipline, be able to omit this as "so-called".

It counts also for other places where the term "so-called undisciplined" is used further. It should be worthwhile to determine to what extent there is already in teacher education attention is given to how teachers in the new postmodern time should be disciplined with learner's culture. Learners should be kept busy with learning contents for they are meaningful in these circumstances and will stimulate their interest (Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:384). This insight means that the

learning content of the conventional school subjects or learning areas should be presented in new and creative ways.

### 6.12.3. Use the possibilities of social reconstructionism

Van der Walt & Oosthuizen (2008:384) suggests that in this process, knowledge of social constructivism will help the teacher. The postmodern man tends to construct meaning for himself. This state of affairs make it necessary for teachers to offer learning content in such a way that the learners to the one side will understand, that what has been given to human beings and what is thus on hand to work with can be reconstructed for all sorts of purposes. This is just one of the strengths of social constructivism that it is "social" in nature. Learning opportunities in the classroom should be used as social opportunities during which learners and teachers are constructively busy constructing themselves from the learning content.

### 6.12.4. Always consider the essential characteristics of education

Teachers complain that the learners were so undisciplined. What such teachers, that are still craving for the restoration of the "old" disciplined behaviour of the learners and on order and silence in classrooms, miss is it is discerned that the contemporary learner is completely different. Another mentality has been the learner of a few decades ago.

The contemporary learner is a more independent "carnival gangster" and "consumer" (Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:384). The learner is the constructor of his or her own existence or meaning. This insight means that the teacher should change from "Educator" to facilitator of learning opportunities, a dispenser of consumer goods in the form of learning opportunities and content. But in spite of this, it is important that teachers are sticking to the four sustained anchorages of education:

251

**6.12.4.1. Education is always accompanied.**

The postmodern learner still has to guide him/herself to make sense of the world around the contents of books, on the internet, compact discs and the like that are available (Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:384). Although contemporary learners are more self-employed than ever, they still need constructive guidance and guidance.

**6.12.4.2. Education is still available.**

There is even a kind of double attack. On the one hand, the learner, postmodern or not, needs the reality is unlocked by the educator for him or her. On the other hand, the learner always needs to have that own potential in the particular circumstances to be unlocked (Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:384). For this reason, learners no longer have postmodern circumstances, conventional classroom education, but facilitation and guidance. Learning opportunities must be presented as in a supermarket, where the learner can "buy" - and discard -as and when the need arises. Each educator will have to decide what is fundamentally justifiable from his own life and world view, religion or spirituality.

**6.12.4.3. Education always remains enabled.**

Assuming that the educator (teacher) will understand what the learner should be able to do, including for future calling fulfilment (Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:385). This is a great gift for today's teachers: they must have an idea of what each learner is capable of for the future should be put in place and the consumable learning opportunities should be arranged in such a way that the learners can use them fully and with fruit.

Education always continues to be the formation of followers or discipline. Teachers who are frustrated about so-called weak discipline in classrooms, what annoyed about learners' so-called bad behaviour, do not create valuable following

252

examples for learners to follow. "Postmodern teachers" are self-employed to construct their own circumstances, to make sense of the environment in which they are and must live and work. By showing the learners how to make sense of your environment, your difficult and even unfavourable education conditions, the teacher creates an example which can be followed by the learners with fruit.

Social constructivism has just the advantage that there can be sense in teamwork (teacher and learners together) the environment and the learning content. The dichotomy and tension between us (teachers what tries to "school") and they (the undisciplined learners who no longer order and know, understand and accept discipline in conventional sense) must make way for an " us approach": as team will all make sense in the given circumstances of the education situation, and the challenges it faces (Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:385).

### 6.12.5. Take advantage of new possibilities

Many teachers feel that they have reduced options with the advent of human rights culture and the ban on corporal punishment in education. The new democracy since 1994 in South Africa, the possibilities of living in a constitutional state and in a context of fundamental human rights, however, increased the options of today's teacher. The learners with whom the teacher has to do with is no longer the totally unwelcome child from before, but someone due to exposure to a lot of new influences much more sophisticated and is therefore someone who is in charge of the future.

If taken into account it becomes apparent that many modern-day children, even from relatively poor communities, are getting rid of childhood, keeps themselves busy with television, radio, cell phones, movie films, CDs, DVDs, iPod and MP3 players, friends that have gained extensive experience with their parents and possibly travelled a lot, then the area nowadays are much more suitable for education (educational education) than before - even in posterior parts of the country. In the most remote parts of the country, learners are aware of new developments in

science and technology. Many of the Responsibility for the success of the learning action can thus be self-placed on the shoulders of the learners.

New possibilities were also opened by the education legislation that (in this case) in South Africa, applies. Examples of this is the already mentioned Human Rights Bill (Chapter 2 of the Constitution, RSA 1996 (b)) Different (technical) universities make available relatively cheap packages with the help of which teachers in the most remote and disadvantaged parts of the country, are the basic principles to demonstrate natural science and technology for the learners. These packages become a deliberate connected to a device that the learners will be able to find in their parents' kitchens.

Following this, Van der Walt & Oosthuizen (2008:384) believes that one can point to an "Evaluation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child" of 1989 by Hafen and Hafen (1995 as quoted by Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:384). They argue that children are elevated from the level of mere legal object to the level of legal subject which they make the bearers of their own autonomous rights. This implies, inter alia, that the Convention on the child's development focuses not only on the child's survival; but to get through to develop the child to such an extent that he / she becomes an independent and "autonomous" citizen (Van der Walt & Oosthuizen 2008:386).

## 6.13. In conclusion

The research in this chapter was about the other place where child discipline are prevalent – in the school context. Many of the narratives I listened to, talked about the topics in this chapter, like the turn of 1994, the secularism and the way that children at school are disciplined. For me this chapter was especially enlightening, because of the fact that I was a teacher for a few years, before my children was born. I believe that the way I learned to discipline as a teacher shaped a lot of my thoughts on discipline.

I wrote the past few chapters, chapter 2-5, to introduce the themes that came forth in the narratives I gathered from different families. I chose to put these chapters with my literature study, before the narratives to help people understand the narratives better and link it with the end chapters of this thesis. I want to make it clear at this point that I went into the interviews I had with the different families to gather narratives, from a not knowing position. I had no idea of what to expect or what most of the families believed.

The previous chapters contained the themes that I gathered. These themes was the themes that triggered me to look further into the literature and was introduced in the interviews by my co-researchers. The next two chapters contains the narratives that I gathered and a reflection on it.

**CHAPTER 7 PARENTS AND CHILDREN'S VOICES**

This chapter contains the heart of my research. These narratives that I gathered motivated me think deeper about the topic of child discipline and the influence a family's religion has on disciplining children.

I chose to call all the co-researchers "affiliates" of their religion. With this I want to convey that their voices are personal voices of how they reflect and perceive their religion in terms of child discipline. These affiliates may therefore differ on some points, with other affiliates of the same religion, because of the internal differences that sometimes occur in religious thoughts and because of the fact that this is their own personal reflection.

I did this research in Durban, during December 2016. I chose to go and stay in an Indian community, where I also took the time to minister and from there I did most of my research. The families I interviewed, I met through mutual friends, through e-mails and phone calls to places of religion. May you journey with me to the houses of these families?

**7.1. Voicing narratives on how religion influences an African parent's way of disciplining children: Meet Mamma and Sissie**

**Children … like a cross without a reason**

**- don't throw them away.**

Religion doesn't help – children can be naughty

Pray and pray and pray – children are naughty

No text in the Bible to give a word on discipline

Only "Respect your mother and your father"

– but children don't listen


God is accepting bad things

Like a cross without a reason

Forgiveness …


Mamma talks and talks – but they don't listen

She prays a lot, but her children are naughty.

Only God knows.

If a child is like that, he is like that.


Most of the kids are lazy and bad – smoking, drinking, drugs and taxis

Boy and girls all the same – young ones all have issues

That's why they traditionally scream and hit – like their parents did.

Growing up Mamma took a bottle to the head – for the sake of discipline

But today's children don't get punished a lot.

You can hit them, but they don't listen.


Baptism is important

If a child is not baptised they are in the dark

Children even get baptised when they are dead

So that they can be in the light


She baptised her boys …

But they don't believe


God didn't say you must punish children

Punishment comes to us as parents

Punishment is separate from religion


Mamma loves her children

She says:

"… we can't throw them away.

We hope that God will change them.

Please pray for us…"


### 7.1.1. How I got to know Mamma and Sissie


I asked a pastor I met in Durban, if he can help me to find African families to interview for my research. We made an appointment to have lunch at the pastors house from where he took me and my family to see the township where he had a school and a church.


The township was called "Onbekend", and it was situated in Chatsworth. It was a township on top of a mountain, where people only recently received roads and houses. Before the state built houses and roads they were staying in little shacks with dirt roads. I could see that the houses where new, and the streets where filled with taxis and people sitting next to the roads. There were also a lot of little *spaza* shops next to the road. After we went to the school, the pastor took me to a little house, where I would meet a very influential woman of the community and a friend of hers.

### 7.1.2. Meeting Mamma and Sissie

The house was lovely inside. We brought cabbages for the women. She also requested for me to bring her a few Bibles. When I met the lady and her friend they didn't want me to know their names, I agreed that the research was anonymous and that we could use other names rather than their own names. The women chose to be called Mamma (the woman with a lot of influence in the community) and her friend would be known as Sissie. This is also the names that they have signed on the informed consent forms.

Mamma's sons were also there. They agreed to also take part, but Mamma said we should only call them the boys. The one boy was 10 years old, and the other one 18 years old. When I left I also gave the boys sweets that I gave to the children of the families I attended. Mamma also insisted that she also wanted sweets and I gave her the sweets I had left in my bag. They were very friendly and open.

Mamma told me that she was previously involved in research for a university, and wants to keep everything anonymous so that the people in the community can't blame her if they find out that she wrote something about them. It seemed that the community was very small and that everyone was involved in everyone else's business.

### 7.1.3. What caught my eye

Mamma was a true matriarch.

Community changed after infrastructure

The hopelessness – don't throw them away

### 7.1.4. The narrative interview with mamma and Sissie

I asked Mamma and Sissie how they discipline their children. Mamma said that they beat them and shout at them. Sissie told me that she sent her boy to the shops. He came late, so she swears at him and beat him. Mamma said that children lie a lot, sometimes because of friends. They are smoking and drinking. Her Boy replied "ee" when his mother asked him if she hits him and shouts at him.

Mamma says that religion doesn't help. Children can be naughty. She prays a lot, but her children are naughty. Only God knows. If a child is like that, he is like that. Mamma says that the only text in the Bible about disciplining children is respect your mother and your father. But children don't listen.

Her oldest boy, whom she treats like a much younger child is 18 years old, the other boy is 10 years old. Mamma says that she is praying, and that is why good things are supposed to happen -except bad things know his name. God is accepting bad things. Like a cross without reason. These things must happen to us, while we are praying.

Sissie says she spends time talking to her children, but they don't listen to her, they do the wrong things all the time. Mamma says that other parents also talk. But most of the kids are bad. Smoking and drinking, and out at night, all night. Boys and girls are all the same. I asked them if parents stand together. Mamma told me about her son who wanted shoes, and her husband said no. And her son was unhappy. But punishment doesn't make it good. Mamma said she was a good child. As a child she put adhesive tape (celotape) on her mouth to keep quiet.

Sissie says that religion has no influence on disciplining children. Religion influences how we have relationships in the house. Mamma didn't agree with Sissie. She says that her religion is good, because she gets peace when she talks to God. She then feels relieved. For Sissie it's also like that. She adds that when talking to God everything is possible.

I then asked what the common issues are they must deal with, in discipline. Mamma says alcohol, and drugs. Sissie says it's about the taxis. Most people are working for them. Mamma says even the young ones have trouble with the issues.

Mamma told me a story:

Her son (10 years old) didn't want to go to the shops. He is very lazy and doesn't want to do anything. He cries a lot. He likes many "*vetkoek*". He doesn't eat at home – its 12 o'clock and he had eaten nothing.

She says that children don't want to go to Sunday school. There are not many who go. She called for her sons to confirm this. Mamma says that they can't learn discipline at church, because they feel it's not for them. In their tradition they hit the children and scream at them. Their parents did this to them, so they also do it. They think that that's the way.

Sissie says that her mother hit her. So, she hits her children. But the children are not listening. Mamma says that growing up she was not naughty. Sissie says that when they hit, they hit all over the body. Mamma said that when she was growing up, she took a bottle to her head. They were taking everything. Sissie says it's because they want you to listen.

Mamma says that her thumb is not going to be right. When she was at school the principle hit them a lot. He was punishing a lot and hard. Her thumb bone was pushed up because of that.

Today's children don't get punished a lot. You can't hit them a lot because then they can't listen. Sissie says that at the same time they tell that they will go to the social worker. Mamma says that if you punish a child it's not like you don't love them. You like them. You just don't want them to do bad things.

Sissie says: Bad things we don't want. Pray for the children. Mamma says God will help them to listen and not do bad things, to your family and to others. When she says that she's preaching things, she said she's going to work for the whole people. Mamma says: I am a woman of God. That is what's she is telling her husband. Her husband is then second. She has a certificate – please God help me. Also with family. Praying for burdens of family. Sissie also prays. She asks God to help her children, to grow up and to do things right, and not wrong.

Mamma says that not all parents go to church. Where do they then learn how to discipline their children? They just do what they think is good. Baptism is important. If a child is not baptised, they are in the dark. Children sometimes even get baptised when they are dead. Then they are in the light of God. Sissie says that if you are in the light of God, when you are dead. You will sit next to the angels of God. Mamma agreed. Mamma says that they baptise children thinking that they will grow in the light of God. But they don't believe. They believe, but don't want to go to church.

Sissie says that religion doesn't have any influence on the way we discipline our children, because children don't listen. Children get punished the way the parents want. God did not say you must punish children. Punishment comes to us as parents. It is good for us to punish them. Punishment is separate from religion. You can't punish a child in church, because it's not good in front of Gods eyes.

262

I asked Mamma and Sissie to tell me more about their religion: Mamma says that she is a Christian. That means to pray for God - to believe in God. Everything depends on God. She likes the name of God. Sissie says that she like God so much. She believes in Him. She knows that He will lift her up. When she cries, everything will be all right. Mamma says that they want something to help the kids in the community, because all the kids are the same. God must help them, because they prayed. Sissie says that they love their children. Mamma says that we can't throw them away. We hope that God can change them.

### 7.1.5. Interview with one of the boys

Mamma's one boy was willing to be part of the research. I gave the ten-year-old a template for a story to write. He didn't write a story. He said that he couldn't write. He understood everything we said in English very well. Mamma and I asked him a few questions, to which his reply was always "e", connected to different emotions and facial expressions.

### 7.2. Voicing narratives on how religion influences a Christian parent's way of disciplining children: Meet the Govender's, Abdoel's and van der Merwe's

### 7.2.1. The Govenders

Pretty picture family of three,

They walk with the Lord

They talk with the Lord

Celebrate faith in their family

with the fear of the Lord.

Discipline is not like in the old days

A rod and screaming – now replaced

by their parenting responsibility

of prayer, love and time.

Because no one is perfect –

we need to talk it through

God will guide them, to always stay true.

### 7.2.1.1. How did I get to know the Govenders

I met this family at the church where I stayed and ministered during my visit to Durban. During the first visit we attended one of the church services and we started chatting with them. They were very helpful and was the first family I visited.

### 7.2.1.2. Meeting the Govenders

The family was very friendly and helpful. They were standing up for their faith but always there to help someone. Their child was well mannered and left a big impression on everyone. The father was also known to be a pillar in the community.

### 7.2.1.3. What caught my eye

They talked a lot about their faith and I could see that they live a life close to God.

They were a close family

### 7.2.1.4. Narrative

### 7.2.1.4.1. Parents

Religion has an influence.

Mr. Govender was brought up from a Tamil background. Mum and dad were Tamil, but his grandma was Christian. She took him and his three other brothers to church, and then eventually mum and dad also gave their hearts to Jesus. He doesn't really know what Tamil is about, he wasn't very into it. Mrs. Govender has been brought up with a Christian background. She went to Sunday school when she was little and wrote exams up to matric and competed in Bible knowledge competitions.

She loves the Lord. It's like basically breathing for her. They believe in Jesus. She trusts the Lord with all of her heart. For her church and serving the Lord has meant everything to her. She has held on to God for dear life, because of the background she came from. To her God has been her only source of hope, strength, and comfort. She has been very indoors. It has always been God and herself.

Mr. Govender says that the way children are disciplined in the present day is not like it was. Now a days, it is just about hitting, screaming and using vulgar language. But in the long term that doesn't really discipline the kids. When a child does something wrong you need to correct them, and tell them that that's wrong, and don't do it and

stuff. Then the second step for him is, "you don't hit the child, but you need to be harsher with the child".

Mrs. Govender replied that in their home, it's just the one boy, they don't hit him. Ever since he has been around they only had one incident where she gave him a clap/whacking. But since Eli (their son) has been around, mostly because Mr. Govender is mostly at work, they both discipline him. If one is reprimanding, the other one doesn't interfere.

They don't hit him. If they need to discipline him, they speak to him; help him to understand what he's done wrong. And then they shout at him, or are quite stern with him. They will tell him, why they discipline him and why they say this and that. There is no swearing, no common words. He is treated the way basically they would have wanted to be treated. If they know that it's going to get out of hand, they will warn him.

For example, if they know that they are going to church, and you know all children are naughty at church, they will say to him: Eli we are going to church today, if you are going to be naughty, mum and dad are going to be very angry with you. But they don't hit him. He knows then and understands. She learned all this from the Lord, and by themselves.

They have their parents, but when they were married they were only staying at home. And when they had the baby, it was mostly only the three of them. They made mistakes, and learned how to work hard at it, and teach him. And then eventually they just started with it. They gained it through experience. The day she realised that she was having Eli she just went on her knees and handed him over to God.

And they see it in him. He knows the fear of the Lord. They know they made mistakes, but much of her time she spends in prayer. She definitely believes in the

power of prayer. She prays about everything. If she walks into the home, she always walks in first, she says, thank you Jesus. They would pray everywhere and always.

Before they leave home as a family, they pray together. No matter if they are late or in a rush, they will always make time to pray.

They are not forcing their son to pray, or get down on his knees. Because then he doesn't want to do it out of his free will. He just started to do it with them. He one day they discovered he knew Psalm 91 by himself; they never thought that he will remember it.

They had a special experience with him. They were looking for a car. His dad wasn't set on buying the one car. Mr Govender wanted something a little better. He said to his family: "What would my friends think". Eli went to his dad and stood there, and he told him, it's your car, it's your car that God would give you, don't buy it because of what other people would think. So, it has- it definitely had an influence.

And some days they go out, and before they go anywhere he just says, let us pray for everything. Even if it's his dad's responsibility to lead the prayer, he sometimes beats his dad to it.

No child is perfect. He's a boy. He makes his naughty.

Advice on disciplining for Christian parents:

Pray first. Correct them when they are wrong. Tell them nicely at first, so that they understand for what they are doing wrong at. Instead of scolding them, and they don't know.

Mum adds, never say a word that would hurt them where they would be ruined by it. It leaves something in your memory. When you speak to them, treat them with respect and love. Don't shout at them, so that they feel humiliated. Don't insult and embarrass them. No parent is perfect, yes out of anger, and in the moment, you may say something harsh, but remember there is always the next day, you can always go back and say, sorry my son. Always discipline with love there is always the next moment to go and undo what you have done.

Grace.

It is difficult to discipline with love. Most of the time discipline comes when something wrong has happened, and not everybody can act out of love in anger or in a moment of frustration. So obviously there are emotions. When you discipline, you don't discipline in a moment of love, but a moment of something gone wrong. It is difficult. We have made our mistakes. It depends on the situation itself.

Prayer and love is important. Respect your kids, you got to have that bond with them. And time, if you just like come home and say, "hi how are you" and that's it, and you do not find out about the school and the work, then it's going to drive them to just go into the world.

Mum says that parents these days need to work. And parents are also tired. They don't have that mind-set coming home. She read something the other day that really caught her attention. It said something about, there were two things that she learned this year that was very important. First photos, mums always want to look beautiful, in pictures. We always want to make sure. But a child doesn't care about how you look. Later in life they just want to make sure that you were there, and in the picture with them. So that they have things to look at, where you were there with them. And

all the time you spend cleaning your home, are precious memories not to be made with your children.

You rather spend time with the kids that you're not going to get back. Time is the most important thing. We have got to make time for them.

Mr Govender says it falls on the parents to teach a child what is right and what is wrong. Your children will follow you. What you do, they will also do. They follow your example. He tends to follow his father very much.

Example, Eli didn't want to do his homework. His mother moaned at him about it, and she saw that he did it, but he was very upset about it. It was an awful time for him. The one day she decided to do something differently. Dad was not at home. She sent him to the bathroom, and she just spoke to him, and said, son you know this is your homework, mum is just here to help you, to tell you that you need to do your homework, and if you don't want to do your homework its fine with me, but it's your homework and I am here to help you. He cried, he just stood there in the bathroom and cried and cried. And I guess that at that point he just realised, you know something happened because he just … I didn't shout at him, I didn't tell him anything harmful, and he just came out and did his homework. And I saw the difference in it. And he did his homework, because he knew he had to do his homework. And not like the previous times that she had to tell him, "do your homework", and "you need to do this". And from then they usually did not have a problem, with homework, and even when he comes home and say he is too tired, they will tell him, it's your homework, and you need to do it, and he does.

Scripture:

Ephesians 6 – children obey your parents, and love your mother and your father that is the first commandment that is the one they do, they teach it to him, and they taught him that. He knows other verses; he knows Psalm 91 and Palm 23.

Don't ever force a child into anything. They've got to love it, especially when it comes to the faith. We as parents are going to teach it to him, but don't force it to them. Because then they will learn it as a habit and not something that they will love and embrace. We attend Holy Communion every Wednesday. No matter how tired or busy we are. He does it and he also knows the verse. We do it as a family.

The reason why they allow Eli to participate, is because they want him to understand the meaning of it. Because if he one day becomes a teenager he must understand that if he chooses something wrong, he would have to give this up. Because he cannot play at that age with Holy Communion, so she knows that if she's teaching him now, as he grows he's going to know that the fear of God is instilled in him. And to her that it is very, very important. And she think that it's something that he would feel very disheartened about not being part of this as a family, if he's a teenager. And he wants to do wrong things.

What is the fear of the Lord?

For her the fear of the Lord is about being obedient. She loves the Lord to such an extent, that she says "if I would have to do something that upsets Him, I know I would … it's very hard for her. Its love. It has to be love. A child would not want to disappoint his parents, because he loves them. And I guess that's my feeling towards God. I am not a perfect child, but I know that I love him, and that is where the fear of the Lord comes from love."

270

They want their son to love God, and that's the kind of fear he must have towards God. He must have respect and honour God. He must not turn away from what he has been taught.

Dad ends of with: love your religion. Teach your kids the right way. And take each day as it comes.

Mum ads: and spend time with the Lord.

**7.2.1.4.2. Child: The time he cried to open up the presents.**

The boy drew a picture and told me the following story about it.

He went to his cousin's house; his father wrapped the gifts at home. And he came home, and he came to his mummy and he just cried and said please can I open up the presents and so on, and his mum had to explain to him that, if he opens the presents before Christmas he is going to kill the magic of Christmas. So, he kind of understood the whole Santa story, and he's now eagerly waiting.

The magic of Christmas, according to Elijah is if you open one gift that means that Santa will be very sad, and God will be sad. That is the one reason why we can only open the presents on the 25th.

Mum told me that when he was crying, she was cutting the tomatoes and told him to wait till the 25th. He doesn't know his numbers that well and heard the 21st. when he then heard that it's not the 21st, but the 25th he cried again.

Presents are a big deal to him. He told me that he is going to get a small, big, medium and large present – while showing me the wrapped presents in front of the Christmas tree.

He didn't go to his dad on this day, because he doesn't want to disappoint his dad. He also knows that daddies no, is no. So he then goes to his mummy. He was standing there, and they had a conversation. He just stood there and cried and cried.

And eventually he sat on the floor. She started talking to him, while she was cutting the meat. And she told him that he couldn't open the gifts, and she had to explain it to him, because he really cried a lot, she felt really bad but also explained to him that if he opens the gifts before Christmas he will lose the magic of Christmas. It was quite a long conversation before he calmed down.

She tells me: "In this house it has always been talked. If there was any discipline, it had always been talking. There was once that he just back talked his father, he didn't want to take understanding, and he didn't want to understand that he was wrong." So that day his mother sent him to his room, to sit on his bed, to think about the way he spoke to his dad. It wasn't right for him to backtalk his dad. He went to his room, and just cried.

Eventually he came out and said sorry Mamma and sorry daddy, I wouldn't do that again. I have learned.

### 7.2.2. Meet the Abdoel's

**Mummy and Daddy is not always going to be there …**

**but God will never let you down.**

Mummy wants to raise her two boys

to know their identity in God.

Daddy agrees, but feels

the youth of today has lost the meaning of life.

That is why Daddies training ground for discipline

is the soccer field in the garage

for there he talks with his boys, bringing them up hard

for its better to teach them sooner, than later to be a man of God.

Sticking to family traditions and teaching them in love

helps the boys when they push their parent's limits,

to know: although mummy and daddy is not always going to be there …

they have a strong foundation, and identity in God,

and He will never let them down.

### 7.2.2.1. How did I get to know the Abdoel's

I met this family at the church where I stayed and ministered during my visit to Durban. During the first visit we attended one of the church services, we started chatting with them. They were very helpful and were the second family I visited.

### 7.2.2.2. Meeting the Abdoel's

This family was very open and kind. They made me feel right at home when I visited them.

### 7.2.2.3. What caught my eye

The fact that the mother said that their religion had an influence on the way that the discipline their child, and the father said that their religion didn't have an influence on the way that the discipline their child, made an impression on me.

The discipline the father and mother created and was greeted with so much respect from the son.

The love the parents had for the children and for each other.

### 7.2.2.4. Narrative

### 7.2.2.4.1. Parents

When I introduced my theme, and asked if they think that religion can have an influence on how we discipline our children, Mr. Abdoel surprised me: He said no. He
274

told me that in today's time it is difficult enough to raise the children and discipline them that he thinks that religion can't have a big influence.

His wife reacted quickly with an opposite way of thinking. For her there were a lot of morals, stories and understanding from the Bible that we can take to teach the kids. For her it was very important that children must know who they are. Mr. Abroel said that children must know the meaning of life. And a lot of children lost the meaning of life. Mr. and Mrs. Abdoel, in one voice declared, that the meaning of life is love and family.

She described it further, by saying that love and respect is honouring your parents. To her this is biblical, because the Bible tells us that husbands must love their wives, and we must live a Christian life. For her the TV and social media and social networks are carrying us away from the life God intended. The buzz of life is taking us away from the purpose of life. The way she disciplines her child is that she talks to him and explains why something is wrong. She tries not to hit him. Dad said when he warned the boy, he will then discipline the child after that.

Mum says that they discipline their child daily. The thing she struggles with most at the moment is that the boy is very distracted by a lot of things. He struggles to concentrate when he is asked to do something, so he forgets what it was and struggles to do it.

Mr. Abdoel told me a story of what happened the past Friday. The boy was full of energy because it was school holidays. He wanted to go to the pool. His father then corrected him, and then took him to the pool.

For Mrs. Abdoel love is very important. You must have love in life. Love is the most important thing for yourself and others. In terms of religion it is important to know that we belong to God. He will stand firm even if all else falls around us. She doesn't

275

believe in all kinds of denominations and all the traditions that go with it. She believes that Jesus died on the cross and set her free. For her faith is believing and trusting. It's all about leaving it with God.

Mr. Abdoel has a lot of belief and faith in God. Mrs Abdoel shared with me that she was born into a Hindu family. Her mum is still a Hindu. Her brother is a Muslim. Therefore, there son knows the difference between Christians, Muslims and Hindu.

For Mr.Abdoel sticking to family traditions, bonds the family together. What we are fed comes out at the end of the day. Mrs. Abdoel has completed a diploma in theology. She has the foundation. Although she missed a lot, growing up as a Hindu, she learned the Bible after she fell in love with Jesus. And now every day is a new lesson about God.

For her husband, it is important to practice their faith in their home.

In Mrs Abdoel's childhood, she was disciplined with a lot of swear words and screaming. She doesn't want to raise her son with that. Her husband said that he only talks one time and then he disciplines the boy. Mrs. Abdoel agrees with that. Mr. Abdoel says that when kids feel, they learn.

Mrs Abdoel feels that her boy sometimes pushes her limits. Before she had children she always wanted to be a strict mother and would not allow her children to be naughty. After she had children, with her own child, she only wanted to love him unconditionally. That you can only know after you become a parent. She would now describe herself as strict with leniency.

Her husband said that the Bible doesn't cater for children of today. They get lost so early. The world has gone bad. We need to be hard. We try to teach, like when we grew up. We try to install everything else Christian.

Mrs.Abdoel want them to be good men and not dum-dums. Her husband wants to bring them up hard.

Mrs Abdoel's heart is soft, that's the balance of having a mother and a father. Her husband stands on the point that in our world we must bring them up hard. We are like sheep among wolves. But she says we need better understanding, and need to teach them to be cleverer.

Getting the right answer is not always going to be right. "It's a partnership. We made this family, we must grow them up." They need to have a strong foundation. The world is going to take them astray. For Mr. Abdoel their roots need to be in Christianity. There they must learn the wrongs and rights. It will pay off. Mrs. Abdoel wants a solid foundation. Grace – is a solid foundation. It is a thick and solid foundation.

Her husband says it will be harder to teach them from 14 years on. What you install now (when they are still young) will pay off at teenage time. Mrs. Abdoel ended the interview with: "Because mummy and daddy will not always be able to be there".

**7.2.2.4.2. Their boy**

When I asked the boy to draw me a picture of what happens when he was naughty he drew me a picture of him and his dad going into the garage. They were both smiling in the picture. The father then told me that he and the boy usually go to the

garage when he was naughty to have a talk to sort things out, afterwards they will then play soccer in the garage. This was then the picture the boy drew.

### 7.2.3. Meet the Van der Merwe's

**Liesa van der Merwe**

There is no handbook for raising kids.

Luckily this lady knows the Lord.

The beautiful family of three

Mummy, Daddy and their Princess

Praying and Bible study the foundation of,

their daily living, their relationship with God.

Biblical boundaries, a good set routine

alternatives to hitting and screaming

keep their family on track,

to live in love, in their walk and talk,

their life and living,

on the path of God.

### 7.2.3.1. How I got to know the Van der Merwe's

I phoned one of the local Afrikaans congregations and asked the minister if he could refer me to an Afrikaans family that I could meet and interview with in Durban. He referred me to Mrs Van der Merwe.

**Meeting the Van der Merwe's**

When I met Mrs Van der Merwe, it felt like coming home. Her daughter was the same age as my daughter. It felt like visiting a friend or a friend of my daughter at a play date. Mrs Van der Merwe also invited my family to come along.

Her parents were visiting from the Cape Province when we had the interview. So while we had the interview, my husband and kids were visiting the rest of the family. While the kids were swimming, my husband and Mrs Van der Merwe's parents were chatting while we had an interview.

### 7.2.3.2. What caught my eye

She talked a lot about boundaries and believed that the Bible sets boundaries for the Christians life.

She was against corporal punishment.

She believed that their families relationship with- and identity in Christ is the foundation on which they build their lives and family.

### 7.2.3.3. Narrative

Mrs Van der Merwe describes her faith as that she was brought up in a Christian home. In primary school, she gave her life to the one true God. The Bible is very important to her. For her God is a God of love. This is very important to her. She holds on to the commandment of love.

Her religion definitely plays a role in the way she disciplines her child. She believes that there should be boundaries. She must set good boundaries, and give choices, to her child. She believes that every action has a reaction. Healthy boundaries are important. A child needs to learn what the boundaries are. The Lord set good boundaries with the Ten Commandments. It gives us guidelines to follow as far as possible. Right and wrong has to do with what the Bible teaches us. It also gives us the boundaries we must live within.

Parenting for her is a partnership. She doesn't use corporal punishment. For her, how you handle people and situations, speaks a lot about who you are. When she disciplines her child, she gives her a choice. She (the child) must then choose what will be taken away. This will be things she loves, like TV time. She also sends her to her room for time out.

She teaches her child that every choice she makes has consequences. When she disciplines her daughter, she speaks calmly to her. She explains to her why things are wrong. Like the time, she drew on the walls with a permanent marker.

Routine is important to her. In the weekends, they don't focus on it so much, but during the week it is very important. She also lets her daughter do chores around the house. There is a family routine wherein they function. This helps that there's a time for everything. Priorities are also important to her. The Lord gives us guidelines for a reason. God is love. But we live in a world of sin. Faith determines discipline, and why we discipline.

Being a Christian is about having a living relationship with the Lord. This influences Christianity. God's will for her life is important to her, because she feels that she cannot do everything on her own, without the Lord. Prayer also plays a big role. Her living relationship with God has a great impact on her life. This is what she also wants for her children, and that is why she disciplines her.

**7.3. Voicing narratives on how religion influences a Hindu parent's way of disciplining children: Meet the Guru and the Pundit**

**7.3.1. Guru G**

Among the rubble of a big city

in a little piece of colourful paradise

I sat down with Guru G,

A reflection of calmness and practical faith,

convincing me that Hinduism

has an influence on child discipline,

because children, animals and faith

 are interwoven in the essence of life.

Children will be children, will be naughty

they need to learn from the start

about the right food, astrology and punctionality.

Parents need to talk to them-

it's all about truth, love and understanding

in a life filled with symbolic meaning

281

not always praying, praying, praying …

but also taking to mind and heart

the stories and lessons of faith.

### 7.3.1. 1. How I got to know Guru G.

I got to know Guru G through a mutual friend of ours. He told me that I could meet up with Guru G when I was going to Durban and I could invite him to have an interview with me. Guru G was one of the first people I phoned when I arrived in Durban. And he was one of the first people I arranged an interview with.

### 7.3.1.2. Meeting Guru G

When I met Guru G at the temple where he lived, I came to know him as a very peaceful and kind man. He introduced me into the Hindu faith and ways, through explaining all the different things at the Hindu temple, the feasts they recently had and by introducing me to the people that came to visit the temple.

I took my family with me. They enjoyed the peacefulness of the temple's surrounding. Guru G also invited me and my family to visit all the areas of the temple where he described the temple to my children in a very special way. We ended our visit by eating and drinking something together before we left. We had a very special time with the Guru.

### 7.3.1.3. What I took with me.

Guru G said, "Predicting is part of the intervention of god". He talked about astrology as part of knowing and predicting who (personality) and how (behaviour) children would be, this will help to look forward, to say what you must do, to get the best out of the situation that's predicted by the stars and planets. Even a child's first letter of their name is predicted by astrology. It seems like astrology for him plays a role in how children are disciplined. There was also a place in the temple where the position of the planets was placed.

The temple was filled and decorated with symbols and gods. Everywhere were reminders of the Festivals and rituals they had. Guru G told me this was to teach children the way to live.

Everywhere around the temple were animals. Some were in cages and some roamed free. Guru G said this is for the children, because they can learn a lot from animals and metaphors of animals.

Children are involved in things happening at the temple from the moment they are born. All the stages of life are celebrated and children must go to the temple from an early age. There is even a prayer that must be prayed when a child is conceived.

They must be taught to follow in the footsteps of those before them.

Guru G stated that "Stix don't work". They don't believe in corporal punishment. Instead upliftment is very important. All children are naughty, according to him and it's good to experiment when you are young.

Guru G showed me that Hinduism is a practical faith, with set boundaries that forms identity.

283

### 7.3.1.4. Guru G's narrative

Sitting in the middle of the old part of the temple and the new, Guru G reflected on his religion and strongly stated that it definitely plays a role in the way parents discipline their children.

The roots of his religion go back 5000 years ago. Hinduism is a practical religion. It presents more of moderation and simplicity. He believes that a child must go to the temple from a very early age, to follow the elders, to follow their path.

Young children need to be taught why to do certain things. For example, in Hindu religion they are very tolerant towards animals, all people must co-exist very harmoniously. The animals are used to teach the children about discipline and how to live. While staring into the distance he described the elephant that has big ears, for memory and a strong tusk for strength. There is a comparison between us and this animal - it teaches our children how they must live. There is a similarity.

With regard to discipline he doesn't believe in corporal punishment. He would rather talk to a child. Tell them what is wrong. Immediately reprimand them. Let them go and make right. For him sticks (corporal punishment) don't work in the current time. You need to be calm with the children. Children today are demanding. That's the difficulty we have.

It's very important to him that we need to teach our children about being vegetarian. For he advised me, that red meat increases the pressure. He said that vegetables, on the other hand, make you more calm- meat makes you aggressive.

His wisdom followed: "We need to guide people how to guide children. You may not be rewarded now, but later." For him love is important, and astrology and numerology is very important. Children need to learn what is right and wrong.

Respect is very important. From an early age you need to tell your children that they are great, wish good things for them hug them and be friendly with them, mix and share with them. With that, respect for elders is crucial. Verses from the holy book – tells them how to get salvation. The Hindu teenagers – now live in multi-racial schools. There is a lot of bad vibes. Boys and girls start to smoke.

For him a child that is open with you is ok. But when a child gets secluded and hides things from you, you need to chat with that child. You need children to open up. They must experiment. We all have a choice to say yes or no. We must tell children the negative things and what the consequences are, and then they need to make a choice.

Everything has a time. At 12/13 years old girls need to do a specific ritual, to come of age. Predicting is part of the intervention of god. He gives advice to parents about what to do. Punctionality is very important – especially with prayers. Bring in discipline by what you do at the temple.

His Counselling as a Guru is about health, family life, to make them understand. You must also thank the divine, that something good has been achieved. It is very important to give upliftment. Everything is based on truth love and understanding. Like the Festival of lights. It's about love and bond and people who welcome others.

Festivals are there to say that through good deeds everything is possible. Good, will triumph over evil. From birth to death the Hindu faith is related to astrology.

The mayor dialect of the Hindu faith is:

285

Tamil speaking

Telega speaking

Hindi speaking

Gucherati speaking


He explained that the language and some of the traditions are different. The writing is different. There is more than one deity present. North, Ram, Sieta Brima is the creator and has the date of your birth and death. Vishnu is the sustainer and the developer.


No one has seen god, he can only be known through scripture. There is seven stages of life. Everything has a symbolic meaning. You must say to a child that they must respect the book. It gives you knowledge and that is why you need to respect it.


Do not look down upon any religion. Everyone is looking for god. All rivers end up in the same ocean. You must be thrifty and charitable.


I agree with him that children need to have respect. But it was interesting that he says that all children are naughty. For him it is an instinct. (Lord Krisna also stole butter to eat) It is natural; they need to develop through that. We need to show them the limits. Like with lettuce – we need for example to show a three year old to enjoy it.


He believes that children need to be out in the open. His is also concerned about the young parents of all races that don't believe in home remedies anymore. Those meds helped him. He reminded me that children must learn to get hurt and that you need to monitor a child.

The Guru doesn't believe in corporal punishment. It's better to sit and talk to the child on a one to one basis, on their level, and discuss what he has done is wrong. He gave me the example of when a child kicks a dog, it is wrong, we will tell him that an animal has a life like you. The child must rather play with it because if you kick it you are actually hurting it. So he suggests that if a child does that he will immediately reprimand them and say, what you have done is wrong - Go there and hug the dog, because you know life with a dog. Because you can scold it and it will always come back to you. He will still show you that love. So that is one-way of showing the child.

A stick, like in the olden days, it doesn't work in this present time. Today he suggests that you have to be passive with children. You have got to be calm with them. Because the levels are different now.

He came from a very large family with six brothers, two sisters and two adopted. They will all sit together and if their parents dished out our meal, they would eat their meal quietly, like all the other children.  And they will never be saying, why is he getting an extra piece. It is different in present day society.

He finds that children today are very demanding. They will tell you, o, I don't eat potatoes, I don't want to eat green beans I don't like "bronki" (*a name the Guru used for the vegetable - broccoli*) and so on. And this is the difficulty we have.

But by coming to the temple, they teach them to be total vegetarians. They teach them that vegetables are healthy, they need to eat a lot of vegetables for their development, mental development.

Because they found that if a person eats a lot of red meat, from our scriptures, and from our theory of Hinduism, we find that red meat increases the pressure. But if they eat vegetables, they've found that a lot of vegetarians are calm. They found that the meat makes you a little aggressive. So, they agree that you need proteins, and are not saying – that you must give it up.

287

That is one of the rituals they do. If a child is academically slow (because all children are not the same.) Some children develop with the norm, and some are slow in speech, some are slow in walking.

So, as a priest they need to guide the parents in particular, and say how to handle children like that. Because some parents are very quick to compare, and he tells them – god has created all of us, at a different space and we have to sit.

There are some parents that go to him with deformed children, he then tells them, that the child is a special gift that is given to them. God has given them to take care of this child. This takes patience and understanding because not everybody can handle retarded children. So, it's a special gift. And he always tells them, they may not be rewarded in the immediate time, but there would be a time that the all mighty, will reward them for what they have done and for how you have being bringing this child up. And you will find that that child grows up with the love and the bonding.

If a child is slow he would encourage them to come on a week day, like a Thursday to the temple and offer to Guru/ Jupiter. Because they believe that their whole physical body is controlled by the planets. The nine planets.

They believe for example that the sun, those children are very strong children, because the sun has strength. And when they look at the deity, the sun in particular, they teach the child – you see this is the sun. The sun is red. Red is related to blood, so the sun is responsible for the blood in our bodies. The children of the sun all have very strong personalities. And most of them will have some blood related health issues.

That's how they pick up if they will be diabetics, whether they will have pressure, and this is how he know what to say through astrology, and numerology. He would go and say – mum, you need to go and watch this child. Don't give him too much red meat, or sugar. So that is the type of thing they do for example.

When a child is slow, they look to Jupiter or Guru and we encourage a child to eat a lot of almonds, nuts grain, because this is a lot of food for the brain. Those kinds of things he would encourage them to eat. So, it's not only that they pray about things, but practise a lot of practical things.

Right and wrong – how do you teach children?

They teach them that respect is very important. Also, that they must learn from a very early age, to greet, to wish, to hug, and to give that smile, to be friendly. They teach them that when they come here they need to mix with children, to share and to become part of this.

So, in every prayer they do not leave children out, they become part of it. They learn from their parents. Their parents are giving an offering, they are sitting with them. Whether he is offering them water to sip or water as an external thing to say god gave me good eye sight, gave me good hearing, let me know what is good to eat and what is bad to eat, so when they teach them about the mouth, the nose and the hearing.

They also teach them to be respectful of others.

Teenagers, because they are going to multicultural schools, there are different types of children from different types of homes. So some of them will pick up some bad

vibes. For example, boys will be boys, they will want to try to smoke. Even the girls. It is happening today.

If the Guru finds that a child is not focusing at school, generally he would monitor them from a young age, when you find that the child is open and happy to talk about that, caring and sharing, then he knows that the child is doing well. And if he finds that the child is becoming a little bit secluded, and withdrawn, he would immediately go to the child, sit and chat, and ask "How are you? What is upsetting you? Why are you down? Are you all right health wise? Are things ok at home?" He would investigate in a polite way, to get the child's confidence. And if he sees the child's responses are "yes" or "My dad is an alcoholic, he abused me …" or something, then he would encourage him to talk to the teachers or social worker. So, he encourages them to talk to the teachers and social workers. He leads them to open up. But if they say, "You know what, I am being bullied at school, and I don't like to do these things, and this is what my friends are doing." He would literally say, yes everybody will go to a trial method, they will experiment - We have the right to say yes or no. which is good or bad. And this is why god has given us, as humans we have the highest, highest thing of senses to discriminate which is good and which is bad. So, He would tell them, "You've taken drugs, what good is it to you?", He would say "Ok, look at your health aren't you feeling weak, aren't you feeling hungry, aren't you feeling angered, I mean maybe for that moment you are feeling nice and cool, and relaxed, but after a time, what happens. Now maybe your parents can't afford it, then you are going to start stealing, taking money from home without permission."

He informs them all the negative things that could happen. "It's going to lead to further problems and then they will get arrested for shoplifting. It's like you know, you feel like you want that perfume, but you have no money, because you are using it on drugs. So, you start shoplifting, I mean I had 21-year olds, some of the parents had been through very hard times. And through drugs, drugs are a major problem in society. It is right through. So, we need to tell them it's not on. Everything has time and has a place. Like meeting, going out, casual sex, and things are not on." He teaches them, that they need to be open.

290

He would say, for example, with the Hindus, with females especially, they come of age about 12/ 13. Then we teach them that they are different, their bodies are going to change, the physics. So, we have a ritual. And he was just doing research the other day, because he had a call from a parent to say her daughter came of age. And he was looking at all the various things that this child is going through, what is the age impact of the age of the astrology on this child, because he can say whether this child is going to be a naughty child or whether this child is going to be flirting, or whether this child is going to be a very respectful child, or whether this child is going to become a young widow.

So in our astrology they pick these things up, he sits with the parents and he says, that to overcome this they have to be open to it, so they say, "Now this is what we are predicting, so with the divine intervention of god, god is almighty, maybe you need to now focus and see. Now that you know how this child is, how she's associating, she is becoming a teen, you need to monitor that. That we are associating, you need to know the type of child she is going to be, the type of women she is going to be, and this is very important." Because he always tells the children – "We are now going to need to know where you are going, your parents need to know where you're going. It is very important. If your parents say, right you are going now to the shopping mall with, so and so, you have to be back at 10; 30, keep to the time. Punctuality is very important. And this is why any prayer, punctuality is very important. I start from there. You can't come half an hour late and say, oh you started the prayer, no, the prayer started at nine, you are supposed to be there at quarter to nine. So that's how we teach punctuality." This is how they learn.

They learn that when they know they have a commitment they need to be there early. They need to be seated. They need to be ready. So, this is how we bring discipline. And they know that. When they are walking into the temple. They would greet you very humbly, politely. For him it's a house of prayer, so he tells them, "When you walk into a mosque, when you walk into a church, you have to

291

remember, it's not a place where you come and make chit -chat, and where you come to worry about things like gossiping.

You know this is where we tell them, so it's important. So, when a child goes astray, and we think that they need counselling, I will talk to them, and say, look at your health. What is happening by you taking drugs. What is happening to your family life. The relationship between your father, and your siblings. Do you want to head that way? What are you going to achieve?" So, you make them understand. And then they will tell you "Yes, I need to, I can't stay without it, and I have been hooked on to it, please try to make some arrangements." And this is how they would channel them to the proper places. And even when out of the dry out period, he would still monitor them. Even if it's just a courtesy call, just call to say, how are you doing? How's the family. And if I see the smile and I see the family there, and he's not agitated, he's willing, you could see that there is a change. And you don't have to bring him in front of the whole congregation, and say, oh you know what, he's gone bad, and this is it. You can then praise and say "Thank the Lord, thank the divine. For elevating this child, and today we are proud to say, he is a teacher, he has gone into medicine, and he is a worthy citizen of society." You need to give that, give them that status. Upliftment is very important.

For the Guru everything is based on truth, love and understanding. He gives the example of the festival of lights.

Lord Rama was banished for 14 years, to the forest because his stepmother had wanted her son to be crowned king. But the father, he was reluctant. So the brother refused. He said, my elder brother must become the king. So he had to go for banishment, for 14 years where he was exiled into the forest. Now when he was exiled to the forest, there was still that love that was born, but when he returned after 14 years back to the land, the people welcomed him and they waited until that time to actually give the crown to him. And it's a festival to say, that although in this world there would be a lot of unrighteousness things happening with our good deeds, everything is possible.

Everything is possible. So that is why we say- good over evil. So this is why we have a festival to dispel the darkness, by introducing light.

When a child is born

When I had my research conversation with the Guru, parents just came there, and said this child was born the day before, 14 December 2016 and the time was 17:47. It's a baby boy. So he will have to go and look at the calendar of astrology and see which stars had an influence, what is the ruling of the sun and the moon, and the other planets. Then he would decide on what influence the planets are having on this child, and give him initials. So that the child will not have any negative impact. And although they may register the child with the proper initials, but they will give it an English name or a short other name. From birth the Hindu faith is based on astrology. Everything is related, from birth to death.

He told me about the girls coming to age. For him its very similar to the Jewish people. The boys basically are Brahmans to the priesthood. In Hinduism they have the Tamil, the Terigu, the Hindi and the Gujuraji speaking. These are the mayor Hindu groups. Hindus have about 500 dialects. We are all Hindus, but the language is different. They try not to intermarry.

It is not a problem, but the language and some of the traditions and customs are a little bit different. The writings are different, but because it is a Hindu temple, there is more than one deity present. The Terigu and the Hindi are generally from the North, so they are very much linked to Ram, Sita, at the North deities, but there are common deities, like Denesha, who is the remover of obstacles, Lord Shiva, is part of the trinities.

293

Lord Brima that is the creator. They believe that Brima gives you the date of your birth and the date of your death. Lord Vishnu is the sustainer. As a Hindu priest he always says to a child, that they need to go through these phases, and they must enjoy childhood, they must enjoy teenage years, they must enjoy having been married - these are all the processes. They must enjoy and go through the emotions of life.

I asked the Guru: "Are children naughty?"

He replied that all children are naughty. It's an instinct, it's a growing up instinct. A child would be a child. He gave me the example of Lord Krishna:

Lord Krishna was a normal person like us. He went and he was just, he was actually stealing butter to eat. But this is how children grow.

You have sweets in the cupboard, the child is automatically going to go, if he asks you for one, and you give him one, and you leave the bottle jar, he is going to go and take it. It is natural.

We all grow up, we all grow through that, and develop through that. You need to say, you know what, too many sweets my child is not good to you. Because your teeth will get rotten. We show them the practical things. We show them the ugly pictures.

His one granddaughter is three years old. The other day they were sitting and having supper. And she saw lettuce. And she said to him: "lettuce is very healthy." He asked her how she knows that lettuce is healthy? She told him, her mummy says lettuce is healthy. She actually then took that lettuce from the salad, and she was enjoying it and that is good.

It all depends on the child, how we bring them up. He would say, a child would be a child. He would like children to be outside in the nature – playing out in the open.

He thinks that young parents today don't believe in home remedies. The home remedies were very good, whether it was an Afrikaans medicine or whether it was an Indian home remedy. But those medicines helped. If a child got sick, you will go and make the contraption - the juice, and say this is good for you. Your fever will go away, your constipation, your things. We are hoping a lot of people will be going back to that. But the younger ones are not.

The parents don't say, no, let's just take the child to the temple for a blessing because it had a bad dream or something, oh no no no, they have to go and take him to a doctor now these doctors are a rip off. All these doctors he believes are a rip of, they just like to come and say this child has a temperature, this child needs to be referred to a clinical psychologist because the child is naughty, because the child is falling.

Children must learn to fall. Children must learn to get hurt. Children must climb the trees. Girls used to climb trees. That's what makes a child robust. And that is why he tells them to go up the jungle gym. He told me an example of a six year old child:

The other child is about 6 years old. She doesn't want to go to school. So the parents came and said, why you don't want to go to school? She is a bit on the unhealthy side. I said, sit down here. I said to her, now you don't want to go to school, tell me about it. She said, no the teacher is forcing me to climb on the jungle gym. She said I am afraid that if I fall I am too heavy. I said, no, why aren't you going up the rope. So I said, if you are holding the rope you will never fall. Put your hands firm on the rope. You're a strong girl. See how strong you are, you are stronger than me. You got the rope there, and you're not going to let go. The teacher is standing there. Then I said you're afraid. She said yes I am afraid of heights. I said ok, you

must tell your mam, that you want to try this, but you want to go slowly, you don't want to be rushed into it. I will do it slowly.

It took him an hour talking to that child. And he compared her to the cow. He told her to look at this cow. "It is a big animal, how small are you in front". I cut an apple and I give the apple. I said, hold the apple in your hand. She said I am frightened. I went and I held the apple, and I said now look at how this animal is eating the apple.  It is grateful it is licking my hand. It is thankful. I gave it something special today. And you to, you do it slowly.

This child now loves coming to the temple. Her mother told him that the child is doing well. This is how they monitor. He told me "it is not always praying, praying. There is god, but none of us have seen god. It is only through the scriptures. We teach them there is a super power. These are images, I tell them these are images. People who have wisdom visualised this is how this god is going to be. For example, this is the goddess of knowledge. It's also your senses. Everything has symbolic meanings." This is how they portray to the child. They don't say to a child, "You must love the goddess of knowledge." They say that you must respect the book.

If a child is tearing paper or standing on a book, he would go very nicely and say to that child, "This is knowledge baby - this is writing. We need to respect it. Do not stand on your book or sit on your book. Book is knowledge." They train them respect, if you are respecting your book, you are respecting your culture. And he always tells them, when they are more mature, do not look down on any religion. Because we are all saying there is a god, but this is the medium I am going through. This river is going to flow here, that river is going to flow there, but they are all going to end up in that one great ocean. It is only the different ways. And that is what he believes, he teaches them to be thrifty, to be charitable. Like when they come to the temple he says ok, you need to give, you need some grains to feed the birds. So, it's like making them aware. He teaches them. He says, "Look at how beautiful the flower is.

Don't go and destroy it, it is there to be admired." We teach them all these things. These are practical things, because Hinduism is a practical faith.

Discipline, for him, is about making kids aware. It's there to be admired. It's practical. Hinduism is a practical faith, with set boundaries, that forms identity.

### 7.3.2. The Pundit

A man full of confidence met me one evening

at a house coloured in with flags in the front garden.

he taught me about the importance of Hindu education

that starts at home, and cannot be bought

From a young age you must groom the children

- like you would with a plant.

You must straighten it up.

If you leave it, it will take its own direction

His home was filled with rituals,

his heart full of respect

as he told me stories of old

of the Bhavath Gita and Wandering souls

of the danger of society outside,

of a code of conduct and dress code

eating right, sleeping at night

because his religion is his way of life.

### 7.3.2.1. How I got to know the Pundit

I got to know the Pundit through one of the other families I interviewed. They introduced me to the Pundit, who they knew.

### 7.3.2.2. Meeting the Pundit

The Pundit was a very neat and friendly person. His house had a lot of flags in front that symbolised the festivals they had recently. He also had a statue of a goddess in the entrance of his house that was beautifully dressed. He made me feel right at home.

### 7.3.2.3. What caught my eye

The rituals, symbols and meaning that they portray in their houses and in how they conduct themselves caught my eyes. You can see directly that he has something different to the way he lives his faith with loyalty. They live kindness.

### 7.3.2.4. Narrative

According to the Pundit religion has "very much" an influence on the way we discipline our children. Education is very important to children. In Hindu homes the

foundation is laid at home. An example is the sharing of the food. And children are taught that they may not laugh at the blind and the cripple.

Children should always be respected. Discipline is taught from a young age. They are taught that they may not steal; they may not waste food, and may not treat their pets in an ill way. Discipline is about restricting them from certain things. It also changes when they grow up, later they are reprimanded. They were bought up stern.

Today it's different, because of the children's rights. Today's kids ask why they are disciplined. That's why their pleasures are cut down, like TV, friends, cell phones.

They are then "what we call grounded".

In a Hindu home they fast certain days. They believe that there is one god, with different names. There is also scripture. Like we Christians have the Bible, they have the Bhavath Gita as reference. The Bhavath is "on the battle field". And the Gita is about the "holy body" – the truth is within us. The Remayan is about the relationships -especially between husband and wife. There is also a strong example of discipline and brotherly love. Some value we bring in home is respect and we must follow it. In the Bahu Gitait states that mankind is at large.

Hindu homes are very open and very tolerant. Kids are taught to show respect in all religious places. Because they believe that God is in the Musk and in the temple. They then also touch their heart or head to show respect for religious places. At the temple children are taught. Families also go there for prayer. They also put up flags to tell stories of their religion.

They also have to be part of the kata- the service to mankind, because it is also service to God. They believe there is only one race and that is the human race.

299

They also have a code of conduct. Part of it is a dress code, for when they go to a place of worship. They dress in a certain way if they go to a place of worship. Dress like they would go to a temple. At funerals they would always help each other. If someone is desperate you need to help them.

At a Hindu marriage there are seven mayor vows. When a child is born, after 6 days they have a thanks giving prayer, to mother earth. There is then certain science and hygiene when a child is born. Like a charcoal fire. There is incense. The baby is massaged. The mother is given healthy food to eat. From the time of birth to death there are sixteen major ceremonies. Their dress code is eastern.

From a young age you must groom the children - like you would with a plant. You must straighten it up. If you leave it, it will take its own direction. You must apply common sense and logical thinking. You must attend a service. For Hindus suicide is defeating god's law. That's why you will then end up as a wandering soul – a ghost - because you went out of time, cheating yourself. That is why god will then not accept you.

Eating habits are also very important. Hindu homes are vegetarian. Alcohol is not allowed. Parents must speak to their children as their friends. Parental guidance is very important. We over pet our children. That is why we need to take our children to the temple to have lectures and discourses and read the Barvat Gita. Children do not read it to memorise it, but to read the stories.

Children need to be taught at home how they must portray themselves. You need to tell them how and teach them how, and, how to use it outside. Hinduism is a way of life. It has moral values, and requires eating healthy. The foundation is laid at home and taught at home.

## 7.4. Voicing narratives on how religion influences Islam parent's way of disciplining children: Meet the Malek's

### 7.4.1. The Malek's

At a house full of women

While the men were out praying

we were talking about Islam

– the way of life which is ingrained on a child

through the Madrassa, Koran, Mummies help

and a life organised around prayer.


Talking and guiding with a pinch of respect

combined with Islam boundaries

discipline kids into an Islam identity.


Family is important

but faith comes first

to be accountable to the name of Allah.

So, do not cry

do what you need to do

so that people can see Islam

when they see you.


### 7.4.2. How I got to know the Malek's

I met Mrs. Malek after I asked the Pundit to help me to find a family to talk to for my research. He then asked his neighbour for help, and she agreed. I saw Mrs. Malek and her daughters together with her sister and mother.

They invited me to come after my meeting with the Pundit. It was then the prayer time for the men. So, her husband was not home. He was at the mosque praying with the other men. It was difficult to find a family from the Islam religion to interview, so I was very happy to meet Mrs. Malek and talk to her.

### 7.4.3. How did I feel

I felt like a foreigner treated with a lot of love, respect and care when I visited them. Mrs. Malek is a teacher at an Islam school and was very keen on helping me. She made me feel at home. She was very well mannered and that impressed me.

Her daughters, mother and sister were also very kind. It almost felt like I was interviewed as well, with all the questions the grandmother and auntie had. It felt like everyone was staring at me while I was having the interview with Mrs. Malek.

After we had the interview, they insisted that I eat something with them. We then ate some fruit. I will never forget the time when I took the peach that was put in front of me, and when I took a bite out of it, it was so juicy that I had to hold my other hand over my mouth not to make a mess. Everyone laughed – me included, and after that it felt like the ice broke and we had a very nice informal discussion.

### 7.4.4. What caught my eye

The thing that I would remember the most is the crying of her younger daughter, after I asked them to write about a time that they were naughty or did something wrong. A few times I told the mother that she really didn't need to do it, if she didn't want to. But the mother insisted that she write a story and finish it. Her aunty went and helped her. It seemed that she was afraid that her spelling was going to be wrong. She didn't want to draw a picture instead, after her mum clearly insisted that she write the story.

The fact that we were only women present was interesting. I struggled to get a Muslim man to talk to me during the visit to Durban, and when I finally had the chance to talk to an Islam family; it was interesting that we were only women present.

The mother was very strict and was a true matriarch. The children were very obedient to her, and didn't want to disappoint her. Her sister also helped with the kids.

### 7.4.5. Narrative

### 7.4.5.1. Parents

Mrs. Malek describes her religion as peace loving and says that it definitely, has an influence on how she disciplines her children. Islam is a way of life. It's very prescriptive of what is expected, and on how to live life. All the foods that they eat must be halal. A child is ingrained from small on all the ways of Islam - from a very young age. Prophet Muhammed – his character is what everyone emulates.

Therefore, children need to be taught from the beginning. You need to bring them back to what is expected of them as Muslims.

Their identity as Muslims lies in the choices they make. Most Muslim children go to Islamic schools. If they do not attend a Muslim school, they need to go to the madrassa after school. There they are taught morals, Islamic manners and the Koran. They need to understand the Koran and take most of their life lessons out of it. The core is Islamic manners.

There are Islamic laws regarding everything in life. Like for puberty – what you can do, and what you can't do. This is taught from a very young age.

Prayer is a very important part of their lives. They pray five times a day, with set times. Life is organised around prayers, and not the other way around. From ten years of age it is compulsory, because we need to be accountable for ourselves. From puberty a child is then accountable for the sin that he or she commits. Before that there is no accountability. Accountability is about being accountable to God and to be able to one day answer to him. The younger age is not accountable to God, because they are immature.

The boundaries in life are about the relationships you have, the way you dress, the people you mix with. From a young age it is taught. At schools respect is taught, a lot of the time. When they are disciplined they are talked to and try to take them out of the situation and reflect on it. Talking and guiding.

Boundaries give us identity. Islam is not a restrictive religion. There is a purpose and reason for every instruction. They start very young to give children boundaries. Drugs and alcohol is a problem, although it is not allowed. It is therefore necessary for them to see how others live. Muslim parents are also very busy and give their children technology. Parental guidance is very important. There are many organisations that host seminars for parents to educate them.

Discipline starts from an early age. Islam is a way of life. Every little thing you do revolves around Islam. In everything you do you must take the name of Allah, for guidance. "In the name of Allah is for the Islam the way of life. Your boundaries, gives you identity from a young age and sets the way of life.

It's very important to be your child's friend. Because if you aren't they are going to look at other places. You need to be part of their interests. And also shape their interests by Islam".

## 7.4.5.2. Children

### 7.4.5.2.1. Youngest girl's story

One day I was writing a story with my mum's very important pen and just as I finished the ink ran out and I thought to myself that if I lied then I would get away with it, but then I did not think that in Islam lying will get you in more trouble than telling the truth. I thought that I can blame it on my sister.

What happened then was that I put the pen into a little container that my sister used, to make it look like she put it in herself to block out the evidence. I went downstairs to check if my mum was home, but she was upstairs in the bathroom.

She came out and she saw the pen in my sister's case and asked why it was there? I then had no choice but to explain what had happened and she told me that it was better if I told the truth rather than lied.

When I think back I should never tell lies and always speak the truth not just because I am a Muslim but because it is a good thing in life. Speaking the truth makes me feel awesome.

### 7.4.5.2.2. Older girl's story

One day I decided to spend a day in bed. I planned on watching a movie and reading a book. However, soon I became extremely bored. My sister was playing nearby, minding her own business, keeping to herself.

I saw fun in irritating her. I started prodding her and annoying her. She became agitated and soon left. She went to the next room. A while later she ran past me. As she ran past me again I struck out my foot and tripped her. She fell to the floor.

What happened then was she began crying. She had hit her head and hurt it. She held it and shouted out for mum. Our mum came to the room and yelled at us asking what had happened. I reluctantly explained what happened while my mum checked on my sister's injury. She then calmed my sister down.

My mum then scolded me profusely. She reprimanded me telling me that I shouldn't have done that as my sister was in no way troubling me. She asked me why I had done it and if it had in anyway entertained me. She then asked me if I now regret what I did and if I think it would be a good idea to do it again.

When I think back, I learned that no amount of "fun" is worth someone getting hurt. Be it as small as just tripping someone to as traumatic as bullying. My mum reminded me that before I do something that could potentially result in my getting into trouble I should think thoroughly about the consequences of my actions.

**7.5. Voicing narratives on how religion influences a Jewish parent's way of disciplining children: Meet the Levy's**

**Children are an extension of us**

Children are so important that they say:

Men are time bound – they need to pray three times a day.

And women are not, because they need to raise good humans.

The Jewish faith is a child centred faith.

For People of God's role is to make the world a better place – *Tikkun olam*

the Rabbi takes time for children, it's good to hear them laughing.

Jewish community is family centred, and celebrate together

At 8 days old a boy is circumcised

Girls are *Barmitswahed* at twelve and Boys are *Bamitswahed* at 13

Mitzvah means a good deed,

so children need to become sons and daughters of good deeds

Hebrew school is a must, to learn Hebrew

and to be able to know how to lead a service

It's a great responsibility and a very big deal.

They're not only learning prayers,

but also the full cycle of the Jewish calendar year.

307

After the *barmitzvah* or *bamitzvah*

people have the responsibility to follow the faith like an adult.


Parents are there to make the world a safer place for children

and to set them free, while showing them how it's done.

Children must be taught to be good citizens and to be appropriate

They need a sense of self-worth with boundaries.

Children need to be mindful to fulfil the commandments and to keep a cosier home


Discipline is about relationships. You can't outsource parenting

It is about co-parenting, it's about working together, about giving a child a set of values.


Most important thing is to be present and stand up as a parent

You must take responsibility for your actions, so that your children can do the same

Bottom line – if you want them to be good humans you need to be a good human.


Each new day is broken in with the prayer: "Thank you for giving me back my soul."

Life is an opportunity.


### 7.5.1. How I got to know Rachel Levy


I went onto the internet and searched for Jewish groups in Durban. I came upon a few groups and phoned them to hear if they could help me to interview a family. I then came upon a lady who gave me the details of Talia, and said that she would

have an interview with me at her work. I went to see her one afternoon at her work. I didn't interview her children because they were too small and because it was easier to see her one afternoon at her workplace.

### 7.5.2. Meeting Rachel Levy

She is a very friendly lady, with small children. She was round about my age, a working professional with a bubbly personality and we had a lovely time. We almost immediately felt comfortable with each other. She shared a lot with me and gave me new insights.

### 7.5.3. What caught my eye

How they teach their children from 3 years old to be a Jew. They have a strong religious identity. All the discipline of the children is built around it.

At 13 a child is seen as an adult – it's almost like from 13 to 18/21 years old, a child has a phase where they need to act like a responsible adult, with other adults guiding them in this. When is a child an adult and doesn't need to be disciplined?

### 7.5.4. Narrative

She describes her religion as an orthodox Jew. There are three streams of Jews:

1. Ultra-orthodox,

2. Orthodox,

3. Reformed.

She agrees that her religion influences the way that she disciplines her children. She also believes that children are an extension of us. Religion influences the way she disciplines her children, because they need to be mindful of the commandments.

They must also keep a kosher home. Children under the age of three are restricted from all the rules of discipline. It's about the tradition. Boys of three go to school. Then their hair is cut (some of them the first time since birth). This is all because they are then entering into the world.

They also give a kid of three the Hebrew alphabet with honey on it, to symbolise that learning must be sweet. Her children are at the moment in non-religious schools. At the age of twelve girls has a *barmitsva*, and at the age of thirteen boys have a *batmitsva*. With that comes the responsibility to follow the faith as an adult would.

The Jewish faith is a child centred faith, where customs are explained to kids at every festival. Children are so important that they say: Men are time bound – they need to pray three times a day. And women are not, because they need to raise good humans.

In the Synagogue the Rabbi always takes time to talk to the children. They have a saying that it is good to hear children laughing. The services are in a prescribed formula where at a certain time the children would go out and have a children's service, simultaneously with the adult's service.

She told me that one of her daughters did the Noah's Ark story and asked why there were no dinosaurs in the story. At home, they discipline with a warning, followed by time out.

She believes that if you don't want it done to you, don't do it to others (religious). There is a lot of conversation, and it's very verbal. Discipline is about wrong and right. The children must be taught to be good citizens and to be appropriate. The children need a sense of self with boundaries. And religion plays a role in it.

Jews see themselves as the people of God. They have the calling and role to make a better world.

They have a "*Tikkun olam*" – that prepare kids to be part of repairing the world:

After you have done the first parts, you can go to the next step.

> Repair yourself (myself)
> Repair people around you (community)
> Repair people
> Repair the world

It's like "Paying it forward". It's a basic tendency of Judaism is respect. Story of the bracelets – it's about giving her children tools. Saying it is fine to observe and to respect it. Discipline is a construct, its ok boundaries to be in.

We are there to make it safe to them. On her 18th birthday her dad went out to buy her a can of reds, and told her that if she ever needs to drink, she must remember – don't get into a situation where she can't phone him. He set the boundaries – you can make the decision, let me show you how to set the boundaries. Set free, but show them how.

Very important component is a positive thing, to question. It is difficult. We must steer them to do good and add value. Religion gives direct and indirect guidance to parents.

311

Every morning they wake up saying the words: thank you for returning my soul to me, for giving me life. Life is an opportunity. Every day you can start anew. In terms of the concept of guilt – she never lets her girls end the day with negativity. Kids must go to sleep feeling safe.

Discipline is also about relationships. She and her husband are co-parenting. Mum and dad are working together. There is not one disciplinarian but both parents. Kids push boundaries. You can't discipline children on your own, because then the kids would run circles around you.

They don't have parental guidance classes. The community activities are really family centred. A big effort is made to welcome people and everyone comes together. Children go to Hebrew school. In order to be bar/*bamitsva* Jewish children should be fluent enough in Hebrew, and they must understand enough about the requirements.

So, they will write a little test. That the Rabbi administers. Almost like confirmation class. The children need to read from the Torah scroll at their bar/*bamitsvha*. They have to be able to lead the service if they grow up in a Reformed community. It's a great responsibility. So it's a huge, very big deal. You are taught Hebrew and Aramaic for the prayer books.

Children learning Hebrew

Two to three years before a child is ba/*barmitsva-ed.* Boys are *barmitzvhaed* and the girl's bamitzvha-ed. When a boy is born they are circumcised at eight days old. At three years old they have the Ofsharing or cutting of the hair of the Boys. At twelve a girl is *batmitzvahed*. And at thirteen a boy is *barmitzvahed*. Mitzvah is a good deed,

so it means literally to become a son of a good deed or a daughter of a good deed. It means that they become part of the society. After that you get married.

You can start Hebrew school from grade r, in the community. If the children are not in a Hebrew day school, there are Jewish education teachers that go to schools to teach the children every week for one or two hours a week. Here they will do faith activities. At Hebrew school, there are a minimum of two years before a *bar/bamitzah*. Girls would then normally go from 10-12 years and boys from 10-13 years.

It's not only about learning the prayers for that day, but about the full life cycle of everything that happens in a Jewish calendar year. It's about understanding all of the festivals and understanding the rituals, and understanding what is required of you. Because at the age of thirteen a boy can make up a minion, make up the core of ten that is required to make a community of prayer. And every day after the passing of a parent you are able to say caddish, the prayer for the dead.

So, if you are in a community where you are short on men, they will go to the Jewish boy's high school, to say caddish there, because there they know they will get enough men. So even a thirteen year old can make the difference between somebody being able to observe, and to fulfil the commandments. So, for them it's a great mitzvah that they can be able to enable.

Can you describe this as disciplining a child into a certain way?

I think again its giving them a set of values. So, there are no requirements after a child is *barmitzvahed* for them to attend the synagogue on a Friday and a Saturday. A lot of kids disappear. Once it's done it's done. Parents don't feel the need to come every Saturday and drop them off or stay with them. But a lot of kids also choose for their own self-worth they are now viewed as an adult. It's an incredibly powerful thing

to give a thirteen-year-old boy that kind of opportunity to be respected, and the same for a girl.

Here they are giving again a structure what is reasonable and fair behaviour as a member of the community and as adult women and adult men you are expected to behave in a good manner. You are supposed to be able to control and conduct yourself and act fairly and justly to everyone around you. So, at the age of twelve to expect a girl not to be rude to their mother, because she wants to wear too much eyeliner. It's a powerful thing.

They do a lot of self-worth exercises. They also learn that as an adult, I am entitled to a view, and I'm entitled to an opinion, and so is everyone else. And I think that's a very important lesson our kids get.

In Hebrew school, they learn that this is what I am learning. Everyone else is learning at their own pace. And they may have a different view. And you know what, that's ok. It's a huge amount of trust that you put into a teenager. Because they now need to decide for themselves. Because as a Jewish parent you can no longer be required as the parent to be the one that is saying, you must go to shul, or do something. It swaps over, because they now become an adult. And you now have to choose, what to do.

The most important thing is that you as a parent must walk up as a parent. You must be present. The big part of Judaism is that you can't outsource parenting. You have to take responsibility for your actions. So, that your child can take responsibility for their actions. I can't expect my children to keep kosher if I don't keep kosher. So, it must be important to me, to impart it to them. I can't expect them to talk nicely to each other, if I don't talk nicely to them or to my husband. And *vice versa*. Kids learn by observation. They are these little sponges picking up everything you do. So, if I want them to be a good human, I need to be a good human. That's the bottom line.

You need to explain why you must do it. We find that we can't dictate something, we need to explain something, and even if they are not going to get the full explanation, the fact that there is an explanation is sometimes enough. That comes very strongly back to Judaism. Again, it's good to question. And in Judaism there are commentaries written about every religious text, where the rabbis argued about what is meant.

By having a faith that is learning based, you encourage parents to be, more willing to engage with their kids. And to learn from them, as they are meant to learn from us. We are quite privileged to be parents. Maybe not at four in the morning, but other times I have felt privileged.

Jewish children go to Hebrew school. There children learn about the Jewish faith. It starts from early on. At eight days, a boy is circumcised. At three years, old a boy's hair is cut.   The children start going to the Hebrew school in grade r/0. They need to go for a minimum of 2 years before bar/*bamitszah*. The children also need to learn about the festivals and the rituals of the Jewish faith. A 13-year-old can already help to fulfil a commandment.

This is giving them a set of values. They are given structure of how to behave in a good manner. With that comes a lot of self-worth exercises. You can't outsource parenting. You must take responsibility and teach them to take responsibility. We can't dictate something. We can explain it. (Judaism) it is good to question. Faith is learning based.

## 7.6. In conclusion

315

These narratives I described in this chapter forms the basis of my research. Although they are not mentioned everywhere, it was these narratives that shaped my thoughts in this research.

I went into the interviews (when gathering narratives) from a not knowing position, therefore the themes that I researched further in the literature study, and reflected on in the other chapters, were themes that came out of the narratives. It wasn't themes that I decided beforehand that I wanted to use to compare the families against each other, but rather themes that caught my eyes and my interest and made me want to know more about how the parents and families came to it.

In the following chapter I will reflect on each one of the affiliates narratives, separately, and discuss some of the themes that came to light (and to interest) in my conversations with the co-researchers.

# CHAPTER 8 REFLECTION ON AFFILIATES THOUGHTS ON RELIGION AND DISCIPLINE

In the previous chapter I wrote down the narratives that came from the research I have done. In this chapter I will take these narratives further by reflecting on the themes that stood out for me in my interviews with the families. I will first write on a reflection on the beliefs from the side of the parents, and thereafter a reflection on the way they perceive discipline. I do not want to compare any one of these families with another one or judge them. They are from different religions and we need to have respect for the places we agree and the places we disagree in our thoughts on parenting and discipline. There may also be differences in how people from the same religion as one of these affiliates see their religion or thoughts on it. This must be respected, because I am working in a qualitative and narrative way, and these reflections and narratives are about personal reflections that people have about the religion they are affiliated with.

## 8.1. Themes that came out of the narrative of Mamma and Sissie

## 8.1.1. A reflection on the beliefs of the affiliates of the African religion: Mamma and Sissie.

## 8.1.1.1. Religion doesn't influence the disciplining of children

Since I left Mamma and Sissie I couldn't shake the feeling of hopelessness they had. Mamma said that religion doesn't have an influence on the way she disciplines her children. It was almost like she had given up on religion. When I think about what Masango said, that religion and culture are seen as the same thing in the African way of thinking. It struck me that all the new things that surrounded her, didn't fit in with her way of thinking. All was not as perfect as it would seem. And her way of thinking wasn't working anymore.

317

Thinking about Mamma's family it is important to note that although all the new developments in their village was brought with good intentions, they as a famliiy were still living in poverty. This made parenting difficult. Like Ward, Makusha & Bray (2015:69) puts it that many parents in South Africa to face considerable barriers in their efforts to fulfil the tasks of parenting. Poverty increases the stress that parents experience when trying to provide for and protect their children, and makes emotionally distant, harsh and inconsistent parenting more likely.

Mamma definitely expericed stress, for her it was so serious that she said to me, "God is accepting bad things. Like a cross without a reason." Mamma said that God is letting these bad things happen to them. For her, her religion doesn't influence the disciplining of her children. It rather influences the relationships at home. When Mamma and Sissie said that religion doesn't influence the way they discipline their children they gave two different answers at different times. The first time they said that religion doesn't influence discipline because it seems like God does not listen to their prayers and requests and the second time they said that the children don't listen. They also noted that the children won't learn discipline at church because they feel it's not for them. Religion doesn't help them raise their children, because their children do not want to become involved and because it doesn't work for them.

### 8.1.1.2. The dualism: Mamma and Sissie pray – for good things

For the African way of thought, history is something that happens to us. That is why many African people would think that they are cursed due to the spirits that control creation and people's lives. Nothing can be done about this. This sounds a lot like Mamma and Sissies way of talking. They felt like they were trapped in a world where they prayed and prayed, and nothing happened. Everything in the past worked so well – like when they were disciplined – but now God doesn't do anything.

318

Sissie said that she's a Christian, but the only things she described as being Christian was that she and her sons were baptised and that she prays. She also said that the prayers don't work anymore, because she prays, and nothing happens.

It was like she knew I was a Christian lady and wanted to talk my language. But in life she was caught in the dualism between the western way of having a private religion in the house and the African way of thinking about religion.

### 8.1.1.3. A dualism – African though also Christian

The dualism I saw in Mamma and Sissies story is not a new one. The debates made them aware that there are some Africans who live a western style existence as well as their African way of life. Other Africans blame colonialism for this dualism.

Those who favoured Christianity as a way of life rejected those who practised an African way of life. They referred to them as hedonistic or unchristian. In other words, Christians were good people, and Africans bad. This way of life continued to divide Africans into the two camps (Masango 2016:5)

In short in an African understanding of religion to be human is to be religious; to live is to be religious (Beyers 2010:7). In the light of this I could see that the two ladies I talked to have got this mixed up with all that has happed in their community. The school that helped their children and also provided food for them from time to time was Christian. And in the light of the pastor that brought me to them, they talked about their Christianity. This they could only describe in the light of their own personal walk with the Christian community. But when they were asked about disciplining their children they went back to the thoughts of the people that went before them – the African people.

This brought to them a dualism filled with problems. Because it didn't work anymore. Their children and the rest of their family were caught up in another dualism. The dualism between the African way of thinking and doing and the western way. That is why it is important for me to look at an African worldview – as the worldview they referred back to and as the way that their thoughts came together with their families' way of thinking.

**8.1.1.4. Hierarchy**

**8.1.1.4.1. The Hierarchy in the African mind-set**

I understood this when I realised that in the African mind-set women and children are of less value than men. Even though everyone is part of one community there is a hierarchy where everyone belongs and in this interconnectedness of the hierarchy everyone has its place. On that day my place was with the women and children.

Mamma and Sissie didn't want to have the conversation I had with them separately. And her husband was standing outside.

Later when I read about African religion I understood why. Men were superior to women and children. That's why it was possible for me to talk to Mamma and Sissie and the boys, but not her husband – because what would the people say, if this woman came and he talked to her. Sissie and Mamma were also inseparable. And with good reason. Because "it takes a village to raise a child". Not just one person.

The higher and lower ranks don't mix. Like Mamma's husband that chose not to be a part of the conversations. A person only has access to the closest ranks to him/her. In the social structure of African cultures, it is difficult for a person to approach a higher-ranking individual, for instance the village chief (Beyers 2010: 5).

Therefore, intermediaries are necessary.

## 8.1.1.4.2. Ancestors and intermediaries

If we think about the concept of hierarchical structures (of African world ancestors), it makes sense that one can only speak to the King (God) through ancestors or mediators, especially the good ones who lived life to the fullest (Masango 2016:6).

With that in mind, we need to understand that only good role models are respected, especially those who have shared their good behaviour with others in the village. The moral code and prescription for an ethical life are found in the tradition (Beyers 2010:3) and therefore also the culture and the religious outlook on life. Mamma and Sissie therefor in this light sees the Christian religion as something private, almost western. And in a way they call upon God in prayer, but struggle with the fact that He doesn't answer.

Even though Mamma and Sissie didn't talk about the ancestors *per se.* I would like to explore this theme further, because of the fact that Mamma and Sissie told me that they discipline like they do because of how it was carried out in the past. I also know that the pastor who took me there warned me that there is a lot of ancestral worship going on in the village.

I suppose that Mamma and Sissie would not call the ancestors by name because this pastor was very concerned about it. But there was a definite possibility that they are still referring to the ancestors because their wisdom for child rearing comes from the ones that went before them, and the way that they talk about prayer is almost like listening to how African people talk about visiting ancestors and expecting them to do something. Like Mamma said, she cannot do anything for her boys – only God can help them.

Ancestors operate from a higher hierarchical position than humans; they are inferior to God and can therefore act as mediators between God and humans. Ancestors are not seen as divine or godly, but rather as spirits around us, it is therefore also possible for them to worship God (Beyers 2010: 5). They act mainly as mediators between God and humans.

If Mamma and Sissie then refer to the ones that has gone before them, they do it with great respect and awe.

### 8.1.1.5. Baptism

The African worldview consists of a lot of rituals and rituals thus become the symbolic actions that define the relationships in which humans stand; not only relationships with the divine, the ancestors or spiritual beings, but also societal relationships with other humans and with nature and everything therein (Beyers 2010:7).

This is probably why Mamma and Sissie had a different view from mine about baptism. For them, it seems, that baptism is a ritual to celebrate their connection with each other as well as with God.

In her own words Mamma said that they baptised their children but they don't believe. She also said that if you don't do it your child will be in the dark. She told me that they do it so that they can sit after death at the side of the angels. (refer to Adendum E: Transcription of the narratives of the co-researchers. Interview with Mamma and Sissie). At the same time, they say that their children believe but do not want to go to church.

The two ladies described their religion as something they had in their homes and something that didn't involve their husbands and children. They also believed that if their children are baptised they would sit next to the angels of God when they die.

I understand that some experts within the African worldview would differ with this, in that there are no angels. And I agree that the description of Mamma and Sissie was a mixture of the understanding of Christianity and African Traditional Religion. This was one of the points in my study that I struggled with – when I asked Mamma and Sissie about their religion, they would tell me that it was the African Traditional Religion, but when they described it, it sounded a lot like a mix between an African Worldview and African Traditional Religion mixed with Christian religion. I wondered if my position as a pastor influenced them to take a middle stance between the African Traditional Religion and Christianity. Therefore, I called on co-researchers like Johannes Aucamp and literature – with the information I gathered with them I socially constructed and thickened my findings.

In one of my conversations with Johannes Aucamp (Aucamp J. 2017:5-8) of TOPIA (Training of Pastors in Africa) on the African way of thinking, I discussed with him the statement that Mamma made about baptism.

He explained that in the African mind-set it means that you give your child a higher-ranking than anyone else, because "next to God" is the highest ranking an African mother can give her child – God is the top ranking position. It seemed that Mamma and Sissie had a good way of thinking about their African culture, but saw it separate from the religion they tried to proclaim. In terms of Aucamp's explanation, I think I had misunderstood baptism. Mamma and Sissie described the reason for the baptism is that through which they can provide a place for their children in the highest ranking – with the angels next to God, when they die.

This was strange for me because it felt to me that even though the children don't have to be connected to Christianity, they can be connected, through a ritual or Christian identity of the parents that baptised them.

Ayliwand Shorter (cited in Magesa L 2014:5 and quoted in Masango 2016:6) described the African baptism as follows:

*"At baptism, the African Christian repudiates remarkably little of his former non-Christian outlook. He may be obligated to turn his back upon certain traditional practices which rightly or wrongly, have been condemned by the Church, but he is not asked to recant a religious philosophy. Consequently, he returns to the forbidden practices on occasion with remarkable ease. Conversion to Christianity is for him sheer gain, an "extra" for which he has opted. It is an "overlay" on his original religious culture. … African Christians operate with two thought-systems at once, and both of them are closed to each other. Each is only superficially modified by the other."*

### 8.1.1.6. Religion is part of everything

The other side of the coin is that humans are part of the world where spirits and gods reside. Religion is therefore not a separate entity existing to be defined apart from life (2010:7) it would rather be seen as part of everything. These lines of thoughts were not so clear in Mamma and Sissie's conversation.

Masango (2016:6) has written about this when he says that the difficulty of some Africans speaking to a hierarchy is a problem in certain rural areas. They use a system of Induna's or mediators, especially when they speak to a king. That same process of communication was brought into Christian practices by some of them.

324

They find it difficult to talk directly to a higher being without a spokesperson. When they share their problems, they will always seek a mediator, because they feel that they are talking to someone who is not their equal.

He describes that the African mind-set sees God as being far away. That's probably why Mamma felt like God didn't know her, care about her, protect her. But on the other hand Mamma and Sissie wanted to have a place for them and their children in this highest ranking next to God.

Other thoughts on how the African mind-set sees God is that he doesn't care about people, that he doesn't want to heal them, and that they cannot sin against God, and that God can't judge them. This is probably why Mamma and Sissie feel that God doesn't ask them to discipline their children – because he is not the one to judge. Disciplining children comes from the ones that came before them.

### 8.1.1.7. Morality

Byers (2010:3), points out that the structure of African Traditional Religion is based on morality. Morality originates with God and flows into the ancestors. This links to Mamma and Sissies way of looking at where the responsibility for child discipline comes from.

Aucamp shows in his picture that the realm of non-living, the living and the spirits of the dead are all part of the reality, in the African mind-set.

For Beyers (2010:4) the conviction that reality as perceived by humanity is merely a part of reality, and the fact that an invisible spiritual world co-exists with the visible world characterises African Traditional Religion as animistic. For him the spirits of the deceased ancestors reside in this deistic and dynamistic spiritual realm.

**8.1.2. A reflection on discipline from the affiliates of the African religion: Mamma and Sissie.**

**8.1.2.1. The past ways of disciplining children**

When growing up Mamma took a bottle to the head (was being hit with a bottle over the head by one of her parents).

When I listened to Mamma and Sissies stories, they explained the way they disciplined in terms of their tradition and also the way that their parents did it. For them this was the way. This reminded me of Roman, Isaacs, Davids & Sui (2016:9), description of the family as instrumental in its members' development and giving meaning to societal constructs, including constructs such as the way marriage is perceived, bearing and raising children, education methods, and the rights and 'obligations' of family members and hence society in general. Likewise, with Mamma and Sissie, they did what whas done to them, in raising their children. In other words, within the family, the one generation are replaced with the next generation.

Mamma and Sissie are examples of what Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds) (2018:24), calls families with intergenerational continuity. This is families where most children grow up from infancy to adulthood within a family, even though they may move between households and have different caregivers at different times of their lives. This is prevalent in the way that they described the discipline they received as children and the discipline the are handing out.

They also told me stories about when they were disciplined as a child more easily than when I asked for stories of when they disciplined their children. Sissie told me that her mother hit her. And Mamma told me that a bottle (glass bottle) was taken to her head at one time when her parents disciplined her. This is totally unacceptable

today and will have legal consequences for the parents if they discipline their children in this manner.

Mamma also told me that when she was at school the Principle hit the children a lot, including her. Her thumb got hurt so badly that it would never again be right, because her thumb bone was pushed up because of that.

This style of parenting that Mamma described, are the Boumrind's authoritarian parenting style. (Baumrind 1971:22). Her parents tried to shape and control her. There was a standard of behaviour, obedience was a virtue and she had to accept her parent's words and actions as right without asking questions about.

If we reflect on the discipline that her parents used on her, according to the Dimensions of Discipline Inventory (DDI) test of Straus&Fouchier (2007:23), we find that they used psychological aggression. Her parents were shouting at her and used psychological aggression as a discipline technique.

According to Gilles-Smith and Lockharts four rival parenting cultures, I would described the parenting style that Mamma and Sissie's parents used with them as a hierarchical pattern (Gilles-Sims&Lockhart 2005:196). They were raised in a context where they were expected to submerge whatever personal reservations they may have and cooperate for the good of the family unit. (Goode, 1982; Tucker, l988).

### 8.1.2.2. Today's children

Mamma and Sissie also complained that their children are lazy and do not want to work. Aucamp says that in the African mind-set work is a curse, and they work to survive.

Mamma and Sissie adopted their parents, parenting styles. They try to raise their children according to Baumrind's authoritarian parenting style. They also adapted the discipline behaviour that their parents used on them – psychological aggression (Straus&Fouchier 2007:23). As parents they were also shouting and yelling at their child, trying to make the child feel shamed or guilty, telling their children that they are lazy.

Looking at Gilles-Sims & Lockhart's four rival parenting cultures, I would describe Mamma and Sissies parenting culture as the fatalistic pattern. Within the way that they are parenting and disciplining their children, they are moving back and forth between the application of strict discipline associated with hierarchy and the relative indifference of individualistic parents.

Mamma and Sissie also said that today's children are not punished a lot. If you hit them they will go to the social worker to tell them and this brings trouble. They were used to harsh physical punishment, in the past they used corporal punishment, but it is no longer acceptable in the present day. They fear using corporal punishment will make the children go to the social worker and the social worker will make trouble for them and take the children away.

I already stated that research has shown that the use of harsh physical punishment by parents is largely driven by parental attitudes (Dietz, 2000; Kirkwood, 1999; Vittrup, Holden & Buck, 2006 as quoted by Mustaine & Tewksbury 2014:90) and/or by community norms (MacKenzie, Nicklas, Waldfogel & Brooks-Gunn, 2012 as quoted by Mustaine & Tewksbury 2014:90). Here we have an example of it. Mamma and Sissie's community and parents used harsh corporal punishment, and that is why it was ok for them to also use the same methods. Now that the community has to change according to the law, parents may not use corporal punishment, they too will refrain from it.

### 8.1.2.3. Physical punishment

Beat and shout at children.

Mamma said that her mother hit her, so they hit their children.

Sissie – she hits them all over the body.

What was interesting, when I asked Sissie where they were hit as children being punished. She replied that they were hit all over the body.

Both of them, say that today's children don't get punished a lot. They can't hit them anymore because then they will go to the social worker. For them this is a big problem because they always used corporal punishment as a discipline in the old days and now have to resort to other methods. I got the impression that this made them feel helpless, because no one has taught them another way. Therefore, they pray for their children, but that also didn't seem to work for them. When they talk about the old days, it seems like they know how discipline worked, but now they are uncertain about discipline.

Harsh physical punishment is driven by parental attitudes and/or by community norms (Gilles-Smith & Lockheart 2005:196).

### 8.1.2.4. A new way of disciplining

The way the discipline was, wasn't any more.

The references they had for discipline was turned on its head.

It seems like there is a new dualism that needs to be addressed. A dualism on how they as parents perceived and lived in a different way from their children.

The way they wanted to raise children, imitating the elders and the ancestors – the children didn't want to follow.

Because a new world opened. With electricity came TV and technology that taught the children new ways. New ways where they could rule their world. With the new roads, the children walked them more easily, and didn't need the parents to walk and talk with them. With the new houses, people closed the windows and the doors – they started to lock each other out and kill the community that all lived together.

The way they lived – was no more.

The changes forced a different way of life for them. This made the family's function different.

Children now wanted to do things their way. They wanted to fit into the new world created for them through commercials, media and western ways.

Though one generation longed for what was past, and tried to enforce those ways on the next generation. The next generation had already moved on  – in their thoughts, behaviour and even physically.

That is why I agree with Masango (2016:12) that African people need to examine and analyse the social structure of their communities i.e. tracing were the blockages or brokenness occurred, especially those of abuse and violence.

These questions will help them to realise that their whole pattern of life, which was viewed as religious from birth to death, is being challenged by globalisation. Secularisation is also changing these concepts of the whole process of African life. Life for Africans was based on spirituality, from the beginning, when a child is born, named, circumcised, through confirmation to man or womanhood. Then marriage, work, dying, death, and burial, this is seen as going through challenges, even though the process is still viewed as sacred, developing one's spiritual personality.

In the contemporary context, many people emphasise individual rights more than communal rights. The spirit of living together is slipping away. New societies must deal with the question of how to return to the spirit of *Ubuntu*, and harness it for productivity and competitive purpose of building the nation. As we cultivate this new spirit of *Ubuntu*, we need to harness it to manage the challenges of reconstruction and development (Masango 2016:13).

## 8.1.2.5. The importance of community

Talking to Mamma and Sissie I could feel that they were there together for a reason. When I did the literature studies and talked to Johannes Aucamp I realised that family and community is of the utmost importance to African religion. Your family, community or the group that you belong to, makes you who you are. For you cannot have an identity without belonging to a group.

It was also interesting for me to learn that the African people do not only experience the people that are physically here on earth with us as a family. They also see the spirits of the ones that have gone before them, their ancestors as part of their family.

Mamma and Sissie were not so clear that discipline starts at home. When we talked about disciplining children they talked mostly about the whole community and I had to ask them about their own children.

331

They do discipline their children, but almost more important is that the community has a big problem with discipline. It's almost like they expect someone to come and change the whole community's discipline problems. Because they prayed and prayed, and nothing happened.

I already talked about the fact that Mamma and Sissie came together to see me, because they represented part of their community. It is also clear out of my conversation with them that they place great value in the family and the community.

Their community was also very important to them. In the African mind-set an individual life is not significant, because the community or tribe means more than one person alone. Tribalism is very important, almost like saying, "my tribe is better than your tribe". This was very clear in my conversation with the ladies, because they were very proud of their community and only wanted the best for their community. I saw Mamma and Sissie together – because it takes a village to raise a child. Mammas husband didn't want to join our conversation, while the boys were very willing.

There is a common saying, that it takes the whole village to raise a child. This brings to the community, the responsibility of good values, ethics, and the spiritual development of a person is then holistically taken.

For Masango (2016:8) this type of process forces one to internalise African values as a way of life. Like we already discussed, in an African community a person is expected to be in relation with other people.

That is why an adult can discipline any child who is out of step. It is part of shaping values, ethics, and the spiritual life of a child. In the African village, one is not

allowed to live life alone, like an island (Masango 2016:10). You cannot live a life of your own; you need other people who will help you live life to the fullest.

In an African village (community), everyone relates to each other, everyone is surrounded by lots of people, tribes, and kinsmen and women. For Masango (2016:10), another concept that continues to shape African spirituality and the values of a person is the rites of passage (initiation) in the context of transformation during the maturational process.

This process encourages elderly people to share their experience with others at the initiation school. For him the rites of passage such as circumcision, marriage, and burials are good opportunities to shape the process of growth that leads to socialisation and the integration of a person or group who would live harmoniously with other people. He calls on a community of adults to shape, nurture, and care for the spiritual upliftment of young ones within a village.

By nature, African people are, nurturing and caring people, who live in the company of others and share concepts of raising children together. Therefore, being in relation to others, or belonging, represents the essential characteristics of being truly human. Different to Mamma and Sissies description of their Christianity, people of the African religion have no private faith and spirituality. This is because their faith and spirituality is communal. (Masango 2016:11)

Today, the question Masango (2016:11) asks, is the village failing or has it collapsed in its African structure of caring and nurturing children? The African worldview needed to dig deep into their African concept of spirituality, checking whether it was helpful in building the nation to its original way of living and respecting each other as they did before.

Masango (2016:12) calls on Africans to re-examine their faith and lifestyle. For in the past, African people worked closely with each other. Today, the African community is breaking down; hence, problems of abuse and violence are emerging. It is like all the new things that came to Mamma and Sissies community.

This I felt was one of the main problems in the community that Mamma and Sissie lived in. Mamma and Sissie looked for guidance from the past, but it was like there was a problem in the community. The community didn't keep to the ways of the past. Even their children had moved on from the past. It seemed from the outside like so much good has happened in their community. Everything looked so nice and new, the new houses with electricity and the new roads - but not all seemed right.

The village was turned on its head – and this had a profound implication on the disciplining of children. The social system of African thought was mixed up with contemporary lifestyle. What was left was two generations that didn't speak the same language, didn't have the same thoughts about life anymore. With everything new – everything they fought for, came the taxis, the *spaza* shops with *vetkoek* and drugs, the electricity to feed technology and television with porn.

People were more away than at home. Families weren't together anymore. This caused a big problem for the families and especially the way parents disciplined their children. Bringing in the new roads, (Christianity) religion, houses and electricity, brought for them new problems challenging their way of thought and especially their morals and values. One of the very bad things Mamma described, was that her son only wanted to eat "*vetkoek*" at the *spaza* shop and that he doesn't want to eat at home.

It even made discipline difficult, because now they can't hit and scream at the children any more, as happened in the past. They are too scared now that the children will tell the social worker and they would take them away. There was a

breakdown in the moral values of the children, because of the influences from other worldviews.

According to Gershof et al (2010:489) children accept the disciplinary techniques of their culture more easily and more effectively. When children perceive a discipline technique to be normative within their culture or community, they may be less likely to evaluate their parent's use of it as aberrant or objectionable. Gershof et al (2010:489)

Consequently, the proposition can be made that learner behaviour is deeply rooted in societal relationships such as the parent's home, the school and the surrounding community or society. Based on this, the factors that may be undermining learner misconduct among others in school-related, family-related and environmental related factors are categorised. (Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:362)

In South African schools, the "discipline problem" can be attributed to the fact that society has been transformed since 1994 and the children struggle to find their place (Van der Walt, 2007:291). Other causes include the fact that:

- many learners grow up orphaned due to HIV AIDS and other diseases (the absent parent problem);
- traditional societal structures are breaking down due to migration to cities;
- that violence is a normal way of resolving conflict (Timse 2006: 1-2 as quoted by Van der Walt, 2007:291);
- teachers feel that they have lost control of the learners and lost control of discipline after corporal punishment was abolished (Hayward 2006: 1 as quoted by Van der Walt, 2007:291);
- the new curriculum bores the learners (Enoch 2006: 8 as quoted by Van der Walt, 2007:291);
- the influence of the media (Govender 2006: 6; Van Eeden 2005: 14 as quoted by Van der Walt, 2007:291);
- and many other factors. (Van der Walt, 2007:291).

335

School and discipline problems in school, are social realities, therefore it is not possible to be separate from the social-historical development from which they arise. Schools reflect the communities in which they exist. Similarly, violence in schools reflects the character of the broader community within which they exist (Van Louw & Waghid 2008:470).

The human degradation caused by colonialism and apartheid, is enormous and rebuilding requires more than ever been realised: more courage, more resources, harder work and greater perseverance.

If it is assumed that schools reflect the communities in which they are located (Engelbrecht 2007 as quoted by Van Louw & Waghid 2008:470), it goes without saying that the aforementioned disturbing conditions (also as the inheritance of the country's colonial and apartheid past) on the basis of what has already become known in transitional language has a "culture of violence".

## 8.2.1.6. Can *Ubuntu* provide a solution to the discipline problems?

I still don't have the answers. My heart only wants to point the way to *Ubuntu*. Maybe through *Ubuntu* we can reach out to open our thoughts and our hearts. Maybe then we can build a new story, a new South Africa. One where we can share our words and views, and together, create a new safe space, a soft-landing place, because "it takes a village to raise this child".

Masango (2016:3) describes that when children or young ones call the word *ntate* (father), they are showing a sign of respect to that adult person, and also see him as the one who shapes them into good citizens. As children continue to grow in the

village, they are then shaped in respecting people, and the concept of *Ubuntu* becomes part of their life.

He further goes on to describe the concept of *Ubuntu* (Masango 2016:8). This is connected to the idea of ancestorship and shapes a way of living that respects human beings, life, the elderly, as well as the villagers (community). This is what Mamma and Sissie were longing for, that one can live with other people in a respectable way.

In this Masango (2016:11) sees some challenges. The world has changed and continues to change in such a way that it challenges the above concept of *Ubuntu.* For example, we are experiencing violence and abuse within African communities. While African people faced the challenges of women and child abuse, they were forced to re-examine where the concept of *Ubuntu* broke down. They needed to analyse the way they were raising their children in these modern times.

The day I saw Mamma and Sissie I felt bad that I couldn't give them any answers on how to discipline their children. I could only pray for them. It felt like they didn't think that prayers would help anymore. This discipline problem was like a cross without a reason.

Today I realise that I cannot give an answer. What works for me in my western way of thinking would not work for them.

Mamma says that they can't throw the children away – she hopes that God will change them.

## 8.2. Reflection on affiliative of Christian religion's thoughts on discipline

## 8.2.1. A reflection on the beliefs of the affiliates of the Christian religion: The Van der Merwe's, Govender's and Abdoel's.

### 8.2.1.1. Discipline that is determined by faith

In my conversations with the three families that are affiliated with the Christian religion, I found that all of them stated that the Bible was very important when raising and disciplining their children. The three Christian families were the families of Mrs. Van der Merwe, Mr. and Mrs. Govender and Mr. and Mrs. Abdoel. Though the Govender's and the Abdoel's have prominent Indian surnames, they are Christian families, and not to be confused with the prominent Indian religions like Hinduism and the Muslim faith.

Mrs Van der Merwe also connected to this when she said that faith determines discipline and is the reason why we discipline. For her being a Christian is about having a living relationship with the Lord. God's will for her life is important to her, because she feels that she cannot do everything on her own, without the Lord.

Her living relationship with God has a great impact on her life. This is what she also wants for her child, and that is why she disciplines her. We take our children in the first place to Jesus, just like He ordered us to do, to the best of our ability. And from there we facilitate and support them on their road which the Lord is going to walk with them and will reveal to them.

I already noted earlier with Barna (2007: 131) that the Bible provides a simple and clear notion of what the family ought to do to raise godly children. It tells us that parents are intended by God to be the primary provider of spiritual direction and care (see Deut.1:31; 6:4-9; 11:18-21; 21:18-19; Ps. 78:5-8; Luke 8:39; Eph.6:4) (Barna 2003: 82).

I asked all three Christian families I interviewed to give me a Bible verse about parenting, and one of the things I would not forget, was their struggle to get one, or talk themselves out of it. I was disappointed about it, because the Bible talks a lot about parental responsibility, about how to introduce appropriate discipline into children's lives as well as parameters in the other parts of life (see Prov. 3:11-12; 13:1,24; 19:18; 23:12; 29:15-17;21; Col.3:20, Barna 2003: 82). In our Christian faith it is important that we know and realise that parents are called to introduce their children to appropriate behaviour, as modelled by the church and Bible (see Num. 18:11; Deut. 15:20; 16:11) (Barna 2003: 82).

The way that Amoateng & Richter (2003:244) describe families also relate to this. They say that families perform a number of vital social functions, like the socialisation of children and the inculcation of moral and social values; the provision of material and emotional sustenance to family members and care of dependant family members, including children, older persons and sick and disabled individuals; antisocial behaviour and the infringement of taboos; the maintenance of family morale and identity, which creates mutual obligations and responsibilities and the motivation to perform pro-social roles inside and outside the family; and the launch of young people into roles and functions in the wider society.

### 8.2.1.2. Honour and obey God

Mrs Govender said in our conversation, that she has the fear of the Lord and through discipline also wants her son to have it. I asked her about what she thought is, "the fear of the Lord", through her explanation I could see that for her this meant that she has a deep relationship and a great love for the Lord and does not want to disappoint Him. In her relationship with the Lord she wants to obey and honour Him, and in her relationship with her child, she wants to guide him to do the same.

She said, "a child would not want to disappoint his parents, because he loves them. And I guess that's my feeling towards God. I am not a perfect child, but I know that I

love him, and that is where the fear of the Lord comes from love." She also wants her son to have this kind of relationship with the Lord. I agree with them, because if I can coach and discipline my children in such a way that they will stay on the paths of the Lord, I will feel blessed.

Mrs Govender explained it further by saying that she wants her son to love God, and that's the kind of fear he must have towards God. She wants him to have respect and honour God and not to turn away from what he has been taught. This made me think of Luther's words truth and encouragement, in that the work of mothers and fathers are regarded as a most holy calling and obligation.

It has a twofold importance for me. First, in terms of family ministry in our time we must realise that parenting is a holy calling. We cannot fulfil this calling without the help and guidance of the Lord. Second, if we help parents to understand that we have an obligation towards not only our kids but also to the Lord, we can help parents to understand the utmost importance of the work that we as parents are doing.

Barna & Myers (2017:24) expressed that we must teach children the joy of obedience. They described it as following Christ's teachings not to avoid punishment but to experience the joy that comes from obedience. They made a very inspiring statement that means that obedience is simply our opportunity to say "thank you" to Jesus for all He has done for us. For them we are given the chance to say "thank you" dozens of times a day, through the choices we make- choices that either please our Lord or pull us away from Him. John 14:15 tells us how Jesus put it: "If you love me, keep my commands."

I agree with Barna & Myers (2017:24), but want to add that Christian parents, under the authority of the Lord, have the responsibility to teach their children to grow spiritually. Christian parents need to teach their children the ways – morals and values, of the Christian religion, and discipline them accordingly. It's almost like saying that the first place for us as Christians, when we think of disciplining a child to

340

start is to realise that through the way we discipline and educate our children we want them to be closer to God and not further away. It's like saying that the authority of God is the starting point of discipline. Because we as parents live and function under the authority of the Lord and through the way we live and parent, we want to lead our children to also live close to Him.

## 8.2.1.3. Honour and obey your parents

Mrs Govender and Mrs Abdoel introduced this theme in our conversations. I believe, like Barth (Bunge ed. 2001:399), that the divine commandment that children honour their mother and father is of the utmost importance. Barth further describes that it consists in a divinely appointed spiritual mission to carry and mediate a promise of grace to one's children (this is then also the first commandment with a promise). Luther (Bunge ed 2001:146) made a vital statement in this regard, saying that if God's will is observed, nothing is more important than the will and words of our parents.

## 8.2.1.4. Faith formation (Teach kids the right way)

Thomas Aquinas (Bunge ed 2001: 171) not only made the argument that parents have a "natural" human obligation toward and love for their children. He also makes a clear statement that parents have the responsibility to educate and care for their children. The Bible gives clear guidance on how to raise families. It tells us that parents are the starting point of children's education and training.

Parents are called by God to be the main provider and may get encouragement, training and resources to help them, as long as they remember that the discipline of their children starts at home. For me one of the most important things, that also came out of the conversations and can be found in scripture is that parents must start the spiritual training of children when they are young (see Isa. 7:15; Acts 26:4).

Mr. Abdoel talked about the importance of faith in the home. Their roots as a family must be in Christianity. For her teaching texts and praying are very important. Mrs. Van der Merwe – praying and Bible study are the foundation of their daily lives and their relationship with God

Mrs Abdoel and Mrs Van der Merwe both told me that one of their wishes is that their family (and especially their children) find their identity in Christ, and the Christian religion. For me this is something that we as parents need to work on with our children.

Bunge (2006:564) states that children are developing beings who need instruction and guidance. I agree with her that adults are to nurture, teach, and guide children, helping them to develop intellectually, morally, emotionally, and spiritually. Several biblical passages speak about these responsibilities, passages that tells adults and parents:

- We are to "train children in the right way" (Prov. 22:6).
- We need to bring up children "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).
- Parents and caring adults are to tell children about God's faithfulness (Isa. 38:19) and "the glorious deeds of the Lord" (Ps. 78:4b).
- They are to teach children the words of the law (Deut. 11:18–19; 31:12–13), the love of God with the whole heart (Deut. 6:5), and just and fair behaviour (Gen. 18:19; Prov. 2:9).

Luther (Bunge ed. 2001:146) makes a clear and strong argument that I also adopt, that although the growth of the faith formation of children must be left to God, the church and parents (I would say in partnership with each other) are responsible for planting and watering the faith. Luther and Calvin also wrote catechisms and religious educational materials for parents to use in the home, and they emphasised the responsibility of parents to guide and to instruct their children in the faith. Like

Luther, I also believe that although catechising and faith formation is important for everyone, that children are the most susceptible to formation.

I would like to also call on Schleiermacher and Strohl to talk further about faith formation. Schleiermacher (Bunge ed 2001:345) claims that the most important duty of a pastor in catechising, is to lead children in developing sound and sophisticated abilities in reading and interpreting scripture. Strohl (Bunge ed 2001:148) feels that catechisms initiates youth in the faith, the believing community's vision of life and distinctive discourse, it gives them a clear point of orientation in the world.


Luther (Bunge ed. 2001:146) describes that the family are the natural locus of education. This for Luther meant that parents had the responsibility for catechising their children and household dependents, joining them in prayers, teaching them their proper duties, and administering discipline. I maintain Luther's idea that this recognises that parents, in addition to their obligation to promote the spiritual health of their children, also has the responsibilities for their social welfare, especially in the area of education (Bunge ed. 2001:150). This coincides with Calvin that said that the family was the primary context for the moral, intellectual, social, spiritual and physical nurture of children (Bunge ed. 2001:171). For him, the primary obligation of parents, especially fathers but also mothers, is to teach godliness. He sees the parental obligation to fulfil God's command and diligently instruct the children in the family are of utmost importance.


Schleiermacher relates to this topic. For him the Christian home is the first and irreplaceable school of faith (Bunge ed 2001:344). Parents do not undertake the religious formation of children alone. Pastors and schools must also participate and help with it.


**8.2.1.5. Sin and Children**

Mrs Govender brought this theme to my attention when she told me, "No child is perfect". What struck me when I was doing research about the topic of sin, it came to me that the theologians of long ago (before 1900) had more to say about sin. It was something that was very important to have an opinion about. To me it feels like people today are living more out of grace in spite of their sin. People sinning has not changed but the focus on people's sin has shifted. Bunge and Barna describe sin and children.

Viewing children as sinful, Bunge (2006:566) underscores two important points in Christian theology. On the one hand, she claims that it recognises that they are, "born in a state of sin"; they live in a world that is not what it ought to be. Therefore, their parents are not perfectly loving and just; social institutions that support them, such as schools and governments, are not free from corruption; and the communities in which they live, no matter how safe, have elements of injustice and violence. On the other hand, she argues that viewing children as sinful recognise that, as they develop, they carry out "actual sins" and are moral agents who bear some degree of responsibility for their actions. I feel that her description of children aren't just true but also relevant to the life and times we live in.

Barna on the other hand started a very important discussion, in terms of children and sin. He argues that we must teach our children to love sinners more than they hate their sin. They (Barna and Myers 2017:49) have a great illustration to explain this point. I previously wrote about this story but feel the need to repeat it again.

They tell the story of how they remember seeing a cartoon that had two televangelists standing in the middle of a barren, deserted street. It was clear in the picture that the rapture had occurred, all the believers had been taken up to heaven, and these two famous preachers were the only two left on earth. Clearly everyone had been taken to heaven to meet the Lord – except them. The one then turned to the other and said, "I don't get it. We hated all the right people."

I agree with him that twenty-first century Christians are known more for who and what we are against than who and what we are for. Barna and Myers (2017:49) calls this odd. Currently, we as Christians are not known for loving people, which Jesus commanded us to do. We are known for the direct opposite - judging people, which Jesus commanded us not to do.

Barna and Myers (2017:26), get to the root of this problem when they say that this attitude is taught, first and foremost, in the home. Parents, in their zeal to keep their kids away from harm (which is important), urge them to stay away from sinners (which is not a Christ like thing to do). The kids unknowingly begin to equate the repulsion of sin with the repulsion of friends and classmates who commit those sins. This attitude is in contrast with that of our Lord when he saved the woman caught in adultery (John 8:10-11) (Barna & Myers 2017:26).

## 8.2.1.6. Children as models of faith and sources of revelation

The Govenders had two interesting instances that they shared when their young son Eli ministered to them, was a model of faith and a source of revelation. To refresh our memories of Eli's story I want to briefly describe it again.

The Govenders told me that they had a special experience with their son, Eli. They were looking for a car. His dad wasn't set on buying the one car. Mr Govender wanted something a little better. He said to his family: "What would my friends think". Eli went to his dad and stood there, and he told him, it's your car, it's your car that God would give you, don't buy it because of what other people would think. They also told me that some days when they go out, before they go anywhere he just says, let's pray for everything. Even if it's his dad's responsibility to lead the prayer, he sometimes beats his dad to it, and prays for their family.

Bunge (2006: 566) stated that the New Testament depicts children in striking and even radical ways as moral witnesses, models of faith for adults, sources or vehicles of revelation, and representatives of Jesus. Here we see that the gospel passages turn common assumptions held in Jesus's time and our own upside-down: that children are to be seen but not heard and that the primary role of children is to learn from and obey adults. These New Testament passages, in contrast, reminds us that children can teach and challenge adults, they can prophesy and praise God, they can be vehicles of revelation, models of faith, and even paradigms for entering the reign of God.

"Unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven," Jesus warns. "Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me" (Matt. 18:2–5). For Bunge (2006: 566) this way of viewing children as models for adults or vehicles of revelation does not mean that they are creatures who are "near angels," "closer to God," or "more spiritual" than adults. For her these passages and others do challenge adults however, to be receptive to the lessons and wisdom that children offer them, to honour children's questions and insights, and to recognise that children can positively influence the community and the moral and spiritual lives of adults.

This reminds me of Calvin's remarks that children are the gifts of God (Bunge ed. 2001:170), are very important in our theological thoughts. Through this we can see children in this manner and recognise not only God's role in child rearing, but the role God plays in our lives through our children. It is a blessing to see that your children have been brought up to know the Lord, and even a greater blessing to experience the Lord ministering us, through them.

**8.2.1.7. The youth of today has lost the meaning of life (Mr Abdoel)**

346

There were only two places that people said that religion doesn't have an influence on the way they discipline their children. One of them was Mr. Abdoel. At first for me it was a shock to hear him say it, but after my discussion with him, I realised that he had a strong point. Although I can see that he is raising his sons in the Christian faith together with his wife, I can see that he has a great concern for the children that surround him in his life, he feels that they have lost the meaning of life. After my conversation with Mr Abdoel I decided to research this topic further.

It was very interesting that when I introduced my theme, and asked Mr and Mrs Abdoel if they think that religion can have an influence on how we discipline our children, Mr. Abdoel said no. He told me that in the present it is difficult enough to raise the children and discipline them, that he thinks that religion can't have a big influence. His wife reacted quickly with the opposite way of thinking. For her there was a great deal of morals, stories and understanding from the Bible that we can take to teach the kids. For her it was very important that children must know who they are.

Mr. Abdoel said that children must know the meaning of life. And a lot of children lost the meaning of life. Mr. and Mrs. Abdoel, unanimously declared, that the meaning of life is love and family. Mrs Abdoel also stated that the buzz of life is taking us away from the purpose of life.

Throughout the conversation Mr Abdoels felt like he was saying no but described a yes. He said that the Bible doesn't cater for children of today -They get lost so early and for him the world has gone bad. I believe that the Bible is very important to this family and that Mr Abdoels said that he doesn't think that religion plays a role in the way that people discipline their children, because there was a lot of youth in their area that have totally lost their way. And for these youngsters who have lost the Christian way and lost the meaning of life, religion doesn't play a role.

347

Mr Abdoel mentioned an interesting thing. When he said that religion doesn't play a role in the way people discipline their children he referred to the Bible. He said that the Bible doesn't cater for children of today. Because the children became lost so early.

This reminded me of Van der Walt's (2004: 92-93) words, that increasing secularism in the western world was also regarded as a further contributing factor to the "discipline problem" in South Africa. According to Van der Walt (2004: 92-93) the phenomenon occurs in two main forms: denial (the church has no more involvement in the everyday behaviour of people) and the return of religion to the private atmosphere of human life (religious norms thus no longer affect public opinion life and behaviour of people - not even in school). (Van der Walt, 2007:291)

Mr Govender has the exact opposite way of thinking about the past and the present. He's a police man, and I think that this may also have an influence on how he looks at things. For him the children today are not as disciplined as in the past. But he describes that today it is just about hitting, screaming and using vulgar language. This has definitely had something to do with his work, because in his family, he and his wife wouldn't tolerate hitting, screaming and vulgar language.

He also agreed in the interview that this kind of discipline doesn't really work. He sees discipline as correcting a child when she/he does something wrong you need to tell them that it is wrong, and don't repeat it. Then the second step for him is, "you don't hit the child, but you need to be harsher with the child".

For him the world has gone bad, and therefore we need to be hard. He still tries to teach the values he grew up with, and tries to install everything with Christian values. With Mr. Abdoel, as with Mr. Govender, I think that his perspective is influenced by the way he thinks about the community around him.

When I talked to Mr. Govender, he told me about the troubled youth in the community. I think this shaped his thoughts on my question, if religion influences the way children are disciplined. It also caused me to realise that Mr. Abdoel and Mr Govender do not only think about their own family and their own children when I address this issue. The women instantaneously thought about their own children and their own families. But with these two men, they also felt a responsibility for what was going on in the community with children.

I already noted that in Barna and Myers book, "*Fearless parenting*" (Barna & Myers 2017:4) they say that families have never been as lost, confused, and doubtful about the future as they are today. Just to refresh our minds, the majority of Americans believe that today's children will not experience as good a life as did their parents and grandparents. Therefore, parents feel as if they have the short end of the stick. Barna & Myers (2017:4) says that in counselling sessions, not a single day goes by that they don't have a heartfelt discussion with parents about how unprepared they feel to deal with their children's issues.

In most of the cases, the issues they're facing didn't even exist just a few years ago. It seems like everything we believe and do is up for grabs in this rapidly changing society, without stable and widely embraced moral foundations. It is as if nothing is certain anymore. The massive amount of uncertainty has caused well-meaning, highly educated Christian parents to start question their own motives, actions, and purpose (Barna & Myers 2017:5).

For Barna and Myers this is why parents today have a daunting challenge: rewire our cultural brains, starting with the minds of our children, to reclaim the Christian principles that made this a great nation. In fostering that cultural about-face, the role of parenting is perhaps more central than anything else (Barna & Myers 2017:6). This relates to Luther that said that the work of mothers and fathers are regarded as a most holy calling and obligation.

349

Calvin remarks that children are gifts of God (Bunge ed. 2001:170). On the other hand, Barna and Myers tells parents, that our children are our legacy- our gift to God and the world (Barna & Myers 2017:8). Through the Lord's guidance and empowerment, families have the capacity and potential to significantly influence the world.

Parents have been assaulted with an unrelenting barrage of insulting images and depictions of parents, year after year. For Barna and Myers that assault has been buttressed by a parallel stream of attacks on the traditional family launched by the liberal media, progressive politicians, and university faculties. (Barna & Myers 2017:9)

For them the rise of postmodernism is a self-centred emotion – and experience driven world view that minimises the role of God and denies the existence of moral absolutes. They describe that this gave a philosophical ballast to a hypersensitive, politically correct culture that cautioned parents against disciplining children or exposing them to traditional ways of thinking. With this, adding to the chaos, the advertising industry aggressively used children as sexual objects to sell products and ideology, seemingly focused on destroying the remaining morsels of youthful innocence that has not been shredded in the previous decade (Barna & Myers 2017:10). For them the culture wars of the late twentieth century expanded to include an all-out battle for the souls of America's children.

In South Africa the picture doesn't look much different. Van der Walt (2007:290) describes that the debate on the "discipline problem" in schools in South Africa as well as elsewhere in the world creates the impression that educators are increasingly losing their grip on order and discipline and that important measures must be taken to address the problem. For him the conditions (sometimes referred to as "anomies" and "anarchists") may be attributed to the impact that prevailing social conditions have on the school as an institution.

The extent of the problem in South Africa is further apparent from the fact that in 2007 almost 600 000 people between the ages of 18 and 21 were serving sentences for serious offences (Dimbaza 2007: 2). For Van der Walt (2007:290), this is largely attributed due to inadequate school education.

Apart from the daily appearance of violence in the world of children the awareness of violence is being carried where children themselves are victims - this is further based on factors to better understand discipline problems at school. Violence against children, including violence in the family as well as sexual violence are extremely high in South Africa (Van Louw & Waghid 2008:469).

They argue that the possibilities for the country look virtually endless while there is a vision of a young democracy, where respect for and support for human rights of every citizen will rule. However, they warn that the levels of violence are extremely high and that the media report about a furious, frustrated and impoverished society with large numbers unemployed people. These circumstances give rise to a host of social problems.

According to Middleton and Walsh (1995: 39), the young man lives today in a Disneyland culture, a "Cool Whip" society, in which everything is temporary, transient, and disposable. Contemporary young people consider themselves self-determinative or autonomous (Gr. Autos = self; nomos = law - a law in and of itself). The environment in which this person must make decisions is like a carnival, in which the entertainment comes and goes.

The environment is experienced as extremely pluralistic, among other things because it is self- and socially constructed. Because people feel confronted by a smorgasbord of religions and life visions, they are obliged to each have their own value system to construct. These values are (other than principles, which were characteristic of the modern time) also of a transient nature, disposable - like a plastic bag that has its purpose served.

Contemporary people do not see themselves as persons with a certain permanent destination, but as creatures whose ego is socially constructed by others, the environment and the circumstances. Middleton and Walsh (1995: 39)

Furedi (2004: 19) describes the contemporary young man as, "living in an era of political exhaustion and social disengagement ". The contemporary young man constantly makes personal preferences and constantly adheres to an opt-out clause. The present day child and young man are also typical of digital or cultural products.

The exposure of learners to a society and the media in which there are regular examples of violence, racism and other anti-social behaviour, definitely has a negative impact on learner behaviour and are identified by McHenry (2000: 35) and earlier Welsh research (Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office 1989: 16) as causes of learner misconduct. (Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:363)

The democratisation process in South Africa, which took place in 1994, has had a huge impact on social, economic and political areas. This impact inevitably extended to the education system with consequent far-reaching changes. The previous education dispensation, was characterised by rigid rules, strict discipline and a patriarchal relationship between teacher and learner. It made way for a new approach, namely Outcomes-Based Education.

The associated establishment of a culture of rights in the new democratic order, placed schools in the barrage of constitutional reform. In the new dispensation, corporal punishment - a former acceptable practice to discipline learners – abolished. Learners became increasingly made aware of this emphasis on rights. This resulted in, among other things, the authority of teachers and principals that were undermined. The effective maintenance of discipline is currently one of the biggest bottlenecks in education (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:304). The moral decline of society, enhanced by media is next to the home, the main cause of discipline problems. (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:311)

All participants agreed with this, that there's a lack of a value-driven society. In addition, the decline in the sphere of influence of the church in society is also indicated as worrying. There is a feeling that the church itself is no longer so sure about fundamental truths and, consequently, parents no longer get answers to questions about the parenting of their children. A lot of literature confirms the tendency of a loser society in which values are relativised. Rossouw (2003: 415) refers to the modern man's search for personal freedom and autonomy as well as the unwillingness of people to settle for any form of authority or authority aimed at ensuring orderly coexistence.

De Klerk and Rens (2003: 354) say that inadequate discipline is the response to the lack of a value system that must be anchored in a particular value-driven world and view of life. According to them (De Klerk and Rens 2003: 312) self-discipline is the most important component of constructive values and norms. The reasons that they respond to the inability of the broad community to successfully address discipline problems, include the overlap of individual rights, the neglect of personal responsibility, the absence of a public value system, the inability of society to teach children to think and decide for themselves as well as the absence of self-disciplined role models in society (De Klerk & Rens 2004: 354). All these factors lead inevitably to the culling of a culture of teaching and learning at schools and necessarily a snowball effect on the behaviour of children. (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:311)

The introduction of a human rights culture had obviously contributed to the feeling that the learners are undisciplined. In a country where the inhabitants were not previously really aware of the necessity of such a culture, as Chapter 2 of the Constitution from 1996 (RSA, 1996 (b), especially articles 1, 7 and 39) waved like a fresh breeze. Human rights, on the one hand, made it clear to all what rights they could claim and on the other hand it also made clear what the limitations were of these rights to the individual as well as for the group to which he or she belongs. However, the advent of the Bill of Rights probably also worked towards the spirit of disorder and anarchy in the schools. Learners abused the Charter on occasions and

with certain rights leaving some teachers paralysed in their work and their relationship with learners.

When talking about the direction of America and South Africa heading that way, I agree with Barna and Myers (2017:11) that say in terms of the pace of cultural change and the significance of the transformation now in progress, the impact of parenting may be greater than ever.

A shift is only likely if today's parents accept the job of raising their children as their greatest gift to the world and perhaps their most significant service to God. I agree with them, that what you do today, next month, a year from now, and even five years from now will imprint critical ideas, values, beliefs, and behaviour on your children that will dramatically influence who they become and how they live for the rest of their lives. It's clear that teachers, relatives, pastors, community leaders, and other people who know and regularly interact with your children have an impact on them.

But parents must realise that nobody has greater potential to transform the lives of children than their parents (Barna & Myers 2017:11). It is important for Barna and Myers that the three key institutions – family, church and government – co-exist. (Barna & Myers 2017:17). For them parenting is not simply about serving as a guardrail against your child's potential derailment on the highway of life. It's also not to simply watch the development process, transpire without parental involvement - this is not God's plan for our children. Parenting is also not a spectator sport; it is a full-contact immersive commitment to honour the God who breathed the life and purpose into your child.

Parenting matters, because it may be the single most important task you take on in your entire life. They describe that children is indeed, a gift from God (see Ps. 127:3), but that we also have the chance to mould their lives. Parent's gift back to

the Lord can be the manner in which they mould their children's lives (Barna & Myers 2017:18).

Barna & Myers (2017:20) say that for many Christian parents today, it seems like the Lord is not their refuge and strength. These parents don't possess that peace that surpasses all human understanding. They continue to live by sight rather than by faith and are therefore consumed by fear. Therefore, they suggest that we would do well to focus on preparing children to take on this increasingly secular society and win the cultural war (Barna & Myers 2017:21). This will ask of us to no longer protect and separate them from culture but prepare and train them to engage and ultimately transform culture.

### 8.2.2. A reflection on discipline from the affiliates of the Christian religion: The Van der Merwe's, Govender's and Abdoel's.

### 8.2.2.1. The Role of love and respect in discipline

Mrs Govender and Mrs. Abdoel (both Christians), brought this theme to my attention in my conversations with them. This made me think about Browning's (Browning Eds 1997: 71), life ethic of equal regard in close relation to the concept of kin altruism - the preferential treatment people tend to give to their biological related family members. Browning (Browning eds 1997: 153) further describes that this Christian love (*agape*), as applied to families, should point in the direction of love as mutuality or equal regard to be achieved inter-subjectively.

Barth (Bunge ed. 2001:399) described parental love by the way it communicates to children that their lives are under the guardianship and guidance of the One who really undertakes for them. I believe that this is the love that the parents I interviewed have for their children. It is a love that Barth (Bunge ed. 2001:399) described as

355

"unconditional" love, as it points to God's love, which penetrates all roles, expectations, and worldly valuation in pursuit of the genuine good of the person in his or her irreplaceable identity. This is also the kind of love that was described by Schleiermacher (Bunge ed 2001:343), where he saw the need that parents love, should be self-sacrificing and should seek to nurture the unique individuality of children, which is God's gift.

In terms of respect, Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes (2007:311), writing about education, says that it seems that a lack of respect - a value that can be regarded as the most important missing link in all cases involving misconduct – are highlighted as the main reason for the deterioration of previously well-disciplined individuals, schools and communities.

On the theme of respect, De Klerk and Rens (2003: 359) wrote about a moral crisis in schools that results from a lack of mutual respect. They argue that values are inextricably linked to a religious subject. Consequently, the value system can be strengthened through regular religious practice in order to also strengthen the religious subject in a school.

### 8.2.2.2. Discipline techniques and corporal punishment

### 8.2.2.2.1. Biblical boundaries

Mrs Van der Merwe said that the Bible is very important to her. For her, what is right and wrong has to do with what the Bible teaches us. She called it the boundaries where we must live within.

### 8.2.2.2.2. Corporal punishment

Mrs Van der Merwe is against corporal punishment. The reason she gives is that for her how you handle people and situations says a lot about you.

The topic of corporal punishment is very relevant in our country and the time we live in. In chapter 5, on the voices of education, I have already mentioned that the discipline technique, spanking, which is a subset of physical punishment, has been the subject of much controversy (e.g., Baumrind et al. 2002; Gershoff 2002; Larzelere et al. 1997). For supporters of the cognitive-developmental approach it is considered as ineffective (e.g., Gershoff 2002), while researchers with the behaviour- modification approach believe it is not more effective than less punitive negative sanctions, but that it has the potential to disrupt the parent–child relationship (e.g.,McMahon and Forehand 200 3; Roberts and Powers 1990).

Together with the debate over corporal punishment, a choir of protest has been summoned from various places about the lack of discipline in schools. As I have mentioned teachers struggle to perform properly and do their work because of the pressure and trauma caused by the lack of discipline, constantly on sick leave and even being forced to resign from education. Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes's (2007:304) overview of existing literature on behavioural problems and the effective maintenance of discipline - nationally as well as internationally - clearly shows that it is an extremely sensitive and complicated problem to be approached with great caution.

The Department of Education (2000: 5-7), said that locally it seems to be the abolition of corporal punishment in 1996 as the beginning of the downward spiral with an increase of large-scale behavioural problems with learners (Department of Education 2000: 5-7 as quoted in Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes's 2007:304).

For some the abolition of corporal punishment is regarded as a giant step forward in the so-called battle for children's rights, viewed from a human rights point of view. The emphasis on individual freedom, the exercise of rights and greater freedom of speech - including children - are according to Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes (2007:304), all factors which, in addition to the abolition of corporal punishment, contributes to the authority relationship between teachers and learners. The teachers and learners have changed so that new methods of discipline needed to be applied.

I agree with, Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes (2007:304), that states that the problem is not simple. To argue that a return to corporal punishment and other strict penalties will provide a quick fix for the current issues around learner misconduct would be short-sighted. Research findings over the last few years widely documented, both locally and internationally, indicates with worrying regularity on the disadvantages of reactive forms of discipline including corporal punishment, (aggressive) verbal correction, suspension and exclusion (Lytton 1997; Sprague, Walker, Golly, White, Myers & Shannon 2001; Gershoff 2002; Mc Curdy, Mannella & Eldridge 2003; Maree & Cherian 2004; Irvin, Tobin, Sprague, Sugai & Vincent 2004; Robinson, Funk, Beth & Bush 2005 as quoted in Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes's 2007:304). Shaw and Braden (1990, as quoted in Robinson et al. 2005: 118) concludes that the application of corporal punishment fails to suppress negative behaviour or strengthen pro-social behaviour.

Here it is also important to note that Gershoff (2002: 545) points out that, although the application of corporal punishment usually results in immediate obedience, in the long run leads to increasing aggression and lower levels of moral internalisation and mental health. Hunt (Maree & Cherian 2004: 76) also found that corporal punishment in the early years of a child's life has a significantly positive correlate with violent behaviour later in an individual's life (as noted these findings were confirmed in a study by Lytton (1997: 211-214)).

Therefore, they claim that discipline in childhood is related to physical punishment and verbal aggression, positively correlates with juvenile delinquency, aggression,

358

academic failure and other forms of pathology. Maree and Cherian (2004: 76) believe that corporal punishment is still widely applied in South Africa and has changed little since its abolition 1996. According to Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes (2007:304), it seems particularly popular in rural areas at black schools - according to them the most vulnerable part of society that is being abused in such a way.

### 8.2.2.2.3. Theologians on corporal punishment

Here I want to discuss Schleiermacher's and Calvin's thoughts on corporal punishment. Schleiermacher (Bunge ed. 2001:343), specifically denounces the use of corporal punishment for children. For him discipline is not about punishment but about promoting an ordered life.

Calvin (Bunge ed. 2001:174), as noted in chapter 2, emphasises the need for parents to be patient and exercise forbearance in dealing with rebellious offspring. Although he admits that parents must in some cases apply harsh discipline ("put the bit" in their children's mouths), he also clearly emphasises that this must be done with love and gentleness, not with wickedness and cruelty. For him the essence of good parenting is in the instruction of piety. Calvin also had a widespread concern for order, especially social order, that characterised the sixteenth century.

### 8.2.2.2.4. Other Discipline techniques

Oosthuizen (2006: 19) introduced us to the concept of positive discipline, addresses a preventive approach in which it is attempted to form the learner's self-esteem to combat misconduct. This approach is in the current international time, probably one of the most appropriate approaches for handling of discipline, in fact, it amounts to an approach that says to the offender: "I'm with you, though you're wrong." This was also the approach that was taught widely in schools when I, myself was an educator in a primary school.

Oosthuizen, Wolhuter and Du Toit (2003) provide an overview of some of the other methods to maintain discipline in schools. They divide these methods into two categories: preventive and reactive methods. The former includes safety measures at schools, aesthetic considerations, organisational arrangements and positive discipline. Reactive methods include a code of conduct, references to the school governing board, suspension, expulsion, detention and criminalisation.

The way that they approached methods to discipline are also important to look at in families. I believe that we must have preventive and reactive methods in disciplining our children. A lot of times this is not something that parents consciously think about, but something they naturally do. When we address certain topics in my ministry with parents, we introduce them to preventive and reactive methods for tackling the issues facing the youth of today.

Mrs Abdoel said that the way she disciplines her child is that she talks to him and explains why something is wrong. Mr Abdoel – discipline in the garage while playing soccer – a description of the child. A key element of inductive discipline is that it focuses on cognitions concerning right and wrong, and especially on child learning and the effects of their misbehaviour on others.

Parents who use inductive discipline coach children by introducing claims and consequences and then supplying rationales that support them. This is done by limit setting, setting up logical consequences, explaining, and eliciting ideas from the child rather than by focusing on coercive means to regulate behaviour (Straus & Fauchier, A. 2007:5).

### 8.2.2.2.4.1. Taking time to take pictures, play garage soccer

When I asked Mr and Mrs Abdoel's boy to draw me a picture of what happens when he was naughty, he drew me a picture of him and his dad going into the garage. It
360

was interesting that they were both smiling in the picture. His father then told me that he and the boy usually go to the garage when he was naughty to have a talk to sort things out, afterwards they will then play soccer in the garage.

This seemed a wonderful example of how a father disciplines his son, in a way that he learns from his mistakes. After I had the interview with the family, the boy asked the father if they could go play soccer. For the garage was not the only the place for discipline, but also where the father was teaching his son the ways of how to be a man of God.

I believe that it's our calling as parents to help our children find their identity in Christ. In my interviews the parents I talked to, Mrs Govender read something she wanted to share with me and ever since it has made a big impact on me. She talked about photos. Mums always want to look beautiful, in pictures. And it is true, we always want to make sure we are perfect. But a child doesn't care about how you look. Later in life when they look back, they just want to make sure that you were there, and in the picture with them. So that they have things to look at, when you were there with them.

This made me think different about the world. I always teased the kids and said I am the "*Mammarazzi*" not the Paparazzi. I was taking the pictures and wasn't in them. But hearing Mrs. Govender talking about taking pictures, my children and I became experts in selfies and taking pictures of each other. Even my husband learned about selfies. Because I realised something important. In disciplining children and teaching them right from wrong, teaching them about the ways of life – they must also know we were there with them. Sometimes learning things again with them.

Life is dynamic. A lot of the things we teach our children, a lot of the values and morals we instil in them are about the way we think, act and react to things and in this, my religion definitely plays a huge role.

361

**8.3. Themes that came out of the narrative of the affiliatives of the Hindu religion's: the Gurru and the Pundit.**

**8.3.1. A reflection on the beliefs of the affiliates of the Hindu religion: the Gurru and the Pundit.**

**8.3.1.1. Hinduism is a practical, visible faith and a way of life.**

The Pundit described Hinduism as a way of life and the Guru said that for him Hinduism is a practical faith. Peggy Froerer (2007:1046) noted that being a good Hindu depends on what people do. She agrees with the Guru and Pundit. They described the Hindu religion further by saying that it has values, requires eating healthy, it has set boundaries that form identity. That is why Hindu children must be taught to do certain things. Manjrekar (2001:353) describes the Hindu thought on children, that they hold the key for tomorrow. For him, to relate the child with its land and its ancestors is direct, clear and an unambiguous mandate of education for them.

For Chakkarath (2005:14) the Hindu way of thinking about childhood is primarily a stage of physical, not mental, development. This differ from the more recent western theories about child development. The child can be seen as the result of karma-directed processes and therefore having deficits. These deficits are characteristic of the human condition and cannot be overcome before the child is capable of understanding the concept of duty and how it is related to the important goals in life. It seems that the child is not considered a person before he/she is able to study and understand what the scriptures convey.

**8.3.1.2. Code of conduct**

Each Hindu must follow certain rules and norms and fulfil his or her life duties. The well-defined code of conduct involves doing that which is right for the individual, the family, the caste (*jati)* the society and the universe.

The rules of conduct have been laid down in various *dharma shastras*, compilations of laws that cover the realms of religious and social life in order to give Hindus orientation throughout their life course. Hindus themselves call it *sanatana dharma*. This approximately translates to "eternal rules" and does not mean a religion in the western sense of the word, but rather a code of conduct (Chakkarath 2005:35-36).

### 8.3.1.3. Discipline starts at home. (family is very important)

Children must be taught at home how to portray themselves. The foundation is laid and taught at home. Especially in their house, it is important to show that they are Hindus. Most Hindus have household shrines. Devega & Gaurkee (2012:77) describes the household shrine as typically devoted to one central deity and contains a picture or statue of that deity. The Hindu religion has a lot of discipline in their following of the code of conduct. This can be seen in their dress code, the symbols and rituals at their homes and even what they eat. This gives them an easy identifiable identity. The Guru said that this is done so that the children can learn of the ways of life.

### 8.3.1.4. Predicting as disciplining and as the intervention of God.

The Guru relied a lot on astrology. It felt like he was suggesting it as a discipline technique. He called the use of astrology as: "Predicting as the intervention of God".

He would use astrology as part of predicting someone's personality and also their behaviour. Through astrology he tells parents whether a child will be naughty, flirty, a respectful child or a young widow. Knowing this, he explained, that parents can then focus and monitor certain things that came out in the astrology. He uses astrology

363

together with parents so that there's no negative impact on a child's life. For him everything is related from birth to death.

For the Guru and the Pundit the family was very important. What was interesting to me in what they said and showed me was that the families and communities were showing their faith in a lot of visible ways, in the community we stayed in Durban.

There was a lot of houses with flags in front of their homes. When I visited the Pundit at his home he explained to me that the flags reminded people of the festivals that they celebrated. They had pictures of the stories that they were celebrating. This would remind everyone passing by and especially those coming to visit and staying there about the festivals and rituals they celebrate.

Every Hindu house also has a shrine, or a statue of a Hindu god that the people in the house worshipped. The one in the Pundits house was of an Indian lady god. She was dressed up very nicely and there were flowers around her and offerings that the people in the house brought her.

The other thing that caught my eye was when I was with the Guru at the temple. When we were there, there were two families that came during the time we had the interview.

The one family came to tell the Guru that there was a baby in their family that was born. The Guru needed to take the details of the time, date and the sex of the baby so that he can go and look at the astrology to which letters, and names the parents can use to name the child so that the child would have a good life and not encounter misfortune.

The other family was two parents and their two sons together with the grandparents. They came to make offerings on that day because it was the boy's eighteenth birthday. It was wonderful to see the two families who sought the Guru for prayer and

guidance on that day and also to see these two families celebrate these big celebrations at the temple.

The Hindu faith is not only a practical faith it's a visible faith that leads the children into the discipline of taking part of rituals and festivals, not because they are forced to do it, but because it's part of what a family does.

The Hindu faith also has a reference to their family that has passed away. For them their family that has passed away could have been reincarnated into something else and then come back to earth. That is why they have a lot of respect and care for all living things. The expression of faith for the Hindu family definitely starts at home. The house's décor speaks of it, the way the women and men dress speak of it.

## 8.3.2. A reflection on discipline from the affiliates of the Hindu religion: the Gurru and the Pundit.

### 8.3.2.1. Discipline past and present

According to the Pundit they were brought up very stern. For him it is different today because of children's rights and the fact that children demand to know why they are disciplined. The emphasis on individual freedom, the exercise of rights and greater freedom of speech - including children – after 1994, are all factors which, in addition to the abolition of corporal punishment, contributes to the authority relationship between teachers and learners, who have had to change in order for new methods of discipline be applied. (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:304).

The emphasis on child rights, with the consequent abolition of corporal punishment and the limitation of schools' ability to act in a disciplinary way, together with the maintenance of discipline in schools is an extremely thorny problem. It is a sensitive and complicated problem to be approached with great caution according to Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes (2007:304).

The spell of human rights, on the one hand, made clear to all of them what rights they could claim and on the other hand it also made clear what the limitations was of these rights for the individual as well as for the group to which he or she belongs (cf. De Vries 2006b: 2; Petzer 2006: 7). However, the advent of the Bill of Rights probably also worked towards a spirit of disorder and anarchy in the schools.

Nevertheless, it is possible that in South Africa, the arrival of the human rights administration in 1994 made a special contribution to the decay of learner discipline - in the conventional sense. The modern-day learner in the school, is a more mature consumer in the carnival postmodern environment than children in previous times.

## 8.3.2.2. Discipline techniques and parenting styles

### 8.3.2.2.1. Discipline techniques

The Guru and Pundit described the disciplining techniques that they follow and recommend as follow: According to the Guru you need to be calm with children. They learn when they know they have a commitment to do something. You must never embarrass a child, rather uplift them. This is similar to one of the DDI test's (Straus & Fouchier 2007:12-16) main discipline behaviour. They describe the behaviour of reward as praising a child for stopping bad behaviour or for behaving well, and to give the child money or other things for stopping bad behaviour or behaving well. Children must also be taught to respect knowledge.

The Pundit feels that you must groom children just like you would a plant. You must therefore apply common sense and logical thinking. Children should always be respected. Mardemootoo (2009:2) advises that discipline should be taught from a young age, and is about restricting the children from certain things.

The Guru feels that all children must experiment. We all have a choice to say yes or no. We need to tell the children the negative things, and what the consequences would be. He feels that one should rather talk to a child and reprimand him/her immediately and let them go and make right. Children have to be told how wonderful and nice they are.

### 8.3.2.2.2. No Corporal punishment, rather upliftment

Hindu doesn't believe in corporal punishment. Mardemootoo (2009:2) agrees that Hindu children are always treated with great respect and awe, for one does not always know who they are. They may be incarnations of a grandmother, grandfather, aunt or uncle, dearly beloved mother, sister, brother, respected father a yogi, or rishi returned to help humankind spiritually.

### 8.3.2.2.3. Deprivation of privileges

According to the Pundit this is one of the ways that he prefers and also advises parents to discipline their children.

This entails taking away a child's allowance, toys, or other privileges because of misbehaviour, sending a child to bed without dinner, withholding the child's allowance, toys, or other privileges until they did what you wanted them to do, "grounding" the child or restricting their activities outside the home because of misbehaviour.

### 8.3.2.2.4. Diversion

The Pundit also talked about time out as a discipline technique.

367

Things like "time out", sending the child to their room for a period of time, giving the child something else they might like to do instead of what they were doing wrong, are described here.

### 8.3.2.2.5. Explain/Teach

According to the Guru this is one of his ways to discipline.

This is about explaining to the child what the rules are to try to prevent the child repeating misbehaviour, showing or demonstrating the right thing to do to the child.

### 8.3.2.2.6. Ignore misbehaviour.

Not one of the affiliates of the Hindu religion mentioned this parenting technique.

When parents deliberately do not pay attention to the bad behaviour of the child, letting the child misbehave rather than have to deal with the results, they are ignoring the misbehaviour.

### 8.3.2.2.7. Penalty tasks and restorative behaviour

The Guru mentioned this.

This entails giving the child extra chores as a consequence, making the child do something to make up for some misbehaviour; for example, pay for a broken window, make the child apologise or say they were sorry for misbehaving.

### 8.3.2.2.8. Psychological aggression

Not one of the affiliates of the Hindu religion mentioned this parenting technique.

Parent shouting or yelling at the child, trying to make the child feel shamed or guilty, holding back affection by acting cold or not giving hugs or kisses, when the child behaved badly, telling the child that they are lazy, sloppy, thoughtless, or some other name like that, is using psychological aggression as a discipline technique.

### 8.3.2.2.9. Reward

Especially the Guru but also the Pundit referred to rewarding children for good behaviour.

This is about praising the child, giving the child money or other things for finally stopping bad behaviour or for behaving well.

### 8.3.2.2.10. Monitoring.

The Guru mentioned that parents and the community should monitor children for previous bad behaviour. To help them not to go back to their old ways.

Monitoring focuses on keeping track of the child's activities outside the home, like telling the child that you were watching or checking to see if they did something, checking on the child's behaviour to catch them doing something wrong.
369

**8.4. Themes that came out of the narrative of the Malek's**


**8.4.1. A reflection on the beliefs of the affiliates of the Islam religion: the Malek's.**


**8.4.1.1. Islam is a way of life**


Mrs. Malek and the Imam I interviewed both agreed that the Islam religion is a way of life, which is ingrained in a child. It is a very prescriptive religion of what is expected of a person and how people need to live.


Gatrad and Sheikh (2000:1) say that life's very purpose then is to realise the divine, a purpose that is achievable only through a conscious commitment to the teachings of Sacred Law. They describe the Sacred Law for Muslims as an all-embracing entity, dealing with all aspects of human existence. For Hodge (2017:1), Islam is not so much a belief system as a way of life that unifies metaphysical and materialistic dimensions. The word Islam means submission, specifically submission to Allah, the supreme and only God. Individuals who practice this submission are called Muslims.


All the foods they eat must be halaal. Everyone needs to emulate the prophet Mohammed.


**8.4.1.2. Emulating the prophet Mohammed**


The Imam has put it a different way, he said that in everything we do we follow the Quran. He explained it through the words of the prophet Mohammed. Before he left the world he said: I have indeed left behind two things: 1st the book of Allah, the Quran and the 2nd thing the way of the prophet. In other words, the ways and the actions of the prophet, what he used to do, how he stayed with his family. If you

follow these things. Then you will never go astray. Whatever they do in life - they follow the prophet Mohammed and they follow the Quran. But not only the one prophet, they follow all the prophets, from Adam to Mohammed, even Jesus.

Abdullah (2017:79) wrote about emulating the past ones. From this point of view the prevailing necessity to emulate is that of the past righteous ones, they are the prophets, the Imam from the Ahlulbait, the righteous ones among the companions and the followers and the righteous ones among the religious scholars. They are top in virtue, honour and magnanimous in status. Among the factors that assist in likening and emulating them is their spiritual effect on different categories of people that glorified and sanctified them.

A child can be a great human being based on whom he is following and imitating.

The identity of Muslims lies in the choices they make.

Prayer is very important.

Followers of the Islam religion has to pray at least five times a day at set times.

Life is organised around prayers: not the other way around. From the age of ten it is compulsory to pray, because we need to be accountable for ourselves. There is boundaries in life, about the relationships you have, the way you dress and the people you mix with. Boundaries gives us identity.

Islam is not a restrictive religion. There is purpose and reason for every instruction. Everything you do revolves around Islam. In everything you do: you must take the name of Allah for guidance.

371

The Imam said that a person can only have life if you are connected to your God. The only time you will get peace is if you are connected to your Creator. That is why in the Quran there is a verse where Allah says you that should know everything with the remembrance of Allah, this is the only time that the heart will get tranquillity and the heart will get peace. It can only happen when you have connected yourself to Allah. Without that, life for him is nothing.

What was also interesting for me was the use of Allah's name constantly. The Imam explained it by saying: "In anything you do you mention the name of Allah. If you do this you are saying that you are under the protection of Allah. Allah is looking at you."

### 8.4.1.3. The Quran

The Quran is the holy scripture of the Islam people. It is also called the Hadiv, and describes the actions and the words of the prophet Mohammed.

The Quran is the book that reveals the life of Islam and can be understood to be the Word of God revealed to the prophet Muhammad, the "Messenger of God," the honoured founder of Islam. The Quran is believed to be God's revelation to humankind. Although the Quran states that Allah communicated with prophets recognised by Jews and Christians, both considered "People of the Book," the Quran is God's final, immutable revelation, and consequently, the primary source of shari'a (Hodge 2017:2).

According to Hodge (2017:5) for the Muslim, God is at the centre of existence (Altareb, 1996). God is understood to be omnipotent and personal. Thus, nothing happens to the Muslim apart from God's will (Husain, 1998).

### 8.4.1.4. An Islamic view of parents and children

Parents should always be the example. He emphasised that the Quran does explain, indeed you have a very good example from the prophet of Allah Mohammed.

### 8.4.1.4.1 The Parent–child relationship

For Gatrad & Sheikh (2000:3) the parent-child relationship is considered the most important of all human relationships, this forming a reference point for all other human encounters. Both children and parents have mutual rights and responsibilities.

Love and respect are the guiding principles underpinning this most special of relationships. Any form of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse of children is thus considered abhorrent within Islamic Law. Islamic teachings, however, does recognise that children may at times need to be disciplined, both in their own interests and also in the interests of the wider society, and this may on occasion involve physical punishment.

There are three groups of people that do not count under this law: the sleeper until he awakens, the (male) child until his first wet dream, and the insane person until he can reason.

In terms of the accountability for parents and carers in Islam Ayatullah (2008:13), says that the Islam religion urges adults to encourage children to play and at times get involved in their play. He also goes on to say that in the eyes of Islam, one of the most important factors contributing to the success of children in various areas, as well as their march towards goodness and prosperity, lies with constant respect, compassion and mercy towards them. Ayatullah (2008:15)

Islam (2015:16) says that the noble duty of parents is guiding the future generation. Islam commands that, duties of parents or guardians are not limited to physical well-being of the child only; they must be vigilant to educational, moral and spiritual development that makes his soul with a clad of piety and the fear of Allah.

Allah says, "O you who believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels harsh and severe…" (Quran 66:6)

Islam is the sole religion which makes moral values, pious feelings and good thinking in any one's heart. A child should be given a decent, adequate, suitable, reasonable and satisfactory religious, moral and ethical supervision to sustain its whole life. They should possess a real concept of right and wrong, real and false, correct and incorrect, appropriate and inappropriate and so forth.

The prophet said, "Honor your children and educate them well." In this regard Al-Nawawi said: The father must discipline his child and teach him what he needs to know of religious duties. According to Al-Shaafa'i, if there is no father, this teaching and guidance is also obligatory upon the mother, because it is part of the child's upbringing and the costs for teaching may be reserved from the child's own wealth. (Al-Nawawi)

It has been narrated that the prophet said: "… A man is a guardian over the members of his family and shall be questioned about them (as to how he looked after their physical and moral well-being). A woman is a guardian over the household of her husband and his children and shall be questioned about them (as to how she managed the household and brought up the children).." (Muslim 4576) This is authentic indications of Islam that, virtuous deeds of a righteous son will continue in the hereafter for his parents.

The Messenger of Allah said, "When a man dies, his deeds come to an end, except for three: A continuous charity, knowledge by which people derive benefit, righteous

son who prays for him." (Muslim 4076) Al-Qurtubi said, parents (He) should teach child what is halaal (lawful) and what haram (unlawful) is and make him avoid sin, and teach him other rulings. (Islam, MS 2015:20)

For the Imam it is very important that the Islamic home has books. Parents are advised to have some child appropriate Islam books. Whatever the children are taught at the madrassa must also be taken home. He advises that parents take 15 minutes every day, reading to their children, to give them some Islamic stories and to teach them about their religion. If the house is Islamic it is very difficult for children to do wrong things. All the stories will be giving them the way of life.

The Imam also told me that one of the most important things in Islam is, that every prayer that parents say for the children is acceptable. The prayers that the parents say for their children will always be accepted by Allah. He told me a story to explain this:

One of the Imams, told this story about himself. He says when he was small, he played with a bird and he broke its leg. When the mother comes, she was very angry. She said: "Why are you treating this animal like this? Why do you do this to this bird? I wish your leg must also be like that. You must also feel how it feels." These words she didn't mean it. But when the child grew up he found that he had a problem which made his leg to be amputated.

In the same way, in everything that the parents do, they must not forget Allah. They must sustain and pray. They must pray for their children. Because most of the time Allah is the one that gives everything. If you pray to Allah, Allah can produce miracles. This is one of the creative things that the parents must always do. The parent's prayers have more effect on their children than any other man's prayers will have.

### 8.4.1.4.2. Children

Children are ingrained from a very young age on the ways of Islam. They are taught from the beginning. Right through life you need to bring them back to what is expected of them as Muslims. You must start young to give children boundaries. The Imam believes that a child grows up according to what they see.

Abdullah (2017:73-74) agrees with the Imam. He says that obedience nevertheless is simple and easy. For him the child needs training and practise how to obey. The Islamic method of education commences by laying down fundamental rules that concord with the children's development for training about obedience putting into consideration the mental and physical ability with the children. With regard to training for prayer the prophet (peace be upon him and his descendants) said: "Order your children for prayer when they attain seven years of age and beat for leaving it when they attain nine years of age". What is meant by beating is either the real beating or psychological punishment even though the punishment has a negative effect on the child, but the effect is temporal and will quickly seize to exist.

Abdullah states that it is impossible to consider it harmful compared to the greater advantage that is training for prayer (Abdullah, I 2017:73-74). The Imam went further in saying that it is better that the training should not be difficult for the child because it leads to disinclination from prayer and creates psychological partition between him and prayer.

### 8.4.1.5. The importance of family and community

### 8.4.1.5.1. Family

376

For the Imam families in Islam are very important. In Islam they've got two kinds of families. They've got blood families. But on the other hand the prophet also said that a believer and a believer - they are like one body. Therefore, the believers must always be in one unity. As long as people are together, there is nothing that can break it.

In describing the South African families, Amoateng & Richter (2003:244) agreed on the importance of family. For them families are regarded as the building blocks of communities and the source of individual development and identity among young and old members, men and women, providers and dependants. Hodge (2017:4) on the other hand, agrees that "family" is often conceptualised broadly to include relatives or even the whole Islamic community. It is the family, most particularly the husband and wife that is understood to be responsible for reproducing spiritual and social values. Thus, family, both nuclear and extended, is essential to the spiritual and social health of the broader ummah.

The Imam told me that Allah says that all of us are going to be asked about our relationships. Breaking relationships in Islam is totally wrong. The prophet explained that this person would never enter into paradise. So, it is very strict in Islam. He says that everyone should be able to tolerate one another. No matter what problem develops the relationship should always be there. The fact that Islam tells parents that they will be held accountable, helps parents to know and remember their responsibility.

### 8.4.1.5.2. Community

Community is a fundamental Islamic value (Hodge, DR 2017:4). He states that rooted in the belief that all people are equal before God, Muslims tend to emphasise benevolence, care for others, cooperation between individuals, empathy, equality and justice between people, the importance of social support, and positive human relatedness.

377

**8.4.1.6. The Madrassa**

If a child is not at a Muslim school they need to go to the madrassa after school. There they will then be taught morals, Islamic manners and the Quran. The core of Islamic manners is found in the Quran.

De Klerk and Rens (2003: 354) say that inadequate discipline is the response to the lack of a value system that must be anchored in a particular value-driven world and view of life. According to them, self-discipline is the most important component of constructive values and norms.

Increasing secularism in the Western world was also regarded as a further contributing factor to the "discipline problem" in South Africa. According to Van der Walt (2004: 92-93) the phenomenon occurs in two main forms: denial (the church has no more involvement in the everyday behaviour of people) and the return of religion to the private atmosphere of human life (religious norms thus no longer affect public opinion life and behaviour of people - not even in school) (Van der Walt, 2007:291).

One of the reasons why retaliation and punitive measures are so deeply rooted in Western and Muslim-oriented societies may be attributed to the fact that it is in the Bible and in the Qur'an, in which large percentages of the citizens of countries believe worldwide, as a very important educational tool. Psalm 89:32, Lamentations 3: 1 and especially Proverbs 10:13, 13:24, 22:15, 23:14, 26: 3, 29:15 refer to the necessity of the use of discipline. Paul also approves of the Corinthians' "seriousness to punish the offender "(2 Corinthians 7:11).

In the Qur'an, retaliation is also validly stated: "Retaliation is prescribed for you in the matter of the murdered; The freeman for the freeman, and the slave for the slave, and the female for the female. There is life for you in retaliation, O men of understanding that you may ward off (evil)" (Holy Qur'an Surah II: 178-179). These

378

guidelines provide many Christians and Muslims justification for applying retaliation methods in educational situations. (These books, of course, also provide guidelines on love; a stewardship approach and is based on love, as will be further apparent.) (Van der Walt, 2007:292).

## 8.4.2. A reflection on discipline from the affiliates of the Islam religion: the Malek's.

### 8.4.2.1. Child discipline

Mrs. Malek describes the discipline that she uses on her children, as that she talks to them, tries to take them out of the situation and reflect on it. In short she describes it as talk and guide.

In terms of the main discipline behaviour of the DDI,(Straus & Fauchier 2007:12-16) it can be described as:

Diversion

Things like "time out", sending the child to their room for a period of time, giving the child something else they might like to do instead of what they were doing wrong, are described here.

Explain/Teach

This is about explaining to the child what the rules are to try to prevent the child repeating misbehaviour, showing or demonstrating the right thing to do to the child.

379

The cognitive-oriented perspective discourages using discipline techniques based on the use of power by the adult, but emphasises the need to provide a child with rationale for desired behaviour and for ceasing to misbehave. The cognitive-oriented perspective discourages using discipline techniques based on the use of power by the adult, but emphasises the need to provide a child with rationale for desired behaviour and for ceasing to misbehave.

The Imam agrees with Mrs. Malek that parental guidance is very important. For Mrs. Malek it's also important to be your child's friend. You need to be part of their interests and also shape their interests by Islam.

The Imam told me that according to Mohammed, everyone is a shepherd and every shepherd is going to be asked about their flock – their responsibilities.

## 8.5. Themes that came out of the narrative of the Levy's

## 8.5.1. A reflection on the beliefs of the affiliates of the Jewish religion: The Levy's.

### 8.5.1.1. The Jewish religion and child discipline

The Jewish religion is a child centred faith. Each new day is broken with the prayer: "Thank you Lord for giving me back my soul." Every day, you can start anew, because life is an opportunity. The Jewish religion is learning based. The Rabbi always takes time to talk to the children. They have a Jewish saying that it is good to hear children laughing. After the Batmitzahed and the Barmizahed children have a responsibility to follow the faith like an adult.

Sacks (1997:10 as quoted in Dor, A & Cohen-Fridel. 2010:8) states that strong religious identity sets the bar for the morals, values and identity where the child is shaped through discipline. It sets a basis to where the discipline can be measured and how discipline can be achieved. Nevertheless, despite these changes, it seems that beyond cultural differences, women still bear most of the responsibility for home and childrearing. Women assume a greater part in their children's upbringing than do men and do so at the cost of their profession, career, and personal advancement, our findings might insinuate this phenomenon.

Like Mrs. Levy put it: *"Children are so important that they say: Men are time bound – they need to pray three times a day. And women are not, because they need to raise good humans."*

### 8.5.1.2. Jewish support structure for discipline

### 8.5.1.2.1. The Jewish community

The Jewish community is family centric- they celebrate together. Lippman, Wilcox & Ryberg- Bethesda (2013: 3) describes the family as a core social institution that occupies a central place in the lives of men, women, and children around the world. Families are a source of support, and sometimes an obstacle, to individual and collective achievements.

In the Jewish community there is no parental guidance classes in Mrs. Levy's community. But there is a lot of community activities. Everyone comes together.

The essence, the functioning and nature of the whole teaching-learning environment of a school is inseparable linked to a variety of societies (Oosthuizen & Van Staden 2007:362). One of the important activities of the teaching-learning environment that is discussed in this regard is surely learner behaviour. Consequently, the proposition
381

can be made that learner behavior is deeply rooted in societal relationships such as the parent's home, the school and the surrounding community or society. Based on this, the factors that may be undermining learner misconduct among others in school-related, family-related and environmental related factors are categorized.

The Jewish community has a tight support community. According to Gershof (2010:489) discipline that is perceived by children to be non-normative is likely to be ineffective in promoting appropriate child behavior and may inadvertently lead to increases in problematic child behavior.

### 8.5.1.2.2. The Hebrew school

Children learn about the Jewish faith at the Hebrew school. It can start from gr.0/1, but only a minimum of 2 years before they are batmitzahed or barmitzahed. There they learn about the Jewish festivals and rituals, as well as the Jewish calendar. Everyone grows here at their own pace.

Wolbe (2000:18) says that if he builds the child and helps him to acquire maálos, but he does not relate to his koach ha-tzemichah (innate growth potential) then the child will be like a robot. He will probably do what he must, but he won't possess any internal vitality. When he/she grows up they won't possess individual initiative, since initiative flows from koach ha-tzemichah, and the koach ha-tzemichah has then long ago withered way and rotted. All that is left is a human robot.

Therefore, if we allow a child to sprout and grow without building him, the result is a wild man. If we build a child without relating to his koach ha-tzemichah, we turn him into a robot. Chinuch consists of both the koach ha-tzemichah and the action of building. That is, we must build a child while cultivating his spiritual potential.

The girls usually is *batmitzahed* at the age of twelve years, and the boys have their *barmitzahed* at the age of 13. *Mitzahed* – is a good deed- so it means literally to become a son or daughter of a good deed. Children must be able to read fluent in Hebrew, and be able to lead the service to be *barmitzahed* or *bamitzahed*. This is also seen as becoming part of adult society.

### 8.5.1.2.3. The calling of Tikkum Olam

The people of God's role is to make the world a better place. It is kind of a way of paying it forward.

Tikkun Olam – Gods people are called to restore the world

For Rosenthal it has become the synonym for social action. Social justice groups everywhere consider their programme as part of tikkun ha-olam. For them it is then virtually the equivalent of the struggle for justice and peace, brotherhood and racial equality, and economic opportunity and ecological responsibility. (Rosenthal, G.S. *2005:239)*

(Sacks, J. 1997:10) Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth in 1997, on talking about Tikkun Olam, says that there is no formula, no Shulkhan Arukh, and no response governing how to be mistaken ha'olam. For him, the Orthodox community needs not only masters of the law but also ba'alai nivuah – people with historical insight. He says that, that is the challenge of our time.

They have done magnificently on the two great challenges of Jewish history: Israel and Jewish children. But now what stands before them is the third great, untouched challenge of Tikkun Olam that they, in a secular age, should become role models for spirituality. That they in a relativistic age should be able to teach people once again to hear the objective "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not".

In an age in which religion so often brings conflict he says that they should teach once again that Shalom, peace, is the name of G-d and that the mighty is one who turns an enemy into a friend. If they do these things there will surely come to all of them that experience of living a Jewish life and knowing that those around them, those with whom they have dealings are blessed by that life, and they will return to us saying: you have been a prince or princess of G-d in our midst. He says that to do that will begin to perfect the world.

## 8.5.2. A reflection on discipline from the affiliates of the Jewish religion: The Levy's.

For Mrs. Levy we as parents are there to make the world a safer place for our children. We need to set them free, while also showing them how it's done. Children must be taught to be good citizens and to be appropriate. They need a sense of self-worth with boundaries.

Children also need to be mindful of the commandments and keep a kosher home,

Discipline is about relationships. You can't outsource parenting. Mrs. Levy believes in co-parenting and that she and her husband must work together. It's also important for them to be present in their children's lives and stand up as parents. They do this because they believe that we must take responsibility for our actions, so that our children can do the same. For her the bottom line is that if we want them to be good humans then you, yourself need to be a good human.

Wolbe (2000:11) agrees with this in saying that Chinuch (education), is a mission of the highest priority, a mission whose success has guaranteed the continuity of the Jewish people and its Torah. He further describes that Chinuch is also a responsibility assigned to every father and mother, and one cannot excuse oneself from it, saying "This isn't my job." Chinuch is therefore seen as a task that parents

naturally long to perform; from deep within themselves, parents yearn to educate their children properly.

Children in the Jewish faith under the age of three are restricted from all the rules of discipline. At home Mrs. Levy disciplines by first giving a warning that is followed by "time out" if the wrong behaviour persists.

In terms of the discipline behaviour of the DDI (Straus & Fauchier, A. 2007:5), it can be described as:

Diversion, that is things like "time out", sending the child to their room for a period of time, giving the child something else they might like to do instead of what they were doing wrong, are described here.

The Levy's believe that if you don't want someone to do a certain thing to you, then you don't do it to them. In their house there is a lot of conversation – in her words "it's very verbal".

In terms of the discipline behaviour of the DDI (Straus & Fauchier, A. 2007:5), it can be described as:

*Explain/Teach*

*This is about explaining to the child what the rules are to try to prevent the child repeating misbehaviour, showing or demonstrating the right thing to do to the child.*

Discipline is about the wrongs and the rights,

This relates to Gershof's (2010:489) first of his 11 discipline techniques described in their interviews, listed in the order they were presented to the mothers and followed by the abbreviations were: "(1) "teach your child about good and bad behaviour" (teach about good and bad behaviour);

Children must be taught to be good citizens and to be appropriate. It's a positive thing for children to question. We must steer them to do good and add value.

For Shapiro (Shapiro S, 2015:3), finding our way to a more peaceful world will mean constructing a world that is just more compassionate, more democratic and more reverential of all life. Therefore, he says that education can and should be an important component in pursuing this goal. What and how we teach our children is surely a critical dimension in the social and moral changes that we so urgently need. But it will mean a bold and radical re-visioning of both the purpose of education and the way we seek to teach.

Religion gives direct and indirect guidance to parents.

Discipline is about giving parents a set of values. They give their children a lot of self-worth exercises.

You can't outsource parenting. You must take responsibility to teach them responsibility.

Wolbe (2000:11) describes that Chinuch is also a responsibility assigned to every father and mother, and one cannot excuse oneself from it, saying "This isn't my job." Chinuch is therefore seen as a task that parents naturally long to perform; from deep within themselves, parents yearn to educate their children properly.

Wolbe (2000:11) takes it even further when he says that even though education is a natural yearning and responsibility, it is also a deep wisdom. He explains it with the metaphor of a seed growing into a plant. (Wolbe 2000:17-18) He starts by saying that a child is a living creature. If we want something particular to sprout out of this seed, we must be careful to plant precisely what we want, and afterward the seeds will sprout from themselves in a natural process. But his is not the only thing we need to do, because there is also construction. It is impossible to depend on sprouting alone.

## 8.6.    In conclusion

For me it is very important to look at the narratives of the affiliates of different religions and reflect on them. I chose to do this chapter of the reflection on religion and discipline in the narratives, as a separate chapter, in order to separate the narratives from the voices of reflection. This thickens the research narratives of the affiliates and help us to understand the research narratives better.

In the following chapter I will take these reflections further by thickening the narratives, together with the literature study and this chapter to a conclusion.

**CHAPTER 9 IN CONCLUSION**

The research narrative thickened in the previous chapters. The narratives were enlighted by the literature study and reflected on in the previous chapter. In this chapter I want to write the about the thickened story – the conclusion of the research.

**9.1. Does religion have an influence on the way parents discipline their children?**

**9.1.1. Religion has an influence on the way we discipline children.**

Almost everyone I interviewed agreed that our religion has an influence on the way we discipline our children. Our religion calls us and gives us the responsibility, guidelines and rules to empower parents to discipline children.

Though religion has an influence on the way parents discipline their children I believe that it can and must have an even bigger impact on child discipline. We live in a day and age where more people are reaching back to their values. We see it in the way schools approach discipline through a set of values, and businesses proclaim their (core) values. What better way to get good value than from our religion.

We need to take the focus off ourselves and have respect for others, even though we don't share the same faith and even the same values. In a postfoundational society, we are free to stand up for what we believe, to celebrate what we share with others (that which is socially constructed) and to respect that which we do not agree upon. We need to take a firm stand on our values and respect others for doing the same.

The conclusion I came to is that parents lost some of their authority in the past years. In a family system, there has be someone in authority. It is supposed to be the parents, but if the parents are losing their parental authority or giving it away, someone else will take that role of authority. A lot of times the children will take over the role of authority. This is not how it should be.

Religion has an influence on how parents discipline their children, but I believe that it should have a lot more influence. The influence is partially lost, because of secularism, the turn of 1994, the children's rights and the abolishment of corporal punishment.

These are not necessary things that can be changed back. We can't turn things back to how it was in the past. We need to look forward. The things that made these changes came to be, will not always be there. The society will again change in the future, the rights of people can change, but the one thing that stays constant through the ages is religion.

Parents choose what and who will have an influence on their children. If they don't make the choice, someone else will. The social context, the media, and other influences will make the choice for them. If parents do not choose for their children, and do not teach their children to stand up for what they believe, others will do it gladly.

Raising children has a lot of challenges. But with challenges goes choices on how to take in on. It would not be easy to give more influence on religion in the way we discipline, but it will always be worthwhile.

The society may change, the culture may change, but the one thing that will always stay is religion – the Christian religion. It has stood the test of time – parents through the ages relied on it and people in the years to come can also benefit from the
389

ongoing support, religion gives to parenting. But it will still stay a choice – especially in our day and time.

### 9.1.2. There were voices that said that religion doesn't have an influence on the way we discipline children.

There were two voices that said that religion doesn't have an influence in the way children are disciplined. The one was that of Sissie and the other one was the voice of Mrs. Govender. Both of them seemed to come around to faith again. And both of them pointed to the children that have so much pressure, peer pressure, pressure from society and much more.

### 9.2. The return of religion in discipline: The Challenge to Pastoral Family Therapy

### 9.2.1. A shared valued system

Bonhoeffer (Root 2017:7), makes a powerful statement when he says that a community is entered by entering its life. For him a person and the community are inseparable – to be a person is to belong in and through others.

Although persons are bound to each other, he explains that persons are also distinctly themselves, therefore a person's distinct will must be honoured. A person is therefore to be bound to each other in and through our respect of the barrier between us.

Most of the families I interviewed had the same value system at home, in their society and in the schools. In our day and time, we need to come back to a joined

390

valued system for our homes, society and schools. This is where religion can play a huge role.

Although Middelton and Walsh (1995:39) said that the young man lives today in a Disneyland culture, a "Cool hip" society, in which everything is temporary, transient and disposable, I believe that "we are not in Kansas" anymore.

Human beings are motivated by what pleases them, but in our day and age people are driven by what pleases them. Therefore, we are in urgent need to have shared socially constructed values so that we can co-exist and respect each other. Religion can assist us with this. We have consumed each other long enough. It's time now to respect and love each other. We need to come back to values and boundaries. We need to return to the old values of religion(s), to the understanding of love and respect so that we can take care of each other.

Parents can't afford to have a power loss. All of us need to build up parents again to be a powerful influence in society. We need to do this so that we build up a powerful next generation that will have the balance of not doubting themselves, and in the process always respect others.

In terms of the handling of misconduct by parents, parents need to be reactive (punish the wrong) and also be pro-active (as far as possible try to prevent their children from doing wrong).

In South Africa violence is prevalent everywhere. In disciplining our children, we must do it in such a way as not to contribute in any way to the violence, but rather provide a safe and peaceful place for our children. Our children must know that their parents have an unconditional love for them that will never change. The home, and in the midst of their families, children must learn to respect and take care of others.

### 9.2.2. Families' return to religion and the church

In chapter 4, I discussed the fact that families and the world around them have changed dramatically over recent decades (Walsh 2012:3). It is therefore necessary that we also acknowledge the role of the family in disciplining children and carrying their religion over to their children. We need to help families to perform traditional care-giving functions so that it can positively determine higher levels of individual functionality than is usually achieved without family support and assistance (Amoateng & Richter, 2003:245).

Families in South Afirca are unique. There are a number of key factors that have impacted negatively on families over the last century in South Africa (Patel, Hochfeld & Englert 2018:5). Things like poverty, single parenting, HIV/AIDS all had a role to play in the way families function. Over recent decades, families have been in transformation, with growing diversity and complexity in structure, gender roles and sexual orientation, multicultural makeup, socioeconomic conditions, and life cycle patterns. I believe that these facors could possibly also impacted the way parents discipline their children.

Orphans according Ward, Makusha, Bray (2015:70) are more likely than other children to be living in poverty, less likely to access schooling, and less likely to be living with a parent – and these risks are greater for double orphans than for single orphans. As with any other family, Ward, Makusha, Bray (2015:70) states that parenting and the context of parenting appear to play a key role in orphans' vulnerability.

Cavanagh & Huston (2006:551) from the social and behavioural sciences have accumulated a solid foundation of evidence that divorce and single parenthood pose risks for the behavioural and emotional development of children and youth.

Ryan, Franzetta, Schelar, & Manlove (2009:1) found that although most children living in single-parent, cohabiting, or stepfamilies have positive outcomes, they are at greater risk for behavioral, cognitive, and health problems.

Concerns about large numbers of "female-headed households" was raised  by Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds) (2018:37) who said that it is known that women tend to earn less than men and so households without adult males may be poorer on average, with a greater burden on women to maintain the household, care for dependents and provide financial support.

International research echoed by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and described by Holborn & Eddy (2011:4) on the effect fathers have on their children's development suggests that the presence of a father can contribute to cognitive development, intellectual functioning, and school achievement. In South Africa many children are raised without fathers (Makofane, 2015:22).

Poverty was shown by Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds) (2018:37) to significantly undermine parenting, decrease the life chances of children, and thereby transmit poverty from one generation to the next.

The same-gendered families also faced challenges, for Lubbe (2007:261) every person with a sexual orientation other than heterosexual, as well as the children of same-gendered parents needs to reconcile his or her or their parent(s) sexual orientation somehow with the heteronormativity of society.

Children in child-headed households may be vulnerable in multiple ways, Hall, Richter, Mokomane & Lake (eds) (2018:36) argued that: they tend to be extremely poor and have low access to social grants, they may struggle to access schooling or to achieve academically, they may be vulnerable to violence, abuse and exploitation, and experience high levels of anxiety, stress or grief.

What remains constant is the centrality, and the fundamental necessity, of relatedness (Walsh 2012:22). Our growing diversity requires an inclusive pluralism, beyond tolerance of difference to respect for many different ways to be families,
393

recognizing both their distinctiveness and their commonalities. As families we need to respect each other and create a space where we can stand together.

The church can not turn a blind eye to these influences on the lives of children and families and need to create a space where we can help families to find hope in the revelation of God within the unique narratives of families and the challenges they may face. We need to do this through disciplining our children in such a way that they can find God's revelation in their lives, His calling on their lives and their identity in His word. This will help them and us to bring the change the church needs to bring.

In our relatedness we need to come together and stand firm. Through returning to our religion and to God, we would not only discipline our children, but also disciple them. Therefore, we must teach our children what they are called to do in this world- we must help them to fulfil their calling.

We need to teach parents what the Bible tells us about parenting. Like I mentioned in chapter 2, Barna (2007:129) says that there are not many Bible verses on parenting and child discipline. He therefore suggests that if God can get adults to have appropriate ideas, they will give it to their children.

In the cultural context of the early church, parents were still serious about parenting and turning to God and the spiritual community. The absence of specific methods of training is consistent in the Bible.

According to Barna (2007:82) the Bible says that a family must raise godly children. Parents must be the primary providers of the spiritual training of children. Discipline is the parent's responsibility. They must introduce, and train children for appropriate behaviour as modelled by the church and the Bible.

Parents have a responsibility toward the spiritual growth and guidance of their children:

- Parents must prepare children to lead a godly life (Barna 2007)
- God expects parents to teach children obedience to the ways of God and respect for others (Thomas Groom in Osmer and Sweitzer eds, 2003)
- Parents must prepare their young children for independence and obedience when they grow up to be adults. (Barna 2007)

## 9.2.3. To stand up boldly within our families for what we believe.

We need to be fearless in what we believe, then we will not only empower parents to take back their authority in their families but empower the children to live out what the parents taught them. We need to teach our children to be fearless followers of their faith.

## 9.3. The youth needs to gain life's meaning in religion.

## 9.3.1. Things that contributed to the loss of meaning

## 9.3.1.1. Cultural and social circumstances

The factors within society, include that there's a lack of a value-driven society, and that there is a decline in the sphere of influence of the church in society that is worrying. This is something only parents can do something about, because it is the primary (but not sole) responsibility of the parents to give their children values and to be actively part of the church sphere, where they can make the churches influence on their children known. Badenhorst, Steyn and & Beukes (2007:310) say that there is a tendency for a looser society in which values are relativised.

We as pastors and parents need to bring our children back to the authority of the Lord. We must seek His values first in terms of parenting our children. This we must do through God's love and respect for all.

The context of our society today makes it difficult to parent. Parents have been insulted by an unrelenting barrage of insulting images and a parallel stream of attacks also facing the traditional family by the liberal media and progressive politicians (Barna and Myers 2017:5-6).

This means that the impact of parenting may be greater than ever before. Parents must accept the job of raising children as the greatest gift to the world and perhaps their most significant service to God. Nobody has greater potential to transform the lives of children than their parents do (Barna & Myers 2017:11, 18).

People in a Christian community are more concerned about what people think of them, their impressions, the things that they don't want anyone to know like the fact that they are struggling. In today's day and age, we need to help parents to understand that there are no flawless parents, and that's ok.

### 9.3.1.2. Apartheid

Apartheid had a huge influence on the African Families of South Africa. As Flatø, Muttarak & Pelser (2017:44) puts it, the legacy of apartheid was well-reflected in family disruptions. The family as it was previously known was turned on its head by the Apartheid movement. Roman, Isaacs, Davids & Sui (2016:9) states that for black families, the term 'family' meant being separated from fathers and often mothers because parents were compelled to leave their families to work in towns.

During the apartheid dispensation in South Africa, social policies and political pressures directly impacted household formation and family cohesion and aggravated the negative impact of urbanization and industrialization on the family (Flatø, Muttarak & Pelser 2017:44).

One particular destructive legacy of apartheid on the family was the large number of single-parent families, particularly among black women, that resulted largely from divorce and from pregnancy outside marriage. As a large proportion of children were raised in female-headed families with little financial support, black families in apartheid South Africa suffered considerably more disintegration than families elsewhere in Africa. Goldberg (2013:1) states that family members that were not employed had to remain in rural areas, and men and sometimes women were separated from their children for extended periods of time. In the post-apartheid period, patterns of circular labor migration have continued, accompanied by a rise in female labor migration.

The resulting urbanisation, and subsequent politically imposed residential and work restrictions, affected black families particularly, and reinforced dual urban-rural homesteads and circular migration as organisational mechanisms of economic and social adaption. For Amoateng & Richter (2003:247), it was agains this backdrop of colonial domination and racial oppression in the society that structural – functionalist family theory, with its evolutionary flavour, held sway.

Children remained in the reserves with family members, while parents faced the daily pain and hardship of not having their own children live with them. Many grandmothers care for their grandchildren, often in the absence of the children's parents.

The migrant labor system that characterized the South African economy in the apartheid system is regarded as one of the most important factors that historically contributed to the rapid increase in female-headed households across southern Africa. In addition, the erosion of patriarchal norms and cultural tradition has fueled a

new consciousness of independent living among the youth and single women, in particular (Flatø, Muttarak & Pelser 2017:44).

Families had to form new meanings of what it means to be a family, that still has a great influence on South African families.

### 9.3.1.3. The turn of 1994

The same things the schools went through after 1994 that I described, families went through as well, and therefore also cultures and societies went through.

According to Apostolides (2016:1), South African people find themselves grappling with a post-apartheid 'reality' that involves living out a life within a 'rainbow nation' context. This "rainbow nation" includes living in a multi-faith and multicultural environment, which is complicated.

After 1994 the society and part of our culture transformed. This is true for both children and parents. Both struggle to find their place, I believe that in our day in age the parents more than the children, because these children who struggled to find their place just after 1994, are today's parents. This must have a significant influence on them and are contributing to the loss of authority of today's parents.

After 1994 a lot of things happened. Traditional social structures broke down due to migration to the city, and both parents in every family being part of the work place. A lot of parents (not just teachers) feel that they have lost control and authority after corporal punishment was abolished.

The influence of the media on parents and families are often degrading, shaming or belittling parents. The human rights culture made children take up their rights and parents question their approaches to discipline. The culture of rights makes the

398

children more aware of the emphasis on their rights. This all leads to the authority of parents being undermined.

In the postmodern era the emphasis on individual freedom and exercise of rights (especially children's rights), together with the abolishment of corporal punishment has contributed to the authority relationship of the parents towards their children being undermined.

New methods of discipline need to be applied. This problem is not a simple one. There is no way that we will return to corporal punishment to restore the authority of parents in the family.

This will be the wrong way to bring back power to the parents, through violence. In a country where so much violence overshadows us, it will be wrong for parents to try and take back the power in their families, through violence. This is especially true because of the fact that in these violent times, families need to be a place of peace and security for children.

### 9.3.1.3. Factors at home

Badenhorst, Steyn and Beukes (2007:310) described the cause of discipline problems in school, by starting with factors in the home. They said that one of the main factors are ignorant parents and related problems. They also called on Louw and Barnes (2003:20) who said that parents are losing control in a society where the dividing line between law and wrong is no longer clear.

This contributes to parents feeling that they are losing part of their authority. Chimenga (2002:51) believes that parents are no longer dedicated to disciplining their children – they expect the school to do it.

I also mentioned that De Klerk and Rens (2003:354) say that inadequate discipline is the response to the lack of a value system that must be anchored in a particular value-driven world and view of life. The origin value systems for children starts at home. There they must have the freedom to choose which values they will stand for. Here religion, I believe plays a huge role.

For Badenhorst, Steyn and & Beukes (2007:311) it seems that a lack of respect is highlighted as the main reason for the deterioration of previously well-disciplined individuals. Parents also need a new way of looking at respect- through the lenses of religion, where we can look with unconditional respect at each other.

We already looked at Barna and Myers (2017:5-6), who made the statement that a massive amount of uncertainty has caused well-meaning, highly educated parents to question their own motives, actions and purpose.

The challenge is therefore to rewire our cultural brains, starting with the minds of our children to reclaim Christian principles. This makes parenting more central to life than anything else, and the need for the Christian community to empower parents all the more relevant in our time.

### 9.3.1.4. The abolishment of corporal punishment and the culture of children's rights

The effectiveness of corporal punishment has been debated a great deal. Franks (2009:9) said that if a child does not stop offensive behaviour when hit, a parent may feel there is nothing more for them to do but hit harder.

The fact that corporal punishment is often carried out repeatedly clearly shows us that it's not effective at preventing a child from misbehaving again, even if they do stop that behaviour temporarily. It's also proven that corporal punishment does not just harm a children physically, it can also cause mental and emotional damage – it can ultimately affect the child's relationship with their parents.

I do believe that the discipline struggle between parents and children is not about the abolishment of corporal punishment, but rather the loss of power. The abolition of corporal punishment in 1996 was followed by a comprehensive campaign to transform policies on discipline at all levels in education. The total abolishment of corporal punishment in South Africa, even in the home and the parent-child relationship in 2018 was also followed by a lot of information in the media.

My own child bravely came to me and told me that I may not use corporal punishment on him. Corporal punishment wasn't something that he knew at home, but when the discussion hit the media and the schools he became like a professional child's rights activist to tell me about his rights – just in case I would consider taking the "rod" into my own hands.

Mamma and Sissie (affiliates of the African religion) also talked about this. They explained that they were always hitting the children as a way to discipline them. But now they can't hit the children anymore because they (the children) will go to the social worker to make a lot of trouble for their parents and then the children will be taken away.

I believe that the rights of children make parents uncertain about their own rights and about how they can approach their children in terms of discipline. I saw this especially with Mamma and Sissie.

This takes away a lot of the power and authority of parents in their relationship with their children. In some cases, it may even reverse the roles of parents and children. That is why I believe that we need to take back the power and authority of parents to discipline, in new and powerful ways. We need to do it urgently, before the power is lost.

The homes where the norms and values were clearer, were not very influenced with the disappearance of corporal punishment. They stood steady on their values and norms and knew the identity that they had in their faith. This reminded me that we need to go back to religion to claim back our values, norms and standards for our lives.

Religion is for me the place where we can take back the power. We as parents can do this by realising that we have the responsibility and calling from the Lord to do it.

In the home, the only people that can limit the parent's God given authority are the parents themselves, by what they allow and do not allow from a young age. For the first years of a child's life, parents make the decisions for them. Therefore, parents need to step up and reclaim the power of discipline. Parents must realise that they have the right to educate and discipline their children.

Children may claim their rights. But they must also realise that they are dependent on their parents.

Parents need to manage the influences in their children's lives. Parents must teach their children to have the same rights and values as they (the parents) have. They must also teach their children to respect their elders and to focus their values on their religion.

In the home, the parents choose the atmosphere. They can choose to have a looseness of values and norms, or to have a more disciplined environment at home. In a house with norms and values, respect and love, everyone knows their place. There is therefore no need for other rights to keep the children safe, because they are secure in the boundaries of the family.

## 9.3.1.5. Secularism

Secularism influenced people to think that the church has no more involvement in the everyday behaviour of people. Mamma and Sissie who are affiliates of the African religion, talked about this in their interview. They said that children don't want to go to church, and that they (the children) have a big problem with alcohol and drugs.

It seems that the influence of secularism that came with the new houses and roads to their village, caused the influence of things such as religion to have less influence on the children. It was like Mamma and Sissie said that religion has no more influence on the way they discipline their children, but on the other hand they now need to return to the church (they asked me to pray for them, because "only g(G)od can help the children")

Parents can and need to change this attitude that says that church has no more involvement in the everyday behaviour of people. Parents need to reclaim their place in church, and together with their children serve God to the fullest again. Families need to return to God and to the church to take up their rightful place.

The church on the other hand needs to make a place and a space for parents to do this. The church and the Christian community must help empower parents to parent their children according to what we believe. A place where families can build each other up, for the purpose that God has for them.
403

## 9.4. The Church as Parent's partners

### 9.4.1. Parental responsibility and involvement in children's lives.

In my conversations this was not one of the topics that clearly stood out. For me it is however very important to write on this topic. If we as a church understand the responsibility that parents have on children's lives, we can help them to fulfil this responsibility.

On this topic I also want to refer back to Thomas Aquinas who developed the argument that I agree with, that parents have a "natural" human obligation toward and love for their children. He goes further to say that parents also have the responsibility to educate and care for their children.

Calvin says unless men regard their children as a gift from God, they are careless and reluctant to provide for their support, just as on the other hand this knowledge contributes in a very eminent degree in encouraging them to bring up their offspring (Bunge ed 2001: 171). Calvin therefore sees as the primary obligation of parents, to teach godliness. He also sees the parental obligation to fulfil God's commandment and diligently instruct the children. On the other hand, children ought to be morally upright, submissive to authority and self-critical.

Gundry-Volf (Bunge ed. 2001:54) refers to it as the so-called household codes. They declare that children have to obey their parents ("in everything" Col 3:20). This agrees with the Gospels that also suggest that Jesus would have expected children to obey parents, unless it conflicted with the obligations of discipleship.

Even the voices from the educational side, voiced the importance of parental involvement not only in the context of the family and home, but also the social spheres like the school. Van der Merwe (2002: 4) and Wolhuter and Steyn (2003: 527) noted that there are two important family-related factors related to the disciplinary climate at schools:

- The guidance that children receive from their parents.
- Parent involvement at school.

Louw and Barnes (2003: 20 as quoted in Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:311), wrote on something that I see more prevalent in my ministry with children each day. They state that parents are losing control in a society where the dividing line between law and wrong is no longer clear. An inability to hold the reins more firmly leads to an "abdication" of their authority and the tendency to leave discipline and education to the school.

Mentz et al.'s (2003: 391) empirical research on the frequency and nature of learner discipline has shown that disciplinary problems are less common at schools where parent involvement in the school is high.

This is confirmed by Steyn et al. (2003), which shows that parents are crucial role players in establishing the right attitudes with their children: "Parents play a decisive role in the formation of attitudes that lead to good behavior in the school situation. " Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes (2007:310) found that four out of five principals indicated that absent parents are by far the biggest cause of discipline problems at schools.

Chimenga (2002: 51) believes parents are no longer dedicated to discipline their children; they expect the school to do it. Rossouw (2002: 431) says that some parents expect from the teaching profession to solve their problems, despite the fact that many are apathetic towards and disinterested in school and educational matters.

"Parents show a lack of tolerance and respect towards government authorities as well as educators, and some have a *laissez-faire* approach towards child education.
405

They expect schools to teach their children proper conduct, but they do not realise their own responsibility." (Badenhorst, Steyn & Beukes 2007:311).

For Van Louw & Waghid (2008:473) the factors that cause these problems are undoubtedly too complex. This complexity requires that the state, those in schools, as well as the communities in which schools are situated work together. This means that we need to make real efforts (outside the school setting) leading to the minimisation of social injustices.

### 9.4.2. We need to take care of parents

As a church we need to empower parents to discipline their children. We need to help parents to take back the authority that the Lord gave us as parents. Therefore we need to tell them that we as a church are there for them and will take care of them. We should teach them that they have responsibility to educate their children spiritually, and also teach them what kind of parent they can be.

As a church community we need to let families re-evaluate themselves and their personal abilities. Within every family lies the ability to be happy and to have good discipline.

On our journey as a church with parents, we need to share with them different ways of approaching discipline and tell them how people perceive parenting. In giving parents this, we must remind them that each family's story is different. They must journey with the Lord, through this and find those which closely resembles their own story and take them back as tools, to write the story of child discipline in their homes. We must empower families to use the information in the way they discipline their children.

In our congregations we must take care to teach parents some of the different parenting styles and discipline techniques in order to let them develop a sound way of disciplining their children. The parenting styles and discipline techniques that I described in the previous chapters.

### 9.4.3. We need to help parents restore their authority in their homes.

We have to empower the parents. Teach them to live out their religion and to stand up for it. Religion gives us the responsibility to do it. We need to re-evaluate and celebrate every parent's abilities and give them tools on how to be dedicated parents. Therefore, we need the social support from the church and faith community – we need to teach our children to be a church wherever we go.

Nel (2016:14) confirms, that parents are indeed the primary mediators of God's covenant / relationship with us. Within the Reformed tradition, we confess it and we take it seriously. How we think about this, decide what place we give to parents in the congregations. He states that we need to acknowledge it: We were and are not always serious enough about this and we like to shift our responsibility on to others.

He (Nel 2016: 15) also goes further to explain that many parents sometimes cannot even explain the basics of the meaning of their child or children's baptism. He asks: how do we speak in our homes about God, about His grace in Christ, about His involvement in our lives? If we read Deuteronomy 6: 1 and take it seriously, then it is a definite subject that we are to talk about in our homes. About the one and only God that loves us (Deut 6: 4-9).

We speak about it boldly when we get up, lie down and are on our way. We boldly talk about His influence in our lives (like Peter after Pentecost). We do this intentionally. I agree with him and believe the whole congregation, life and ministry of a church must take parents, children and adolescents seriously.

**9.5. The role of baptism in terms of discipline – the fulfilment of parents and the church's promise**

None of the affiliates of the Christian religion, talked about baptism as something they thought of when talking about discipline. I however believe that baptism is of the utmost importance not only to our lives or for salvation, but for our families. After completing research on the different theologians I realised a new, how important baptism is for every child, every parent and every congregation. I believe that baptism can help us talk to parents and the church, and in such a way start a conversation on our promises that we make at children's baptism and the responsibility we as a church and parents have to discipline our children, and to lead them to have biblical morals and values.

Child baptism takes place in the context of promises that are exchanged between parents, family, church, friends and God. It is a promise that has for its goal salvation. It asks of us to live our lives as children of God and to teach our children to do the same.

For Christians this is also where our promise of discipline lies. Because if we want to define discipline in terms of our religion, we define it in terms almost similar to the promises made at the baptism of children.

If we could get parents to understand the importance of baptism and guide them to live their lives and teach their children accordingly, I believe the world would look different.

If parents raised their children according to their baptismal promises, things like the values and norms of the family shouldn't be something that's unsure or not intact. Parents would then look on the Word of God for guidance in parenting their children. The Christian faith would be a strong foundation for the family to be built upon.

But the question would be: is it just parental responsibility to take care of these children. What if the parents choose not to take their children to church –would there be nothing anyone could do?

I would disagree with that. Because at the baptism of a child the church, family and friends also promise to assist parents in raising their children to know the Lord and to live for Him. Because the church makes this promise every time a child is baptised, we as church need to work together to fulfil our promise to parents and to God. We needn't just do it for the sake of the children, but we also need to do it for the sake of the parents. We need to help them to raise their children in a way where their religion plays a prominent role.

In the state our country and world finds itself we as a church need to stand up for what we believe and guide families in their faith formation.

Baptism gives us and our children the responsibility to take care of and discipline our children, so that they can be children of God.

## 9.6. In conclusion.

Religion has an influence on the way parents discipline their children and must have an even bigger impact on child discipline. We can't just recognise the problem that this research brought to light and do nothing about it. Otherwise we just become part of the problem. To bring forth change and take back authority, will be uncomfortable in a way for parents, because they will have to do things differently by standing up for who they are. Therefore, we need to look above the discomfort and look towards God who can help us to change. This research narratives are not only about listening. The findings of this research compel us to do something.

In this day and age, we need to help parents to reclaim their authority over their children, in order for our religion to have a greater impact on our children's lives. Therefore, we can't just let the narratives of this research be, but we need to engage ourselves into the story.

We must allow the story to become our new story. A story where there is restoration in our society and families, because parents took back the authority to discipline their children in a way that gives witness to their religion.

## 9.6.1. To conclude I want to ask three questions of the research I have completed:

What if there was no theology or religion, how would the discipline look and operate?

What if there were no parents and children – thus families, how would the discipline operate?

And in the light of these two questions I finally ask: Does our religion have an influence on how parents (families) discipline their children?

## 9.6.1.1. What if there was no theology or religion, how would discipline operate?

In the light of the research described in this thesis I discovered that if there was no religion- nothing to believe in and nothing to stand firm on, it would be impossible to create the boundaries for discipline.

Even if someone doesn't describe what they believe as a religion, the boundaries, morals and values they live by, are produced by what they believe and do not believe. On the other hand. It was clearly seen that the affiliates of the religions that

took part in this study build their boundaries, norms and morals, the way they approach their lives by what they believe. Most of these religions called on divine intervention which they received from their sacred books.

Christians received their divine intervention from God through the Holy Spirit and from the Bible. The Hindus received their divine intervention from their holy scriptures. The Gurru said that no one has seen god, he can only be known through scripture. He also believes in astrology and said that predicting is part of the divine intervention of god. The Pundit called the scripture of the Hindu faith the Bhavath Gita. The Islam affiliates referred strongly to what they believe and the meaning of their lives to the Koran. The affiliates of African tradition, although they didn't have a specific holy scripture called on the traditions and meanings that was handed to them from generation to generation.

You cannot discipline a child or have socially constructed rules if there are no beliefs behind the reasoning for the rules. We need to believe, in something, someone, or even some way of living, in order for us to construct discipline for our children.

### 9.6.1.2. What if there were no parents and children – thus families, how would discipline operate?

If there were no parents and children, no families, from whom will children learn how to live, and how to approach right from wrong. Who will be the role models for what is socially accepted if there is not a parent, family or society to teach the child through socially constructing that which discipline will be measured against?

### 9.6.2. Discipline in our day and age

This brings us back to the present day. It was observed in this research that some of the co-researchers said that religion was irrelevant for today (Mamma and Mr Abdoel). We also observed that people struggle to find what they believe in. There were many influences that removed the meaning, described in this chapter. Some of the things that changed and stripped away our meaning of discipline and families, were cultural and social circumstances, apartheid, the changes brought about after 1994, factors at home, the abolishment of corporal punishment and the culture of children's rights and secularism.

If we do not have a meaning from what we believe, how can we have a meaning in terms of discipline? How can we ourselves be disciplined if we do not believe in something, someone or some way of thinking?

We observe that in the present day there are a lot of reasons why families are struggling. Such as family structures, apartheid, HIV/AIDS, poverty, absent fathers and female-headed households, all have had an influence on the struggles families are facing in our country and how we perceive families.

How will the children of our country learn to socially construct discipline if they don't have role models in their parents, families and communities to demonstrate the way they need to live.

### 9.6.3. In the light of the previous two questions I want to finally ask: Does our religion have an influence on how parents (families) discipline their children?

The research has already answered that religion is a definite influence. But even more than that, family and religion (something, someone or some way of thinking to believe in) are vital for disciplining children in families. They are the two most basic building blocks on which we need to build the disciplining of our children.

On the other hand, religion (beliefs) and families are the two things that we need to claim back.

These two, family and religion, are the most important things we can give our children. As the research has demonstrated, in South Africa we have a diversity of religions and families. Rather than judging each other, lets respect each other and give each other space to stand firm, as families of different shapes and sizes on what we believe. We need to believe, and we need to reconnect with our families for the sake of our children.

At the beginning of this thesis, I stated that I want to find out what the connection is between the way parents discipline their children and their religious beliefs. Through the research I have found that religion and discipline do not just have an connection but is dependent on each other.

The research described in this thesis made it clear that without parents having something which they can believe in (namely religion), that can set the boundaries, morals and values for discipline, they do not have any grounds on which to measure the grounds for discipline.

The research has also shown that even if you do have religion, that brings about rules and regulations, boundaries that you can discipline someone on, but you do not have the parents or children to socially construct the religion, beliefs or boundaries, discipline would not be able to function.

Religion definitely has an influence on the way parents discipline their children. But even more than that, discipline is dependent on religion (as a means of something to believe in) and families (parents and children that can socially construct) for it to take place.

413

**CHAPTER 10 A VOICE OF REFLECTION**

The previous chapter was the conclusion to my research. In this chapter I want to voice my own research journey and my reflection on it.

**10.1. A voice of reflection on the journey of research**

For me it was very interesting to do the research in a narrative, qualitative way. At the end of my studies I realised that this kind of research doesn't end. For me I will always look into new ways of looking at the topic. I believe, part of it will always be part of my voice.

The research for now ends here, but in a way it's just the beginning. I want to take this research and my findings out to the church community. In my own community, and the community where I carried out the research, I will use this research in one or more parental guidance workshops, that will be held over a time, because I feel that it is very important information that I need to share with others.

I struggled with this ongoing way of doing research, because it sometimes felt like I was stuck, and not getting it right. I then one day said to myself, that I need to strive for progress and not perfection.

This mind-set helped me to complete this research and at the end I must say that the progress turned into perfection. In this kind of research, I feel it is easy to get stuck, when your mind-set wants everything to be perfect. In a way you can't just do the research, by setting the goals and then ticking all the boxes. This kind of research is about going on a journey, and on the journey the research takes shape. It is not the kind of research that ticks of boxes, but a journey of wonderful new discoveries along the way.

This kind of research also allowed me to write my own narrative about the topic of how religion influences the way parents discipline their children. I did not lightly take the decision to put my literature study before the narratives I gathered in this thesis.

When I look back I realise that the fact that I chose to do it like that, enriched the meaning of those narratives. It also helped, because I also chose to put the reflections on the narratives and the conclusion I made at the end chapters. Even though my journey did not take place chronologically as it is written here, the narrative I chose to write on the journey, makes a lot more sense for me. I went into the interviews (when gathering narratives) from a not knowing position, and after doing the literature study, I realised that it fits in better before the narratives to enrich and thicken the narratives stories.

I went into the interviews from a not knowing position, therefore the themes that I researched further in the literature study, and reflected on in the chapters, were themes that came out of the narratives. It wasn't themes that I decided beforehand that I wanted to use to compare the families against each other, but rather themes that caught my eyes and my interest and made me want to know more about how the parents and families came to it.

I focused more on the Christian religion, because it is my religion and because I am writing from a Practical Theology, Pastoral Family therapy context that is based on the Christian religion.

Having people reflect on my findings also helped me to see things from another side, and not to get blindsided. It also helped me a lot when I went back to the literature to reflect on my findings. A lot of the resources were pointed out to me by the reflection team. This research is not only about me giving a peace of my mind, but rather of me opening up and expanding my mind and my heart, and through this gaining new insights into this topic.

415

I will like to use the following to explain how the research was done in interchangeable loops:
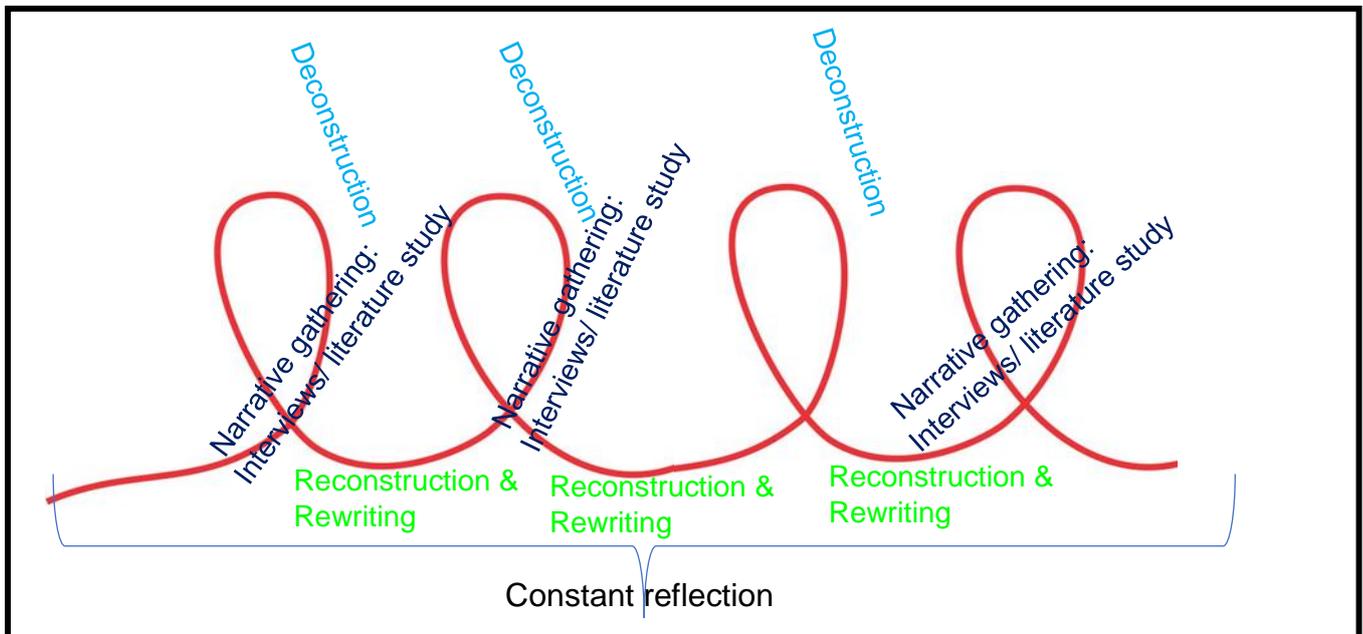


## 10.2. A reflection on the influence of different religions

Bunge MJ (2006:551) notes that within the growing academic and public debates about children and childhood, many questions also emerge about complex relationships between children and religion. She argues that religious traditions, for better or worse, shape the lives of children in a variety of ways. Interesting for me was to see that some scholars and civic leaders are re-examining the positive role that religion can play in character formation and child protection. On the other hand others are suspicious of what religious communities teach children and how children have been treated in these communities. Therefore, Bunge (MJ 2006:551) claims that parents and leaders of diverse faith communities' express concerns about children and religion. This is especially true, as they strive to preserve continuity with their own particular traditions and to nurture the spiritual and religious identity of their

children in complex and pluralistic social contexts within their own tradition and by participating in international and multi-religious conversations about childhood.

I agree with (Bunge MJ 2006:554), that we need to develop strong religious understandings of children. In doing this, religious scholars and theologians can do much to overcome simplistic views of children, to strengthen the commitment of faith communities to children themselves, to deepen knowledge of their particular religious tradition, to contribute more effectively to interdisciplinary discussions and childhood studies programmes in the academy, and to participate more fully in policy-making debates and decisions about child well-being both nationally and internationally.

With Bunge (2006:579), I also call on serious religious reflection on children, which includes attention to their vulnerabilities and needs as well as their strengths and gifts. This will be appealing and useful to a wide range of audiences and those that are concerned about children and childhood - from scholars, professionals, and policy makers to civic leaders, international relief agents, and child advocates. In this way, the intellectual task of exploring the themes of children and childhood in relationship to the world's great religions has the potential not only to strengthen interdisciplinary research on children but also to increase genuine respect and concrete support for children here and around the world.

In terms of the different religions, I learned that the families whose religions were more strictly followed, didn't have such a great power loss, when things like secularism or the culture of rights tried to minimise the authority of the parents. I believe it is important as a practical theologian working in Pastoral family therapy to also know how people from different religions perceive the way their religion influences the way they discipline their children. This not only enlighten us to define our own religions influence more clearly but helps us to understand and respect how affiliates of different religions discipline their children.

417

I would like to summarise the different religions of the affiliates that participated in the research interviews, as described in chapter, 4 as follows:

### 10.2.1. African religion

The African religion is seen as part of life. Byers (201:6) puts it: religion is life, and life is religion. In the African mind-set there are two spheres of the universe – a visible sphere and an invisible sphere. The hierarchy is also very important it flows from the lower members to the higher members of the hierarchy. In this hierarchy you may not mix with the lower members. The lower members use mediators to contact the higher members.

The African Traditional religion is based upon morality. It originates with God and flows into the ancestors. The family and community are of utmost importance – a person is a person, through another person (Aukamp)

The closeness of people within the African mind-set, reminded me that our faith community is of utmost importance. It takes a village to raise children.

### 10.2.2. The Hindu religion

Children are seen as close to divinity and thus deserving of every indulgence. They are precious and need to be taken care of very well. Children are seen as the centre of all aspirations and as the protector of the country, religion and the culture.

Disciplining children is about teaching them the values and traditions of the ones that has gone before them. Children can also be seen as the incarnation of the ones that has gone before them, a previous loved one.

418

There is no evil or hell. The motivation to do well comes from the spiritual obligation one has to fulfil. They have a code of conduct, which is a set of rules and norms that they need to follow to fulfil their duties.

The huge respect that the Hindu religion has for children, reminded me that we as Christians must take care to realise that our children are precious and that we need to handle them in such a way.

### 10.2.3. The Islam religion

Discipline in the Islam family starts at home, because: At judgement day everyone will be asked about their responsibilities. Parents should therefore always set an example for their children. Children must know their religion. In everything they do they must follow the Quran.

The parent–child relationship is the most important of all human relationships. Love and respect are the guiding principles for relationships. Children need to be disciplined for the benefit of themselves and society. The duty of parents according to Islam (2015:16) is to guide the future generation.

The madrassa and reading Islam books at home is very important. All the stories will be giving them their way of life.

Family is very important. The community is also a fundamental Islamic value (Hodge 2017:14). Although discipline is important, they do not believe in using corporal punishment. It is important that the followers of Islam are emulating Alla and others who went before them.

The boldness with which Mrs. Malek (affiliate of the Islam religion) taught her children to live out the Islam faith and the commitment that she had in doing it was a great inspiration for me.

### 10.2.4. The Jewish religion

Tikkun Olam is a saying reminding Jews about the responsibility they have to restore the world. In this relativistic age we need to teach people to hear the objective "Thou shalt" and the "Thou shalt not".

Jews have a strong religious identity that sets the bar for the morals, values and identity where the child is shaped by discipline.

In the Jewish religion, education is very important. It is called the *Chinuch* and is the responsibility of every parent – one cannot be excused from it. It is seen as a deep wisdom. A child in the Jewish faith must be built while cultivating his/her spiritual potential.

The roles of men and women are still defined. Women bear most of the responsibility at home. And men better identify with dominance, therefore they have a preference for authoritarian parenting.

The Jewish lady I interviewed (Mrs. Levy – an affiliate of the Jewish religion), was an inspiration to me, because of the way that she stood up for her religion in a confident though loving way.

## 10.3. A reflection on the influence of education

I chose to do interdisciplinary research on the theme of education and discipline. I did it because of my education background (I was a qualified teacher, who taught at a primary school).

For me this was very enriching. It helped me to understand that the discipline problems we face are also about the same things the educators had to go through.

To put it in postfoundational terms: the specific context of discipline was one that was as prevalent in South African education as well as in South African homes. The theme of discipline is therefore socially constructed.

All the different religions in South Africa had to go through new socially constructed realities in terms of post-apartheid and in terms of the demise of corporal punishment. Therefore, even people of different religions had somewhat the same socially constructed issues that they went through in terms of corporal punishment and new narratives that had to be developed in education and in families.

I would like to see a theologian do research on the influence that the turn of 1994 had on the different religions in our country.

## 10.4. A voice of personal reflection

In the past few years while I was busy with this research I had my own battles with child discipline. It was as if this research took me to a place where I not only researched about other people's experiences and thoughts, but to a place where I had to think about how I am disciplining my children. I was blessed with two very intelligent children, with opposite personalities. My son is intelligent and wants to

figure everything out for himself. For him the world is right or wrong with almost no in-betweens. It was a dream disciplining him. But then came his sister. She is a very strong willed child, and a little fighter.

One thing I learned from my research on discipline was that discipline is not just about methods to correct your children's behaviour. It's much more. It starts with us as parents. We must know who we are and what we believe, so that we can have a strong foundation to build our family on.

Our actions and the way we live must then bear a testimony to our religious identity and beliefs. If we live what we preach – our children will follow in our footsteps. We cannot expect our children to be what we cannot or will not be. We can't teach our children to worship and love the Lord, when we only do it once a week. The biggest discipline lessons we give our children are the ones that they can see in our lives.

## 10.4. A voice in closing

The journey of my research was an amazing one. I loved the fact that I could listen to people's stories. In doing this I made new friends, through the openness my co-researchers had in sharing their stories I learned to have great respect for each one of them.

We all have families that we want to give the best, and raise them in our religion, so that our children can have a solid foundation to stand on in their adult life. It is a journey that will never end, because the people, places, books, sounds, smells and memories will stay with me for a life time.

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**ADDENDUM A:     INFORMED CONSENT LETTER**

**Department of Practical Theology**


**LETTER OF INTRODUCTION AND INFORMED CONSENT**
**FOR PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH**


**Title of the study:**

A Practical Theological reflection on discipline: Listening to the voices of children and parents.


**Researcher:**

Lizette van Rooyen

University of Pretoria

084 690 1971

lizvanrooyen@gmail.com

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You are cordially invited to participate in an academic research study due to your experience and knowledge in the research area, namely Practical Theology. Each participant must receive, read, understand and sign this document *before* the start of the study. If a child is 7-17 years and is requested to partake in a research study, the parent/legal guardian must give consent. Children from 7-17 years are also required to sign an assent form.


**Purpose of the study**: The purpose of the study is to find out if there are any connections to how people discipline their children and what they believe. The results of the study may be published in an academic journal. You will be provided with a summary of our findings on request. No participant's names will be used in the final publication.


443

**Duration of the study**: The study will be conducted over a period of 4 months and its projected date of completion is January 2017.

**Research procedures**: The study is based on the postfoundational practical theological positioning together with narrative research. I will create a space where people's narratives (stories) can be listened to and heard in a respectful manner; a place where it is not only possible to hear the meaning of the narrator (the one telling the story), but where the narrator is respected and not exposed by the research itself. The aim of my research, will be to listen to stories of parents with different religious backgrounds disciplining their children. I therefore do not strive to be objective at all, but rather strive for subjective integrity, with a method of participatory interaction.

I will invite approximately five different families from different religious backgrounds to go on the journey with me. I will try to choose families with children aged between 5 and 12 years of age, and also different ways of thinking, that have different religious outlooks. I would also prefer to keep the families anonymous to keep them safe from any criticism and to help them to be open about their thoughts on the sensitive topics of discipline and religion. It will thus be a random selection of families with different religious backgrounds.

The data that I will be collecting will be interpreted on a social constructionist basis (interpretations will thus be made together with the "co-researchers"/ interviewees). I will do it through listening to parents and children's narratives and through that trying to understand the world of these families. I will also use a literature study in order to gain more insight into the research. My focus will be on the narratives of religion and discipline.

**What is expected of you**:

I will have three interviews with parents and one (the first one) with their children. Because of the fact that I will do my research on families of different religious

backgrounds, I will do each family's interview on their own (separately). In the interviews I will ask the parents to tell me about how they think their religion influences the way they discipline their children and to reflect on it. I will only ask the children to draw me a picture or write me a story of a time they were disciplined by their parents. They (the children) will not be drawn into any discussion about it.

> Because I would like to involve children in my research, I would ask parents beforehand to sign consent forms for the children. I would also make it clear that I do not want to harm any relationship between the parents and their children and want the parents to be present when I do research with the children. I would not involve children in the discussions on how they are disciplined. I would only have these discussions with the parents, because I do not want to harm the relationship between the parents and children. I would only ask the children how they are disciplined, through asking them to write or tell me a story, or to draw a picture and tell me about it, when I interview them.

**Your rights**: Your participation in this study is very important. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without stating any reasons and without any negative consequences. You, as a participant, may contact the researcher at any time in order to clarify any issues pertaining to this research. The respondent as well as the researcher must each keep a copy of this signed document.

> **Confidentiality**: All information will be treated as confidential. I will keep the families' identities anonymous. Only I will have access to the raw data. The relevant data will be destroyed, should you choose to withdraw.

**ADENDUM B: A MINISTRY CURRICULUM VITAE OF REVERENT LIZETTE VAN ROOYEN**

**PART TIME MINISTER AT THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH MAGALIESKRUIN-PRETORIA**

**Church ministry**

Organise weekly children's ministry on Sundays for pre-school children and children up to gr.6.

Give guidance, motivate and train the children's ministry team of my congregation.

Organise and lead different camps for children during the year. Camps like holiday camps during the school holidays and a yearly BOOT camp (adventure camp) for children.

Lead and organise talks for children and their parents about current issues in the community, such as bullying, drugs and technology. I do this together with professional persons, like the local police and an Educational Psychologist.

Lead Sunday Services in our congregation where I also sometimes lead the congregation in celebrating Holy Communion and baptism.

For parents who want to baptise their children, I lead a monthly baptismal guidance course.

Give pastoral guidance to children and parents in need.

Organise social events where children and parents can celebrate our family in Christ.

Hospital visitations.

In our team of congregational ministers I keep the minutes of our weekly meetings.

Train teens to be leaders in our children's ministry

**Work in local schools**

Weekly part of children's ministry in primary schools

Work as part of a network (consisting of people like police, community policing forum, counsellors and social workers) in the local pre-schools, primary schools and high schools.

Am part of an outreach team that reaches out yearly, during the child protection month, to schools in our community, together with the above-mentioned network, to talk to children and teens about current issues, to warn them and teach them to be safe

Gives support and help in the network to children in need at the schools.

Presented a Parental Guidance programme, at the local CMR (social work centre).

I gave parental guidance at all the Afrikaans primary schools in our community together with an Educational Psychologist during 2015.

**In the broader church community**

I was part of the Dutch Reformed Church's commission for Church and Education.

Serve at the South African Counsel for Churches on the children's ministry team, as the 1st Deputy Chairperson.

**At the University of Pretoria**

Under the guidance of Prof Julian Müller doing my PhD in Pastoral Narrative Therapy.

Part of the research group of Prof Malan Nel on children and youth ministry.

A Practical Theological reflection on discipline: Listening to the voices of children and parents.

(A PhD Study in Practical Theology: Pastoral Narrative Family and Marriage Therapy)

Reverent Lizette van Rooyen
BA Theology (UP), BD Theology (UP), MA Practical Theology (UP),

Post Graduate Certificate in Education (UNISA)

| **Name of the Family:** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Parent(s):** | | |
| Name and surname: | | |
| Age: | | |
| Contact number: | | |
| E-mail address: | | |
| Name and surname: | | |
| Age: | | |
| Contact number: | | |
| E-mail address: | | |
| **Child(ren)**: | | |
| Name and surname: | | |
| Age: | | |
| Name and surname: | | |
| Age: | | |
| Name and surname: | | |

| Age: | | |
|---|---|---|

**Purpose of the study**: The purpose of the study is to listen to the stories of families in order to find out if there are any connections to how people discipline their children and what they believe. The results of the study may be published in an academic journal. You will be provided with a summary of our findings on request. No participant's names will be used in the final publication.

**I, Reverend Lizette van Rooyen, hereby give consent that this is confidential, that the names of the parents and children (Families) will not be made known.**

I will have three interviews with parents and one (the first one) with their children. Because I will do my research with families of different religious backgrounds, I will carry out each family's interview on their own (separately). In the interviews I will ask the parents to tell me about how they think their religion influences the way they discipline their children and to reflect on it. I will only ask the children to draw me a picture or write me a story of a time they were disciplined by their parents. They (the children) will not be drawn into any discussion about it. I would ask parents beforehand to sign consent forms for the children. I would also want to make it clear that I do not want to harm any relationship between parents and their children and want the parents to be present when I do research with the children. I would not involve children in the discussions on how they are disciplined. I would only have these discussions with the parents. I would only ask the children how they are disciplined, through asking them to write or tell me a story, or to draw a picture and tell me about it, when I interview families.

**ADENDUM C: WRITTEN INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

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I hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature of this research.

I understand that I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the research. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions.

Respondent: _____

Researcher: _____

Date: _____

Contact number of the Researcher:

_____

**ADENDUM D: VERBAL INFORMED CONSENT FORM** *(Only applicable if respondent cannot write)*

_____

I, the researcher, have read and have explained fully to the respondent, named


_____ and his/her relatives, the letter of introduction. The respondent indicated that he/she understands that he/she will be free to withdraw at any time.




Respondent:          _____


Researcher:          _____


Witness:                 _____


Date:                      _____

Sissie says she talks to her children. She sends them to church every Sunday. But they only listen some of the time.

Mamma says she and her children pray together sometimes. And they read the Bible together sometimes. But the children don't want to.

Mamma says when she was young she listened to her parents. Children today don't listen.

Sissie says when she was young she was also naughty. But not like the children today.

Mamma says the times are different now. There are too many bad things now. Children see bad things on the TV. They learn bad things.

Mamma says she does not know what will become of her children.

Sissie says she prays that God will protect her children. She worries about them all the time.

Mamma says that the child that turns out good, it is because of God. Not because of the parents.

She says she does her best. She prays. She talks. She beats them. But she cannot control them.

Sissie says the same. She does her best. But she cannot do more.

Mamma says only God can help now.

I asked them if parents stand together. Mamma told me about her son who wanted shoes, and her husband said no. And her son was unhappy. But punishment doesn't make it good.

Mamma said she was a good child. As a child she put Sellotape on her mouth to keep quiet.

Sussie says that religion has no influence on disciplining Children.

Religion influences how we have relationships in the house.

Mamma didn't agree with Sissie.

She says that her religion is good. (Christian) Because she gets peace when she talks to God. She then feels relieved.

For Sissie it's also like that. She adds that when talking to God everything is possible.

I then asked what is the common issues that they have to deal with, with discipline.

Mamma says alcohol, and drugs.

Sissie says it's about the taxis. Most people are working for them.

Mamma says even the young ones have trouble with the issues.

Mamma told me a story:

Her son (10 yrs old) didn't want to go to the shops. He is very lazy and doesn't want to do anything. He cries a lot. He likes many vetkoek. He doesn't eat – its 12 o'clock and he ate nothing.

She says that children don't want to go to Sunday school. There is not many who go. She called out her sons to confirm it.

Mamma says that they can't learn discipline at church, because they feel it's not for them.

In their tradition they hit the children and scream at them.  Their parents did it to them, so they also do it. They think that that's the way.

Sissie says that her mother hit her. So she hits her children. But the children are not listening.

Mamma says that growing up she was not naughty.

Sissie says that when they hit, they hit all over the body.

Mamma said that when she was growing up, she took a bottle to her head. They were taking everything.

Sissie says it's because they want you to listen.

Mamma says that her thumb is not going to be right. When she was at school the principle hit them a lot. He was punished a lot and hard. Her thumb bone was pushed up because of that.

Today's children don't get punished a lot.

You can't hit them a lot because then they can't listen.

Sussie says that the same time they tell that they will go to the social worker.

Mamma says that if you punish a child it's not like you don't love them. You like them. You just don't want them to do bad things.

Sissie says: Bad things we don't want

Pray for the children

Mamma says God will help them to listen and not do bad things, to your family and to others.

When she says that she's preaching things, she said she's going to work for the whole people.

Mamma says: I am a women of God. That is what she is telling her husband. Her husband is then second. She has a certificate – please God help me. Also with family. Praying for burdens of family.

Sissie also prays. She asks God to help her children, to grow up and to do things right, and not wrong.

Mamma says that not all parents go to church. Where do they then learn how to discipline their children? They just do what they think is good.

Baptism is important. If a child is not baptised they are in the dark. Children sometimes even get baptised when they are dead. Then they are in the light of God.

Sissie says that if you are in the light of God, when you are dead. You will sit next to the angels of God. Mamma agreed.

Mamma says that they baptise children thinking that they will grow in the light of God. But they don't believe.

They believe, but doesn't want to go to church.

Sissie says that religion doesn't have any influence on the way we discipline our children, because children don't listen. Children get punished the way the parents want.

God did not say you must punish children.

Punishment comes to us as parents. It is good for us to punish them. Punishment is separate from religion. You can't punish a child in church, because it's not good in front of Gods eyes.

I asked Mamma and Sissie to tell me more about their religion:

Mamma says that she is a Christian. That means to pray for God. To believe in God.

Everything depends on God. She likes the name of God.

Sissie says that she likes God so much.

She believes in Him. She knows that He will lift her up. When she cries, everything will be all right.

Mamma says that they want something to help the kids in the community. Because all the kids are the same. God must help them, because they prayed.

Sissie says that they love their children.

Mamma says that we can't throw them away. We hope that God can change them.

**ADDENDUM F: TRANSCRIPTIONS OF THE NARRATIVES OF MY CO-RESEARCHERS.**

**INTERVIEW WITH MR. AND MRS. GOVENDER**

Religion has an influence.

Mr Govender was brought up within a Tamil background. Mum and dad were Tamil, but his grandma was Christian. She took him and his three other brothers to church and then eventually mum and dad also gave their hearts to Jesus. He doesn't really know what Tamil is about, he wasn't very into it. She has been brought up within a Christian background. She went to Sunday school when she was little and wrote exams in matrix, and competed. She loves the Lord. It's like basically breathing for her.

They believe in Jesus. She trusts the Lord with all of her heart. For her church and serving the Lord has meant everything to her. She has held on to God for dear life, because of the background she came from. He has been her only source of hope, strength and comfort. She has been very indoors. It has always been God and herself.

Mr. Govender says that the way children are disciplined now a days is not like it was. Now a days, it is just hitting, screaming and using vulgar language. But in the long term that doesn't really discipline the kids. When a child does something wrong you need to correct them and tell them that that's wrong, and don't do it and stuff. Then the second step, you don't hit the child, but you need to be more harsh with the child.

She replied that in their home, it's just the one boy, they don't hit him. Ever since he has been around they only had one incident where she gave him a clap/whacking. But since Elijah has been around, mostly because Mr Govender is at work, they both discipline him. If one is reprimanding, the other one doesn't interfere. They don't hit him.

If they need to discipline him, they speak to him, help him to understand what he's done wrong. And then they shout at him, or be quite stern with him. They will tell him,

why they discipline him and why they say this and that. There is no swearing, no common words. He is treated the way basically they would wanted to be treated. If they know that it's going to get out of hand, they will warn him, for example, if they know that they are going to church, and you know all children are naughty at church, they will say to him, Eli we are going to church today, if you are going to be naughty, mum and dad are going to be very angry with you. But they don't hit him. He knows then and understands.

She learned all this from the Lord, and by themselves. They have their parents, but when they were married they were only staying at home. And when they had the baby, it was mostly only the tree of them. They made mistakes, and learned how to work hard at it, and teach him. And then eventually they just started with it. We gained it through experience.

The day she realised that she was having Eli she just went on her knees and handed him over to God. And they see it in him. He knows the fear of the Lord. They know they made mistakes, but much of her time she spends in prayer. Definitely prayer. She prays about everything. If she walks into the home, she always walks in first, she says, thank you Jesus. They would pray everywhere and always. Before they leave home as a family, they pray together. No matter if they are late or in a rush, they will always make time to pray.

They are not forcing their son to pray, or get down on his knees. Because then he doesn't want to do it out of his free will. He just started to do it with them. He one day knew Psalm 91 by himself, we never thought that he would remember. They had a special experience with him. They were looking for a car. His dad wasn't set on buying the one car. Mr Govender wanted something a little better and Mr Govender said, what his friends would think. And he came to his dad and stood there, and he told him, it's your car, it's your car that God would give you, don't buy it because of what other people would think. So it has, it definitely has an influence.

And some days they go out, and before they go anywhere he just says, let's pray for everything. Even if it's his dad's responsibility to lead the prayer, he sometimes beats his dad to it.

No child is perfect. He's a boy. He makes his naughty.

> Pray first.
>
> Correct them when they are wrong.
>
> Tell them nicely at first, so that they understand what they are doing wrong.
>
> Instead of scolding them, and they don't know.
>
> Mum adds, never say a word that would hurt them where they would be ruined by it. It leaves something in your memory.
>
> When you speak to them, treat them with respect and love.
>
> Don't shout at them, so that they feel humiliated.
>
> Don't insult and embarrass them.
>
> No parent is perfect, yes out of anger, and in the moment, you may say something harsh, but remember there is always the next day, you can always go back and say, sorry my son.
>
> Always discipline with love.
>
> There is always the next moment to go and undo what you have done.

Grace.

It is difficult to discipline with love. Most of the time discipline comes when something wrong has happened, and not everybody can act out of love in anger or in a moment of frustration. So obviously there are emotions. When you discipline, you don't discipline in a moment of love, but a moment of something gone wrong. It is difficult. We have made our mistakes. It depends on the situation itself.

Prayer and love is important. Respect your kids, you got to have that bond with them. And time, if you just like come home and say, hi how are you and that's it, and you do not find out about the school and the work, then it's going to drive them to just go into the world.

Mum says that parents these days need to work. And parents are also tired. They don't have that mind-set coming home. She read something the other day that really caught her attention. It said something about, there were two things that she learned this year that was very important. First photos, mums always want to look beautiful, in pictures. We always want to make sure. But a child doesn't care about how you look. Later in life they just want to make sure that you were there, and in the picture with them. So that they have things to look at where you were there with them. And

all the time you spend cleaning your home, are precious memories not to be made with your children.

You rather spend time with the kids that you're not going to get back. Time is the most important thing. We have got to make time for them.

Mr. Govender says it falls on the parents to teach a child what is right and what is wrong. Your children will follow you. What you do, they will also do. They follow your example. He tends to follow his father very much.

Example, Eli didn't wanted to do his homework. She moaned with him about it, and she saw that he did it, but he was very upset about it. It was an awful time for him. The one day she decided to do something differently. Dad was not at home. She sent him to the bathroom, and she just spoke to him, and said, son you know this is your homework, mum are just here to help you, to tell you that you need to do your homework, and if you don't want to do your homework its fine with me, but it's your homework and I am here to help you. He cried, he just stood there in the bathroom and cried and cried. And I guess that at that point he just realised, you know something happened because he just … I didn't shout at him, I didn't tell him anything harmful, and he just came out and did his homework. And I saw the difference in it. And he did his homework, because he knew he had to do his homework. And not like the previous times that she had to tell him, do your homework, and you need to do this. And from then we usually did not have a problem, with homework, and even when he comes home and says he is too tired, I will tell him, it's your homework, and you need to do it, and he does.

### *Scripture*

Ephesians 6 – children obey your parents, and love your mother and your father that is the first commandment that is the one we do, we teach it to him, we taught him that. He knows other verses, he knows Psalm 91, 23.

### *The time he cried to open up the presents.*

He went to his cousin's house, his father wrapped the gifts at home. And he came home and he came to his mummy and he just cried and said please can I open up the presents and so on, and his mum had to explain to him that, if he opens the

presents before Christmas he is going to kill the magic of Christmas. So he kind of understood the whole Santa story, and he is now eagerly waiting.

The magic of Christmas, according to Elijah is if you open one gift that means that Santa will be very sad and God will be sad. That is the one reason why we can only open the presents on the 25th.

Mum told me that when he was crying, she was cutting the tomatoes and told him to wait till the 25th. He doesn't know his numbers that well and heard the 21st. when he then heard that it's not the 21st, but the 25th he cried again.

Presents are a big deal to him. He told me that he is going to get a small, big, medium and large present – while showing me the wrapped presents in front of the Christmas tree.

He didn't go to his dad on this day, because he doesn't want to disappoint his dad. He also knows that daddies no, is no. he then goes to his mummy. He was standing there, and they had a conversation. He just stood there and cried and cried. And eventually he sat on the floor. She started talking to him, while she was cutting the meat. And she told him that he couldn't open the gifts, and she had to explain it to him, because he really cried a lot, she felt really bad but also explained to him that if he opened the gifts before Christmas he will lose the magic of Christmas. It was quite a long conversation before he calmed down.

In this house it has always been talk. If there was any discipline, it had always been talk. There was once that he just back talked his father, he didn't want to take understanding, he didn't want to understand that he was wrong. So that day his mother sent him to his room, to sit on his bed, to think about the way he spoke to his dad. It wasn't right for him to back talk his dad. He went to his room, and just cried. Eventually he came out and said, sorry Mamma and sorry daddy, I wouldn't do that again. I have learned.

Don't ever force a child into anything. They've got to love it. Especially when it comes to the faith. We as parents are going to teach it to him, but don't force it to them. Because then they will learn it as a habit and not something that they will love and embrace. They do Holy Communion every Wednesday. No matter how tired or busy they are. He does it and he also knows the verse. They do it as a family. The

reason why they let Eli do it, is because they want him to understand the meaning of it. Because if he one day becomes a teenager he must understand that if he chooses something wrong, he would have to give this up. Because he cannot play at that age with Holy Communion, so she knows that if she's teaching him now, as he grows he's going to know that the fear of God is instilled in him. And I think that it is very, very important. And I think that it's something that he would feel very disheartened about not being part of this as a family, if he's a teenager. And he wants to do wrong things.

### *What is the fear of the Lord?*

For her the fear of the Lord is about being obedient. For me to dishearten… I love the Lord to such a point that if I would have to do something that upsets Him, I know I would … it's very hard for me. Its love. It has to be love. A child would not want to disappoint his parents, because he loves them. And I guess that's my feeling towards God. I am not a perfect child, but I know that I love him, and that is where the fear of the Lord comes from love.

We want him to love God, and that's the kind of fear he must have towards God. He must have respect and honour for God. He must not turn away from what he has been taught.

Dad ends of with: love your religion. Teach your kids the right way. And take each day as it comes.

Mum ads: and spend time with the Lord.

**INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION OF INTERVIEW OF MR AND MRS ABDOEL**

Mr Abdoel that in this day and age he really doesn't think so. You have to discipline a child, religion it plays a role, but in this day and age it's very hard to put both together and practice it.

Mrs Abdoel says it plays a big role. Because there are morals, and there are stories and there is so much of understanding that we can take from the Bible as parents, and understand it and feed that to our children. So I think, that if they know the road that Jesus walked, what He did for us, the main, the core of who they are, that's so important for them to understand who they are,  because one day they are going to be individuals not just dummies walking on the road, being a person asking who am I here for, they must know who they are, I am a Christian, and this is my belief system, so nothing can just, you know, take them and bluff them with a silly situation.

Mr Abdoel: The youth lost the meaning of life, they lost it they actually got lost in the world chasing other things in the world,

Mrs Abdoel:  they lost the plot

Mr Abdoel: chasing music and all the singers and they are running for that. But the main things in life they have forgotten.

***The main things in life?***

Mrs Abdoel: love, family – that's it – two things ( A agreed)

If you ask little a, there is always two things I want from him, love and respect. Because that is honouring your parents, and if you are honouring your parents, there's the thing in the Bible now, if you honour your parents you shall have long life, those are the things that we can teach them.

*Little A drew a picture of him and daddy playing soccer in the garage. Daddy said that is the training ground- in the garage, where they play soccer together.*

Mrs Abdoel:  love and respect is biblical. Everything I tell my husband, even in our marriage, our home, if you ask him, it's biblical. You're supposed to love your wife, wives submit to your husband. Those are the things, when my husband and I are talking, I talk to him about it, then I tell him, this is supposed how life is supposed to be as Christians. So we're not living from another book out there in this world, what we see on TV has always taken us away from who we are supposed to be, that there is carrying us away to social media, and all these social networks and stuff, are taking us away from our core beings.

### What is our core beings?

Its, we're all here for a purpose. Life got us so busy, work, getting up in the morning, making lunches the traffic, the buzz of life, the music, so many things, frustration. It's taking us away from our purpose of life, and how we are supposed to grow up our children. Taking them to church, showing them how to go in the right way. It's distracting us. It's nice to take a break and just say, you know what, today it is the day just for my family. This is what I would appreciate, thank you God. Things like that. What about prayer, that you forgot about when your busy.

### How do you discipline your children?

Mrs Abdoel: I don't have a quick hand. But I like to talk to him and explain to him, I'm sitting here he's sitting there, I will explain to him, until I am blue in the face. But I try not to hit, because then I feel miserable.

Mr Abdoel: but if you have been warned, and you still, not a beating, I will take the hands that has touched it (been naughty) and they will get warmed up.

Mrs Abdoel: but he will get, when I get frustrated because I told him ten times, believe me I will take the slipper and I will whack him.

There's no like I will hit you till you're blue and black, no. but I will smack him, in such a way that he will get corrected.

Mr Abdoel: I warned you and I know that you know that that is wrong.

### When last did you discipline him?

Mrs Abdoel:  discipline is a daily thing. How many times per day you should ask? (laughing)

The main thing at the moment, is that little A, is very distracted. If I tell him to get something, or put something right, or take something out, it's that he's distracted by something else, maybe the TV. It's like his mind is not concentrating that good. So, we try to get him to concentrate on one thing at a time. When we try to ask him two to three things at the same time he's going to fail. He wants to take responsibility, but she tells him that there is certain things he can do, and certain things he can't do.

Mr Abdoel: Friday he was last disciplined. So before his daddy wanted to take him to the pool, he didn't want to listen, he was running up and down. You know it is holiday time, and he was very excited. He was on the other hand also giving it a go. And I gave him a shot on his hand for doing something, but then he also took him to the pool. Because he felt bad.

Mrs Abdoel: Holiday times their energy levels are sky high, and our energy levels is depleted.

Verses 2 motivate to discipline?

Mrs Abdoel: honour your parents, and the book that Marcia bought little A about, honouring your parent. But basically, it's about love. If you have love in your hart, if you live your life in love with yourself and other people, you will be happy. Because if you don't love people and you don't love yourself, you will always find a fault with anybody and everybody. Love is the most important thing that I want my children to know. If you love yourself and other people, that's the main thing. Let's think about the commandments of God. Let's tie it back. What does it say? Love God and love others like you love yourself. Behind the toilet, if you look at the toilet I got there, I've got three on the door, stuck over there, commandments of God, and who we belong to, we don't belong to man. Man's going to go. Man's going to let us down. But God will hold still and God will firm to us.

*How would you describe your faith?*

Mrs Abdoel: I don't believe in all these dominations, and all of that. I believe Jesus died on the cross for my sins, He set me free. There is no bondage that I live under. So, I got myself of from all the heritage stuff, were going forward on a clean slate. For me faith is believing and trusting, leaving it right there with God. And believing in the power of God. That He is going to intervene, He's got the resources, He knows

exactly what time your appointments are. It's not in my hands, it's in His hands. My children, my family, my husband, my marriage – everything is in His hands.

Mr Abdoel: I am not the holiest of holy, my religion, I am Christian, I may not be the holiest of holy, but my belief, I got a lot of faith.

Mrs Abdoel:  Little A knows that he is a Christian. When he goes to my mother's house …

Mr Abdoel: Mrs Abdoel: is not born into Christianity, she comes from a Hindu home.

How did you then get into a Christian home?

Mrs Abdoel: When I met my husband, he never ever forced me, he never told me, you have to be a Christian, no. he took me to church. And it was actually, he is going to get a crown one day for his wife, because he is the one that took me to church and you know. In fact, the first year I went to church I was laughing, laughing at the people, what are they doing, what is this, I haven't seen this before.

But I was telling you about little A. My mom is a Hindu, she still is, and when he is going to her house, he knows the difference between them and us. They are Hindus and we are Christians. Certain things like when I put a dot, or if I'm wearing a Panjabi or something, or a shari, or I put a dot on, like just acting, he will tell me. You're not a Hindu, you a Christian, take that of. He knows the differences, and I like that. Even my brother, he knows my brother is a Muslim, and that he goes to the mosque.

Mr Abdoel: you know, recently they had that festival where they bust all that fireworks?

Mrs Abdoel: Devali

Mr Abdoel: he asked me why don't we bust crackers.  I told him, it's because we're not Hindu's and he got that in his head, so every time he sees that, he says – oh that's only for Hindus. (all laughing together).

Sticking to family traditions, bonds the family together. You know what your mum has taught you also practices in your house, because that's the way you've been taught. If you've been fed violence and all that thing, that's what comes out.

465

Mrs Abdoel: A was brought up in a Christian home, with Sunday school and all of that. Solid bred in a Christian home. She missed out on all of that. So, when I fell in love with Jesus, basically I went for it completely. I did a diploma in theology, and that. Because I felt that I missed out on a whole lot of stories. You know like as a child and like the foundation of everything, like the Moses story, and the Abraham and Izsak story. I missed out on all of that. So just from reading the Bible, I couldn't grasp it. So I did the whole theology story two to three years, there's my graduation there with the Church. I tried to catch up, but every day is a new message.

Mr Abdoel: we also try to practice it, try to watch a Christian movie. We put one on for him, you know.

Mrs Abdoel: – I've got tons of Christian resources, all my stuff over there, I love my Hill songs.

Mrs Abdoel: like for example Suhana's childhood – when she looks back at it, when she did something wrong, her parents would use fbc's whatever, (that is swearwords). She will not use swearwords on little A, she will not hit any bombs on him, because "how am I disciplining him, by using those words"? It's very different in that sense.

Mr Abdoel: as I say, I speak one time, twice, third time you will get a thrashing, because you are not listening now.

Mrs Abdoel: – Then my shoes talk. And my shoes talk very well, hey.

Mr Abdoel: I noticed with the youngsters of today, only that you feel a little pinch you take it all and realise that's not what I was supposed to do that.

Mrs Abdoel:  – They push their limits.

Before I had children, I always said that I will be such a strict mother, I will not tolerate any nonsense, and if other people's children may be naughty, I would say - how do they let the child do that? But with your own children, there is such an amount of leniency, because you love them so much, you love them unconditionally. And you only know that after you become a parent.

But I think my core foundation is that I am strict, but I still do it, there is a lot of leniency with him.

Mr Abdoel: in this day and age I feel like the Bible is been written, you know, it was so long back.

Mrs Abdoel: – that it doesn't cater for the children of today.

Mr Abdoel: I guess the children of this world are getting lost at a much younger age. It makes it harder as a parent to discipline a child. How do you stop a child, you know, from being a boy. Like everybody else that's playing in the park, you can't go and tell him go be a boy with them. Where you grew up with your childhood a little bit different to now. He can't do this, and he can't do that. The world has gone so bad, that we have to sometimes need to be hard with them.

He tries to teach him how they were grown up. What dad says, that goes. Listen to your mum, listen to your dad. And I try to install everything else in a Christian way, Sunday school.

Mrs Abdoel:  – I notice that in my husband a lot, he uses his own childhood and he disciplines and teaches them. I can respect that.

With me it's very different, because I don't want my children to grow up as I was brought up, and the way I … things that I was taught. I try to open my mind up a lot more to this world, more knowledgeable so that I can handle them as boys, because I want them to be good men at the end of the day. At the same time, I don't want them to be dumb dumbs, like boys who will only be taken advantage of. So I follow my husband a lot for how they should be as men.

Mr Abdoel: I bring them up hard, I will be honest with you.

Mrs Abdoel:  The big thing with the husband and I, it's a big balance. I am very soft, my heart is very soft. Like Mr Abdoel is a bit harder. But that's the balance. That's why God gave you a mother and a father. The mother will take you and hold you, and the father will take you out there and say, now try and walk. I try and pull them more towards me, and I'll shield you.

Mr Abdoel: But in this world today, you have to grow them up hard. You can't let the sheep go in among the wolves.

Mrs Abdoel:  So he depends a lot on his childhood and his upbringing, and I don't want them to have what my upbringing was. I want them to have a better

understanding and to be more open to this world. More clever, we were kept very, you know, I was very sceptic, like I didn't know. If I had a question I never knew, because I never got the right answer. If I asked a question, I would never get the right answer. With little A , when he's got a question, I will answer him to the best way for him to understand.

As a parent I am not going to always be right, and I am not always going to be wrong. But I am going to learn along the way. Sometimes I get frustrated, so I tell little A, just hold on. You get over frustrated with a child. It's true, when I can't see it, he can see it (her husband). It's like a partnership between us. We made this family, and now we need to grow them up, between the both of us. So at the same time A and I will also challenge each other also in parenting.

Mrs Abdoel:  Children need to have a very strong foundation. They need to know who they are. They need to respect their parents. They need to love their parents because in this world it's going to take them astray, it's going to be like heavy currents that's going to take them away. It's going to be alcohol, drugs, women, clubs … it's going to take them. When they hit it all-out there, when they fall back down, they are going to fall back down on their foundation.

Mr Abdoel: What we instil now in them as a small young child, are your roots in the ground, Christianity, this is right, that's wrong, morals, mummy don't like that, and daddy don't like that. Surely one day all that, that we are repeating will come out.

Mrs Abdoel:  It will pay off one day, it will pay off. But it is that solid foundation that I want for them. Because they are going to fall one day, and when they fall from that place that they are going to be in, they are going to fall back in on the foundation, the solid foundation. That's going to be back home here. Daddy and mummy will still be here to tell you, what did we teach you. How did we explain to you when you were growing up? What did we instil in you?

We've all been there. So we've got to prepare them for that. With big solid roots.

Mr Abdoel: They say it's harder to teach a child from 14 years upwards about Christianity, than six years upwards. You think it will be easier to understand Christianity when they get a little bigger, but it's not that way. What you install now,

at this age, at 14/15 he will be ready to make a decision, and say this is wrong and this is right. Mummy says don't do this, and don't do that.

Mrs Abdoel: That's the whole thing. Because mummy and daddy are not always going to be there. When daddy and mummy is not there, what are you going to do? That's what I want to know.

**TRANSCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW WITH MRS VAN DER MERWE (AFRIKAANS CHRISTIAN)**

Yes, my faith has an influence on how I discipline my children.

My faith: I came from a Christian home. I adopted Christ as my Lord and saviour, and my Father when I was still young, in primary school. from there the Lord was on a journey with me. And from there I absolutely walked on the road of the Lord. Sometimes I went through a lot of bends in the road, and a lot of ups and downs. But today I believe that there is only one true and living God, I do everything according to his book, the Bible. And His laws and guidance. We serve a God of love. So that is very important to me. And I believe that every home should be built on love. Without that …

And the commandment of love. Of mother and father that love each other. The children should see it. It is necessary that they see it. We are so privileged in our home to have come from loving families, with no divorce, but loving parents. That we didn't have to struggle through the divorce of parents. I pray that the Lord will keep this love covenant between us till the day when death separates us. I see cousins and friends that have gone through it. It's very difficult. I don't think it's ever easy for anyone. There are circumstances that happen, and death can come in. I also see that in my daughter's school. There's a lot of single mothers and single fathers, and how difficult it actually is for those children.

Discipline?

I came from a home where there's a lot of boundaries. My mother and father set good boundaries for us. They didn't force discipline on us. My mother always gave us choices. She also always said that for every choice you make there is a consequence. Hettie Brits also states it: every action has a reaction. You have a choice about it, if you do it out of love, or of you don't do it, or won't do it, you need to be responsible for the consequences, of how you made your decisions. I think we also try this with our daughter. I try to put boundaries. There must be routine. But it must be healthy boundaries, for her. You know a child should learn where her boundaries are. This to me is important.

If you think about discipline in terms of boundaries, we find that the Lord put boundaries out for us with his Ten Commandments. If you obey the Ten Commandments, and out of that set your boundaries, you can only walk on the right road. And we try. If you can try to follow that guidance. I believe that we will be ok at the end of the day. And it is that boundaries that we try in our family. To give us the wrongs and the right. And our right and wrong is what the Bible teaches us. My husband and I do our Bible study together in the evenings and in the morning. We believe in the same God and in the same values. And that helps a lot.

I think that makes it easier. I think it must be extremely difficult in a family, where the mother or father have other ways of thinking of a thing. And not have the same values. I believe that this makes it extremely difficult. But in our case, in our house we have the same values, we believe in the same things, which makes it a lot easier. We differ in opinion sometimes, because we are human, but if it comes to the bottom line, we believe in discipline and to discipline our daughter. We have a little bit of different ways of doing it, but I don't really believe in a hiding. I think our daughter is now 6 years old, and she had only two hidings in her life time. There are different ways of doing it. And me and my husband believe that how you handle a person, and how you handle a situation, tells a lot about a person. And we also apply this in our secular world. And that is how we had success in the past, because it's about how you handle people. It's about how you communicate and handle things.

How do you discipline your child?

I think I should say that we have been very blessed with our daughter. We don't have a very hyperactive, OCD type of daughter. But she has her moments, when they throw a tantrum, and she doesn't want to put her toys away. So, I give her a choice. Either we take away the things she likes, or we make her TV time less, but she learns with every choice she makes. If she says that she doesn't want to do it now, we give her a choice and say that if she asks us to do something later, she must think of it if she will be willing to accept it if we say no, we don't want to do it. Then she thinks about it for a while, and then she realises it. And then sometimes she will say, I didn't play alone, daddy also played with me. So we try. Or we would give her some alone time in her room. But I also realised that when she gets tired, she gets to be difficult, like any other child would have done. If they get more tired, they would not like to do what you ask, then they get emotional, I have learned, to take a step or two back, breathe don't answer, that's no time to get overemotional too. Then take it on anew from the start. Because if you retaliate you make the situation worse. You need to talk to them nicely. We don't just give a hiding, and when we give a hiding, we explain afterwards to her, why she got it. And then she understood. We once gave a hiding because she wrote on the walls with a permanent marker, after we told her she may not do it. And then I gave her the choice: tell me why you drew on the walls or get a hiding. And she couldn't answer me, so I gave her a hiding, because I told you that we don't write on the walls. And till today she didn't write on the walls again.

So, there's boundaries. Again the boundaries are there, again it's a child, but if we don't learn there, it could lead to bigger things if you do not discipline from the start.

We also have a routine in the house. Over weekends we are not so strict about it. But now that's she's starting to go to school, they believe that in the week a routine is very important. A child needs routine, because like the older they get with homework and things like that, and mummy and daddy also need some time, there is a routine if they get home, because they get home at 17:00, then she watches a little bit of TV, and mummy is busy in the kitchen, or she helps mummy in the kitchen, with the

washing of the dishes, because she is now old enough to learn. But if daddy comes home, she knows for about 15 minutes she plays, so that mummy and daddy can catch up. She will first greet him, and talk to him a bit. But then she knows that mummy and daddy will have some time to talk and reflect on their day. She will then be around them, but on her own mission, not interfering in their conversation. And then when mummy is preparing the dinner, daddy will spend some time with her. Then its bath time, it happens usually after dinner, because she needs to be in bed by 19:30 till 19:45. And then she pushes the boundaries of bed time. At the latest at 20:15, she must be in bed.

In the week it is very important to keep this routine. And over the weekend we have mostly family time. It's just the routine is necessary to let the week flow easier. And we also need to know that there is a routine. Every person needs to function according to a routine. You need to learn that there is a time for everything and that there are priorities, to what is important and what not. But it doesn't always happen like that. But we try to keep to it, to the best of our ability, but it doesn't work like that every day. So you would know.

What do you think, why is our faith important for discipline?

I believe that the Lord didn't give us guidance and commandments for nothing. There's a reason we need to obey these things. Because the Lord is a God of love. And he doesn't like it when people are (*te na kom*) each other, or hurt each other. When Eve had bitten the forbidden fruit the first boundary was stepped over. Our faith (*bepaal*) our discipline, if you don't have God in your life, if you don't really know Him, then discipline would not be that important to you, in the sense of why you do it. I've worked with atheists and people of various religions, and they do things totally different to us believers, who have a relationship with the Lord. If I had to do all the prayers and fasting like the Hindus do, it would be difficult. But on the other side, I wish us Christians…, or Christianity and being a Christian is two separate things for me. Christianity, where you are taught everything about God, is different to being a

Christian, that's in a living relationship with God. What I want is a relationship with God. The Lord journeyed with me on the path to having this relationship with Him. I have a living relationship with God, and yes, my Christianity is influenced by that, because I do things with a lot more passion, and enthusiasm. But if I didn't have the relationship with the Lord, like I have, because look, I can do nothing without the Lord in my life, and asking for His will for my life. Because a few years back I realised that I couldn't do it on my own.

There is no handbook for raising kids. Luckily we have the Lord. Because every child is different from each other. And you can't handle one child the exact same way as the other.

For me it's important that the relationship you have with the Lord, has so much more of an impact as just someone who learns a lot about the Lord. If you don't have that real relationship with the Lord, where you talk to the Lord in prayer – there is two separate worlds. There is things happening in the spiritual realm.

I pray every day that my daughter will have this kind of relationship with the Lord. We also teach her to kneel every night before we pray. It's not always fun, because she's also sometimes tired, and asks if she should really kneel. Then we tell her there is a reason that we do it.

My prayer for her each day is that He will keep the flame of her passion for Him burning every day. And that He will keep the devil from steeling it.

You can argue as much as you want, but if you don't feel it, or experience it, on a daily basis, then it's different. It's totally a different dimension of doing things. It's a great privilege.

The Lord didn't say that we would not have difficult times or hurtful times … that path we have also walked. But I wouldn't have been able to go through it, if I didn't have a living relationship with the Lord. Because the Lord carries us. There where we can't go on, He carries us.

**TRANSCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW WITH THE GURU (HINDU)**

Think that all religions have an influence on the way we discipline our children.

The roots of Hinduism goes back some 5000 years. It is a very practical religion. It can be complicated. Because of the various rituals. In the present times it is more about a life of moderation and simplicity. This religion very strongly influences the way a child is disciplined. When a child comes to a temple, or any religious place they go to, from an early age they follow what the elders it give them for guidance as a path to follow. So they won't be led astray.

Especially there they teach the younger ones in every festival they have, because they have different notations and significance, the child must understand why they are there, what is their purpose, why did they go there, is it a thanks giving service, in praise of the welfare of society or is it a thanksgiving in praise of nature, or is it a thanksgiving for an animal. Because if you look at Hindus they are very tolerant towards animals. From the vicious to the very calm ones. They all can co-exist very harmoniously. And this is what is very sad today, we are all living in urban areas, our children, some of them haven't even seen a live elephant.

They teach the children about the comparison between animals and humans. They derive from the animals and educate them that this is how we are supposed to be. There is a lot of similarity.

Discipline

Do not believe in corporal punishment. But they would sit and talk to the child on a one to one basis, on their level, and discuss what he has done is wrong. For example, if he kicks the dog it is wrong, we will tell him that animal has a life like you. He must play with it because if you kick it you are actually hurting it. So immediately we will reprimand them and say, what you have done is wrong. Go there and hug the dog, because you know like with a dog. You can scold it and it will always come back to you. He will still show you that love.

So that is one-way of showing the child. Because if you take a stick, in the olden days, yes we took a cane and you did this, now you're going to get it. It doesn't work in this present times. Today you have to be passive with children. You have got to be calm with them. Because the levels are different now. You know the understanding of a child, for example I come from a very large family with six brothers, 2 sisters and two adopted. We will all sit together and if our parents dished out our meal, you will eat your meal quietly, like all the other children.  And we will never be saying, why is he getting an extra piece. It's different in today's society.

I find that children today are very demanding. They will tell you, o, I don't eat potatoes, I don't want to eat green beans I don't like broccoli and so on. And this is the difficulty we have. But by coming to the temple, we teach them total thing about vegetarian. Where we teach them that vegetables are healthy, they need to eat a lot of vegetables for their development, mental development. Because we found that if a person eats a lot of red meat, from our scriptures, and from our theory of Hinduism, we find that red meat increases the pressure. But if they eat vegetables, we found that a lot of vegetarians are calm. We found that the meat makes you a little aggressive. So we are saying yes, you need proteins. We are not saying – you must give it up.

That is one of the rituals we do. If a child is academically slow, because all children are not the same. Some children develop with the norm, and some are slow in speech, some are slow in walking.

So, as a priest we need to guide the parents in particular and say how to handle children like that. Because some parents are very quick to compare, and I tell them – God has created all of us, at different a pace and we have to sit. There are some parents that come here with deformed children, I tell them, I say it's a special gift that is given to you. God has given to you to take care of this child. The patience and understanding because not everybody can handle restarted children. So it's a special gift.

And I always tell them, you may not be rewarded in the immediate time, but there would be a time that the all mighty, will reward you for what you have done and for how you have being bringing this child up. And you will find that that child grows up with the love and the bonding. If a child is slow I would encourage them to come on a

477

week day, like a Thursday to the temple and offer to Guru/ Jupiter. Because we believe that our whole physical body is controlled by the planets. The nine planets. We believe for example that the sun, those children are very strong children, because the sun has strength.

And when you look at the deity, the sun in particular, we teach the child – you see this is the sun, the sun is red. Red is related to blood, so the sun is responsible for the blood in our bodies. The children of the sun have all very strong personalities. And most of them will have some blood related health issues. That's how we pick up if they will be diabetics, whether they will have pressure, and this is how I know what to say through astrology, and numerology. I would go and say – mum, you need to go and watch this child. Don't give him too much of red meat, or sugar. So that is the type of thing we do for example.

When a child is slow, we look to Jupiter or Guru and we encourage a child to eat a lot of almonds, nuts grain, because this is a lot of food for the brain. Those kinds of things I would encourage them to eat. So it's not only that we pray about things, but a lot also the practical things.

### Wright and wrong – how do you teach children?

We teach them that respect is very important. We teach them that they must learn from a very early age, to greet, to wish, to hug, and to give that smile, to be friendly. We teach them that when they come here they need to mix with children, to share and to become part of this. So in every prayer we do not leave children out, they become part of it.

They learn from their parents. Their parents are doing the offering, they are sitting with them. Whether I am offering them water to, sip or water as an external thing to say God give me good eye sight, give me good hearing,  let me know what is good to eat and what is bad to eat, so when we teach them about the mouth, the nose and the hearing. We also teach them to be respectful of others. So, we start from an early age by teaching them. We would take verses from the holy books and say how this child was a good child, how he got salvation. What did he do? Did he go and pity the bird and fed the bird, and kept some water. This is why I encourage a lot of

animals in here at the temple. To show them, yes it is caged sometimes, but this gains the child's confidence. It's very important, because then they know, you see the dog is greeting you. We teach them this stuff. I encourage them to feed the animals. Perspectives is very crucial.

Teenagers, because they are going to multicultural schools, there are different types of children from different types of homes. So some of them will pick up some bad vibes. For example, boys will be boys, they will want to try to smoke. Even the girls. It is happening today. If we find that the child is not focusing at school, generally I would monitor them from a young age, when you find that the child is open and happy to talk about that, caring and sharing, then I know that the child is doing well.

And if I find that the child is becoming a little bit secluded, and withdrawn, I would immediately go to the child, sit and chat, and ask how are you, what is upsetting, why are you down. Are you all right health wise? Is things ok at home. I would do a very investigating in a polite way, to get the child's confidence. And if I see the child's is responses yes or my dad is an alcoholic, he abused me or something, then I would encourage him to talk to the teachers or social worker and I would say that if they're feeling that I am going to talk to your dad, it's going to cause a rift in the congregation.

So I encourage them to talk to the teachers and social workers. I lead them to open up. But if they say, you know what, I am being bullied at school, and I don't like to do these things and this is what my friends are doing. I would literally say, yes everybody will go to a trial method, they will experiment. We have the right to say yes or no. which is good or bad. And this is why God has given us, as humans we have the highest, highest thing of senses to discriminate which is good and which is bad.

So I would tell them, fine you've taken drugs, what good is it to you, I would say ok, look at your health aren't you feeling weak, aren't you feeling hungry, aren't you feeling angered, I mean maybe for that moment you are feeling nice and cool, and relaxed, but after a time, what happens. Now maybe your parents can't afford it, then you are going to start to stealing, taking money from home without permission. I give them all the negative things about what is going to happen. How are it is going to lead to further problems and then they will get arrested for shoplifting. It's like you

know, you feel like you want that perfume, but you have no money, because you are using it on drugs. So you start shoplifting, I mean I had 21 year olds, some of the parents had been through very hard times. And through drugs, drugs are a major problem in society. It is right through. So we need to tell them it's not on. Everything has time and has a place. Like meeting going out, casual sex, and things are not on. You know we teach them, we need to be open.

I would say like for example, with the Hindus, with the females especially, they come of age about 12/ 13. Then we teach them about that they are in a different, their bodies are going to change, the physics. So we have a ritual.

And I was just doing research the other day, because I had a call from a parent to say her daughter came of age. And I was looking at all the various, you know what how this child is going through, what is the age impact of the age of the astrology on this child, because you know we can say whether this child is going to be a naughty child or whether this child is going to be flirting, or whether this child is going to be a very respectful child, or whether this child is going to become a young widow.

So in our astrology we pick these things up, we sit with the parent and we say, now to overcome this we have to be open as to it, so we say now this is what we are predicting, so with the divine intervention of God, God is almighty, maybe you need to now focus and see, you know this child is, how she is associating, she is becoming a teen, you need to monitor that. That we are associating, you need to know the type of child she is going to be, the type of women she is going to be, and this is very important. Because I tell, I always tell the children, we are now going to need to know where you are going, your parents need to know where you are going. It is very important.

If you parents say, right you are going now to the shopping mall with, so and so, you have to be back at 10; 30, keep to the time. Punctuality is very important. And this is why any prayer, punctuality is very important. I start from there. You can't come half an hour late and say, oh you started the prayer, no, the prayer started at 9, you supposed to be there at quarter to nine. So that's how we teach punctuality. This is how they learn.

They learn that when they know they have a commitment they need to be there early. We need to be seated. We need to be ready. So this is how we bring

discipline. And they know that. When they are walking into the temple. They would greet you very humbly, politely. You know it's a house of prayer, so even we tell them, when you walk into a mosque, when you walk into a church, you got to remember, it's not a place where you come and make chit chat, and come and where you come to worry about things like gossiping. You know this is where we tell them, so it's important.

So when a child goes astray, and we think that they need counselling, I will talk to them, and say, look at your health. What is happening by you taking drugs? What is happening to your family life? The relationship between your father, and your siblings. Do you want to head that way. What are you going to achieve. So you make them understand. And then they will tell you yes, I need to, I can't stay without it, and I have been hooked on to it, please try to make some arrangements. And this is how we would channel them to the proper places. We try to. And even when out of the dry out period, I would still monitor them. Even if it's just a courtesy call, just to say, how are you doing? How's the family. And if I see the smile and I see the family there, and he's not agitated he is willing, you could see that there is a change. And you don't have to bring him in front of the whole congregation, and say, oh you know what, he's gone badly, and this is it. You praise and say. Thank the Lord, thank the divine. For elevating this child and today we are proud to say, he is a teacher, he is a gone into medicine, and he is a worthy citizen of society. You need to give that, give them that status. Upliftment is very important.


Everything is based on truth, love and understanding. If you look for example at the festival of lights.

Lord Rama was banished for 14 years, to the forest because his stepmother had wanted her son to be crowned king. But the father, he was reluctant. So the brother refused. He said, my elder brother must become the king. So he had to go for banishment, for 14 years where he was exiled into the forest. Now when he was exiled to the forest, there was still that love that was born, but when he returned after 14 years back to the land, the people welcomed him and they waited until that time to actually give the crown to him. And it's a festival to say, that although in this world

there would be a lot of unrighteousness things happening with our good deeds, everything is possible.

Everything is possible. So that is why we say- good over evil. So this is why we have a festival to dispel the darkness, by introducing light.

### When a child is born

This parents just came in here, and said this child was born yesterday 14 December 2016 and the time was 17:47. It's a baby boy. So I will have to go and look at the calendar of astrology and see which stars had an influence, what is the ruling of the sun and the moon, and the other planets. Then I will decide on what influence the planets are having on this child, and give an initial. So that the child will not have any negative impact. And although they may register the child with the proper initials, but they will give it an English name or a short other name. From birth the Hindu faith is based on astrology. Everything is related, from birth to death.

So I told you about the girls coming to age. It's very similar to the Jewish people. The boys basically are Brahmans to the priesthood, but generally the girls. In Hinduism we have the Tamil speaking, we have the Terigu, we have the Hindi speaking, we have the Gujuraji speaking. These are the mayor Hindu groups. Hindus have about 500 dialects. We are all Hindus but the language is different.

We try to intermarry. It is not a problem, but the language and some of the traditions and customs are a little bit different. The writings are different, but because it is a Hindu temple, there is more than one deity present. The Terigu and the Hindi are generally from the north, so they are very much linked to Ram, Sita, all the north deities, but there is common deities, like *Denesha,* who is the remover of obstacles, lord Shiva, that is part of the trinities.

Lord Brima that is the creator. We belief that Brima gives you the date of your birth and the date of your death. Lord Vishnu is the sustainer. As a Hindu priest I always say to a child, you need to go through these phases, and you must enjoy childhood, you must enjoy teenage years, you must enjoy having been married these are all the processes. They must enjoy and go through the emotions of life.

### Are children naughty?

All children, it's an instinct, it's a growing up instinct. I mean a child would be a child. For example lord Krishna is a normal person like us. He went and he was just, he was actually stealing butter to eat. But this is how children grow. You have sweets in the cupboard, the child is automatically going to go, if he asks you for one, and you give him one, and you leave the bottle jar, he is going to go and take it. It's natural.

We all grow up, we all grow through that, and develop through that. You need to say, you know what, too many sweets my child is not good for you. Because your teeth will get rotten. We show them the practical things. We show them the ugly pictures. My granddaughter is three years old. The other day we were sitting here and having supper here. And she saw lettuce. And she says to me: lettuce is very healthy. I said how do you know lettuce is healthy? She said, my mummy says lettuce is healthy.

She actually took that lettuce from the salad, and she was enjoying it and that is good. You see, so if I mean like, it all depends on the child, how we bring them up. I would say, a child would be a child. I would like children to be in the out, out in the open. I think that young parents today don't believe in home remedies. Nr.1 home remedies were very good, whether it was an Afrikaans medicine or whether it was an Indian home remedy. But those medicines helped. You know, if a child got sick, you will go and make the contraption, you know the juice, and say this is good for you. Your fever will go away, your constipation, your things.

We are hoping a lot of people will be going back to that. But the younger ones are not. The parents don't say, no, let's just take the child to the temple for a blessing because it had a bad dream or something, oh no no, they have to go and take him to a doctor now these doctors are a rip off. All these doctors I believe are a rip off, they just like to come and say this child has a temperature, this child needs to be referred to a clinical psychologist because the child is naughty, because the child is falling.

Children must learn to fall. Children must learn to get hurt. Children must climb the trees. Girls used to climb trees. That's what makes a child robust. And that is why I say, go up the jungle gym. The other child is about 6 years old. She doesn't want to school.

So the parent came and said, why you don't want to go to school? She's a bit on the unhealthy side. I said, sit down here. I said to her, now you don't want to go to school, tell me about it. She said, no the teacher is forcing me to climb on the jungle

483

gym. She said I am afraid that if I fall I am too heavy. I said, no, why aren't you going up the rope. So I said, if you are holding the rope you will never fall. Put your hands firm on the rope. You're a strong girl. See how strong you are, you are stronger than me. You got the rope there, and your not going to let go. The teacher is standing there. Then I said you're afraid. She said yes I am afraid of heights. I said ok, you must tell your mam, that you want to try this, but you want to go slowly, you don't want to be rushed into it. I will do it slowly. And I think it took me an hour talking to that child. And I compared her to the cow. Now look at this cow. It is a big animal, how small are you in front. I cut an apple and I give the apple. I said, hold the apple in your hand. She said I am frightened. I went and I held the apple, and I said now look at how this animal is eating the apple it is grateful it is licking my hand. It is thankful. I gave it something special today. And you to, you do it slowly. And that child loves coming here now. She is actually, her mother is telling me that the child is doing well. See this is how we monitor. It is not always praying, praying. There is God, but none of us has seen God. It is only through the scriptures. We teach them there is a super power. These are images, I tell them these are images.

People who had wisdom visualised this is how this God is going to be. For example, this is the goddess of knowledge. It's also your senses. Everything has symbolic meanings. So this is how we portray to the child. So we don't say to this child, you must love the goddess of knowledge, no no no, we say you must respect the book.

Like if a child is tearing paper or standing on a book, I would go very nicely and say to that child, this is knowledge baby, this is writing. We need to respect it. Do not stand on your book or sit on your book. Book is knowledge. So train them respect, if you are respecting your book, you are respecting your culture. And I always tell them, when they are more mature, do not look down on any religion.

Because we are all saying there is a God, but this is the medium I am going through. This river is going to flow here, that river is going to flow there, but they are all going to end up in that one great ocean. It is only the different ways. And that is I believe, I teach them to be thrifty, to be charitable. Like when they come to the temple I say ok, you need to give, you need some grains to feed the birds. So it's like making them aware. I teach them. I say, look at how beautiful the flower is. Don't go and destroy it, it is there to be admired. We teach them all these things. These are practical things.

Hinduism is a practical faith.

**INTERVIEW WITH THE PUNDIT**

Hinduism very much influences the way parents discipline their children.

Education is very important. But what you learn in a Hindu home, you will never get at a university. Because the foundation is laid at home. You see, it is brought down from generations. Our grandparents and great grandparents, they did not have access to education. They were more or less illiterate. But they stood by religion and culture. So the moral values exist. I will give you some examples. For example, sharing of food, our priority is, if there is a poor child, you must share, you must share. They need clothing, need food, extras. So now for example, when they are out at school you get poverty stricken children there. So they already taught, you don't need to learn that at school, they've already been taught at home.

Another important thing, I'm talking strictly Hindu now, it portrays Indians generally. In a home, when somebody is blind, somebody is cripple you don't laugh, you don't mock at the person. And it's very strongly just as parents are saying to children, all the respect they teach you, but because your mother and father is saying it, it must be right. That's now important. So it must be done from a very young age. And for example other things are taught, stealing – you must not steal, you must not waste food, don't throw the food, animals – you have a pet, you don't ill-treat the animal.

If a child had done something wrong, Hindu parents discipline their children through restricting them. There is a change from how we were treated. I mean we were strictly reprimanded immediately. Either a good hiding on the back or if you got, TV, radio or something, that's it. Actually we did not actually backchat, question the parents. What they say, was law and rule. But today now, today's children got rights. We were brought up in a very stern way, and reprimanded, pleasure will be cut down. They were so strict and stern, we were brought up in such a way, that no is no, and yes is yes.

But it still exist today. But today's kids are not that way, they will sit down and question and say why, why, why and extra. But pleasures are cut down like I say. In

the form of watching TV, or going out with friends, the cell phone is confiscated. Actually the common term is – they are getting grounded. That's what they will use.

Religion definitely plays a role to what is wrong and what is right. Because we refer back to scripture. In a Hindu home, we fast on certain days. When I say fast, I refer to not eating meat. The general is Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Fridays. Generally it is two days, but it differs from family to family. Because we've got one god, but different deities. Like different rivers flowing into the see. So we pray to different deities, with different names, but eventually the message is universal. Now, if I say scripture, I don't know if you've heard about the *Bhavath Gita*. Just like the Bible have stories and references and that, when god appeared in a human form, to set an example to humankind. So he behaved, just like Christ taught. Lord Krishna we rendered to. He said you must fight, but fight doesn't mean you must kill and murder. Fight for your equal rights in a decent dignified manner. Wrong is wrong, and right is right. But that is the whole theme. And actually *Bhavath Gita* was on the battle field. On the battle field the lord gave the instructions. To simplify we say the whole body is *Barvath Gita*. And the truth is within us. On the war field. Where there was going to take place, on the battle field, you can still read in scripture, and you can be calm and cool and win. From the *Bhavath Gita* and the *Ramayan*. The lord appeared in a human form again, and total like husband and wife, father, mother, brother, he was so disciplined.

Let's give you one example in a nutshell. When the father was king and he had three or four wives, the whole thing, when I say three of four wives, it's to teach mankind. One was Bitkani, she wanted her son to take the throne and not the other one, not the eldest one. So she said to the king, you given me a boon, I want it to be fulfilled now. I want this son to be sent to exile for 14 years. The older one needed to go to exile so that the younger one could be king. It's like in today's society, we still get cruelness. What the son said, no, my word is my bond. If my mother said it, although it was an evil plot, if my mother said it, my mother said it. It's a good example. Irrespective of me, my mother said it. So these are saying, your word is your bond, you may never go back on you word. Although it was a cruel plot, of going into exile, he didn't say he was not interested. He would go. Brother said, no, I don't want to share the throne, because you are entitled. He meant the brother didn't want it. He said, the brother, you don't worry, I will guide you, I will leave my pair of shoes here,

my blessings are with you, because my mother – and not his own biological mother, but his stepmother- see the evilness there, but he says, no – now that is god himself in a human form. That is what discipline is all about.

I think that is a strong point in your thing.

Because 14 years – the wife says, no, no, no, you know, I am your wife. I got to stand by you. I am going to the forest now. He says, no, no, it's only me. You must understand now. I married you, to give you care, comfort extra. That's the permission your parents gave me. So I must look after you, I am not going to take you to the forest. But the wife says no, it's quite interesting, I married you to stand by for the better or the worse, now I can't leave you. How can I, it's not fair of me. And the brother says, I'm coming, another brother. The one that was taking the thrown, refused it, but another brother, look for your well-being, when you are sick or the wife or so. The king, Ram that we are now talking about going away, he says to the brother, no, no. the brother said, what you talking about brotherly love, mother, father, wife, and it's everything like, the same values we bring in our home, that's regard and respect. Or for argument sake, when the king died, the father dies, then the elder brother takes in charge, but not in charge as negative authority, but to regard respect and form.

Actually we use it, that's why I speak it so freely. The Bible Gita, although it's not Hindu, but nowhere it is referred to as for Hindus only, it's for mankind at large,

Even Mahatma Gandhi, when he was in London he went to the library and asked what is the book that is the most common borrowed book, it was the Badvit Gita. I'm talking then, and even a lot of westerns and Christians, it doesn't mean they are not Christians. Because with me, I've got a Bible in my car, at workplace and everywhere, I sometimes joke about some of the pastors, I tell them, I touched more Bibles than you yourselves. Because when we having workshops, there are hundreds and hundreds of books I am sorting out. So I have to put some here, here, here … you know what I mean. I was kind of enjoying it, because it doesn't mean that if I'm a Hindu, touching a Bible, I would be healed. These stupid. I had the opportunity, that I touched so many of them. So they were stunned, some of the pastors. You know, all have different mind-sets, he was really stunned. I am being a Hindu, something funny he said, I didn't get rude with him, I just told him, I have

touched more Bibles than you being a Christian. So what is this, we filled with kindness. And our home is open, as a Hindu, whether you're a Christian, a Hindu and a Muslim. And I visited a mosque, a church, a temple and all services I went for and it doesn't affect me, really, really. We are very tolerant, generally the word is tolerant.

Say with our religion, our kids are also taught, from young age am taught, every Hindu whether you pass a mosque, a temple, you always lift your hand and show this, whether it's a temple, with this we show respect, that God is sitting in that mosque, God is sitting in the church too. Even I was brought up like that, our children are taught that. Every Hindu home does that. Irrespective of what place it is.

Normally we pray like this, we touch our heart and head, the same as like we put our hands together, we are showing respect.

At the temple the Hindu children are also taught about their religion. And it varies, they do have prayer. You know like you have a service, you have seen the flags we put up, *kata janda.* It's a Hindi word, translated it means a story. In there, there is five chapters of the story. Detailed. And in the *kata* it is teaching to the family, the friends, whoever attends, about stealing, about respect, everything, discipline. You know what I mean. Be simple, be good. The bottom line is of the *katan* stories is service to mankind, service to God. Service to humanity is service to God. About sharing, whether it is, the debt you help assist. And not only Hindus, the main focus we believe in, there is one race, the human race. One language, the language of love. Now religion, are something we created here.

There is a code of conduct. Like dress code. When you go to a place of worship, any place of worship, not only yours, it doesn't mean that if I'm a Hindu and I'm going to a mosque, or a church, then I must dress in pants, and what if. You dress as if you would be in a temple. You know with the ladies the *sadi,* and the head, with a *tabut,* not with open, you know. And we do take off our shoes. At any place of worship. Even in church, when we go to church, the church does allow me, but I still feel very uncomfortable, with shoes there. If a family friend provides extra food, it's not only about your own religion. If somebody is desperate, you have to help them. You have to help – full stop.

Generally the Hindu marriage, there many aspects, but there is seven mayor vows.

489

Children are born as Hindus that's it. We do a thanks giving prayer kind of thing, to mother earth. When a child is born, at six days, thanks giving appreciation. We refer to the earth as mother earth. A lot of science and writings comes in too. You know when a child is born. Regarding the oils the bathing, everything, although we go to medical doctors orders, we do it medically. But in those days, they didn't go to real doctors, the housewife's, did everything, the massage of the baby, the fire, not charcoal, but natural. Certain smoke, extra. For a child to be healthy. In all Indian homes they have the massage of the baby. So that's global more an Indian tradition. And when the sixth day of prayer is done, the mother is given healthy food, close family are invited. Actually from the time of birth, I'm talking generally, there is 16 and it's called sun scares, 16 major ceremonies. One is when a child is conceived, actually before child birth. When a child is conceived. A verse is read, through the mother's stomach. Then it's at childbirth. Then pre-school level. Education, three stages, pre-school, primary, tertiary. And you know when one gets married, there is a few there too. Proposal, to get the dot on the forehead. One day prior to the marriage. Confirmation that everything is in order, they settle. Then it's the cleansing of the skin in the evening, and then next day it's the wedding. And eventually we go through old age, you know. And you get death, and you get a few ceremonies after that. With a total of 16.

***What is the mayor things that make Hindu parents different in the way they discipline their children? What is the things that makes them stand out?***

The dress code.

When it comes to prayer especially, you've got to basically be appropriately dressed in other words. The sari is a must. Your head covered. If you are married, you have to place on the dot. Not bare hands. With jewellery. It don't have to be expensive jewellery, but they carry it well. As I say code of conduct. Like if you have a job description, you need to be presentable. Here you are standing in front of God, the highest authority, so you need to be presentable.

Discipline in home?

From a young age you've got to groom them. A simple example, like a plant, when the plant is young, if it's going of shape, you make sure, while it's young you get it straightened up. You know, you tie a stick, or a string or something. It will grow the

490

direction how you want to. If you leave it, it takes its own direction. And then when it's gone mature after a few years. And it's taking an angle where it's coming to your house to the wall, you got to, there is destruction there. And we try to apply common sense and logic thinking from a young age. You don't bind yourself to children too much. If you set the rules at a young age, TV time, prayer time, you must attend service, and homework, all right, if you give them too much of me time, they will grow up in that fashion. By joining friends and going out. And you expose them, something about – you can't say our children are unlike we are, that you don't talk about rape, you don't talk about aids. When it's on the news, and on the TV, you've got to show it to them. I mean, suicide in our religion, in the Hindu religion, when you are born, your time, is set by almighty God. When you're going to die. So committing suicide, you are defeating, Gods law, because it was not your normal time to go. So there's a belief, there's a word in Hindi, it means a wondering soul, that's what one in English refers to as a ghost. Because he went out of time. He tried to beat the system. So, he wouldn't get into the spiritual world, the way you belonged to. When your time was elected to you. It's like cheating on yourself. So God will not accept it, because your time is not due. You were not called for. This is now simple, your time is not due.

Even eating habits. We don't eat like pork, beef, many Hindu homes are vegetarians. Because of religious issues. Well I am a vegetarian. All meat is a no, no.

We have trouble with teens and young people with alcohol and drugs. You see sometimes you don't only need to see what the danger is, you've got to also speak to them as your friend. You can teach them everything in this home, when they step out the danger is out there in society today, and that is the western influence. Cell phone, face book, television, all those things. I'm not saying it is not healthy, but that's a problem. Whether it is a Christian, a white, black, blue or green. Things are gone of any race or religion. You can discipline a 101%, when you go to school, you are going to experiment that's the deal. So parental guidance is very, very important. We are all guilty, we don't blame the children, even me. You know what, we over pet our children, we say, you know what, he is a child, either between the wife and the husband. When we say you are not going, or go and come back a certain time. But dad will say, no leave it, he's a child. Give him freedom. That's where the problem

lies. And later we find it difficult to take them out of that. When he go for a party, we feel pity, let the boy enjoy himself, but there is a lot of things happening there.

Parental guidance is done, when you take them to a temple, to a service. There is lectures on discourses, simplified. And the *Barvah Gita* that reminds them to read. And it is there in English also, and it is very simplified. We've got the Rama Krishna, the define life society, you know. Lovely stories for all age groups. From the age of five. Simplified pictures and cartoons. They don't necessary need to memorise it, but there are certain short verses, which they can. The repetition automatically, they memorise it. But there is no hard and fast road. They can sit with the book and read.

### A last word:

To my knowledge and observation, there are debts of children, of parents, I think directly about my own kids. I have two daughters. One is an attorney, the other one is at Eskom in Johannesburg, and one is a charted accountant.

I observed them. You know that certain times you don't think of certain things unless you're asked. They've been very, without me even telling them they have been very caring, comforting, and not only Hindus. I know other faiths.

I think the bottom line is, to really teach them here, they portray. Let's give an example: you know sometimes people do good things, good intentions, and they don't do it in the correct manner. Now you need to teach them and tell them. But you've got to tell them how to use it on the outside, where to use it. Otherwise it will get, boring, boring for them.

If I can summarise: Hinduism is a way of life. Moral values, themes , teaching extra. When you look at eating values. It's there. I'm not saying that other religions don't do it. But our concentration is on eating healthy, not on what scientist are telling you. There should be no junk food, because I actually do it myself, you hear these people, they say, God is making me sick, God is not making you better, God didn't tell you to eat junk food. God didn't tell you to drink tons of coke, or peri peri sauce. You need to drink water and vegetables, and fruit. All healthy stuff. As Hindus we say it's a way

of life, its moral values, themes and teaching yoga, we do posture meditation. Then you will be healthy. The foundation is laid at home, and as they grow up, they will join in formal classes outside. Without even using the word. It is taught. Sleeping is important, a good amount of sleep.

want to go along it? So, I use a lot of examples like that. Yet sometimes, you

know, you get mothers who are very strict, who use an iron fist, but you know I

am not like that. I talk a lot and we have a very open relationship, so my

children can come and talk to me about anything. So that is how we get to

understand what the other one expects of them. If you close that door, then

the child will not come to you and then they will go astray. But if you keep that

communication line open, any time, anywhere, any place, then it's much

easier to keep them on the right path.

even start with the experimentation. So that is the foundation of my disciplining with my children.

It's about the choices they make when something is coming their way.

Her children have been to Islamic schools and most of the Muslim children attend Islamic schools. Even if kids attend like the normal public schools where there is no religion taught, they attend what we call the *madrasa*. Or Islamic school after school. So every Muslim child is exposed to Islamic education.

They teach them morals. They teach Islamic manners. They teach the Koran, the understanding of the Koran, not just the reading of it. Because the Koran is the stories of the prophets and the way of life and things like that. So most of our life lessons actually come from the Koran. So we teach Koran, so obviously they learn Arabic. But the core is the Islamic manners, they learn the Islamic law as well. Islamic law regarding everything in life. Like when it comes to, looking at the youngsters now, at this age they learn for example, like for a simple example. If a child would reach the age of puberty, both male and female what's the course for what you can and can't do. The relationships, you can now obviously not mingle with the opposite sex, things like that. So these things are taught to them at a very young age. So like my daughter would have already done, and worked through all these subjects.

Like the prayer. Very important part of that is the prayer. And I think if you talk about discipline, because we are expected to pray five times a day. In terms of the ritual prayer. And there are set times for it. So it is almost like we organise our lives around our prayers, and not the other way around. Wherever we go, whatever we do, you make sure that you will be in time for that. Or wherever you go you make sure that there is a place where you can go to perform the prayer.

So for children, from the age of then, it becomes compulsory. That they have to perform their prayer.

We talk about us being answerable. At the end of the day we need to be accountable for our actions. And of course a child under the age of 10, actually under the age of 12 haven't reached that age of maturity as yet, to say if you do the wrong thing you are accountable for that action. Like that an adult would. But from the age that they

reach puberty, the child is at an age of maturity where you do something wrong you are now accountable. In other words accountable for the sin that you have committed. Whatever you do, you are responsible for it. But before that, there is no accountability.

A child before puberty can be disciplined.

### *What is the difference between accountability and discipline?*

When we talk about accountability we talk about the greater sense of the word, in terms of being accountable to God. I mean we all believe in heaven and hell. That's the final accountability. When we do something, we know that there will be a time that we need to answer at a stage in our live. And we all know that we will be punished at some stage. But the extent that you will be punished will be determined by your actions. Therefore after you reach maturity that's the age where they now themselves become responsible. Because even what they do, they can be punished for. But at the younger age, when you are looking at it, it's the parent's responsibility. You can't hold a child responsible for something that they are too immature to understand themselves. Psychologically they can't comprehend some of the facts and things that they see.

Puberty is nothing to do with religion, it's all to do with tradition.

They don't make a big deal about the girls reaching puberty. It's an awkward stage for a child, you do not need to put them through a whole ritual that has nothing to do with what God intended for them.

The way they bring up a child sets boundaries for their lives. When you talk about how you bring up a child, you talk about everything. You talk about relationships, the way that they dress, limitations, boundaries. The people that they mix with. Who they are encouraged to be with. So this sets boundaries from a very young age, and we hope that these things are taught to them, and we hope as parents that they will continue to take that in their adulthood.

### *How do you discipline the children in school?*

She has taught up to grade 9s. She is always considered one of the best disciplinarians at school. She thinks it's because she gives the children a lot of

respect, she gives them a lot of her time and she gives them a lot of respect. And she does believe that you have to give respect to earn it. Very often she had, look no matter which school you go to, you are going to be exposed to children who are exposed to the same things outside the school environment. All the influences, the negativity, the social environment, the home environment aren't exactly the same. So she found herself in a situation where she needed to talk to children. And very often the approach that she used is that she tried to take them out of the situation, and look at the situation as if they are not there. And it is very often that I would ask the question: is this something that you would like for yourself? Is this something that you would like your child to go through? And always the answer is no. You know mam this is never what I would like my child to do. So why are you doing it. And look, fortunately all the kids that I have dealt with would have positive responses. And those that we don't get the same responses initially we keep on trying, the same method of talking. And trying to guide them in that way. I think it's just that it's talking to children. Because you obviously not going to achieve anything with any physical punishment or anything. So it's talking.

It's bringing up the boundaries and identity again.

The boundaries gives us identity. Once you step out of that, that's when you find yourself in no man's land. That's when you find yourself where you don't know what to do. And very often you start doing that which you are not supposed to do, that you did not intend in doing in the first place.

Faith gives so many boundaries.

You know in many ways people look at religion and says, it's such a restricted religion. But it isn't. It's not a restrictive religion at all. If you look at all the things that you can't do, you find that, you know what. Everything that you can't do, if you look at the bigger picture, its things that if you do, do it, you will find your life in total disarray.

So as much as they say it's restrictive, you know it isn't. There is a purpose and reason for every single instruction or directive that comes from it.

When the boundary is given there is also a reason given. It's not like – you are not allowed to do this or that or to go there, there is always a reason, why you are not

allowed, so that the child would understand the reason. Ok I could go back to the halal food issue. You know when I tell my child, you are not allowed to eat this she is definitely not going to ask me why, she knows. It is only when the child understands why they not supposed to do something, or when they are allowed to something, that they then themselves can learn and gather from it. And they self-will be prepared to accept it. They also then know the consequences.

At their school as well they are dealing with the issues that's at hand today, drug issues, and the alcoholism, so they do bring in people from all these organisations, people who have probably been recovered addicts and so many of them are very, very young. So they speak to the children. And it is necessary for children to see the effects of all of this rather than them wanting to go through it and experimenting with it themselves. They need to see for themselves first-hand, what's happening out there. Even if you look at going to go and visiting orphanages, or the homes of older people. These are the things we bring into our schools, because it is necessary for them to see how others life. Otherwise they don't appreciate what they have. Alcohol is not allowed in Islam, not at all. Anything that causes a person to lose sense in terms of their mind or thinking or ability to reason is not allowed at all.

### Technology?

I think there is nothing wrong with technology. It's something we need to embrace. Even if you don't want it, it is here to stay. And it's only going to get more advanced. But it's something that needs to be monitored very, very closely. I have two girls with iPads and everything. You need to know what they are doing. That's the most important thing. The relationship you have with your child is very important. They must be able to disclose to you whatever they have on that phone. Because as soon as you see that there's an area that they are hiding, then there is course for concern. But if they can show you their conversations with their friends and things, then you know that you can have it. But technology is becoming a major problem. At the end of the day we are preparing our kids for the future. And we can't say that we don't want them involved with technology. When every facet of work out there has technology.

It's how you use it. This is actually a bigger problem than drugs and alcohol at our schools. Because with the Muslim parents, this is the problem, many of them, are

498

very busy with their lives, and they tend to give in to the children and the cell phones. That is the problem we have to deal with at school where children are communicating over the weekend with their social interactions – these issues reported back to school. Then on a Monday morning we will have children or parents there complaining that this child said this and that child said that. But where did they say it, they said it on Instagram. It's got nothing to do with the school, and they have to handle it.

They have parental guidance in the Muslim faith. They have organisations that hold seminars on parenting. It's now more than ever. With the increasing number of social problems this is also increasing, because you are trying to educate people and empower them on how they can overcome problems. Parents need to know how to handle situations.

Disciplining starts at a very early age and the fact that we teach them that Islam is not something that you do once a week or twice a week, but that it is actually a way of life. Every little thing that you do, evolves around being a Muslim. If I have to tell you there is a little prayer that you read for stepping into the toilet and when you step out of the toilet, with which foot you step into it, with which foot you step out of the bathroom. You are not allowed to go into it barefoot. Or if you're dressing there's a little prayer that you do. Of course nobody knows every single thing, but there is something and everything you do, you take the name of Allah. For guidance, to help you to do the right thing. To make the right decisions, the right choices. With everything we do, we do it in the name of Allah. When we start the car, or leave the yard, we say, in the name of Allah.

The fundamental of Islam is that it's a way of life.

ADDENDUM L: TRANSCRIPTIONS OF THE NARRATIVES OF MY CO-RESEARCHERS.

RACHEL LEVY INTERVIEW (JEWISH) TRANSCRIPTION OF RECORDING


Jewish

Judaism is broken into three streams:

> Ultra-orthodox
> Orthodox Jews (to where they belong to, women who dress modestly, men who wear a head covering, they follow the traditions of keeping kosher on the Sabbath)
> Reformed Jews (slightly more lenient or moral and liberal)


Religion does influence the way they discipline their children, because it influences how they live their lives. Kids are an extension of us.

How do they live their lives in terms of their religion?

They try to be a little more mindful of the commandments that God has prescribed, to the Jewish people. Things like keeping a cosier home. Like separating milk and meat. Like children not eating ice cream after a *boerewor*s (type of sausage) roll, because there is a waiting period. This is where it comes into discipline. Because children under 3 years of age are exempted from all the restrictions of Judaism, because they are too young to comprehend that there is a system of rules or regulations around it.

It's like telling her 3 year old that she can't have a smarty as a desert, but a fruit. And if she asks why, they tell her it's because it's not kosher. They are then starting to introduce her very gently to the rigours.

It's a tradition, not a commandment in the community, that little boys when they are old enough, to officially go to school, which is at three years old. They would go to pre-school. They would let the hair grow until three years. So at three they have their hair cut, and they enter in the world. They leave mum and start to become their own person. In very religious households, they would cut the boys hair at three and they

will also have their first day of school, very close together. They have a very sweet tradition, where they would give the kid a Hebrew alphabet, and they put honey on it. So it should always be sweet and learning should always be a positive experience. They always make sure it's a laminated page. It happens in very traditional communities.

Girls at twelve are ba mitzvah-ed, then they come of age and then they are effectively treated as an adult in the eyes of the community, but not so much by their parents. They then need to behave as an adult would. Boys at 13.

With that comes the responsibilities and following the faith as an adult would follow it.

The Jewish faith is a very child centric faith. So everything, like celebrating a festival, a huge part of it is explaining to your children the customs and why you are doing something in a particular manner. And also because the men are time bound, so they are required under the Jewish faith at specific times of the day, three times a day. Essentially in the morning in the afternoon and in the evening. Women are not. Because our primary function is to see to it that we raise good humans. So it's very interesting that your most important task as a women in the faith is to be able to pass on traditions at home and an effective manner at home. My daughter loves going to *shul* with my husband. Because for her, she goes to the synagogue and the kids get a little glass of grape juice and a chocolate and the Rabbi tells them a story, and it's like a special activity for them. At the same time the kids also know that when the Rabbi is speaking, giving a sermon, they're out the *shul.* Like they get immediately ushered outside. But if they make a noise nobody will go out and shout at them, because it's considered a positive thing to hear kids laughing. They call it a great "*gevalt*".

The *shul* is a word for the synagogue. The services have a prescribed formula. You have a set of blessings that you say, then you have a responsive reading, and then at an evening service, or a service that happens on a Sabbath, the Rabbi or the community leader will give a sermon. There would be a children's service that is running simultaneously to the adult services. They then learn about the songs of *Shabbat*, and they are taught games and clapping hands, to pass on knowledge.

Discipline at home – the children normally get a warning, with a consequence attached to it, like a time out. They try to instil in them that if you don't want it done to

501

you, you don't do it to someone else. There is a religious undertone to it. For the youngest one that's only turning two, it's more of saying "don't" a lot. Don't hurt yourself, don't hurt your sister when doing something. They get a raised voice. They don't get physically smacked, they get verbally reprimanded, and then given a time out. They respond pretty well to it. It's almost like: for every action there is a consequence. There is a lot of negotiation in their house. Can I do this? No! Can I go there? No. maybe Jewish households are very verbal.

Discipline is about teaching them to be good citizens. In the sense that they are able to be in any situation and know how to handle themselves and also when not to overreact to somebody and when it is appropriate to react. So, if we go to the park and someone pushes my kids, they can stand up and say that, that's not nice, and say please don't do it. They must use words and not their fists and not push back.

They must now that they have a boundary. They get the sense of self but also get it to stand up for themselves. It's sadly because of the society that we are in, we need to make sure that kids know where the boundaries between themselves and strangers are.

Religion plays a role in the way they discipline, because our perception of the Jews are that they are "a people of God", and that their role is to make society a better place. There is a tenant in Judaism that's called "*Tikun olam*", to prepare the world. It starts with me, I need to repair myself. Then to repair my community, then to repair my people, and then to repair the world. It goes in progressive steps of how you should conduct yourself, so you can't expect somebody to treat you with any kind of decency if you are not at least kind to yourself and kind to your immediate family. It's kind of paying it forward.

So we teach our kids to respect other people, because that's a basic tendansy of Judaism. Her eldest, her best friend is a little Tamil girl. And she thinks it is very cool that her friend comes to school with the red bracelet. And she wants to know why she doesn't have a red bracelet. The mother explained that they had a prayer at the weekend, and that it's what they included. Her daughter replied that, that is very pretty and that she also wants one. Mother explained that you can't copy her, they have done a whole prayer and it's a very special thing just for that. But they can make a bracelet that she can wear and she can also give one to her friend, so that

they have the same bracelet. And they both decided that's a nice idea. So it's giving her little tools, so that she knows that its fine to observe something different about someone, and to ask about it and then to go " ok, that's cool, I like it". They feel fortunate that their children is in a school where there is other children with other cultures and creeds.

**Making the world a better place**

*Tikkun olam*

To repair the world

(like the previous four things)

We prepare our kids to be part of repairing the world.

Discipline is not a negative. To discipline is about giving our kids a framework and construct where they can operate within. These are ok boundaries to be in. children must question and push boundaries. Because there is something that has gone horribly wrong, because kids are naturally so curious and they can't sit still.

We are just there to make it safe for them. So you must go and be inquisitive, but you must also understand that there are things out there that may not be in your best interest. And we need to make sure that those things like using alcohol that they know how to use it in a responsible manner. Not all of those things will be things that they will be able to choose for themselves because they will have a bigger view. And they will now be the boundaries.

On her 18th birthday, her dad picked her up from school. She was in school uniform. And he took her to the liquor store. He told her that he will be buying her, her first legal drink. And he bought her a can of reds. He took her home that night and poured her a drink. And he said "Right well you had your drink. You are now legally old enough to drink. But you just need to remember you don't get yourself into a situation where you can't phone to get help. Whatever the time – you can always phone us."

He set the boundaries. He said here you go, you are absolutely welcome here and you are able to make the decision for yourself, but let us guide you and show you the best way to make it. So we hope that we can do it with our kids.

You are setting them free, but at the same time showing them how.

A very important component, which they cherished from their faith is that it's a positive thing to question. Faith is meant to be difficult. Yes there are people who have been incredibly lucky and they wake up and they are like it's easy, it's all there. In Judaism they have so many small regulations that are placed upon them, they are there to kind of steer them, so if you view that that's the bigger picture, and you have been steered along a greater cause, to do something good, to add value to society. And that's our role as parents to do the same. So the religion gives us quite a lot of direct and indirect guidance to how to be good parents.

If they wake up in the morning the first thing they do they say – than you for returning my soul to me. So you give thanks to God for allowing you to wake up. So that's the first prayer that you teach your kids, that they could say by themselves because it's really short. It's a very short prayer and it's written to be very simple for them to say. And then they also start to get the basics of Hebrew. And it starts them of on a very mindful way. They have been given an opportunity, and they must go out and do something exciting with that day. Even if it's playing in the sand, they must do it and enjoy it as much as possible. Every day you can start anew. So it doesn't matter how terrible your day was yesterday, or what happened that you are miserable about, it's ok, you will learn to deal with it, you will get through it.

Guilt. Never let the kids go to sleep or take a nap when they feel bad about something. They will always end the day by giving them a big cuddle and big love and say you are loved, you are wanted. They go sleeping feeling very very safe.

### *Moral values*

The morals is ascribed to them, by their religion and they would like their kids to do the same.

So for Friday night she was invited to a function. There was a huge group of friends there. But she said, thanks, but I can't attend, it's *Shabbat*, and it's more important for her to have it with her family. Even if her kids will be asleep by seven, and her

husband will be fine by himself at the house, it's like it's still the Shabbat and it is still, I don't want to. Even if we do nothing but read on the couch, it is still the idea is that you spend the time as a family. You are regrouping and kind of re energising.

### *Relationships in discipline*

Kids will divide and conquer. So they are co-parenting.

You can't discipline children on your own, because then the kids would run circles around you.

They don't have parental guidance classes. The community activities are really family centric. A big effort is made to welcome people and everyone comes together.

Children go to Hebrew school. In order to be bar/ba mitzvah Jewish children should be fluent enough in Hebrew, and they must understand enough about the requirements. So they will write a little test. That the Rabbi administers. Almost like confirmation class. The children need to read from the Torah scroll at their bar/ba mitzvah. They have to be able to lead the service if they grew up in the Reformed community. It's a great responsibility. So it's a huge, very big deal. You are taught Hebrew and Aramaic for the prayer books.

Children learning Hebrew

Two to three years before a child is ba/bar mitzvah-ed. Boys are bar mitzvah-ed and the girls be mitzvah-ed. When a boy is born they are circumcised at 8 days old. Of sharing or cutting of the hair of a three year old boy. At 12 a girl is bat mitzvah-ed. And at 13 a boy is bar mitzvah-ed. Mitzvah is a good deed, so it means literally to become a son of a good deed or a daughter of a good deed. It means that they become part of society. After that you get married.

You can start Hebrew school from grade r, in the community. If the children are not in a Hebrew day school, there are Jewish education teachers that go to schools to teach the children every week for one or two hours a week. Here they will do faith activities. At Hebrew school, there are a minimum of two years before a bar/ba mitzvah. Girls would then normally go from 10-12 years and boys from 10-13 years.

505

It's not only about learning the prayers for that day, but about the full life cycle of everything that happens in a Jewish calendar year. It's about understanding all of the festivals and understanding the rituals, and understanding what is required of you. Because at the age of 13 a boy can make up a minion, make up the core of ten that is required to make a community of prayer. And every day after the passing of a parent you are abide to say *caddish*, the prayer for the dead. So, if you are in a community where you are short on men, they will go to the Jewish boy's high school, to say *caddish* there, because there they know they will get enough men. So even a thirteen year old can make the difference between somebody being able to observe, and to fulfil the commandments. So, for them it's a great mitzvah that they can be able to enable.

Can you describe this as disciplining a child into a certain way?

I think again its giving them a set of values. So, there is no requirements after a child is bar mitzvah-ed for them to attend the synagogue on a Friday and a Saturday. A lot of kids disappear. Once it's done it's done. Parents don't feel the need to come every Saturday and drop them off or stay with them. But a lot of kids also choose for their own self-worth they are now viewed as an adult. It's an incredibly powerful thing to give a thirteen year old boy that kind of opportunity to be respected, and the same for a girl, because. What?

Here they are giving again a structure what is reasonable and fair behaviour as a member of the community and as an adult women and adult man you are expected to behave in a good manner. You are supposed to be able to control and conduct yourself and act fairly and justly to everyone around you. So, at the age of twelve to expect a girl not to be rude to their mother, because she wants to wear too much eyeliner. It's a powerful thing.

They do a lot of self-worth exercises. They also learn that as an adult, I am entitled to a view, and I'm entitled to an opinion, and so is everyone else. And I think that's a very important lesson our kids get. In Hebrew school, they learn, that this is what I am learning. Everyone else is learning at their own pace. And they may have a different view. And you know what, that's ok. It's a huge amount of trust that you put into a teenager. Because they now need to decide for themselves. Because as a Jewish parent you can no longer be required as the parent to be the one that is

saying, you must go to *shul*, or do something. It swaps over, because they now become an adult. And you now have to choose, about what to do.

The most important thing is that you as a parent must walk up as a parent. You must be present. The big part of Judaism is that you can't outsource parenting. You have to take responsibility for your actions. So, that your child can take responsibility for their actions. I can't expect my children to keep kosha if I don't keep kosha. So, it has to be important to me, to impart it to them. I can't expect them to talk nicely to each other, if I don't talk nicely to them or to my husband. And *vice versa*. Kids learn by observation. They are this little sponges picking up everything you do. So, if I want them to be a good human, I need to be a good human. That's the bottom line.

You need to explain why you must do it. We find that we can't dictate something, we need to explain something, and even if they are not going to get the full explanation, the fact that there is an explanation is sometimes enough. That comes very strongly back to Judaism. Again, it's good to question. And in Judaism there is commentaries written about every religious text, where the rabbis argued about what is meant. By having a faith that is learning based, you encourage parents to be, more willing to engage with their kids. And to learn from them, as they are meant to learn from us. We are quite privileged to be parents. Maybe not at four in the morning, but other times I have felt privileged.

**ADDENDUM M:   FORM TO GUIDE THE CHILDREN TO WRITE A STORY ABOUT A TIME THAT THEY WERE DISCIPLINED.**

**A practical theological reflection on discipline: Listening to the voices of children and parents.**

**Researcher:**

**Reverent Lizette van Rooyen**

**(A PhD Study in Practical Theology: Pastoral Narrative Family and Marriage Therapy)**

**BA Theology (UP), BD Theology (UP), MA Practical Theology (UP),**

**Post Graduate Certificate in Education (UNISA)**

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**Listening to the voices of children**

**The story of …..…………………………………… (Name of child)**

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My parents/Father/ Mother then ……………………..

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**When I think back, I learned ……………………….**

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**ADENDUM N: A PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON DISCIPLINE: LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF CHILDREN AND PARENTS.**


**Researcher:**

**Reverent Lizette van Rooyen**

**(A PHD STUDY IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY: PASTORAL NARRATIVE FAMILY AND MARRIAGE THERAPY)**

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**Listening to the voices of Children**


**A Picture by**

………………………………………………………………………………………

**(Name)**