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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

### TO CRACK THE SHELL AROUND YOUR HEART

Individuals are often unable to integrate into their life story the traumatic events they have experienced. They build walls around themselves to protect themselves against any further hurt. It then follows that those experiences cause them to construct their problem saturated stories as their “dominant life stories”. Theophostic Prayer Ministry (TPM) facilitates an encounter in which Jesus Christ is invited to bring in His truth in the midst of such hurtful events, allowing a new, more integrated construction of reality.

TPM can be described as a practice in which Jesus Christ is invited to enter experientially into the social processes by which people construct their realities. This pastoral approach warrants greater practical theological attention and this study focuses on the practices of TPM and their healing possibilities.

As a background to this study, I have drawn on my own experience of this ministry. I have always believed that in order to use a certain therapeutic orientation in therapy, it is important to be first on the receiving end, making oneself available to experience TPM firsthand. Benner (1998:226) also, by asking the question: “How can one presume to lead others on a journey one has not previously taken oneself”? emphasizes the importance that helpers should receive the form of help they provide. I believe it is important to receive first hand experience of the effect thereof on your being, that is in your total being (Elliott et.al. 2004:15). One of the requirements that Dr. Ed M. Smith (2004), Theophostic International, insists upon is the fact that you need to receive a minimum of ten hours of personal ministry from someone trained in Theophostic Prayer Ministry before you are allowed to facilitate in a session.

Benner (1998:226) continues by further indicating that only when you have received are you really able to give. He emphasizes the interactive nature of soul care: “The interaction between the giving and receiving of care to self and others is rich and multidirectional. In giving care, we receive it, and in receiving it, we are often able to give something in return” (:226). It is thus a process in which both the receiver and the one who ministers co-construct their own new stories. This research will also add to the co-construction of my own story, as the researcher. I want to

acknowledge and express appreciation towards every participant in this research project who in this way became a co-constructor of a new dominant story of my life. Therefore I make use of the suggestion of Bak (2004:96) to write this research report, as far as it is functional, in the first person, as is the tendency in present contemporary research.

Theophostic Prayer Ministry (TPM) will be explained in detail in a later chapter. Summarized, TPM is at its core an approach where Jesus Christ is invited by means of prayer to take part in a pastoral conversation where the search is for His interpretation of events. In this process new realities are constructed for the recipients of TPM.

## **1.1 The motivation for the research**

Both personal and contextual reasons serve as motivation for this research.

### **1.1.1 Personal reasons**

On a personal level, the motivation for this research developed out of my personal encounter with TPM. At the time when I received my healing through TPM, my experience was that I discovered the precious pearl that Matthew 13:45 referred to. I became curious to know if other people experienced the same thing. I also developed the need to create the opportunity for these stories of healing to be told within a framework in which their authenticity could both be tested and protected.

Since early childhood I had experienced certain problems which had become more prominent as life progressed, fuelled by low self-esteem, depression and other symptoms which I had developed. Long before I started psychotherapy, I was actively involved in ministry. Being a minister I had to counsel different people with a variety of problems. Soon, discovering my lack of appropriate knowledge to help them or myself, I decided to undergo psychotherapy in order to first of all find answers and solutions to my own problems.

My first encounter with therapy was a combination of cognitive therapy and pharmaco-therapy. It helped me straighten out my thinking. This process interested me so much that I decided to equip myself better academically by enrolling in a Psychology course. This resulted in me receiving my Honours degree in Psychology.

That gave me a broad perspective on different therapeutic orientations. Out of my first experience I became enchanted with “Transactional Analysis” and incorporated it in the counselling I did in my ministry. I experienced great success with this. In my search for functional competence, I enrolled in a master’s course in Pastoral Therapy at the Faculty of

Theology, University of the Free State (UFS). During this course I was introduced to systems theory and trained in the strategic and structural approaches within the eco-systemic epistemology. I thoroughly enjoyed the implementation of this therapy, but had the opposite experience when on the receiving end. I experienced both as blaming and judgmental approaches.

Next I was really fortunate to be selected for the M.A. in Counselling Psychology at the formerly named Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit (RAU), now University of Johannesburg. In this training my perspective on the different therapeutic orientations was broadened. During this course I was also introduced to hypnotherapy, experiencing it from different approaches within the hypnotherapy domain. I thought that hypnotherapy might hold the answer to my own struggles. Although I gained some healing, especially physically (headaches etc), which allowed me to cope slightly better, my basic problem still persisted. After a year or two in private practice as a psychologist, I enrolled for the course in narrative therapy. This approach helped me to externalise my problem and it gave me control that I did not previously have.

During 2004 I was introduced to TPM, an approach which entails inviting Jesus Christ to be an active partner in the therapeutic process. This approach fascinated me enormously and it was a life-changing experience for me to be invited to this type of ministry. My life-long struggle had been with lie-based thinking which had let me believe that I was worthless. I needed to keep all the strategies I had learnt from different therapeutic orientations in place, just to counter these thoughts. After TPM I experienced maintenance-free victory in some areas of my life, meaning that those negative thoughts had disappeared. This process helped me to experience the involvement of the Triune Godhead in my personal life in a way that I had never experienced before. This healing experience motivated me to go on a personal research journey where I could explore the practices of this type of ministry and its healing possibilities.

### **1.1.2 Contextual reasons**

On a more general level this study is motivated by the fact that the practice of TPM, which initially started in the USA as a lay ministry, spread around the globe in a very short period of time and is making an impact on many lives. To quote Dreyer (1998:1), the new scope for Practical Theology is the “lived religion inside and outside the church”. Proper research in the field of pastoral praxis is therefore needed to understand TPM. The claims of high success rates made by the advocates of TPM need to be explored (Miller 2006a:1), not only to serve this field of interest, but also Christianity as a whole. I trust that this study also contributes to the further

development of TPM, in order to raise the value of TPM in the eyes of the recipients, as well as providing a more integrated construction of the reality of the recipients for them.

Further motivation for this study is that the patriarchal culture also left its imprint on practices of pastoral counselling. Heitink (1977:74) indicates how the terms “priest” in Catholic circles and “minister” or “pastoor” (as in Dutch and Afrikaans) in Protestant circles were seen as hierarchical, paternalistic and authoritative. According to him the term “pastor” does not have the same connotation. The religious leader was seen as the patriarch, who “was entitled to have the power to speak on behalf of the deity, or interpret the Word of God” (Kotze 2002:12), and he used this power to make decisions for the members of what was allowable or not. This pastor issued a “prescription” of the action that should be taken to solve a problem. The recipient had to perform it to receive healing for the hurt (Nel 2003:10). An example of this is the nouthetic approach of Adams. He assumes that the foundation of every problem is a sinful lifestyle that needs to be remedied by means of an admonishing confrontation with the Word (Adams 1972:102). This confrontation was done by the religious leader within the counselling set-up.

It is surely also the result of a church that, in her history over the centuries, misused her authority, and taught her members to equate the authority of the office as pastor with that of the authority of Christ Himself. This misuse of power is very clearly illustrated in the narrative of Annatjie, one of the participants in this research, where the pastor invokes the authority of a “revelation” to authorize his way as the only way of counselling.

In the experience of Nel (2003:7), of those seeking help, fewer and fewer consider the church as an option. It is a possible indication of the resistance that developed against the patriarchal culture in the church and/or modernism. Modernism is fully discussed in Chapter 2 (2.2.2.2), but here it can briefly be mentioned that according to the modernistic paradigm, reality is out there and bound by the laws of nature. Knowledge is based upon objective, unbiased observation of the world (Burr 2003:3). The post modern man is no longer satisfied with approaches in which he experiences that he is judged against one or the other absolute knowledge (such as Scripture). Therefore it can be understood that when people become aware of a non-judgmental approach that it would be popular. I see it as a further motivation for this study.

In cases where people still come to the church for help, it is with a “consumer mentality” (Elliot 1998) focussed on authoritative and ready answers. They search in a modernistic way for an expert who has knowledge of the Scriptures and who can interpret God’s voice for them from an official position. In short they expect professional people (experts in the health sciences) employed by the church to solve the problem from their specialist positions. It seems as though the church or the community of faith, under the influence of modernism, has totally relinquished

her role, with regards to pastoral care and counselling, to experts who provide a professional service. It is as if the church is so stupefied by modernism that she cannot recognize her own authority (as believers) that she received in Jesus Christ. Therefore it is necessary to research practices where believers again take up their authority in Christ to serve the Body of Christ.

I intend, by exploring the life stories of people who also experienced TPM, to contribute to a better understanding and balanced appraisal of this new pastoral praxis.

A number of the narratives in this study illustrate that some of the participants undertook a similar journey to mine in relation to therapy. It seems that all of us have been influenced by the modernistic therapeutic culture to such a degree that we went to one or another specialist, who we believed had the *knowledge* as an *expert* to release us from our problems.

Whereas pastoral care was initially the responsibility of the community of faith, with the passing of time a shift occurred and it became the responsibility of the expert. For example, Foucault (1984:370) indicates how the individual's responsibility, towards spiritual self care within Christianity, shifted to become the pastor's responsibility. The result was that a pastoral power developed, kept in place by his knowledge of the human psyche. The establishment of professional associations for pastoral counsellors, such as the *American Association of Pastoral Counsellors*, the *Associations of Clinical Pastoral Education*, and in South Africa the *South African Association for Pastoral work* (SAAP), and the *South African Association for Christian Counsellors*, is an indication of this. Browning (1985:8-12) also argues that it is essential for pastoral counselling to satisfy the requirements of science.

It all brought about that the role allotted to Christ in the presentation of pastoral help was made totally subservient to the opinions of experts, who used the medical model of diagnosis, medication and human therapeutic orientations to make a therapeutic intervention. The "pastoral psychotherapy" of Clinebell (1996:374,391) is an example of this, where he champions specialized ministries of counselling and therapy centres, a type of halfway house between church and psychotherapist. To him competent pastoral counselling means to make an accurate diagnosis and then to be able to implement the most effective technique that suits the diagnosis. In that process the recipient becomes a patient.

Although while following Fritz Perls' Gestalt-therapy there was a shift within the therapeutic environment from the patriarchal to growth-orientated therapies and the recipients were called clients or members (Greenspan 1983:121), it did not significantly alter the recipient's position. They were still commonly disempowered in the process rather than empowered. It led to the recipients frequently accepting no responsibility for their problems: "For them the minister is

someone to whom they can abdicate their responsibility for their own lives. In short they anointed the minister as a patriarch who cares for them by comforting them when in need and by making choices for them” (Nel 2003:9). The shift to the eco-systemic epistemology only shifted the blame from the individual to “relationship networks” which become the focus of pastoral diagnosing (Van Arkel 1987:264).

Competition in the work place is fierce among professionals, where everyone competes in the free market for the biggest slice of the cake. As a result, the interests of the recipient are relegated to second place and that leads to further disillusionment. The recipient is now labelled by a diagnosis and subjected to discrimination in the work place as well as the community.

To summarize, in both the psychological-professional approach to therapy (for example Clinebell), as well as the biblicistic-fundamentalistic approach to pastoral counselling (for example Adams, 1972) the therapist operates from a knowledge-power position. It can so easily happen that the therapist, using these approaches, placed in an expert position, uses his knowledge to play god in the life of the recipient. With this research I attempt to indicate what happens when the facilitator steps back from being the expert representing God/Jesus, and instead facilitates a process where the recipient and Jesus participate in a conversation.

Therefore, I want to explore what happens when an ordinary believer (with no formal academic training in Theology or Psychology) facilitates a process in which the recipient is empowered by an encounter with Jesus Christ to become an expert in his/her own life, co-constructing a new, more integrated construction of reality with Jesus Christ. This all takes place by means of a ministry where the recipient’s experience of Jesus Christ plays a central role in the co-constructing process, and where the facilitator creates space for the recipient to learn from Christ without allowing his knowledge to play any role in the process of facilitation.

## **1.2 The research problem**

What then is the research problem? Seymour and Towns (1990:5) point out that family therapy research is not interested in *whether* people change, but in *how* they change. The *whether* question has already been posed with regards to TPM in other research. The following is an example of it. In a paper presented by Terry Zuehlke (2007) he reported on his own research where he tested TPM’s effectiveness by means of quantitative research in a before-testing-after-testing design. Excellent empirical statistical results were achieved, indicating that 84% of the subjects had clinically meaningful change and 68% went from dysfunctional- to recovered status. But in his paper he indicated that the therapeutic community in the USA remain very sceptical about the research. In spite of the fact that they as researchers adhere to all humanly possible



requirements of quantitative research, the results are still questioned. By means of this, Gergen's (2002:9) statement is confirmed that so-called empirical facts are not "reality driven" but "culturally determined".

Connecting with the abovementioned, I am convinced that the power of convincing through narratives of personal experience, of which the legitimacy has been substantiated, has much greater weight in convincing than numbers. In my opinion it has become counterproductive in a postmodernistic society to try and deliver evidence by means of numbers. On the contrary, then the richness of the experience and knowledge of participants in TPM gets lost: "As researchers become less content with labeling numerically the level of kindness or the degree of hope, they may become more interested in understanding the stories of kindness and hopefulness" (Pinnegar & Daynes 2007:19). In any case, it is not the aim of this study to try and prove the success or failure of TPM. It would come down to me also being involved in "playing the same old **invalid** game", against which Meyer (2003:7) warns, namely that the danger in participating in such research strengthens modernistic fundamentalism.

After the quantum and relativity theories were accepted, it became very clear that the clearest proven facts in physical science are only a certain perspective on a phenomenon and that those "facts" can change when looked at from another angle (Meyer 2003:5). It further seems that "according to quantum theory, not only is the observer involved, but the observer actually brings about what is being observed" (O'Murchu 2004:33). It may be that the psychology community does not like the results of Zuehlke's research, as it does not fit in with their views. Therefore Zuehlke's research is now being questioned as to whether it was really objective. In any way, can such a before-testing-after-testing design, using psychometrics, really serve as evidence of the effectiveness of TPM? Psychometric tests can also not put "facts" on the table. In any case these can often be manipulated. Furthermore all "facts" so collected becomes dependent on the interpretation of the researcher. The questioning of Zuehlke's research is legitimate in the light of the words of Gergen (1985:272): "Scientific formulations would not be the result of an impersonal application of decontextualized, methodological rules, but the responsibility of persons in active communal interchange". In that light the contribution of Zuehlke's research to the field of Practical Theology is devalued.

In the end, I want this study to lead to a better understanding of TPM and make a greater contribution to the field of Practical Theology. It is not going to come about by searching for evidence of TPM's success. There are enough anecdotal stories to confirm both the positive and the negative. In this research it is about analyzing stories of which the legitimacy has been substantiated in order to gain a better insight into the practices and healing possibilities of TPM.

In this process I listened to the experiences of recipients of TPM and their experiences of TPM and what influence it had on their relationships and environment. I did not try to prove anything, but to learn from recipients of TPM and from this make a contribution to the further development of TPM as pastoral practice. In this research I want to focus on *how* and *why* the participants changed or did not change. With regards to the “how” question, I explore the participants’ experiences of TPM and the accountability of the practices of TPM. With regards to the “why” question, I explore in what circumstances and with regard to what problems TPM effected change or not.

Keeping this in mind, I want to formulate the research problem in broad terms as:

*How and why did, or did not, Theophostic Prayer Ministry change the lives and relationships of persons who engaged in it as recipients?*

Extensive detailed reporting will therefore be accounted for as to **how** and **why** people experienced change or did not, through TPM. I hope that I have sufficiently explained that it is not within the scope of this research to prove empirically that TPM brings about change in peoples’ lives.

### **1.2.1 How people changed**

In order to show “**how** people changed” this research explored the TPM process by giving voice to the narratives of the selected participants’ experiences with TPM, in order to gain a better understanding of what the relative influence, of the different aspects of the process, is in the lives of TPM recipients. The following two aspects were investigated:

- **The recipients’ experiences and interpretations of their encounters with TPM.** Through research interviews the participants’ experiences of TPM became storied. Testimonies from significant people in the participants’ lives could also contribute greatly to the better understanding of the influential effect of healing or no healing through Theophostic Prayer Ministry on the recipients’ lives and relationships (this aspect is covered in Chapter 7).
- **The ethics of the process.** It is not only important to look at what effect TPM had on the lives of the participants, but also at the effect this had on other significant persons in the lives of the recipients. Most important is the issue of whether the way in which it was applied is ethically accountable. It is not about conforming to certain ethical norms put in place using certain knowledge, but it is about how TPM

participated in a process in which each participant was allowed to develop a preferred ethical story of faith, hope and love (this aspect is covered in Chapter 8).

### 1.2.2 Why people changed

Furthermore this research attempts to gain a better understanding of the factors contributing to change. It also attempts to gain better insight into why change took place in certain cases, but no change happened in other cases. In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to explore the understanding of these participants to determine the degree of success or failure of TPM. In this process I aim to understand their views in the light of different Theological, Pastoral-therapeutic and Psychotherapeutic discourses (this aspect is covered in Chapter 7). I also explore why, in what circumstances and with regards to which problems TPM effected change or not (Chapter 9).

### 1.3 Research objectives

Borman et.al. (2006:134) indicates that within qualitative research it is better to formulate research objectives that guide the study, rather than research questions. Therefore I want to formulate the objectives for this study as:

- a) To explore the influential effect of healing through Theophostic Prayer Ministry on the recipients' lives and relationships as experienced by them, and as witnessed by their family and friends, by investigating the recipients' positive and negative experiences of this ministry, in order to get a better understanding of **how** this ministry affects people's lives;
- b) To evaluate Theophostic Prayer Ministry as an ethical practice;
- c) To explore the TPM recipients' understanding and experiences of **why** change occurred or not and relate participants' views on this to different Theological, Pastoral-therapeutic and Psychotherapeutic discourses.

Although my reasoning, with regards to the choices that I have made concerning the different aspects of the research, is only expounded in Chapter 2, I assume that by already having an idea of the research design and journey it will be more meaningful. Following is a brief exposition of the research design and journey.



## 1.4 Research design

When the research design is described, the terms “methodology” and “method” are very important. In research the **methodology** must show how we must go about gaining knowledge, while the **method** is the tool or instrument employed by researchers to collect the data (Sarantakos 1998:11). In Chapter 2 (2.3.4) I motivated why I chose a descriptive/ interpretive and hermeneutic methodology, where the researcher’s primary goal is “to describe and/or interpret the subjective experience of research participants” (Kvale 1996:71).

In my opinion the best way to fully explore these themes is by making use of the research method of “case studies”. Seeing that this term comes from a modernistic paradigm, where participants are treated as objects, I chose rather to use the term “narratives” in this study, as I view this term to be more respectful towards the participants. Furthermore I make use of research interviews to collect research data.

The result is that I have selected eighteen recipients of TPM and analysed their narratives in terms of “*how and why Theophostic Prayer Ministry affected the lives of persons who engaged in it as recipients*”. These eighteen narratives were selected from the caseload of an experienced TPM-facilitator, but lay counsellor, who has no formal academic training in Theology or Psychology.

## 1.5 Research Journey

At the start of this research project, prior to the pilot study, I conducted interviews with two recipients of TPM, which are not included in the research report. In conducting those interviews, I chose certain questions following consultation with my promoter to serve as the framework for a structured interview with the participants.

### 1.5.1 Pilot study

Following on from those first interviews, the pilot study was fully completed. It comprised the first interview with the participant, and then the nominee (a significant other in the life of the participant that was nominated by the participant to witness about the influence of TPM in the participant's life) had the opportunity to work through the process notes of the interview before I conducted an interview with him/her. I followed up the second interview with a multi-reflexive conversation, including the participant, the nominee and the facilitator in the conversation. In the process the insertions of my promoter were included. These interviews served as a guideline for all the subsequent interviews.

## 1.5.2 Selecting the participants

According to plan, I selected 16 recipients of TPM from the ministry of Chaplain André Muller (an experienced TPM practitioner). To build the research on only one person's ministry is a limitation to the generalising possibilities of the research. The problem is that as TPM is a relatively new type of ministry, especially in South Africa, I was not aware of other experienced counsellors in this type of ministry in the province of Gauteng, where the research was conducted. The choices were between recipients who had been facilitated by various inexperienced facilitators or recipients from the caseload of an experienced facilitator.

Even Dr. Ed Smith (2007:6) indicates that the experience of the facilitator plays a very important role in the success of TPM. If the narratives of recipients facilitated by a variety of inexperienced facilitators were used, it would not serve the goals of this research, namely a **better understanding** of the TPM process, as well as the influence that it has on the lives of the recipients. The goals can be better achieved if the narratives of recipients facilitated by an experienced facilitator are collected. I opted for the latter.

In the research proposal it was suggested that all recipients that he dealt with during 2004 and 2005 be included in the population for selection. In practice, it was realized that it would be better to have a number of participants who had already received TPM a few years ago. It would be a better indication of the long-term effects of TPM. Because Chaplain Muller only started with TPM facilitation in 2001, it did not seem meaningful to exclude a certain section of the recipients that he had facilitated in the meantime. As a result I decided to include in the population all recipients that he has facilitated to date.

Four recipients with a positive outcome and four recipients with a negative outcome or where no results were obtained, were selected for their value in the advancement of our understanding of TPM. Ghauri (2004:109) pointed out: "the choice of case is made because it is expected to advance our understanding of the research phenomenon". In the case of the "not so successful" recipients, Chaplain Muller was requested to identify four recipients who in his opinion did not have a successful outcome with TPM. In reality it limited the recipients to those he still had some sort of contact with, in order for him to judge the outcome.

Four recipients were selected from the people who received only single sessions as well as four recipients randomly selected from the rest of those who received ministry from him. In selecting the latter group, the method used was as follows:

All recipients were arranged in alphabetical order and a number assigned to each one. A random draw of fifteen recipients was made from these numbers. The numbers were listed in the order they were drawn. True to the order on the list, the relevant recipients were approached to request their co-operation.

### **1.5.3 Negotiating the journey**

Chaplain Muller contacted each of the selected recipients in order to explain the nature of the project to them and to elicit their co-operation. He also requested that each participant nominate someone who knew him or her before they received TPM, to also partake in the project (For an explanation of this aspect, refer to Chapter 2 point 2.3.5). He made appointments with each participant to meet with me. In most cases, the chosen nominee had already attended those first meetings. I meticulously explained the purpose of the project to each participant and their nominee, accompanied by a written explanation of the project (Appendix A) that they read through. If they agreed to co-operate, they signed the consent form (Appendix B for Participant and Appendix E for Nominee).

In the case of the first three categories there were only two people who were approached who did not agree to participate in the project.

The process of negotiation with regards to the randomly drawn list is here reproduced in its entirety. From the 82 recipients that made up the population, the following numbers were drawn in said order:

51, 77, 22, 44, 13, 66, 46, 21, 58, 17, 29, 81, 33, 67, 10.

**Recipient 51** agreed on the telephone to take part in the study. The interview was to take place at her residence but when we arrived there, she said that her husband refused to give permission for her to take part.

**Recipients 77 and 22** are included in the research.

**Recipients 44 and 13** did not see their way open to participate.

**Recipient 66** did not want to be a part of it, but his spouse offered to take part. Since she (**Recipient 67**) was already included on the random list, her offer was accepted and is included.

A number of appointments were made with **Recipient 46**, but after she cancelled them each time, we decided to continue with the list.

**Recipient 21** could not be traced.

**Recipient 58** was contacted, but when he did not respond after a sufficient period of time, we approached **Recipient 29** who agreed to take part in the project. (**Recipient 17** had already volunteered as a nominee in another narrative and was therefore excluded). After the interview with Recipient 29 had already taken place, Recipient 58 contacted us and agreed to an interview. Therefore both **Recipient 58** as well as **Recipient 29** are included in the research.

In this way it happened that five recipients were included in the randomly drawn list. A total of eighteen recipients are included in this project.

In two cases there were problems finding willing nominees. Everything possible was done. A number of appointments were made with nominees who simply did not show up. In the end a former employer volunteered to act as nominee in both cases. For practical reasons it was impossible to find a time that suited both the participants and the nominee. Finally, the interviews with these nominees were conducted in the absence of the participants. Their permission for the final report, as with all the other participants, was obtained (see Appendix D).

Every participant was given the opportunity to choose a pseudonym. While some did, the majority chose to use their real names in the research. Apart from the “not-so-successful” group, everyone’s wish was respected (For an explanation of this aspect, refer to Chapter 2 (2.3.3.1 d)).

#### **1.5.4 Sharing the experience**

As with the pilot study, three interviews were conducted in the case of each participant. I obtained the permission of all participants that the interviews be videotaped. These videotapes serve as the primary source of the research data. If any other information was obtained from another source, it was explicitly noted when reporting the research data. These tapes are kept confidential and will be kept safely for three years after the research project is completed. During the first interview each participant was afforded the opportunity to share his or her own experience with TPM. In most cases the nominee also attended and was present when the first interview was conducted with the participant. In the cases where the nominees could not be present, process notes were given to them to read before they proceeded with their own interviews. In this second interview the nominee responded to what was said in the interview with the participant. Following this, process notes were also provided to the participant about the second interview. The third interview, which included the participant, the nominee, Chaplain Muller and the researcher, was arranged to be a multiple reflexive conversation, in which the first two interviews were reflected upon.

Circumstances altered the procedure in only four cases. Explanations of two of the cases have already been presented, while the third case was that of a minor child. I judged the nature of the multiple reflexive conversations to be beyond his comprehension and considered it not to be in his best interest, to be present at the third interview.

In the fourth case, the participant's employer (security company) summoned him to work, at the start of the multiple reflexive conversations. He asked his spouse to take part in the conversation on his behalf. In that case his daughter was the nominee.

### **1.5.5 Reflection of the researcher**

At the conclusion of the interviews, I reflected on each narrative. Responses from my promoter as well as Chaplain Muller were obtained in the process. Where necessary, further response from the participants was obtained by means of correspondence or telephonically. In this way new knowledge was gradually co-constructed. Finally, the permission of each participant was obtained to publish the final report of his or her experience with TPM in this research project.

### **1.5.6 Ethical consideration**

This point is about the accountability of the research process. Here I focus on the ethical consideration with regards to the research process. The ethical aspects with regards to TPM as an ethicizing process and the effect that it has on the environment, is under discussion elsewhere. The ethical aspects important to the research journey are the following:

- a) It is important that research is done in such a way that every participant benefits from it. The aim is that it be an *enriching experience* for each participant. The whole process must reflect respect towards the viewpoints and convictions of the participants. That goal was kept in mind throughout the process. During the last research interview an attempt was made for it to contribute to the thickening of the alternative narrative of the participant.
- b) The effect that the research process has on the participants must be monitored as much as possible in order to be accountable for what took place in the research interviews. It was also arranged beforehand that Chaplain Muller would be available if any of the participants needed further consultation at the conclusion of the interviews.
- c) The research interviewer has the responsibility to be constantly aware of and critical of his own **presuppositions**. Therefore it is ethically responsible to continually set out my position. My own experience of TPM had an obvious influence on the way that I



conducted the interviews. In analysing and writing the research report, I included that which I considered relevant. In Chapter 2 (Requirements for a qualitative interview) I expound on this further.

- d) The research report must also be put together in such a way that it is accessible for the participants. In obtaining the final approval of the research report of each participant, I go out of my way to make sure that each person understands the part applicable to him or her.
- e) In this way I tried to be accountable as a researcher in this research report.

### **1.5.7 Weaving together themes from all the interviews**

Consequently I searched for the continuous themes that were present in most of the case studies, in order to weave them together and in that way construct new knowledge. In the process of working through the process notes of the research interviews, it seemed that the questions that Thiessen (2003) used in his research interviews, intercepted with the themes that surfaced regarding the “how” question. In the first place I worked through all the interview process notes in order to answer the “how” question by means of these questions, namely:

What effect do the participants' responses seem to indicate has TPM on the way they narrate their lives or construct their realities?  
Does God's voice appear to be an active participant in the dialogues that led to any changes?  
Do aspects (practices) of the TPM process seem to correlate with God's voice in the process?  
Do other aspects of the TPM process appear to play a part in any reconstruction of reality?

(Thiessen 2003:160)

In order to attend to the fourth question, I identified and incorporated other aspects that regularly appeared in most interviews (Chapter 7).

The same method is followed regarding the ethical aspect of the practice of TPM (Chapter 8), while the “why” question is discussed in Chapter 9. The participants' reasons, for the short and long term effect of TPM on their lives, are judged by means of their own opinions and then compared with different Theological, Pastoral-therapeutic and Psychotherapeutic discourses.

### **1.5.8 Reflection on the research journey**

Following the reporting of the research, I reflected on the research journey and the mutual influence that the research journey had on my story and the influence of my story on the research journey.

## 1.6 Review of this chapter

In this chapter I primarily motivated this research from a personal point of view and secondly from a contextual perspective. I also provided motivation as to why the research problem was formulated as: “*How and why did Theophostic prayer ministry affect the lives of persons who engaged in it as recipients*”. Subsequent to that, the research journey was presented.

## 1.7 Preview on the contents of the other chapters

Chapters 2 to 9 are divided into Section A and B. Section A basically offers the epistemological and theological background against which this research is conducted. Furthermore it offers a literature overview and analysis of TPM practices. It includes Chapters 2 to 5.

In Section B, I introduce the research participants and report on the research and reflect upon it (Chapters 6 to 9).

### SECTION A:

**Chapter 2** expounds the conceptual frame of the research. The research is positioned according to the four concepts that encompass a paradigm, namely ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology. My choice is to view this research as a narrative inquiry within social constructionism, because it “adopts” a relativist ontology, a transactional epistemology and a hermeneutic, dialectical methodology. With regards to the method, I use case studies in order to allow the participants to tell their own stories by means of the research interviews.

In **Chapter 3** I position myself with regard to the Theological discourse. With regard to the different approaches within the Practical Theology discourse, namely the confessional approach, the contextual approach, the correlative approach, the hermeneutic approach and social constructionism, I would like to position myself selectively with social constructionism. More specifically I associate with the collaborative approach of Harlene Anderson (2007) and the narrative paradigm, because stories are experiences in which strands of meaning coalesce, where “speaker and hearer are the collaborative agents for a process that liberates meaning” (O’Murchu 2005:59). I view the task of Practical Theology as maintaining the connections between the varied stories of life and the grounding story of the Christian community.

In **Chapter 4** the development of TPM in the Inner Healing landscape is indicated. Following that, TPM related discourses from Pastoral Therapy and Psychotherapy are critically discussed. This background knowledge is necessary to understand what happens in a TPM session.

In **Chapter 5** the practical principles of TPM are expounded. This is achieved by using the verbatim accounts of three TPM sessions with one of the participants, to explain how the principles are applied in practice.

With this chapter (5), Section A finishes, giving the reader a bird's eye view of the landscapes of the research and TPM as an approach in pastoral care. In Section B the participants in this project are introduced and the research problem is placed under scrutiny in order to reflect on the information provided by the research project. In that way co-constructing of new knowledge is made possible.

#### **SECTION B:**

**Chapter 6** introduces the reader to the nineteen participants in the research project. The facilitator is introduced first, followed by the eighteen selected recipients of TPM (the process of selection was described earlier in this chapter). Only the ideographical details deemed necessary to provide enough perspective for each narrative are used.

**Chapter 7** is dedicated to "*the recipients' experiences and the interpretations of their encounters with TPM*". The focus is on their perception of their experiences of the TPM process and the influence that TPM had on their lives.

**Chapter 8** examines the ethicizing of TPM practices by means of the experiences of the participants.

**Chapter 9** compares the opinions of the participants about why they experienced change or not, with different Theological, Pastoral-therapeutic and Psychotherapeutic discourses.

I use **Chapter 10** to reflect on the whole journey, as well as the possible implications that this research may have on TPM as a ministry and the contribution it made to Practical Theology. I also reflect on the way forward, the influence of the research on the participants (co-researchers) and on my own life. I also pay attention to the influence that the research has had on my own viewpoint and how it has influenced the way I use TPM in my own practice. This chapter (and also this research report) is concluded with a couple of quotations from the interviews in order for the co-researchers to have the last say.

# SECTION A

In Section A, I position myself and the research with regard to the research- as well as theological discourses. Furthermore I discuss the discourses relevant to TPM from within Pastoral Therapy and Psychology. I attempt to give a clear image of what happens in TPM sessions in practice

## Chapter 2

### THE CONCEPTUAL FRAME OF THE RESEARCH

In this chapter my goal is to set out the theoretical framework within which I conduct this research. I also intend to show and motivate my choices in this regard. A short overview about the definition of a paradigm and the development of scientific thought will contribute to a better understanding of it. In Chapter Three I offer my position regarding the theological discourse. Therefore, I wish to first discuss the three aspects under the following headings:

- a) Paradigm – a perspective on how to study the world (2.1).
- b) The journey of scientific thoughts (2.2).
- c) Positioning of the research within a Post-modernistic paradigm (2.3).

At the same time as discussing the three above-mentioned aspects, I further motivate the formulation of my research question and expand on the specific objectives for this research. In this research it is not about a futile exercise of proving the success or failure of TPM, but about making a contribution to the further development of TPM. Future recipients of TPM should be able to take advantage from the participants in this study. In this process I aim to position TPM, which radiates a pre-modern naïve faith, in a paradigm where this faith can be understood as a second-naïvety (Stiver 2001:57) radiated from a social constructionist paradigm.

In order to achieve these objectives, it is necessary to set out a detailed account of the social constructionist paradigm (2.3).

## 2.1 Paradigm – a perspective on how to study the world

Different researchers have different perspectives on how to study the world. These perspectives are defined by the paradigm from which the world is observed. The paradigm explains how the researcher perceives the world (Sarantakos 1998:11). It is therefore important to fully understand the term paradigm.

The word *paradigm* derives from the Greek word παράδειγμα (*paradeigma*) which means “to show (demonstrate) in public” and from the word δεικνύμι (*deiknumi*) meaning “to point to something” (Kittel 1964:25,32). Kuhn (1970:175-6) defines paradigm as “an entire constellation of beliefs, values and techniques, shared by the members of a given community” and writes about the change of scientific paradigms (which he restricts to sciences of a natural order), and then rightfully adds that a paradigm is a certain *pattern of thought* within a scientific community. He indicates that change is cultivated by new discoveries as well as the influence of theories (Kuhn 1970:66). He also points out that change of paradigms is “a reconstruction of the field from new fundamentals, a reconstruction that changes some of the field's most elementary theoretical generalizations as well as many of its paradigm methods and applications” (Kuhn 2003:9). However, Geertz (1973:9) points out that a paradigm is “shaped” by a community’s cultural background as well as its historical background. Denzin and Lincoln (2000:157) defined paradigm “as a basic set of beliefs which guide action. Paradigms deal with first principles or ultimates”.

In its core a paradigm is a certain view of reality. While it is the aim of this research to gain a better understanding of the way TPM influenced people’s lives, it is important to do so from a **perspective**, in other words a **pattern of thought** or **paradigm** that offers the best opportunity to give voice to people who had an encounter with TPM, in order to gain a better understanding of its practices and healing possibilities. To make a well-grounded choice about which paradigm is best suited for this research, it is fitting to briefly show the journey along which the **scientific thoughts**, about views on reality and the acquiring of knowledge, travelled.

## 2.2 The journey of scientific thoughts

Initially the church was heavily influenced by the philosophy and the position that the church occupied within culture. I find it meaningful the way Louw (2003:102-103) classifies these influences on the development of the disciplines of science, including Philosophy and Theology in three time phases, namely Submission, Observation and Participation, and would like to discuss this development according to these time phases.

## 2.2.1 Submission

During this time phase submission to the authority of a body of knowledge was required. The implication was that there existed a hierarchy of power where the advantaged held power over the disadvantaged. It was evident in the **Classical Hellenistic period** as well as the **Middle Ages**.

### 2.2.1.1 The Classical Hellenistic period

Tarnas (1999:69) points out that the Greeks were probably the first who tried to understand the world by seeking a deeper truth behind the phenomena they perceived and therefore they established a dynamic tradition of critical thought. In that way they tried to understand the world by means of reason and not religion or tradition. Although philosophers were encouraged to debate about it, it was commonly accepted that religion and tradition had the final say and everyone had to **submit** to it.

Tarnas (1999:69-71) refers to two sets of assumptions that illustrate the classical Greek concepts of reality. The first set of assumptions refers to the world as a sovereign and ordered cosmos:

- a) A rational analysis of the empirical world is therefore possible because the order in the cosmos is akin to the order in the human mind.
- b) The cosmos gives expression to an intelligence that gives nature its purpose and design. This intelligence is accessible to human awareness.
- c) Intellectual analysis will reveal a timeless orderliness that will transcend its concrete, temporary manifestation.
- d) Knowledge of the world's underlying structure and meaning make it possible for human cognitive functions such as discussion, empirical examination, imagination, and moral deliberations to be exercised.
- e) When that deeper meaning is discovered, it will satisfy the mind and the soul's search for meaning.

The second set of assumptions refers to the unpredictability and openness of the universe:

- a) True knowledge can only be obtained through the rigid application of human reasoning and empirical observation.
- b) The only truth that is humanly accessible and useful is immanent rather than transcendent.

- c) All mythological and supernatural elements must be excluded as anthropomorphic projections from interpretable causes of certain phenomena.
- d) All theoretical concepts must be measured against an empirical reality.
- e) Human knowledge is fallible and must continuously be reviewed in the light of further evidence and analysis.

There are contradictions within these assumptions; on one hand they want to point to the sovereignly ordered cosmos and try and establish a synthesis between Greek rationalism and Greek religion, while on the other hand they point to the unpredictability and openness of the universe. This polarisation in Greek thought probably had a great influence on later seventeenth century thinking.

The core aspect of this historical age, which still wields an influence in our society, is that even though individual thoughts are encouraged, mainly the church and state still expect submission from their members. Judging by a number of reactions on the Internet, TPM is being dismissed in an authoritarian fashion as unbiblical by some theologians and church leaders, who have probably had no first hand experience of TPM. This requirement to submit is also the main characteristic of the mediaeval period.

### **2.2.1.2 Mediaeval period**

After the Classical Hellenistic Period, Christianity was established as the dominant religion of the West. Christianity's bond with this classical civilization was established in a comprehensive Christian life- and worldview. To the Greek "logos" was wisdom and to the Christian "logos" is the Word of God, Who became flesh in Jesus Christ. In this "**mediaeval period**" the church was "the sole arbiter of truth, and it was not the responsibility of individual human beings to discover the truth about life or to make decisions about the nature of morality" (Burr 1995:12). This truth was communicated in such a way that Christ's suffering actually intensified human guilt and increased fear of punishment and suffering. The church became the exclusive source of the "truth" and occupied a dominant position of knowledge and power in society. It led to the church developing a judicial role with theological, cultural and political authority (Tarnas 1991:124). In this situation the church took on the role of being God's voice. It is as though God was denied the privilege of talking directly to His people. In many cases the church of today still interprets its role as being the voice of God. That is why an approach, such as TPM, wherein recipients are led to hearing God's voice for themselves is criticized (see the comment about the narrative of

Annatjie at the end of the next paragraph). That being said, however, in the abovementioned circumstances fertile soil for abuse was prepared.

That is exactly what happened. The next step was a situation where racism, sexism and classism in the church became accepted as “God given”. Isherwood and McEwan (2001:63) also indicated in connection with it “all kinds of abuse of women were acceptable under the protection of marriage vows”. Women were kept dependent and excluded from the decision making process. The legacy of that patriarchal theology and culture of hierarchy and submission is so entrenched in tradition and dogma that it still has an influence on today’s ecclesiastical practices. It was also demonstrated clearly during the research interviews. Annatjie, one of the participants, for example, repeatedly alluded during her interview to the fact that she suffered because of male authority in her church. While she saw her calling as a counsellor, her pastor did not allow her the freedom to practise it. His standpoint was that exorcising demons is enough to free people. He wanted her to relinquish TPM, claiming that he had a revelation regarding it. When she tried to explain to him what she had experienced, he found it unacceptable and she had to resign from the church in order to be free to minister TPM. In my opinion, this example illustrates clearly why research from that perspective will not be unbiased.

Development in the field of science, as well as developments such as the rise of individualism, the protestant reformation, the art of printing, colonial expansion, etc, started threatening the position of the church. Brueggemann (1993:2-3) indicates that the French Revolution seriously threatened the “trusted set of symbols” of the church as well as her economic and political power. The influence that the church exercised was greatly weakened by the rise of individualism, where the church was no longer seen as the “sole arbiter of the truth”. Instead, individual judgments “based on objective, scientific evidence, about reality” became the focal point (Burr 1995:12). It introduced the phase of observation.

### **2.2.2 Observation**

Observation points to the action where a reality is objectively observed from a distance: “This search for truth was often based upon the idea that there were rules or structures underlying the surface features of the world” (Burr 1995:12), which were still to be discovered. The results of this observation led to a logical empiricism, which laid claim to there being only one absolute truth (Louw 2003:107).



### 2.2.2.1 The Enlightenment

During the seventeenth century the Enlightenment placed the emphasis on individualism and reasoning. The individual person was established as the determining centre of the world (Meyer 2003:44). Emmanuel Kant, an advocate of the “Enlightenment”, taught that the individual reaches adulthood when he/she no longer experiences a certain matter as truth or reality when it is based on the opinion of an authority (God or the church), but is based on his/her own understanding of it. Kant further finds it important that the use of reason should be free and public (Foucault 1984:34, 37). There was a quest for the nature of reality and truth that could be found by rationally based observation and scientific evidence. This attempt to unite all people to view the world in the same way (to get consensus), namely the rational way, laid the foundation on which modernism was built (Toulmin 2000:13). I was raised with that “view”. My theological training greatly pivoted on there being only one true interpretation and the great command was to convince everyone else to conform. Although many other approaches, such as post-modernism, prompted me to have an open mind, it is TPM that really freed me from it.

Louw (2003:108) pointed out that a scientific culture developed as a result of this “Enlightenment” view, where human beings and nature were controlled and exploited by a male-dominated community. It is interesting that critics of TPM base their arguments on that framework, one in which there is only room for one **right** approach (Miller 2006a:1). It is clear that the **narrow-minded** approach would not be the right one to do justice to the **variety** of experiences of TPM recipients. Where modernism continues developing along the same lines, I also want to indicate that the modernist perspective is not the answer to this research either.

### 2.2.2.2 Modernism

Modernism developed in the late nineteenth century as the result of industrialization, urban migration, the development of transport systems and the colonization of Africa and Asia. Marxism came to prominence in its condemnation of an economic system that promotes exploitation (Gergen 1994:98) and Freud tried to demonstrate that instinctual forces drive people who therefore have more of an animal than a godly nature (O’ Murchu 2004:146).

According to the modernistic paradigm, reality is out there and bound to the laws of nature. Descartes used **representation** of the world of objects as the way to “certainty”: “To know is to represent accurately what is outside the mind; so to understand the possibility and nature of knowledge is to understand the way in which the mind is able to construct such representations” (Rorty 1980:3). To Descartes thinking and existence were identical. Human thoughts give him

direct and certain knowledge of the world while it is made possible to establish unambiguous facts and maintain generalizations of life towards “certainty” (Meyer 2003:284). The big problem with this Cartesian thinking is the subject-object split, in other words the split between the “knower” and the “known”, leading to “anthropocentrism *par excellence*, making the human being in her thinking and action the central focus point” (Meyer 2007:5). Where the researcher is unavoidably part of the system being researched, the distinction between subject and object cannot be made in research in social sciences. It also appeared that especially post positivists acknowledged the theory-dependence of scientific methods (Kelly 2006:36).

In modernism research of human behaviour is about searching for scientific knowledge that leads to the discovering of the laws that govern human lives. This knowledge is general, universal, timeless and context-free. This asks for research that is objective and independent. Empirical research methods claim to uncover truth that will be the same, independent of the identity of the researcher, over time and in various situations. In this way logical empiricism then claims “absolute objective knowledge or truth as being external to the knower, can be presented objectively to the knower and is organized in meta narratives of humanised science, progress and individual meaning” (Higgs & Smith 2002:3). The critics of TPM employ this very way. They assume that they have exposed the “objective truth” from the Scriptures and view their interpretation of this “knowledge” as more important than any other knowledge. The following quotation from Maier (2004:24) is an example where TPM is dismissed because it differs from traditional theological interpretations: “Finally, because [from a TPM perspective] we need to be healed more than we need to be forgiven, this approach [TPM] renders **traditional spiritual disciplines** practically powerless without some kind of Theophostic experience to ‘trigger’ their effectiveness” (my bold).

Although positivism, logical positivism, and logical empiricism are three different approaches, all of them believe that metaphysics should be eliminated, that reality is apprehensible by an objective observer and that knowledge about objects that contain inherent and universal truths should be discovered by means of empirical research (Hibberd 2005:74; Lincoln & Guba 2000:168). The goal was to establish a neutral way of thinking that would not be limited by any other restriction, for example religion. The great emphasis on this led to the social sciences attempting to obtain the status and legitimacy of the natural sciences (Bredo 2006:9).

The appropriateness of the logical-empirical paradigm for research into TPM to offer the best opportunity for exploration should be questioned. Kaye (1990:29) pointed out that this approach reduces the therapeutic process to observable, quantifiable elements in a controlled experimental environment where verification through replication is necessary. Cause and effect have to be

empirically discovered through systematic observation: “Not only is this ideal-type design unrealistic in proposing that real-life practices conform to artificial quasi-laboratory conditions, but it does not fit with the complexity and unpredictability of communications in the therapeutic encounter” (: 29). The research of Zuehlke (2007) that I referred to in Chapter 1 (1.2) is an example of this. For example, Zuehlke reports the following results from his case studies:

Reviewers were licensed professionals who do not use TPM. The external reviewers rated:

- Nine case studies with “much improvement”;
- Two case studies with “moderate improvement”;
- Two case studies with “mild improvement”.

Although Zuehlke (2007:13-18) achieved excellent empirical results, these results do not reflect the actual experiences of the subjects. The only conclusion to be made from these results is that, to the best of our knowledge, TPM had a positive influence on the recipients. It cannot reflect the reality of TPM from the perspective of the recipients. Ely (2007:572) says in this regard that in proper research “*truth*” must not only be “**known**”, but also “**felt**”.

From the above-mentioned example it can be understood why there has been a growing unease with the logical-empirical paradigm since the early 1960’s. Until that time, the theologian inherited a sacred wisdom and the clerics were seen as holy, wise and powerful in the light of a divine discourse in which they heard God’s voice (O’Murchu 2000:12). People frequently question politicians, health experts, economists, educationalists as well as theologians, asking what authority a specific person has to speak on a subject. Great emphasis is now laid on specialization. Knowledge gains more and more power. Since then the base of power has started shifting. People want to submit themselves less and less to the opinions of others from whom they are distanced. This has paved the way for post-modernistic thought, with the emphasis less on observation and more on participation.

### **2.2.3 Participation**

In a post-modern world what used to be the exclusive domain of the specialist is now every individual’s right –namely the right of admission to knowledge and wisdom. It is the post-modern invitation to every individual, which helps to co-construct new knowledge through participation and the sharing of their own experience.

### 2.2.3.1 Post-modernism

Post-modernism can probably be traced back to the philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), who questioned in an honest way all doctrines that drained life energy. His statement that God is dead already related to a “reaction to the conception of a single, ultimate, judgmental authority who is privy to everyone’s hidden and personally embarrassing secrets” (Wicks 2007:8). This way of thinking already started questioning the existence of a singular truth or reality. This theme was only developed further in the late 1960's by thinkers such as Habermas, Foucault, Derrida, Rorty, etc. (Bredo 2006). Jun (2006:255) stresses the fact that “any theory or model necessarily distorts reality because it cannot represent the full complexity of social reality”.

The view of post-modernism is that, although reality does exist, it is not possible to objectively know reality and therefore objective study of reality is impossible (Brueggemann 1993:7). In the same way there is no fixed or neutral place, no centre or central basis from which to obtain a “full” perspective on other perspectives. Post-modernism “rejects any attempt to encompass other accounts to become the singular way things are, any claim to have found the ultimate foundation for inquiry” (Bredo 2006:19).

As post-modernism challenges the idea of a single meaning of reality, it suggests, “meanings result from social experience” (Hare-Mustin & Marecek 1988:455). To Jun (2006:54) the most important contribution of post-modernism is “its characteristic insistence on the plurality and multiplicity, as well as the diversity and difference, of human social experience”. Rossouw (1993:904) also points out that multiplicity is necessary in order to prevent one form of knowledge from dominating another. Academic discourse can so easily dominate the knowledge of the recipients of TPM. In the research the researcher may easily seek the validation for his theory and in the process “invalidate the uniqueness of the clients' stories and thus their very identity” (McNamee & Gergen 1992:30). In the exploration of TPM practices, this aspect is very important. The experience of God has a unique aspect for every individual. As already indicated with regards to Zuehlke’s research, a reductionist research approach where there is no room for the multiplicity of experiences, can hardly accommodate the participants' experiences of TPM. This point of view is further motivated by Gergen (1999:20) who says, when he points out how difficult it is to put any experience into words, that any approach that is reductionist “cannot tell the truth about our experiences”.

Where the similarity between psychology and TPM is clear, it is fitting to also briefly look at the development of scientific research thoughts within psychology. Ever since Freud, psychology

has done a tremendous amount to be accepted as a legitimate science. In that process it seemed that the logical empiricist approach, where control experiments were carried out in laboratories, had placed too little emphasis on the complex interpersonal processes that take place within the therapeutic context. Those research results cannot be anything but reductionist. The result was that “by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century constructivist epistemology had taken over as the basis for many of the new developments in psychotherapy” (Thiessen 2003:13).

#### a) Constructivism

Within psychology constructivist thoughts can probably be traced back to Alfred Adler and George Kelly. Adler “was one of the first psychological thinkers to assert that individuals play an active role in creating a view of self and the world on which they then base their subsequent perceptions and interpretations” (Carlson and Sperry 1998:68). Then there was Kelly, who had already started in the fifties of the previous century to develop his construction theory about personality. Initially Kelly's work did not attract much attention, but in the eighties family therapists such as Harlene Anderson and Susan Levin (1998:46-67), dissatisfied with the so-called objective experts, used his work. Kelly developed a “repertory grid” against which the individual interprets his experiences in terms of “constructs” put together earlier in life (Brammer & Shostrom 1968:269). Burr (2003:19) points out that these constructs are “systems of dimensions of meaning”. Gergen (1994:64-7) adds the following: “This view traces the chief source of human action to the processes by which the individual privately construes, cognises or interprets the world”.

According to my knowledge, neither the founder of TPM, Ed Smith, nor other supporters have positioned TPM epistemologically. TPM's focus is on those “constructs” which were already constructed early in the life of the individual. Those constructions were often built on a certain interpretation of what happened in a specific memory. This interpretation then leads to negative consequences for the person. In TPM terms these “interpretations” are called lies.

I am further convinced that the last mentioned aspect of TPM could be even better understood by means of the following description of the development of a construct from a constructivist's perspective.

Constructivism developed from biological science, where it became clear that the brain does not make exact copies of reality like a camera, but that the brain is a closed system that never takes information directly from the environment. In that way, what it perceives is always a function of its own structure. In this regard McNamee and Gergen (1992:3) wrote: “constructivists argue that processes inherent in the organism largely determine what is to be taken real” (therefore

there is no such thing as an objective truth). From a TPM perspective it means that an unfortunate interpretation of events from the past colours the current experience of what is real. Reality is always observer dependant. The development of second order cybernetics also had an additional influence on the development of constructivism. Second order cybernetics sees the therapist as a part of the cybernetic circuit of social interactions: “When therapy is considered as a whole circuit, it is impossible to distinguish what is contributed by whom” (Keeney 1984:34).

Burr (2003:19) describes constructivism, summarizing it as follows: “Constructivist psychologies argue that each person perceives the world differently and actively creates their own meanings from events. The ‘real’ world is therefore a different place for each of us”. Taking Dissociative Identity Disorder (D.I.D.) as an example, in constructivism it means that a certain set of behaviour (called a syndrome) exists in reality, but that different people perceive, name and describe it differently.

According to Gergen (1994:68) the constructivist view, that every person has a different perception of reality, is not an authentic part of the post-modernistic paradigm. It remains an objective truth that is only perceived subjectively. Gergen sees reality as socially constructed. Seeing that D.I.D. is in itself a construction, and not only something about which constructions are made, it is really about constructing constructions, in other words social construction.

#### b) Social constructionism

Social constructionism is vitally important for TPM. TPM does not want to make diagnoses or engage in diagnosing at all (Smith 2007:150). In fact, TPM is all about the interpretation that the recipient has about certain occurrences in his/her life, which gives the facilitator the starting point for the conversation between the recipient and God. However, TPM does not view this perception of the recipient as an independent reality. Although the person’s own experience is intensely personal – as God reveals Himself to the person - and it is possible that it may be viewed as constructivist, God’s voice is nevertheless another Voice that co-constructs a new interpretation of the recipient’s own experience. In that sense TPM views that which happens in a TPM session as socially constructed as God’s voice takes part in the constructing of a new reality for the recipient. It implies that the recipient freely chooses to believe in God and acknowledge Him as an active constructor of this new reality. By creating space for God’s voice, lies (called constructs in narrative language), which a person had built a problem-saturated story around, were deconstructed, in order that a more preferred story, more life-giving and ethical, could be reconstructed around the new interpretation.

In order to gain knowledge of TPM, we have “to approach knowledge from the perspective of the social processes through which it is created” (Kotze and Kotze 1997:29). However, a social process (shared prayer) or a conversation is facilitated where a new perception is socially constructed. To approach TPM from the view of constructivism will not paint the complete picture. Taking the aforementioned arguments into consideration, according to my view social constructionism is the appropriate perspective to do this research from.

Through this brief description I have shown the journey along which the **scientific thoughts** developed.

I want to focus now on social constructionism as part of the post-modern paradigm. I agree with Geertz (1973:5) who defines the analysis of human action “to be not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning”. To better explore the effects that are produced by TPM, an approach where “the most interesting questions are not about the ‘reality’ of the world, but about people’s experience and their interpretation of it” (Green & Thorogood 2004:12) would be most helpful.

I choose therefore to position the research in the post-modern paradigm, “because of the stand it takes regarding reality, especially in terms of what constitutes knowledge and how and for whom knowledge is constructed” (Richardson 1990:12). It is therefore fitting to expound on the post-modern paradigm in greater detail.

### **2.3 Positioning of the research within a post-modern paradigm**

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, it is important to discuss with more detail, the post-modern paradigm, focusing on social constructionism. I would like to continue discussing it by means of Denzin and Lincoln’s exposition of a paradigm (Denzin’s & Lincoln 2000:157). According to them there are four concepts that encompass a paradigm, namely **ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology**. The ontology raises basic questions regarding the nature of reality. The epistemology focuses on the relationship between the inquirer and the known. Axiology focuses on how we shall be moral people in this world, i.e. the ethical ways of doing research, while the methodology focuses on how we gain knowledge about the world.

In order to illustrate the above, I take as an example the narrative of Alice. From a modernistic paradigm, psychopathology has a basic set of beliefs, which means that Alice can be diagnosed according to the DSM IV as suffering from Dissociative Identity Disorder (D.I.D.). It is accomplished by means of a paradigm developed by medical science, according to which certain symptoms point to a certain disorder. Hacking (1999:100) argues that psychiatrists created

(“concocted” – Hacking's word) a disorder such as, for example, Intermittent Explosive Disorder (IED) in order to treat people with short tempers with medication. White (1995) refers to this as “pathologizing discourses”. McLean (1997:74) indicates that the diagnosis leads to the person's problem being generalized. The health professional then believes that (s)he understands the problem and knows how to treat it.

If D.I.D. were the research topic and I needed to decide which paradigm to use, I would investigate:

- a) The **ontology (2.3.1)** now asks questions about the nature of the reality of it. How can we know that something like D.I.D. exists? Is there something like that?
- b) The **epistemology (2.3.2)** wants to know “what we know about D.I.D.” and “how we gained that knowledge”.
- c) The **axiology (2.3.3)** looks at the moral aspect of the process in gaining that knowledge.
- d) The **methodology (2.3.4)** asks how we must go about gaining that knowledge.
- e) In the process of gaining that knowledge the **method (2.3.5)** is the tool or instrument employed by researchers to collect the data (Sarantakos 1998:11).

To answer the research question: “*How and why did, or did not, Theophostic Prayer Ministry change the lives of persons who engaged in it as recipients*”? the modernistic paradigm will not suffice. Therefore I chose social constructionism, because it “adopts a relativist ontology, a transactional epistemology, a hermeneutic, dialectical methodology” (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:100) and participatory ethics as axiology (Kotze 2002:17). I want to position this research according to these concepts, which are discussed under the next five headings. (Out of respect for the quoted authors I keep to their formulations of the topics for these headings). In reflecting on this, I want to indicate at every turn how TPM fits into social constructionism with regards to each of these discourses. It may sometimes appear repetitive, but I aim to highlight the position of TPM with regards to each of these different concepts within social constructionism.

### **2.3.1 Relativist ontology**

Ontology can be said to study conceptions of reality; whereas epistemology can be represented by the answers to the questions “What do you know?” and “How do you know it”? Ontology can be represented as a search for an answer to the question “What are the knowable things”? Lehmann (2004:142-143) refers to ontology when he indicates that every paradigm makes “metaphysical presumptions” of “what could be known”. He uses the word “principle” to



indicate the basis of the “first assumption” that indicates “the metaphysical ground understanding of a matter” (Lehmann 2004:39).

Relativist ontology proclaims that knowledge of reality is not acquired by objective scientific methods but where knowledge about reality is socially constructed. There is consciousness of and appreciation for the continual change of knowledge and reality: “In post-modern thought there are no universal criteria of truth; claims to knowledge are always contextual” (Jennings & Graham 1996:168). Even “scientific knowledge” and the so-called realities are the products of historical and social discourses. The four ideas that Freedman and Combs (1996:22) describe help us to understand what lies behind a post-modern view on reality:

- Realities are socially constructed.
- Realities are constituted through language.
- Realities are organized and maintained through narrative.
- There are no essential truths.

In this research it is not about essential truths. It is already the futile exercise that some research aims to achieve, evidence for or against TPM. Research results are necessary where evidence is not sought. Although demands are made of TPM's founder to validate TPM theory by “long term, extensive, randomised control-group studies”, (Miller 2006a:1) research is needed where the development of TPM and the interests of the future recipients are foremost. No criticism will be able to eliminate TPM as an approach.

Relativist ontology creates the space where reality is socially constructed. For example, when Harre (1986:4-5) points out that it does not make sense to try and ontologically understand different “emotions” from another paradigm, seeing that the meaning of it can differ from culture to culture or the meaning can be socially constructed, only relativist ontology can do it justice. Emotions are such a vital part of TPM practices that no justice will be done if TPM is evaluated from another ontological approach.

From the abovementioned quotations of Freedman and Combs it shows how important it is to remember that research results on the table, namely the narratives of participants, are social constructions constituted by means of language and organised and maintained by narratives. No universal deductions can be made from them, but these narratives become co-constructors of a developing TPM approach for the sake of future recipients of TPM.

I hope that what I've written is sufficient to show that relativist ontology, as social constructionism, is the best approach for this research. Furthermore, I am of the opinion that this

ontology also creates a framework wherein TPM may come into its right. Now let me expound on **social constructionism** further.

According to Gergen (1994:68) reality is socially constructed. When critics of social constructionism argue that there is a reality out there and not only something created by a person's own thoughts, for example that “death” is not merely a social construction, Gergen answers: “.... constructionism is ontologically mute. Whatever is, simply is” (Gergen 1994:72). With these words Gergen states that a foundational description cannot be made of what “is”, of reality. Again I refer to the example of Alice. Her diagnosis of D.I.D. does not mean that something like D.I.D. has an independent existence. From my own experience I know that some psychiatrists these days doubt the existence of it. However, someone speaking to Alice suddenly experiences during a conversation that a change has taken place in her personality. That person definitely experiences something. The moment when the person tries to “articulate what” it is, he/she enters the world of discourse, or in other words, the process of social construction. The diagnosis of D.I.D. only has meaning within a certain professional circle, where there is agreement on the meaning of such a diagnosis. Therefore it is nothing else but a social construction.

For example, Ed Smith (2008d:2) advises his readers time and again about what recipients report in a session. He says the “images are what they are (which we do not know)”. The facilitator respects whatever the recipient presents and does not try to change it by means of his/her own knowledge. In the session the facilitator becomes a sounding board only reflecting and in prayer creating space for God's voice to take part in the conversation. Although Smith does not position himself in social constructionism, this approach fits the reality of social constructionism, as is clear from the key assumptions of a social constructionist perspective, that Burr (1995:2-3) indicates:

- a) **A critical stance towards taken-for-granted knowledge about the reality.** What exists is what we perceive to exist. In TPM what the recipient “perceives to exist” becomes the reality that is dealt with.
- b) **The ways in which we commonly understand the world, the categories and concepts we use, are historically and culturally specific.** In TPM the specific tradition is Christian and all recipients are thoroughly informed of this, in order for them to make an informed choice about whether they wish to work within that framework. By means of this it is acknowledged that a specific historical and cultural context is used. In stating the framework in which one works, it is acknowledged that the concepts used are context specific. At the TPM course presented in the Philippines I personally experienced that

one term crucial in TPM, namely “lie”, in their context had a completely different connotation. Following a reflective conversation with those present, we agreed to come up with a new term incorporating the meaning.

- c) **Social processes sustain knowledge.** The goings-on between people in the course of their everyday lives are seen as the practices during which our shared versions of knowledge are constructed. Therefore what we regard as “truth”, i.e. our current accepted ways of understanding the world, is a product not of objective observation of the world, but of the social processes and interactions in which people are constantly engaged with one another. When TPM says that the recipient's perception of what happened in a memory is the “truth” for him/her, this assumption is confirmed.

From the abovementioned we can see how easily TPM fits into the social constructionist ontology. This strengthens the argument to position this research within this paradigm.

Seeing that realities are organized and maintained through narrative (Freedman & Combs 1996:22), the narrative paradigm opens up further possibilities for the positioning of this research. I want to expound on this paradigm in more detail in order to indicate the applicability of its ontology for the exploration of TPM practices and their healing possibilities.

The **narrative paradigm** provides the bridge between knowing and telling. Through the narrative the authentic meaning of a person’s lived experience comes to light and in this way co-constructs the authentic meaning of the research phenomenon. It is important for me that authentic, genuine and trustworthy descriptions of TPM experiences come to the fore in this research. Therefore it is also important not only to experience TPM through the participants’ experiences, but to also collect reliable knowledge that may lead to TPM further developing as a model. I agree with Atkinson (2007:231) who uses the term “understanding from inside”, meaning that the way in which each individual relates his/her experience includes the following:

- There are unique aspects that do not correlate with anyone else’s;
- Some aspects are shared with some of the other participants’ experiences; and
- Some aspects are common to everyone (universal).

All the aspects are of utmost importance when the meaning of TPM is thoroughly explored to construct ethically responsible interpretations. Atkinson (2007:230) describes the importance of this in the following words:

Whether it is on the part of the person living the life or another (a researcher) eliciting it from the one living it, the interpretation is the result of **understanding from inside** the meaning of the experience through a psychological re-enactment, an

imaginative reconstruction, or narration of the experience [bold mine].

In my opinion, the authentic meaning of a TPM experience will be best highlighted by means of a narrative inquiry that can lead to a better understanding of TPM as well as pastoral care as a phenomenon.

**In Summary** it is about the ontological question: “What are the knowable things”? Put differently, it is about the question of the nature of reality. In my opinion the experiences of the participants are the reality with which I work in this research project. It is not an objective reality that needs to be explained by psychometric instruments. It is knowledge socially constructed from experiences, which took place during conversations in prayer ministry and afterwards in the research interviews. It is important to point out that the “voice” of Jesus (God) is a partner in the conversations in prayer ministry. The nature of the reality researched here, is the reality socially constructed by the facilitator, the recipient and the recipient's experience of the voice of Jesus. Within the research interviews, the researcher and the nominee of the recipient are also participants in the social construction of this reality.

### 2.3.2 Transactional Epistemology

Epistemology is that part of philosophy that studies the source, nature and limits of knowledge (Gouws et.al. 1979:77). However, epistemology cannot be limited to the field of study of philosophy, seeing that every scientific discipline should shoulder responsibility of its own suppositions with regards to the origin, establishment and reliability of its own knowledge.

As the epistemology focuses on the relationship between the inquirer and the known, epistemology is about the different theories of knowledge. As research is “essentially about producing knowledge about the world that we can claim as valid” (Green & Thorogood 2004:10), the role of the epistemology is of vital importance in research. Different researchers base their work, often without saying so, on different epistemologies that lead to different understandings of the research data. The research of Oliveri and Reiss (1984:38) is an example of how different understandings lead to different interpretations.

Each epistemology operates from certain suppositions (Lehmann 2004: 142-143). The term epistemology embraces the question of **how** a person thinks, observes and decides as well as the question of **what** a person thinks, observes and decides (Kotze 1992:4).

Here is a brief overview about the origin of epistemology in order to explain my choice of epistemology. Rorty (1980:132) indicates that it was only when the power of the church over science and knowledge was defeated that scientists could demarcate their territory. He

summarizes the origin of “a theory of knowledge” by indicating the role of Locke and Descartes in the seventeenth century and Kant in the eighteenth century. Locke explained the term “theory of knowledge” as “an understanding of mental processes”, while Descartes is responsible for the term “mind as a separate entity in which processes occur”. Where ancient philosophers had opinions, Descartes and Locke then created a field in which “certainty, as opposed to mere opinion” became possible (Rorty 1980:137). Kant viewed philosophy as “a tribunal of pure reason” (Rorty 1980:3) that made knowledge possible. According to Kant all knowledge starts with experience (Bredo 2006:14). It laid the groundwork for a modernistic epistemology in which knowledge as an accurate representation of the reality is made possible by special mental processes by means of a general theory of representation (Rorty 1980:6).

Although the positivistic epistemology, as an example of a modernistic epistemology, believes that logical and empirical research methods can guarantee the absolute truth by means of controlled experiments, where prepossessed conclusions are cancelled out by an impersonal and objective research (Gergen 1985:252), it is Hibberd (2005:77) that summarizes the problem with positivism: It “misconceives social scientific practice, and the results of that practice, because it misconceives the characteristics of the researcher, the characteristics of the subject under study, and the nature of the relationship between them”.

This study is not interested in proving that TPM brings change in people’s lives, because that type of research is epistemologically flawed for the following reasons:

- a) Analysis of the central tenets of positivism (assumptions of induction, verification, falsification, decontextualized theory) have been shown over decades to be false;
- b) Positivist doctrines are not able to formulate the essence of certain psychological theories and research practices;
- c) Positivism's inability to accommodate certain psychological and social phenomena;
- d) Positivism cannot accommodate the amorphous relationship between researcher and subject;
- e) The results of social research are dependent on the interpretation of the researcher and therefore subjective.

(Hibberd 2005:75-6)

An approach where “objective research” is expected will not do justice to research where recipients’ experiences of TPM are researched and will be reductionist in effect (Dyson 1998:4). This research wants to be part of a process where TPM’s development is the main aim, not for TPM per se, but in order for TPM to be an instrument in helping people to develop preferred life stories that are ethicising.

A transactional epistemology “sees knowledge as created in interaction among investigator and respondents” (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:111) and is applicable in this research. This research

needs an approach where the researcher is seen as a participant in and a product of the social process, which underlies the production of research and knowledge. Connelly and Clandinin (2006:482) refer to research that indicates that the researcher inevitably invests in the story of the participant, and the participant in that of the researcher. It is about the participants' experiences of TPM and their understanding of the reasons why it brought them change or why it did not, and to learn from the recipients so as to improve and develop TPM to provide future recipients and their significant others with even more preferred and ethical experiences, or otherwise, less negative experiences. It is also necessary that the epistemological point of departure must create space for the voices of the participants to collaborate in developing TPM knowledge and practices all the more richly.

A transactional epistemology, such as social constructionism, meets these requirements and therefore I want to continue exploring what the benefits of this approach are for the positioning of this research.

### **2.3.2.1 Positioning of the research within social constructionist epistemology**

The key assumptions of social constructionism have already been set out in the discussion of the ontology. In order to judge what value it will have to position this research within social constructionism as a transactional epistemology, it is necessary to keep in mind the following suppositions that Gergen (2002:6-11) indicates:

- a) The terms by which we account for the world and ourselves are not dictated by the stipulated objects of such accounts.
- b) The terms and forms by which we achieve understanding of the world and ourselves are socially derived products of historically and culturally situated interchanges amongst people. Stronach and Mac Lure (1997:72) point out how the cultural and intellectual baggage, that each participant and researcher bring with them, determines the meaning that they ascribe to their words.
- c) The degree to which a given account of world or self is sustained across time is not principally dependent on the objective validity of the account, but relies on the vicissitudes of social process.
- d) None of the propositions making up the social constructionist web are candidates for truth.
- e) Language derives its major significance from the way in which it is embedded within patterns of relationship.

From these suppositions it becomes clear how important language is in the social construction of research knowledge. No objective truth about TPM can be exposed by this research. That which is constructed is part and parcel of every participant's culture and personal history, in that it is imbedded in the language that each participant brings to the research interviews. As Burr

(2003:46) phrases it, “language [is] at the heart of this construction process” and it is therefore necessary to view the role of language and narratives in the social construction of reality.

Hermans (2002:xv) refers to Gergen's point of view that **the role of language in social constructionism** is that no reality is independent of our linguistic representation of reality, and concludes then that language should not be understood as referring to specific objective matters but should rather be understood in terms of the function that it fulfils.

Burr (2003:46) also indicates that where language is uniquely human, language is by nature changeable and constantly changes its meaning. There is a big difference regarding the role that traditional psychology and social constructionism attach to language. Traditional psychology sees language as representational of one or other reality, such as emotions or memories.

For the social constructionist, language is not only a means to transmit knowledge. Already since the 1920's the social character of language was emphasised by the Russian philosophers, Voloshinov and Bakhtin, when they said: “The actual reality of language-speech is not the abstract system of linguistic forms, not the isolated monological utterance, and not the psycho-physiological act of its implementation, but the social event of verbal interaction implemented in an utterance or utterances” (Morris 1994:49). Maturana indicates that natural language is a basic biological function. Therefore it is rather connotative, implying that through language more is said than what the basic meaning of the words imply, than denotative where language is a “symbolic system for the transmission of information” (Maturana & Varela 1980:30). Maturana explains it further:

However when it is recognized that language is connotative and not denotative, and that its function is to orient the orientee within his cognitive domain without regard for the cognitive domain of the orienter, it becomes apparent that there is no transmission of information through language. It behoves the orientee, as a result of an independent internal operation upon his own state, to choose where to orient his cognitive domain; the choice is caused by the “message”, but the orientation thus produced is independent of what the “message” represents for the orienter. In a strict sense then, there is no transfer of thought from the speaker to his interlocutor; the listener creates information by reducing his uncertainty through his interactions in his cognitive domain.

(Maturana & Varela 1980:32)

From the quotation above it is clear that the functioning of language is not the delivering of a mere message. Language is rather an interactive process that constitutes the world we live and exist in. It is by means of language that communities shape their view of reality. The uniqueness of human beings rests on the fact that they can use language to exist. Language is the symbol created to give meaning to experiences. Language enables people to consciously give meaning to their world. This characteristic makes dialogue possible, so that one person can pass this

meaning on to another. When I understand what another says to me in dialogue, I understand only what is said. It implies that I can never understand another person as a person: “This understanding is always in context and never lasts through time” (Kotze & Kotze 1997:32). The description of the experiences of the participants can only be understood within the context in which it was related. In the context of research, language is used to give meaning to the participants’ experiences of TPM, rather than to transfer objective knowledge about TPM.

It must further be remembered that “communication and discourse define social organization, that is, a socio-cultural system is the product of social communication, rather than communication being a product of organization” (Anderson, H & Goolishian, H 1988:372). It is exactly this aspect that holds so many possibilities for the TPM approach. In TPM it is those interpretations formed by a socio-cultural system that need to be socially reconstructed by means of exposing those interpretations to the voice of God. A research approach that has no leeway for that can hardly do TPM justice.

Language also creates space for people to make choices and to exercise those choices (Hare-Mustin & Marecek 1988:461). People choose how they want to understand their world. By means of those choices, they give meaning to events in their lives. Smith (2007:135), founder of TPM, describes this ability of people to freely choose as the “second most powerful force in the universe”. Therefore it is recommended to research the recipients’ experiences of TPM by means of an epistemology where the meanings of the words people give to their experiences are valued.

Furthermore, keeping in mind that the experiences of these events are linked together by a theme to form a life story, it is an indication that it is applicable to position this research within a narrative paradigm. The narrative therefore plays a central role in the organising, maintaining and circulation of knowledge about our world and us. When knowledge about the complexity of human experiences is constructed by means of a story, it gives the listener an understanding of the other’s experience within a certain context. Viewed from this perspective, it is not about the transmittance of certain technical general knowledge. The narratives provide the opportunity for alternative interpretations, knowledge and experience with regards to a certain phenomenon.

Therefore a narrative inquiry is ideal when the stories of the eighteen recipients are listened to; each story offers more alternatives with regards to the interpretation of TPM. It leads to the understanding of the practices of TPM being able to be described all the more richly. In this way the research contributes to a thicker description of the story of TPM as well as to enriching the TPM story.

Burr (2003:47) views the big difference with regards to the role of language between traditional psychology and social constructionism as:



The relationship between language and thought;

The relationship between language and action.

a) **The relationship between language and thought.**

The traditional view of the relationship between language and thought is that one is a way to express the other. It rests on the assumption that the experience, or whatever I want to express, has an independent existence from the words that I use to describe it. For the social constructionist language and thought are not two separate phenomena: “They are inseparable and language provides the basis for all our thoughts” (Burr 2003:62). Language delivers a system according to which we sub-categorise our experiences and in that way label them with meaning: “Language produces and constructs our experience of each other and ourselves” (Burr 2003:62). There is nothing in the nature of creation or in human beings that naturally leads to the conceptual categories represented in any language. The fact that there is a constant shift in meaning in any language, leads the post-structuralists to describe language as “a site of struggle, conflict and potential personal and social change” (Burr 2003:62).

This role of language is so characteristic of what happens in a TPM session when God’s voice participates in the deconstruction of old interpretations. Many times I have been present in a session where God totally transformed a certain matter or situation with a few, simple words. Annatjie, one of the participants told how the words of God: “You are My joy” (Appendix B2) transformed her total view of herself and her identity. In another context the same words might not have had any influence. God has the ability to use the right words at the right moment that slot into the language of the recipient, allowing transformation to take place. Ed Smith (2007:164) also points out that when a recipient in TPM hears from God, personal and social change always follows.

Although Smith utters these words from a pre-modern first naivety, I believe that a second naivety is also present in God participating in the conversation. In this regard Village (2007:90) points out that lay people accuse scholars saying that they “lose that crucial childlike faith” because they approach the Bible from a critical objective stance. Looking at it from a post-modern angle, the question may be posed if a more literal reading of the Bible is not more true to the text. It is in this regard that Ricoeur's hermeneutic process makes sense. Ricoeur emphasizes the constructing ability of language. Dolejšova (2001:46) describes it best:

Ricoeur thus speaks of three stages, the “first *naïveté*” or the “primitive *naïveté*”, the pre-critical stage, which is dominated by the immediacy of belief. To exist, as a Christian in this stage, seems to be easy, as the world is full of non-problematic meaning; God is in everything.

language to speak about it, to invite others to participate in this world of faith, immediacy and meaning as well. Perhaps this stage is well known to people who had a strong conversion experience as adults.

This phase is followed by a phase in which everything is evaluated and questioned. Ricoeur calls this time of critical thinking “a loss of naivety” or a “hermeneutics of suspicion”. What he finds most important is how to pass on from this stage. It is how to move from a position where I have to understand in order to believe, to a position of having faith in order to understand.

This stage is called a “second *naiveté*” and aims “to be a postcritical equivalent of the precritical hierophany” (Ricoeur 1967:352). Dolejšova (2001:47) describes this stage further:

This is a stage of regaining the immediacy of the first *naiveté*, yet without abandoning critical thinking. Both previous stages are integrated and challenged, as one enters a reoriented space, but no longer in a non-problematic way. It is a space where aporias are present, and yet do not distance us from the contact with reality, from belief, immediacy and the plenitude of meaning.

This second naivety of Ricoeur provides the space in which God's voice can be understood in a TPM session.

## **b) The relationship between language and action**

With regards to the relationship between language and action, Burr (2003:17-18) differentiates between the deconstructionists and the discursive psychologists. The discursive psychologists focus on social interaction and language as a form of social action as the centre characteristic of social constructionism. They emphasize the performative and action-oriented nature of language. Deconstructionism, on the other hand, emphasizes the constructive power of language as a system of signs rather than being an action of an individual. They focus on the way in which structures of language influence the person. To them the “text” is the central concept of social constructionism. Seeing that both these approaches “endorse the view that language constructs rather than represents the world in different ways” (Burr 2003:62), I am of the opinion that both these aspects are relevant in this research. Instead of viewing it with an either/or attitude, it should rather be seen as providing more alternatives to explore a certain situation.

Social constructionists for example are of the opinion that the way in which language is used to describe ourselves, other people or events, determines the resultant action, in other words: “Different constructions of the world sustain different kinds of social action” (Burr 2003:61). In terms of the earlier cited example of Alice, diagnosed as D.I.D., the construction of the world that the relevant facilitator believes in, determines his/her reaction. One facilitator may refer her to a psychiatrist while another may see her as a person with a prophetic gift. On the other hand,

within a narrative paradigm the constructive power of language can be utilized to deconstruct diagnostic labels like D.I.D.

The important role that language plays in the process of social construction is acknowledged in this research about the TPM experience. The role that the language, both of the facilitator and the researcher, plays must be kept in mind during the research process. In this research project the researcher and facilitator belong to different denominations and theological traditions and therefore it is important to take into account that the meaning of words may differ. Hacking (1999:222) also points out how important it is that especially within religious set-ups participants “have to make plain” what they understand as the meaning of certain terms. The result was that within the research interviews this was constantly controlled, especially in the cases where different cultures were involved. Religious language and the meanings of different rituals were checked and clarified between the participants, the facilitator and the researcher. This aspect played an especially important role in the narrative of a Bulgarian participant. It also implies that I, as the researcher, should clearly spell out my own position with regards to Theology and Practical Theology (see chapter 3).

In my opinion the best way to describe the change brought about by TPM, will be through an epistemology where knowledge is socially constructed. A narrative inquiry will be best suited here. Influenced by Pinnegar and Daynes (2007:9-28), I have chosen a narrative inquiry for the following reasons:

- a) Narrative inquirers acknowledge that the researcher and the researched are co-participants in the project and that both of them are going to learn and change because of it. Stronach and Mac Lure (1997:118) describe narrative research as “transformative events – moments at which new insights and excitements opened up”. When Chaplain Muller reflected on his experience of the research process he pointedly referred to the transformation he experienced.
- b) Narrative inquirers turn from numbers to words. They acknowledge that when experiences are translated into numbers, the nuances of the experiences get lost. These nuances are exactly the data, which enable the phenomenon to be described richly. Even empiric researchers such as Roberts et.al. (2006:323) acknowledge: “narratives help people create meaning and purpose in their lives”. It is important to this research that the experience of TPM can be richly described, rather than being mere statistics that are published. For example by reading through Zuehlke’s research (Zuehlke T 2007) the reader becomes aware that the numbers reflected significant

change, but the true impact that an individual experienced cannot be reflected, as with a narrative inquiry.

- c) I have already mentioned that the so-called “scientific knowledge” is also a product of historical and social discourses. In two earlier empirical research studies, in which I was the researcher, I experienced how academic discourses (theological and other) influenced empirical findings in any case. As objective scientific knowledge in the social sciences is a myth in my eyes, I chose an epistemology for this research where it is acknowledged that knowledge is socially constructed.
- d) The questionability of the claim on the generalization of the particular, where the search is for universal laws, was already shown in the research of Geertz (1973). The goal of this research is not to make generalized conclusions, but to understand and explore the experiences of the participants as contributions to this study field. The next aspect also adds to it.
- e) Narrative inquirers turned from the general to the particular and “embrace the power of the particular for understanding the experience” (Pinnegar & Daynes 2007:24). I am of the conviction that by reading the eighteen stories of the participants, the reader has the opportunity to understand something of the experience of the participant. Something of the abovementioned power can be transferred, further contributing to the “understanding and the co-constructing of TPM” for the benefit of future recipients of TPM, which empirical results and generalized conclusions cannot do.
- f) Narrative inquirers understand that there are a variety of ways in which human experience can be understood and ways in which knowledge can be gathered. It gives this research project the opportunity to validate each participant's experience for the contribution it makes to the project as well as to TPM as a model in general.
- g) Through a narrative inquiry, participants have the opportunity, by sharing their experience of TPM, to add knowledge about the effect of TPM-practices on people’s lives. In this way the effect of TPM can be co-constructed by all the participants in the research process. The participants are therefore co-researchers and become consultants for the further development of TPM.
- h) Riessman and Speedy (2007:430) point out that the remembering and retelling are key elements in the therapy process. By means of a narrative inquiry the participants again had the opportunity to remember and to retell. When the participants had the opportunity to retell their experiences of God’s revelation, new opportunities for the

thickening of their new interpretations was created by means of the interviews. In this way the research project contributes to the newly constructed life story of each participant.

### **2.3.2.2 Conclusion**

Since epistemology is about the different theories of knowledge, it seems to me (as mentioned earlier) that empirical research cannot really bring about true objective knowledge. As “laboratory”-type research projects can never do real justice in, for example, a therapeutic context, it follows logically that the research problem can best be addressed from a transactional epistemology, such as social constructionism. The researcher becomes part of the research while the participants become co-researchers. In that way a better understanding may be gained of TPM and a contribution to the further development of TPM as a prayer ministry model can be made.

When the important role that language plays in the construction of new knowledge is considered, it seems from the explanation in the previous paragraph that a narrative inquiry is the most appropriate model, seeing that contributions of the participants receive a voice in the further development of the model.

Since the research is now positioned with regards to the ontology and the epistemology, is it now also necessary to position the research within the axiology.

### **2.3.3 Axiology - Participatory ethics**

Axiology is that branch of philosophy dealing with ethics, aesthetics and religion. Axiology is a part of the basic foundational dimensions of a paradigm. The practice of any science can never be neutral: “All knowledging including scientific enquiry, implies practices of power/knowledge, and thus ethics” (Kotze 2002:6). Ethics are not external to, but embedded within paradigms. Axiology includes the role of spirituality in human inquiry (Lincoln & Guba 2000:169). The question is within what paradigm this research ought to be ethically justified.

From within the logico-empiricistic paradigm that Kotze (2002:13) calls “prescriptive ethics”, a process of deductive reasoning developed. These ethics then developed the alleged objective and transcended status of truth, independent of time or context. Within this paradigm it means that when these prescriptions are satisfied, the researcher is assured that the research has been ethically justified. Walker (1998:7) calls it “a theoretical-juridical model of morality” and defines it this way: “It prescribes the representation of morality as a compact, propositionally

codifiable, impersonally action-guiding code within an agent, or as a compact set of law like propositions that explains the moral behaviour of a well-formed moral agent”.

In contrast to it, Kotze (2002:17) suggests “participatory ethics”, which is applicable within a post-modern paradigm. It follows from what Heshusius (1995:122) calls a participatory mode of consciousness: “It relates to a way of being with others and with the self that is passively alert, vigilant but not intrusive, a way of attending that is characterized by both the totality of the act of interest and the participation of the total person”. Two quotations from the research interviews describe something of it: “*Joe said that it was nice because talking about his experience of TPM made him remember small details. He also enjoys listening to other people talking about his changed attitude*”. Further to that, Chaplain Muller describes his experience of the research interviews: “*What was to me an overwhelming experience, was that I felt God’s presence in most of the interviews. As the interviews progressed, I realised that we were busy with something holy*”. Both these quotations bear witness to the fact that they experienced that the interviews involved participation of the whole person.

A further aspect that forms part of participatory ethics is that the research process must be available to everyone who participated in it. It means that everyone must have a voice in a way that does not marginalize anyone or cause decisions to be taken for him or her. It means that the research process must be one wherein the researcher joins in participatory solidarity with them (Kotze 2002:18). Within a paradigm with a participatory approach “the practical knowing about how to flourish with a balance of autonomy, cooperation, and hierarchy in a culture as an end in itself, is intrinsically valuable” (Lincoln & Guba 2000:172).

I go along with Kotze (2002:20) who conceived **narrative ethicising** as a meaningful way in which to ensure that participatory ethics takes place during the research process. There are according to Josselson (2007:537) three principles involved in an ethical practice namely:

- Assuring the free consent of participants to participate,
- Guarding the confidentiality of the material, and
- Protecting participants from any harm that may ensue from their participation.

In my opinion those three principles make a significant contribution to ensure that the research process is an ethicising one. For a narrative inquirer the most important ethical issue is to conduct the research in a way that the researched benefits from it. For Amia Lieblich, in her conversation with Clandinin and Murphy (2007:647) this implies an attitude of emphatic listening, of really containing the other and of not being judgmental. This is the positive side. On the negative side it is to do no harm (Clandinin & Murphy 2007:647). I am convinced of it that

these guidelines for the research process provide a safe space for both the TPM process as well as the participants to explore experiences.

A narrative inquiry will always be relational. The inquirer usually has to fulfil a dual role – a personal relationship with the participant and a professionally responsible role in the scholarly community. On one hand the researcher bears the responsibility to protect the dignity, privacy and well being of those being studied, while on the other hand this responsibility may often be contrary to “the scholarly obligation to accuracy, authenticity and interpretation” (Josselson 2007:538). Josselson further points out that this is a problem where the best the inquirer can do, will not be good enough. What is important is that the inquirer has to admit it and be open about it, rather than to pretend that there is no problem.

### **2.3.3.1 The relationship between the researcher and the researched**

I have already indicated that a paradigm in which the researcher is an objective observer is not fitting for this project. In this research it is about the participants’ views on how and why TPM did or did not bring about change. During some of the interviews intense personal communication took place; a situation where a researcher has to take an objective stance will not be ethically justifiable. In such a situation during an interview the participant may feel very exposed. Josselson (2007:539-547) convinced me that a narrative inquiry would be the most appropriate way to handle the ethical aspect of the relationship between the researcher and the researched. Following mainly Josselson I want to point out the aspects regarding the relationship between the researcher and the researched that determined my choice:

#### **a) Narrative research involves a contract that is both explicit and implicit.**

In narrative research the researcher endeavours to obtain data that is deeply human and genuine from aspects of a participant's life that are significant and meaningful to the participant. The explicit contract defines the role between researcher and participant. The development of a personal relationship between the two parties contains an implicit contract that is difficult to make explicit, as different expectations, assumptions, etc, are often not communicated. That is exactly the nature of the implicit contract between researcher and participant that determines with what respect and compassion both parties approach the process (Josselson 2007:539). The greater the rapport and trust, the greater the degree of self-revealing and, with this, the greater the degree of trust that the researcher will treat the material thus obtained with respect and compassion.

It seemed from the interviews in this research, according to my experience, that where the researcher and the participant easily resonated, the participant found it easier to share his/her experiences than in the cases where the participant viewed the research with distrust. However, it is precisely this “deeply human and genuine” information that the participants shared that enabled me to gain a meaningful impression of TPM.

**b) Dilemmas of informed consent.**

Strydom (2005:59) indicates that informed consent means that “all possible or adequate information on the goal of the investigation, the procedures which will be followed during the investigation, the possible advantages and dangers to which respondents may be exposed, as well the credibility of the researcher”, must be explicitly explained to the participants and their consent is to be obtained on those grounds. Where various research projects cannot disclose all this information, without influencing the outcome of it, it creates a dilemma. It can be seen as a misrepresentation and result in legal problems. That dilemma is not applicable to this research, as no information was held back.

In this research project the participants were informed about the purpose and the procedure of the project and interview in particular. That included information about confidentiality, about who would have access to the content, the right to publish and the participant’s right to see transcriptions and interpretations. A written consent was obtained from each participant. An information brochure was handed out to each participant.

**c) Confidentiality**

Most participants won't tell the researcher what the researcher needs to hear for the project if they are not sure about their anonymity. Everything was done to safeguard their privacy. The researcher informed all participants as to who else would have access to the data, whether written or on tape etc. All the material was safeguarded and disguised so that participants would not be recognised by others.

Another aspect that according to Strydom (2005:61) is synonymous with confidentiality is respect for the privacy of the participant. Where confidentiality refers to the management of information given to the researcher, the latter refers to the participant's right for the information to remain private. It also implies respecting the boundaries of the participant and not using confrontation or any other provocation to obtain information. Another way in which this right could be violated would be the use of hidden cameras. In this research process the camera was in plain view and every



participant gave his or her consent to its use. It also implies the right of every participant to retract any information made public and to refuse its inclusion in the research report.

In this research every participant had the opportunity to read the final report and then gave permission for the information to be made public.

#### **d) Potential harm**

The researcher has the ethical obligation to, within reason, protect all participants against any harm or damage as a result of the research project (Strydom 2005:58). Participants in a human science research project can more easily be harmed emotionally than physically, and the researcher must take responsibility for it. Participants were informed from the start what the possible impact of the research may be. The participants had the opportunity to withdraw if they were not up to it. However, it must be kept in mind that within human science research there may be a certain amount of discomfort for the participants. Josselson (2007:539-547) discourages the practice to include “the potential harm clause” in the consent form, as it, through the power of suggestion, generates suspicion. Imperative for ethical conduct, however, is that the researcher be qualified to listen and contain a wide range of human experience, and if the interviewee needs professional help after the interview, be ready to make an appropriate referral.

Although care was taken at the start to fully inform the participants about the whole research project, “the potential harm clause” was not included and arrangements were made beforehand with Chaplain Muller to be available should the need have arisen. In two cases participants did not see them continuing and withdrew from the project.

The research interviewer did take care that participants did not disclose information that they would later regret. Every piece of information was weighed for the consequences it might have, before it was disclosed in the research project. The participants were made aware of the possible consequences. Only content that both participant and researcher agreed upon was included in this report (Kvale 1996:112-7).

An aspect that involves both confidentiality and potential harm is the use of pseudonyms or own names. Each participant had the choice to use a pseudonym. Only a few chose one. I realised, in a few cases during the transcribing of the research interviews, that some of the participants (the “not-so-successful group”) may not really comprehend the full implication of using their own names. In those cases I chose pseudonyms for them, in order to protect them against any potential harm.

**e) Ending the interview**

At the end of the interview it is important that each participant voice his/her experience of the research project. This is the equivalent of debriefing, inviting the participant's reflections on the experience as a way of saying goodbye. At that point the researcher mentioned that if any participants had any signs of discomfort, they were to follow up on any unfinished business. In this project the last interview was designed to attend to any unfinished business, to straighten out any misconceptions that may have developed during the process and specifically to reflect on the way research may have influenced their life story.

**f) Reflexivity in the interview**

People can give informed consent to participate in a research project, but they cannot give prior consent to participate in an open-ended relationship that is yet to be established. Therefore, there are a few important guidelines (Josselson 2007:545-7):

As researcher I had the ethical obligation to be aware of the implicit aspects of the participant's consent, all those unsaid expectations they might have had, and to manage these in the dynamics of the relationship formed with each participant.

- i) As researcher I was aware that to be the primary tool of the inquiry, I had to be sufficiently in control of my own inner processes (issues). I am not aware that they interfered at any stage of the research process. I entered into the conversations knowing about the importance of the power balance in the relationship. In the multi-reflexive conversations Chaplain Muller played an important role, when he, through his reflection, made me aware of instances where my issues could have entered the conversation.
- ii) While it is not uncommon for people to share things they have never told someone else, I focused on being present in a way that was “passively alert, vigilant but not intrusive” (Heshusius 1995:122). In that way I hoped that my emotional response signalled acceptance and appreciation for sharing what is important to them and that also helped me to refrain from overt and subtle judgment about the participant's life.
- iii) I never used confrontation to elicit more data.
- iv) As I stay in the same area where most of the participants were residing at that stage, I believe that I am sufficiently acquainted with the social and cultural world of most of the participants.

**g) The competence of the researcher.**

An important aspect that Strydom (2005:63) adds here is **the competence of the researcher**. The researcher has an ethical responsibility towards the participant and the scientific community. My responsibility towards the latter is “to report correctly on the analysis of data and the results of the study” (Strydom 2005:63). The participants, my promoter and joint-promoter audited this report. On the other hand, I tried to remain sensitive to the influence that my competence may have had on the participants.

**h) The well being of the participant.**

I also adhered to what Neuman (2006:131) points out that research should never be more important to the researcher than **the well being of the participant**. Participants were never placed in situations where they could be embarrassed or frightened.

In chapter 8 I reflect further on the issue whether this research project succeeded in keeping within the abovementioned guidelines in order to establish if this research project was ethicising.

### **2.3.3.2 The ethics of the report.**

What were the participants' stories are now co-constructed texts, the analysis of which falls within the framework of the interpretive authority of the researcher. As in the Western world, the written word has power beyond that of the spoken word; the participants in effect gave the researcher special power “that must be acknowledged and ethically managed in a written report” (Josselson 2007:548). Throughout I have allowed myself to be led in the interpretations by the participants' meanings about the relevant matter. As far as possible I have connected their interpretations with relevant discourses in the various areas of knowledge.

Josselson (2007:549) mentioned primarily two different research goals in narrative research, namely (1) the collaborative mode, where the research is designed to “give voice” to the participants, and the ethics are grounded in the participants being co-producers of the written report (see also Gehart et.al. 2007:373; Conle 2000:51); and (2) the interpretive mode where the goal is advancing knowledge by interpreting the texts on a conceptual level, excavating the intention and meaning behind appearances. This mode involves the task of understanding a narrator differently to the way that he/she understands the issue at hand. Researchers working from this perspective usually do not involve participants in the interpretation. Narrative inquirers differ in their view on this practice; for some it is a totally inappropriate principle in an ethical practice and others do not have a problem with it. Someone like Conle (2000:51) sees data analysis and interpretation as part of the research project topics and materials

not have to relinquish their narrative quality”. Savin-Baden and van Niekerk (2008:464) argued on the other side that a narrative inquiry is only “interruptions of reflection in a storied life”. Justly, Josselson (2007:549) remarked that most research projects implicate both modes of practice. The goals for this research project implicate both modes, i.e. to give voice to the participants’ stories and to advance our knowledge of TPM as a pastoral practice by interpreting the texts on a conceptual level, excavating the intention and meaning behind appearances. Although the latter is one of the goals, in this research project there was no question asked or method used in order “to understand a narrator differently to the way that he/she understands the issue at hand” (Josselson 2007:549). There was no hidden agenda behind any of the research questions.

When I interpret the texts on a conceptual level, *excavating the intention and meaning behind appearances*, the goal is not to interpret the participant’s own story, but to interpret TPM’s story from the participant’s perspective. In that way TPM itself is then deconstructed and opens the way for further developmental possibilities for TPM.

I can agree with the stand Josselson (2007:549) takes on this matter:

My position is that the primary ethical attitude in the report rests in the researcher's authority, stressing that the report is the researcher’s understanding or interpretation of the research data. The inherent ethics of narrative research lie in the resolute honesty of the reflexivity, which state clearly the biases, aims and positioning of the knower and the circumstances under which the knowledge was created, with the researcher taking full responsibility for what is written.

That is why a research report must ideally be written in the first person. If researchers use the passive tense, the reader may easily mistake the researcher's interpretations as that of the participants, “instead of making clear what is the participants’ interpretation and what is our (‘the researchers’) reflection on the interpretation” (Savin-Baden & Van Niekerk 2007:466). It becomes clear that when the researcher uses the first person, the reader can easily distinguish between the interpretations of the participants and the researcher.

In the last chapter I reflect honestly on all the mentioned issues. In order to achieve this, I want to take special responsibility towards the participants and therefore the consent of all the participants will be obtained for the final report.

Process notes of the three interviews with each participant and their nominee cover 148 pages. Initially I wanted to include the notes in the research report to enable each participant to use his/her own voice, but it was not practical. Another option was to make a composite of the eighteen stories and in that way to present all the relevant information. However, I agree with Josselson (2007:553) who points out the disadvantages of creating composites of several

participants' stories. It is fictionalising the data and in effect destroys the integrity of it. As a result I decided to add the summaries of the changes participants experienced in table-form as an appendix (Appendix B2) to the research report. The complete process notes will be available for perusal for a period of five years after the completion of this research<sup>6</sup>. In the report itself I used certain recurrent themes to report the responses of the participants.

In writing the research report I followed the guidelines for writing a narrative inquiry research text as presented by Connelly and Clandinin (2006:485). I reflected on the experiences and viewpoints of the participants as accurately as possible. I am aware that this text is written for this specific time and place and that “there is no ultimate finality, or limiting truth, in this particular text written” (Connelly & Clandinin 2006:485). I accepted the challenge to write the research report in a literary form that is accessible to the participants. A bigger challenge was to write the report in a way that no party would benefit to the detriment of any other. Although I did my best to achieve this goal, my opinion is that I did not succeed fully. I reflect on this issue further in chapter 8. The significance for Practical Theology as well as for the TPM-community is indicated in the report when applicable.

I wrote the research report with great respect and appropriate tentativeness, recognizing that the participants were going to read what I wrote about them. I hope that by them reading the material that some will realise how important their contribution was in this research, while others will have the opportunity to view their experiences from a different angle. Others might show it to family and friends and by doing so, create a wider audience for a story co-constructed by a conversation with God. In whatever way they respond to it, my wish is that it will contribute to the thickening of their preferred stories of faith, love and hope. Therefore, although it is my aim that TPM and future recipients have to be the primary beneficiaries of this research project, out of ethical considerations I want the participants explicitly to have equal benefit from it. In the third interview with each participant I gave the participants the opportunity to share what value the research process had for them. This interview is structured as a multi-reflexive conversation wherein I set out on purpose to work towards a thicker description of their preferred life stories. In that process a wider audience was created for their preferred stories.

### **2.3.3.3 Summary**

I chose an axiology of participatory ethics such as narrative ethicising where I as researcher could join in participatory solidarity with the participants. Only participants that willingly

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<sup>6</sup> <sup>2</sup>□ Contact author at [jjcrous@absamail.co.za](mailto:jjcrous@absamail.co.za)

consented to the research project were included. All material is being handled confidentially and participants are protected from any harm that may ensue from participation. In chapter 8 I evaluate if this research process was indeed an ethicising process.

I will now position this research within a methodology that fits in with the research being an ethicising process, as well as with my chosen ontology and epistemology.

#### **2.3.4 Descriptive/ interpretive and hermeneutic methodology**

Regarding the choice of a methodology, the question should be asked, as Guba and Lincoln (1994:108) put it: “How can the inquirer go about finding out whatever he or she believes can be known?” As “a methodology is a model entailing the theoretical principles and frameworks that provide the guidelines that show how research is to be done” (Sarantakos 1998:11), the methodology must be most closely aligned to the ontology and epistemology from which the research is done.

Regarding a methodology I chose a descriptive/ interpretive and hermeneutic methodology, where the researcher’s primary goal is “to describe and/or interpret the subjective experience of research participants” (Kvale 1996:71). This interpretation should be of a reflexive nature. My aim is not to make any diagnosis, but it is about the participants' experiences of TPM and why they believe they gained or did not gain from TPM. By reflecting on the participants' experiences, the research conversations were meant for the further development of TPM and also for the interests of the future TPM recipients.

The hermeneutic perspective of the methodology refers to the relationship between the experience and the narration of the experience. When a participant shares his/her experience of TPM the experience becomes a process of narrative interpretation, and the telling of it an interpretation of the experience. Atkinson (2007:229) explains that any subjective account of a participant is done from “a personal worldview, a personal philosophy, a personal value system and a view of what is moral – in other words, how life is lived”. The participant cannot help but describe this experience from that perspective. In other words, his/her story is already an interpretation of the experience. By telling it a re-interpretation of the experience takes place, in which the response of the researcher plays an important role. In that way new knowledge with regards to the experience of the participant is co-constructed.

In the methodology of practical theology three concepts are very important, namely *understanding, explanation and change*. The perspective of understanding is central in the hermeneutical theory of interpretation. I go along with Heitink (1993a:163) who sees the primary

task of the research as the understanding of the action. In this study “the action” refers to the TPM-process.

However, “understanding” is not the only thing it is about. A social constructionist approach will offer TPM the best opportunity for exploration, because for the social constructionist the purpose of the inquiry is not only understanding, but also the **deconstruction** of the construction that the participants initially held. Meyer (2003:69) points out that when people tell their stories they are working with perspectives that they believe to be true statements of fact. In therapy these statements have to be deconstructed, while aiming towards consensus, but still open to new interpretations as information and sophistication improve. According to this statement, the stories and testimonies of the participants will hopefully contribute to a better understanding of how the TPM-process works as well as its influences in peoples' lives. This inquiry also hopefully contributes to the deconstruction of constructions that the participants and researcher initially held. Regarding the epistemology, the inquirer is also a participant in the research process.

Knowledge consists of those constructions about which there is relative consensus. There are also expectations that this process will contribute to the deconstruction of discourses in pastoral praxis regarding the TPM-process.

This research allows the participants the opportunity to tell their stories about their experiences of their journeys with TPM. Ballard (1994:22) refers to case studies as “research stories” and said: “Stories are as important, relevant, valid, reliable, meaningful and generalizeable as any other writing (which) is referred to as research”. This type of research wants to explore rather than to confirm. An exploratory approach is followed where the research endeavours to explore new knowledge. This study explores how TPM affects people and their relationships, when they want to alter their dominant problem-saturated life stories to alternative stories of love, hope and faith. In listening to the stories of the participants, it is not about attempting to understand more about them, but the emphasis is on attempting to understand TPM through their words. In this way the narratives of the participants become a mirror in which TPM can be mirrored. This opens the way for further development of TPM for the sake of future recipients of TPM.

The research conversations have to have a reflective quality. In these reflective conversations new knowledge about TPM is co-constructed. Kaye (1990:330) said that the purpose of the research conversation is that new meanings evolve towards the dissolving of problems. In this way the research not only explores new possibilities for TPM, but also explores the development

of TPM as a possibility for pastoral care and counselling through which new space is created to hear the voice of Jesus Christ.

Therefore I chose a descriptive/ interpretive, hermeneutic methodology, where the researcher's primary goal is "to describe and/or interpret the subjective experience of research participants" (Kvale 1996:71). As a narrative inquiry is such a methodology and an excellent way to study "experience as it is lived", (Clandinin & Rosiek 2007:69) I made use of a narrative inquiry.

The research problem is formulated as: "*How and why did Theophostic Prayer Ministry affect the lives of persons who engaged in it as recipients?*" A narrative inquiry gives the participants the opportunity to relate their experiences of and through TPM, and by means of that relating to create new meaning from it for themselves. Secondly, the research audience also gets the opportunity to view TPM through their eyes and to gain a better understanding of how TPM influenced their lives. In the reflective research conversations the question of "why" is implied and all the participants become co-constructors of knowledge with regards to TPM. In my opinion a narrative inquiry was therefore the most suitable methodology for this research.

With this choice it was important for me to keep in mind that what the recipients experienced in the research process, positive or negative, would have an influence on their future life story. In that sense the place where it took place was also very important. Most interviews were conducted at my private practice's consulting rooms. A few interviews took place at Chaplain Muller's house, while a few took place at the participant's residence or place of work. One interview was scheduled for a restaurant because it was the only practical venue. However, being so public, it was difficult to speak openly and that particular participant later withdrew. It emphasizes how important the guidelines that Clandinin and Rosiek (2007:69) set in this regard are when they say, "The concrete, physical and topological boundaries of the places where the inquiry took place also had an impact on the way in which people told their story". They also point out that in any experience people are always in interaction with their circumstances, consisting of both personal and social conditions. In this regard, during the research interviews, the participants not only spoke of TPM, but inevitably also about themselves and their narratives. Although I guarded against staying in the role of the researcher, it could not be helped that in some cases the conversations took on a therapeutic or pastoral colour. It must be remembered that I had to keep their best interests at heart.

Another aspect that should not be neglected is the influence of the researcher's narrative in the research process. Regarding this, Louw (2003:62) says: "When a narrative of a person's lived experience is being researched it is the researcher's narrative that influences the content and direction of the research narrative". By the re-telling of the stories of how the TPM-process



influenced the dominant story in the lives of the participants, the influence of my own narrative should also be taken into consideration. In the last chapter I reflect on this.

Because I chose narrative inquiry as methodology, I had to choose “a basic approach of gathering information” - in other words, a method that fits with it (Ho et.al. 2006:209).

### **2.3.5 Method**

Kvale (1996:11, 95) says method is the way to the goal. According to him knowledge obtained through external observation and experimental manipulation methods did not help to obtain a better understanding of the involved human beings. Gergen and Gergen (2003:60) further point out the danger of methods that are used in the same way in each and every circumstance, in saying, “any demands for universal methods of research function oppressively. They sustain the realities and morality of a particular group”. The method has to contribute to making the TPM-process and the meaning that it has for the participants better understood. A narrative inquiry is not a quest for universal laws, but about a better understanding of TPM and to contribute to the further development of it. As the aim of this research is not about generalizing research results, I therefore, prefer a narrative inquiry using case studies and research interviews as the method.

#### **2.3.5.1 Narratives (Case studies)**

In the literature about research, case studies are generally accepted as a meaningful method in qualitative research. For example, Ballard and Bray (1997:12) point out that consumer testimonies are particularly compelling data for qualitative research. Guba and Lincoln (1994:114) further stress the importance of case study reports in research when they point out that case study reports are an important mechanism for the transfer of knowledge from one setting (construct) to another through the provision of vicarious experience. Cohen and Manion (1994:123) add that case study data is “strong in reality” because “case studies are down-to-earth and attention holding, in harmony with the reader’s own experience”.

The inclusion of this method also becomes clearer in that it will make this research more accessible to a larger audience and especially a church audience. Where many lay counsellors are being trained in TPM, this method also helps them have access to the research.

These arguments as well as those expounded below convinced me to make use of case studies in this research project.

As TPM is all about individual sessions, as in psychotherapy, it makes Bromley's description (1986:1) that "a psychological case study is an account of a person in a situation" applicable. Bill Gillham (2000:1) defines a case study as:

- A unit of human activity embedded in the real world;
- that can only be studied or understood in context;
- that exists in the here and now;
- that merges in with its context so that precise boundaries are difficult to draw.

As already indicated in Chapter 1, eighteen narratives (case studies) were selected and included in this research. The "human activity" studied here is that which took place in the TPM session and its influence on the life of each participant. It can only be understood within the context of each participant's circumstances. Participants were drawn from a wide spectrum of social circumstances. The most important advantage is that the case study method is embedded in the real world. This characteristic of the case study method also makes it the ideal method for this research project.

Another aspect of importance is that the narratives were selected after TPM had already taken place. If narratives were selected beforehand, for example by implementing a before and after testing research design, the research design could have influenced the way in which the facilitator may have conducted the session, i.e. by being very sensitive in the way the TPM-principles were applied. On the other hand the participant's spontaneity may have been inhibited.

Whereas Gillham clearly indicates the "case" aspect of case study, he gives no indication in his definition as to what he means by the word "study". Bromley (1986:9) defines it as "a scientific reconstruction and interpretation based on the best evidence available of an episode (or set of related episodes) in the life of a person". Although it may well happen in the research process that a reconstruction of the participants' life stories could have taken place, the main concern of this research is the co-construction and interpretation of TPM.

When Yin (1993:4) speaks about the importance of there being a foundation theory for case study research, he indicates that with regard to exploratory case studies it must be very clearly specified what it is that is being explored. This aspect was very clearly set out in the research problem, namely "**how** and **why** people did or did not experience change through TPM".

However, in my opinion Yin gives too much weight to the theory as a pre-planned knowledge that should steer the research. In this process, with such a scenario, the theoretical discourse of Theology or Psychology would supersede the previous knowledge of the participants. I would rather position myself with Gillham (2000:2) who points out another important characteristic of a case study, namely: "You do not start out with apriori theoretical notions (whether derived from

the literature or not) – because until you get in there and get hold of your data, get to understand the context, you won't know what theories (explanations) work best or make the most sense”.

Gillham (2000:101-2) indicates how single case studies questioned medical scientific facts and tested IQ scores, resulting in theories having to be altered. I also consider it important to align myself with Gillham's point of departure, but for another reason. Although data from this research will be reflected on from various discourses from the Practical Theology and Psychological areas of expertise, the statements of the participants remain exceptionally important. The goal is not to affirm or nullify certain knowledge. That is why I choose to do this research as a narrative inquiry.

There is another reason motivating my choice. Before the case study method came into use by the social human sciences (Lyons 2007:621), its use initially started at the Harvard Law School in 1870, and then was used by the Medical School. Initially the case study method was used to train students to put them in touch with the realities outside the scholastic world. For example in the Law School the students used a set of appellate court decisions to ponder and to extrapolate general principles. In the same way case studies are also used in other areas to equip students for the practical. Lyons (2007:621) indicates how “medical cases, *which* are stories of real patients, progressively disclosed over several weeks through which students themselves develop their own learning agendas”. In that way I also position myself with Lyons' (2007:622) point of view that case studies “foster a true spirit of inquiry”. Case studies are a process of learning about the case, and the product of our learning adds new knowledge to the relevant discourse.

Adding to the abovementioned, I argue that the case study method is ideal for a narrative inquiry. Studying the narrative of a person's experience of TPM (a case study) leads to more knowledge becoming available about the phenomena. By means of selecting a number of narratives the research problem, namely “**how** and **why** people did or did not experience change through TPM”, could be richly explored.

I already indicated in chapter one that I have a problem with the term “case studies” because it leaves a cold clinical impression, characteristic of a modernistic approach, where participants are reduced to “cases” (court cases) and not human beings. This research process aims at not objectifying participants as subjects in research, but regarding them as true co-researchers. I choose rather to use the term “narrative” because it is about the narratives of the participants who take part in co-constructing the TPM narrative. The term “narrative” creates space for the mysterious and child-like essence of people's life stories (Ely 2007:572). It can then exist to

unify the research story into one, not only revealing clinical facts but also being one that transforms.

As TPM is especially criticized from within modernistic circles (Thiessen 2003:45) that its success stories are anecdotal by nature, it is important to this research that:

- The meticulous description of a narrative is very important. The experiences of the participants as described by them are essential. Second hand evidence is not used. Gillham (2000:100) indicates that the meticulous description in a case study is very powerful in the influence that it exerts on existing knowledge.
- While the descriptions of participants must be respected as their own experience, people such as family, friends or colleagues must also support it. In this way the stories are substantiated.
- The narratives have also been chosen in such a way that participants come from a wide spectrum of background and economic circumstances.

In this research all the research interviews were videotaped, where after the participant's nominee and the facilitator reflected together on the initial research interview. In that way the stories were substantiated and excluded the possibility of them being anecdotal.

According to Sarantakos (1998:95) there are three methods, namely *interviews*, *documents* and *observation* that can be used in case study research to gather data. Based on the arguments expounded in the following paragraph my choice was to use research interviews in this study.

### **2.3.5.2 Research interviews**

Research interviews involve qualitative in-depth interviews of a small number of participants. No attempt is made to determine generalising lawful relationships among variables (Keeley et al 1988:219). A conversation gives the investigated participants a better opportunity to formulate their own conceptions of their lived world, than for example questionnaires do. The conversations can lead to knowledge, which can be used to enhance the human condition. In this research it is specifically about enhancing TPM as a prayer ministry, the ultimate beneficiaries of this being the recipients of TPM. Interviews allow the participants to convey their situation to others from their own perspective and in their own words (Kvale 1996:70).

Cohen and Manion (1994:271) indicate that although various types of interviews exist, each has the same features in common. Although the roles between interviewer and interviewee may change, an interview is always about one party seeking information and another who provides that information. But this description is not good enough. It is more far-reaching than the mere exchange of information. That is why I want to agree with Kvale (1996:42) who sees the qualitative research interview as a "construction site" of knowledge. He builds his assumptions on the five features of the post-modern construction of knowledge: the conversation, the

narrative, the linguistic, the contextual and the inter-relational nature of knowledge. Kvale (1996:4) uses the metaphor of a traveller and a journey to describe the role of an interviewer: “The journey might instigate a process of reflection that leads the interviewer to new ways of self-understanding, as well as uncovering previously taken-for-granted values and customs in the traveller’s home country”. Kvale (1996:14) also points out that an interview is literally an “inter” view. It is about two persons conversing about a theme, where an interchange of views is made. There is interdependence between human interaction and knowledge production. He discerns between three different types of conversations, which involve different forms of interaction and levels of reflection on the form and content of the conversation: everyday interactions, a philosophical dialogue and a professional interchange. There are a variety of forms of professional interviews, such as a legal interrogation, a job interview, a therapeutic interview and a research interview (Kvale 1996:19-20). He defines the research interview as “an interview whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena” (Kvale 1996:6). In this way research interviews are a suitable way in which TPM and its effect on participants’ lives can be richly described.

I have broadly referred to the requirements that Kvale (1996:28-39) uses as guidelines regarding **designing the research interview**. Where the purpose of this research is to investigate the participant’s experience of TPM, the research interview is *theme oriented* and can be structured, semi-structured or non-structured in focusing on the participant’s experience.

The non-structured interview focus is without a predetermined structure for the conversation. In the case of so many narratives, this method would have resulted in an unmanageable amount of data; therefore I did not consider it any further.

Huysamen (1994:145) views the difference between structured interviews and semi-structured interviews as follows: Structured interviews make use of an interview schedule, while predetermined questions must be asked in a certain way (without any changes). Semi-structured interviews make use of an interview guide with all the participants being asked the same questions, but where the interview is adjusted according to the specific circumstances of the participants. Kvale (1996:125) defines a semi-structured interview in this way: “It has a sequence of themes to be covered, as well as suggested questions. Yet at the same time there is openness to changes of sequence and forms of questions in order to follow up the answers given and the stories told by participants”.



Structured interviews would not have done justice to the uniqueness of each narrative. To address the research problem, namely “**how** and **why** people did or did not experience change through TPM”, structured interviews would not afford the participants the opportunity to relate the “how” and “why” according to their own experiences. With regards to this Moore (2000:122) says that the goal of an interview is the spontaneous views of the participants. Structured interviews probably would have resulted in the participants only agreeing or disagreeing with other people’s opinions. There would be no chance of TPM being enhanced through their knowledge.

Therefore, I chose the semi-structured interview as it gives the researcher and participant much more flexibility than the structured interview (Huysamen 1994:145). The researcher is able to follow up particularly interesting avenues that emerge in the interview, and the participant is able to give a fuller picture. The participant shares more closely in the direction the interview takes and he can introduce an issue the researcher had not thought of. In this relationship the participant can be perceived as the “expert on the subject” (Greeff 2005:296). Cohen and Manion (1994:273) speak of this sort of interview as a focused interview and point out that this type of interview is ideal when the focus is on “a respondent’s subjective responses to a known situation in which she has been involved”. It is exactly this sort of situation in this research, with the participants sharing their experiences and opinions about TPM. A further advantage is that the semi-structured interview is adjusted differently, for example for a ten-year-old child and a senior citizen, as was the situation in this research.

For the first interview I compiled a semi-structured interview using the following process:

- A first non-structured interview was conducted. Both researcher and participant partook in an open discussion on the participant’s experience of TPM. That interview was videotaped and afterwards discussed with both a colleague and my promoter.
- Using the first interview, I formulated a number of questions. Then a second interview was conducted with a participant in order to test the questions. Not one of the first two participants was included in the selected eighteen.
- Using the experience and information that the first two interviews provided, I compiled the semi-structured research interview, subsequently tested in the pilot study. Where Kline (2005:46) says: “There is no way to overemphasize the need of a pilot test,” I want to add this aspect that it is expedient to test the interview guide by means of a pilot study. Huysamen (1994:197) remarks: “the purpose of a pilot study is to investigate the feasibility of the proposed project and to detect possible flaws in the measuring procedures (such as ambiguous instructions, inadequate times, etc.)”. An interview guide

(Appendix B3) was combined in order to ensure that the interview is focused on the theme and finally I did check the practicality and suitability of the semi-structured research questions in the pilot study.

In the second interview I asked the participant's nominee to reflect on all that was said in the first interview, and in the third interview I made use of multiple reflective conversations. Multiple reflective conversations are reflective conversations about conversations. In this research it means that it is talking about their experience of talking about TPM (Hoffman-Hennessy & Davis 1993:369). These authors also said, "A reflective conversation follows, rather than directs, it elicits ... ideas". Reflexivity is very important in the co-constructing of the alternative story. That is the "act of making oneself an object of one's own observation" (McNamee & Gergen 1992:75). A new perspective develops when a person makes his/her own prior conversation an object of his/her own observation in the interview. In a third conversation all present reflect on their experiences of their previous interviews in a way that new ideas can develop from which TPM and future recipients of TPM can benefit. The following people were part of the multiple reflective conversations: the participant; one family member, colleague or friend of the participant, nominated by the participant; the facilitator and the researcher.

On the negative side analyzing the data is probably more difficult when there are no pre-formulated questions and ready-made categories for analysis, but the *deliberate naïveté* and absence of presuppositions advocated here implies openness to new and unexpected phenomena. The implication for this is that I, as interviewer, should be curious and sensitive to what is said or not said, as well as critical of my own presuppositions and hypotheses during the interview. I tried to be open to new and unexpected phenomena. This was very important in this research. Being trained in the theory of TPM may also lead to me as researcher assuming explanations for the participants' experiences in mere theory. This approach forces me to be more open to novel explanations from the experiences of the participants and their own explanations of it.

Where "precision in description and stringency in meaning interpretation correspond in qualitative interviews to exactness in quantitative measurements" (Kvale 1996:32), this also may speak against the semi-structured interview as the ideal method. I tried to comply with this requirement by carefully reporting the participants' descriptions and meanings of their experiences. Failing that, it would lead to the participants not being considered true co-researchers. With eighteen narratives and 54 interviews it was impossible to make transcriptions of all the interviews. In any case, transcriptions cannot reflect the non-verbal communication. I tried to remedy the situation by making process notes of the videotaped interviews and double-checking the notes with the participants as far as possible, in order to ensure that the participants'

opinions and experiences were accurately reflected. Also, the participants had the opportunity to correct the written process notes if necessary. In that way I wanted to ensure that both the factual and meaning level of what the interviewees said were reflected in the process notes. During the interviews I tried to give each participant the opportunity to describe the meaning they attach to specific situations. During the last reflective conversation any further ambiguities were cleared up. It was necessary in order to allow the co-researchers to truly take part in the co-construction of TPM. I tried to faithfully reflect the participants' descriptions and interpretations in the process notes, without interpreting anything myself. My interpretations only came into play in this research report, and I have clearly marked them as such.

During the interview I tried to lay hold of extensive and rich descriptions of specific situations and action sequences from the participants' worlds that enabled me to arrive at meanings on another level. In most cases this was accomplished, but in certain cases it was difficult to obtain rich descriptions of specific situations, seeing that the participants were not willing to provide personal information during the interview.

Although I tried to clarify participants' statements that were *ambiguous*, or may imply several possibilities of interpretation once clarified, I failed in certain cases. In those cases I reflected on it in the process notes and obtained the participant's opinion on it by presenting the process notes to them.

The conversation in the research interview may lead to *change*. It may instigate processes of reflection where the meanings of themes described by the participants are no longer the same after the interview. It happened for example, during the interviews with both Marinda's and Michelle's nominees, as their perceptions of TPM totally changed.

Kvale (1996 33) also emphasizes that in order to ensure reliability, it is of extreme importance that the research interviewer has no **presuppositions**. In my opinion it is a demand not easily satisfied. A researcher who is involved in the field of his research cannot easily sideline his experience. As indicated earlier, it is ethical for the researcher to declare his position and that it should be negotiated during the interpretation of the research results. As researcher I can never really distance myself from my personal experience of TPM, as already declared in Chapter 1. My attitude towards TPM most probably played a role in the way in which I conducted the interviews. I did take all of these aspects into account when interpreting the research results.

## 2.4 Closing remarks

In this chapter I stressed that it is necessary to indicate from what perspective this research is conducted. In other words, it is about the angle from which reality is approached, the paradigm



that offers the best opportunity to give voice to people who had an encounter with TPM, in order to gain a better understanding of its practices and healing possibilities.

After I discussed the historical journey of scientific thoughts by means of three time phases (submission, observation and participation), I indicated that for the conceptual frame of this research I chose from within the social constructionist paradigm a relativist ontology, a transactional epistemology, participatory ethics and a descriptive/interpretive, hermeneutic methodology. It seems that a narrative inquiry fits in very well because of the fact that the narrative can understand the TPM experiences of participants from the inside, as it were. Furthermore it creates the opportunity for the participants to be co-researchers and practical consultants for the further development of TPM.

The narrative inquiry also provides an opportunity for the research project to be an ethicising practice where the well being of the participant is the highest priority. As methodology a narrative inquiry gives the participants the opportunity to relate their experiences. While the retelling of it allows them to find new meaning in it for themselves, secondly it also gives the research audience the opportunity to view TPM through their eyes.

As method for gathering the information I chose to do it by means of the research interviews from eighteen narratives due to the fact that case studies yield research data grounded in reality. I also indicated that the method of semi-structured interviews is the best way to explore the participants' notions of how and why TPM did or did not bring about change.

Finally, I indicated that everything must be written in a report so that the narratives of the participants are represented in such a way that an experience is recreated for the reader.

Herewith I indicated the theoretical framework for the research as well as its positioning. The next aspect that now needs to be addressed is my personal positioning with regards to the theological discourse. I have already stated that where an objective researcher is little more than a myth, it is important that the researcher in practical theology declare his own theological position in order to calculate the relative influence of it on the research project. That is the subject of Chapter 3.

## Chapter 3

# LOCATING MY VOICE WITHIN THE THEOLOGICAL DISCOURSE

It is necessary in any study that the researcher not only position his research paradigm, but also clearly indicate the context from which he does the research, in order to enable the reader, in the words of Thiessen (2003:3): “to place oneself in the author’s shoes” in order to be able to read the research narrative emphatically. Connelly and Clandinin (2006:485) further emphasize that: “in a research report on a narrative inquiry the text must reflect the circumstances, places, times, personal and social aspects of the researcher that may influence the research”. These authors place the emphasis on the personal aspects of the researcher. I believe that if the reader wants to stand in the shoes of the author, when he or she reads the research article, it is necessary that the reader also knows the academic and theological background of the researcher. This background of the researcher influences the manner in which the research data is handled and the researcher’s narrative influences the content and direction of the research narrative (Louw 2003:62). This aspect must be kept in mind during the research process where new knowledge is created.

In Chapter one I wrote about my experience with psychotherapy and pastoral therapy. This chapter focuses on the location of my voice and that of the research in the theology and practical theology discourses. In order to do this, it is necessary to have knowledge of, *firstly*, my (hi)story with regard to the Christian theological tradition (3.1), *secondly*, how I position myself with regard to the theological discourse (3.2), *thirdly*, with regard to the Practical Theological discourse (3.3) and *fourthly* with regard to the discourses of Pastoral care and pastoral theology (3.4).

### 3.1 My (hi)story

I grew up in the reformed tradition of the Christian faith. My parents, especially my mother, had a very pious and legalistic approach to their faith. For example, Cobb (1991:19) points out that many of the members of the church, generation after generation, viewed the church leadership

“as watchdogs over the moral behaviour of their congregations”. It led to me accepting this legalistic approach that as a child made faith seem synonymous with “don’t touch, don’t taste”. Furthermore, my father’s side very strongly influenced me with regard to Afrikaner nationalism, in effect making it the norm of Christian life.

Nevertheless, my mother’s philanthropical approach saved me from becoming a racist. The following anecdote may illustrate something of this. At age 9, when I heard in 1958 that Dr. Verwoerd had become Prime Minister, I went to the black lady working for us. I said to her: “Now you k.... are going to get it,” probably something I had heard from my father, but of which I am now very much ashamed. My mother heard my remark. She took me aside and taught me; in a way I still remember today, the worth of every person created by God. That conversation changed my point of view forever. In fact it plays an important role in the locating of my voice within a paradigm where the voice of each participant in the research is respected and appreciated.

The education I received in my parents’ home led to me enrolling for my theological training with a strongly pious attitude on the one hand and a philanthropic approach on the other. There the “sola’s” of the reformed tradition were made plain to me, namely, Sola Christi, Sola Gratia Sola Fidei and Sola Scriptura. The training made me conscious of the worth of the Covenant and the centrality of Christ in any ministry. Essentially, my whole ministry has been influenced by those two “discourses”. I suspect that because TPM ascribes such a central place to Christ, it is one of the reasons why I felt attracted to this model.

I now wish to focus on Theology as an academic discourse and its influence on my personal narrative.

### **3.2 Theology as an academic discourse**

The word “Theology” is constructed from two Greek words: “Theos” and “Logos”, which mean “a word about God”. However, God cannot be made the object of science (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:3) as any word about God is a word of faith. The study object of theology is therefore rather discourses about faith (Hermans 2002:ix). Already in 1927 Heidegger described Theology as the science of faith (Hart & Wall 2005:10). Meyer (2007:7) points out that Descartes’ subject-object split of scientific thoughts, including Theology, had the upper hand for three centuries. Accordingly, theology was understood to be a rational clarification, explanation and delineation of dogmas and belief systems.

Contrary to it, Jones (1999:6) and Louw (1999:8) refer to the definition of theology by Anselm of Canterbury as: “faith seeking understanding”. Louw (1999:9) points out: “Understanding entails different experiences of God. Understanding is a process of contextual interpretation, not of rational explanation”. Theology focuses on this understanding and how to communicate it. Louw (1999:9) then submits that Theology can be defined as “faith seeking ways of discoursing”. I can identify myself with the latter definition.

These discourses always imply two parties, namely God and a human being. It brings me to Tillich’s “correlation method”. Tillich views this method as the only one in which there can be theologised. According to this method it is about the human question that must be connected with the Godly revelation, while each stays independent but yet does not exclude the other. The existential question of the human race is dependent on the theological answer, while the content of the theological answer cannot be concluded from the question of human existentialism. The form of the answer is indeed moulded by the question, but the content is moulded by the Christian revelation (Donga 1989:25).

In my theologising I want to side with both Tillich (1968) and Louw (1999). I view theologising in this study as my faith seeking ways of discoursing, as Louw understands it, namely not rational explanation, but contextual interpretation. As TPM practices are built around people seeking answers to their existential questions and about what God is revealing to each recipient, Tillich’s correlation method provides a framework within which one can theologise about TPM.

I want to add to this the post-modern view that “intuitive and mystical ways of knowing ought to be included” (Herholdt 1998:223) in our theologising. Herholdt (1998:223) sees it as the task of Theology to no longer follow a strictly systematic approach to doctrinal issues. Rather, the Post-modern Theology should see its task in terms of integration and coherence of all different loci. In this way every individual locus of the Dogmatic discipline is seen as part of a greater whole. It implies that, for instance, I cannot study ecclesiology without Christology or pneumatology, or soteriology etc. It is also about more than just the acknowledgment of the context (also used in modern theology) but about the integration of it. I cannot speak of the one without including the other. If I want to understand God’s revelation it is not limited to certain loci in the Dogmatic discipline to explain it. The “intuitive and mystical ways” in which revelation is experienced is part of our theologising, because we are limited in any case by interpretations of the revelation.

In my opinion this discourse about “*human experience of Divine revelation*” mainly addresses three dogmatic loci or discourses, namely theological anthropology, Divine revelation (including viewing Scripture) and spirituality. In light of the abovementioned post-modern viewpoint, I

want to view it as a whole and discuss the different loci in an integrated way. It falls outside the scope of this study to have in-depth discussions about these loci.

I focus on the discourse about **the human experience of Divine revelation**, as an example, to locate my voice in the Theological discourse. Although I focus on my own voice in this discourse in this chapter and will attend fully to TPM's position in respect of it in chapter 4, when it is necessary in a discourse, I will refer to TPM's position.

### **3.2.1 Human experience of Divine revelation**

In TPM the emphasis is that the person receives a revelation directly from God. Therefore there cannot be a discourse about TPM without ascertaining that you have a thorough discourse about human experience of divine revelation. The way in which humans experience "Divine revelation" is influenced by each person's spirituality or experience of faith. Firstly, therefore, I want to give an overview of how spirituality influenced people's experience through the ages, in order to position myself responsibly.

#### **3.2.1.1 Spirituality**

In 1987 Firet (1987:73) wrote about how important it has become in modern society not only to know (in terms of faith) but also to experience. The Christian faith has lost its place in the Western culture as a social presumption. For centuries children grew up with the stories about Jesus Christ, but this is no longer the case. Firet says that the loss of the mystic, or the experience of faith, may well be greatly responsible for it. Also Holmes (1976:5) said that the crisis in the ministry over the last generation was deepened by the loss of the mediation of transcendence in Christian ministry. Where TPM again places the emphasis on experience, it is necessary to devote extensive attention to "spirituality".

**Firet** (1987:172) defines spirituality as a personal and/or shared fundamental, fairly continual life orientation of a religious nature. Spirituality is the way in which people seek meaning in life, the living centre according to which people live their lives. Firet compares it to the way in which people pray (religious way of asking), in which they meditate (religious way of listening), the way in which they open themselves up to divine input (religious way of practice, for example asceticism), and the way in which they participate in the culture (religious way of socialising).

When **Holmes** (1981:1) writes about spirituality, he refers to the meaning of the word "spirit", namely breathe, and places it in context with the ancient proverb: "to breathe is to pray". In his opinion, spirituality is more than just the communication with God by means of prayer. He sees

spirituality as how we experience the communication with God, in which the particular experience of prayer of each person plays an integral part. Holmes (1981:158) stated: “Authentic Christian spirituality is rooted in the common human experience of transcendence”. According to this definition spirituality plays an enormously important role in TPM. TPM is prayer and is built specifically around a recipient’s experience of God’s revelation in prayer.

**Heitink** (1993:259) views differences in spirituality as a plurality in the faith experience. Within and outside the church there are movements pursuing mystic spirituality, and others, such as the confessional, charismatic, evangelical, sacramental or a society-critical spirituality.

In a nutshell: *spirituality showcases how human beings can experience God and His revelation*. It can therefore be accepted that the recipient’s spirituality is a very important factor in the way in which TPM is experienced. Therefore it is necessary to set forth a thorough exposition of it.

**Benner** (1998:70) points out, with regard to the relationship between psychology and spirituality, that psychologists and theologians continually get ensnared in one of two extremes. Spirituality is reduced to basic psychological constructs and processes, or on the other extreme, it is placed outside the framework of human behaviour, standing alone as a reality removed from the rest of a person’s existence.

In connection with this, I think that the psychologist **Jung** made an important contribution: “Jung developed a psychology that place religious and spiritual needs at the very centre of the psyche” (Benner 1998:71). In the process of developing the typology of personalities he also assigned different types of spirituality to each of the personality types. Hirsh and Kise (1997:5) made the following classification based on Jung’s personality types and spirituality:

- a) Extraversion: Experiencing God with others.
- b) Introversion: Experiencing God through ideas.
- c) Sensing: Experiencing God through the concrete and specific.
- d) Intuition: Experiencing God through paradox and mystery.
- e) Thinking: Experiencing God intellectually.
- f) Feeling: Experiencing God wholeheartedly.
- g) Judging: Experiencing God through discipline.
- h) Perceiving: Experiencing God in the moment.

This classification offers an explanation as to why TPM is successful in certain cases and not in other cases. But in this way spirituality is narrowed down to a function of personality, reducing the concept. Indeed, Jung made a big contribution, but when it comes to experiencing God it is about much more than just personality types. It implies that one cannot speak about divine experience without encompassing both concepts, namely theological anthropology and Divine revelation as dogmatic loci. Nevertheless Jung's contribution was indicating that the role of personality in experiencing God should not be overlooked. We can deduce from it that personality also played a role in the way recipients experienced TPM.

In my understanding Holmes' formulation namely: "*spirituality is how we experience the communication with God*" tells us in a nutshell what spirituality is about. Keeping in mind my own experience of TPM and my theological positioning, it is important to give an exposition of the different traditions with regard to spirituality. In my opinion, Urban Holmes (1981) provides a good framework according to which the great variety as well as the complexity of spiritualities, or ways that Christians experienced God throughout the ages, can be illustrated.

**The model of Urban Holmes** uses two bipolar scales, categorising those experiences into four dimensions. I don't see this category as absolute knowledge, but as a social construction through which a framework is built to give a quick oversight of the (hi)story of spirituality. Firstly, there is the apophatic/kataphatic scale that Holmes represents as a horizontal axis on a graph. Secondly there is a speculative/affective scale represented as the vertical axis. The apophatic/kataphatic scale describes the techniques of spiritual growth, while the speculative/affective scale describes the primary focus of the techniques.

Apophatic and kataphatic refer to the different approaches to meditation. The kataphatic approach refers to the active use of the imagination. The Christian identifies a positive image about God and uses this imaginative image as a tool for meditation. An example of this is the image of the shepherd with sheep in his arms. The other senses can also be used to enhance imagination, for example the sounds on the hillside or the smell of the fields. This way of meditation was very popular in the Middle Ages in monasteries, especially in sixteenth century Spanish mysticism.

On the other hand, the apopathic approach is based on an emptying technique of meditation. All imagery representing God is seen as limited and dangerous representations of His Being. Benner (1998:92) remarked in this regard: "Apopathic spirituality warns of the dangers of glib over familiarity and the idolatrous assumption that the reality of God can be captured in words or symbols". For apopathic spirituality the goal of meditation is to experience unity with God. What

is experienced during this meditation is not so much about knowledge of God as the experience of His love. Although God is incomprehensible to the human mind, it is possible to experience His love. The Eastern Orthodox spirituality falls in this category.

The speculative/affective scale indicates the variety of ways in which Christians approach God and expect to meet Him. The speculative approaches emphasize the illumination of the mind while the affective approaches emphasize the illumination of the heart. Speculative spirituality emphasizes encountering God with the mind. This approach is usually associated with a rational, propositional theology with the Eastern Orthodox and particularly the reformed tradition in Western Protestantism being good examples to cite. Within these traditions God is encountered with the mind and by means of Scripture, rather than through direct experiences. Again, affective spirituality emphasizes the direct experience of God. Knowing about God is set against a personal knowledge and experience of God. This type of spirituality does not acknowledge study of Scripture and doctrines as as important as the personal experience of God.

Holmes finds an interaction between the two scales, that is to say the different ways of experiencing God are closely interrelated. He proposes that there must be a balance between all four of the approaches of experiencing God in order to cultivate healthy spirituality.

Schematically, it is set out below:

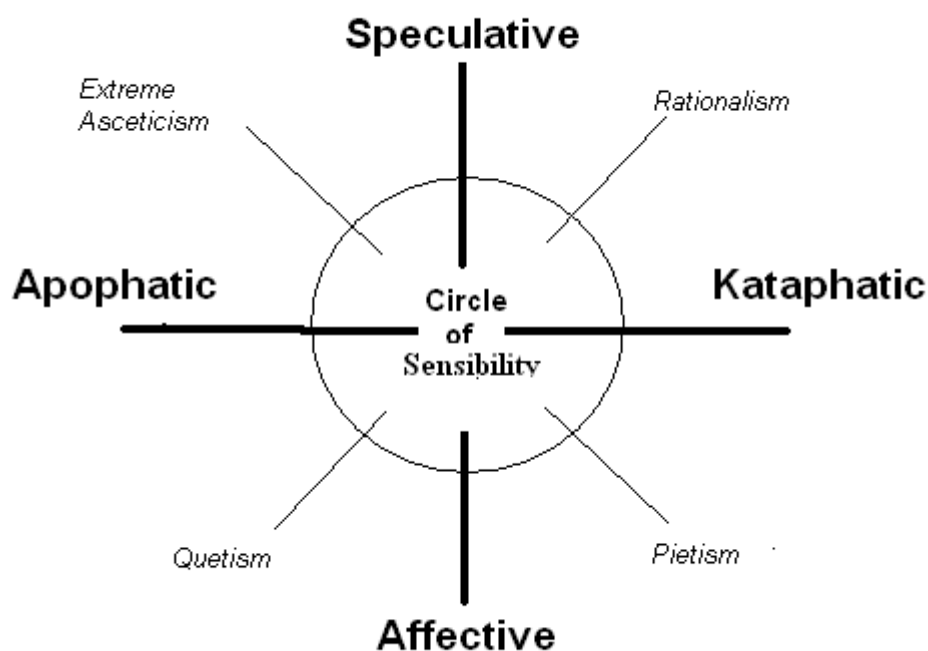


Figure 1 Ways of experiencing God and their associated dangers. (Holmes 1981:4).



The circle in the centre of the figure represents a balanced spirituality (Circle of sensibility). The area outside the circle represents the overemphasizing of certain aspects that leads to exaggerated spirituality.

Accordingly, there are four approaches to spirituality. Four specific dangers are indicated if the balance is thrown out. Extreme spirituality in one of these approaches then leads to one of the following results, namely rationalism, pietism, quietism and extreme asceticism or encratism, as illustrated in the following table:

|     | Spirituality               | Exponents   | Excess  |
|-----|----------------------------|---|---|
| a). | Speculative/<br>kataphatic | Origen<br>Dominic<br>Thomas Aquinas<br>Tersteegen   | Rationalism: Any view appealing to reason as a source of knowledge or justification. “God be in my head and in my understanding” (Briggs 1993:270).   |
| b). | Affective/ kataphatic      | Anchorites<br>Bernard of Clairvaux<br>Francis of Assisi<br>Bonaventure<br>Radical Protestants | Pietism: Refers to all religious expressions that emphasize inward devotion and moral purity (Stoeffler 1965:2).  |
| c). | Affective/apophatic        | Beguines & Beghards<br>Miguel de Molinos<br>Francis Fenelon<br>Radical Protestants            | Quietism: Purely passive spirituality, the quest for complete passivity and annihilation of the will – one does not need to seek salvation, but wait for it passively (Holmes 1981: 44, 71, 107). |
| d)  | Speculative/<br>apophatic- | Gregory of Nyssa<br>Dionysius, the  | Extreme asceticism or encratism: Excessive purity of heart (Holmes 1981:21).  |

|                       |  |  |
|-----------------------|--|--|
|                       | Pseudo-Areopagite<br>John of the Cross                   |  |
| Circle of sensibility | Teresa of Avila<br>John of the Cross<br>Luther<br>Calvin |  |

**Table 2:** Four approaches to spirituality

Holmes (1981:158-9) uses the following metaphors to describe the journey through the (hi)story of spirituality:

Two images, the mountain and the desert, stand out as characteristic of the terrain over which this journey leads us. There is in the first image the constant rehearsal of the ascent – as the ascent of the Mt. Carmel in John of the Cross – toward union or perfection. In the second image we are reminded that purity of mind and poverty of spirit are required. Both images emphasize the danger or risk in the spiritual journey. The risk cannot be avoided.

It falls outside the scope of this research to fully set out the (hi)story of spirituality throughout the ages, and therefore I am going to refer only to a few of the prominent exponents as examples of each of the abovementioned categories with this journey through the (hi)story of spirituality. I am going to concentrate on highlighting central aspects of a particular category, rather than trying to reflect thoroughly on the important theologians' contributions. On account of the fact that I use Holmes's framework for this overview of spirituality, I rely mainly on his work as a source.

From the area of philosophy, Neo-Platonism had a major influence on the spirituality of Christianity. Before discussing the different types of spirituality, I want to briefly set out the central themes of Neo-Platonism. Plotinus interpreted Plato in a way that does not really reflect Plato's own viewpoints. He and his followers' understanding of Plato came to be known as Neo-Platonism. Neo-Platonism is a philosophy with clear overtones of religion. Plotinus saw the absolute transcendence of the One who is the total Other. He viewed creation as a process of emanation from The One. Furthermore, there are two manifestations of the transcendent, namely the mind and the soul. The World Soul had two parts, the rational and the irrational soul. In that way people too had these two parts. Still, he sometimes distinguished three parts of the human being: the rational, the spirited and the appetitive. The latter he associated with the body.

He views salvation of humanity as being the consequence of purification of the mind. It is achieved by an ascent to participate in the divine Mind. The motivation of this ascent lies in the urge for unity with the One. Plotinus divided this ascent into four movements (Holmes 1981:24):

- Purgation and the practice of the virtues;
- A rising above sense perception to thought;
- A reaching beyond thought to union; and
- An ecstatic absorption in The One.

The influence of philosophy on spirituality must, therefore, not be overlooked. Bloesch's (2007:64) argument is that neo platonism is completely foreign to the New Testament.

Philosophy is actually nothing else but social constructions. The question arises, if it has such a substantial influence on spirituality, in what way is man's experience of God determined through man made social constructions that s(he) believes, rather than the Word of God. I will, therefore, now go on and demonstrate how this philosophy in the differing spiritualities played a role. This will also contribute to an evaluation of what influence this had on TPM and help to answer the "why" question about TPM.

I want to expound on how the first three of these four movements influenced Christian spirituality, especially in the case of Origen. Seeing that **Origen** is judged to be the seminal thinker in the (hi)story of Christian spirituality (Holmes 1981:26), I briefly expound his spirituality.

In his youth he was an encratite, believed to have been castrated while never abandoning his austere discipline. Scripture held the central place for him. However, he thought allegorically and always wanted to discover the deeper meaning behind each visible thing (*A rising above sense perception to thought*). He viewed spirituality as the imitation of Jesus Christ. The ascetic saw it as detaching himself from the world, leading to an illumination by the Logos. Because so very few people achieved it, Origen developed a "practical gnosticism" (*a knowledge of transcendence arrived at by way of interior, intuitive means*).

According to this approach, the process of illumination begins with self-knowledge. Origen differentiated between two types of self-knowledge. Firstly, there is the knowledge that contains a constant struggle with demons. There the Cross was the supreme expression of hope. From that developed his image of the "spiritual battle" where demons were to be defeated in the desert. This aspect clearly influenced Smith in his earlier writing on TPM. Secondly, there is the knowledge that he called a gift from God, namely "a sober intoxication". Using an allegorical setting out of the life of Moses, Origen indicated how growth in holiness must be attained in the desert. Purity of soul is achieved by serving your neighbour in love (*Purgation and the practice*

*of the virtues*). That was a complete shift from the ascetism of his youth. However, the core of Origen's mystical theology is the union with the Logos (a *reaching beyond thought to union*) that he described as a marriage between the soul and the Logos. He envisioned this unity as: "we are to be as much like God as possible" (Holmes 1981:28).

Origen described his personal experience of God's presence, which according to Holmes should be the cradle of most ideas in Christian spirituality (Holmes 1981:28), as:

God is my witness that I have often perceived the Bridegroom drawing near me and being most intensely present with me then suddenly He has withdrawn and I could not find Him, though I sought to do so. I long for Him to come again, and sometimes He does so. Then, when He has appeared and I lay hold of Him, He slips away once more, and, when He has so slipped away, my search for Him begins anew. So does He act with me repeatedly, until in truth I hold Him and go up, leaning on my Nephew's arm.

In a way, this spirituality resonates with the experience of the theophostic moment in a TPM session where recipients intensely experience the presence of God when He shows them His truth. Holmes (1981:26) classifies Origen's spirituality as speculative/kataphatic. Starting with this category, I wish to broadly discuss each category, referring to exponents whose spirituality is similar to each category. Lastly, I want to expound on balanced spirituality that Holmes (1981:119) calls the "Circle of Sensibility".

#### a) Speculative/ kataphatic spirituality

The central aspect in this approach is that spirituality is rooted in Scripture. The emphasis is on the role of the *nous* (mind) and not on emotion. Gerhard Tersteegen (1697-1769) points it out when he says: "The mind is a sleeping power, and when the Holy Spirit awakens it, the person is given over to a contemplative intuition of the Word. This leads to an awareness of God's presence in us" (Holmes 1981:143). Furthermore, Holmes (1981:68) also referred to Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274) in whose spirituality the two aspects of meditation and contemplation played important roles. He viewed meditation as "reason is a discursive deduction from the principles of truth" while contemplation is "a simple, intuitive, vision of truth". It is, however, impossible to know the essence of God.

Another aspect that is the legacy of Dominic (1173-1221), also characteristic of this spirituality, is seriousness about training others by means of spiritual direction.

It can therefore be said that speculative/ kataphatic spirituality emphasizes that the experience of God's presence must be rooted in Scripture. It is about an illumination of the mind (*nous*). The latter term also appears in TPM. Ed Smith emphasizes that TPM is mind renewal. TPM also makes full use of imagination. Therefore, TPM could fit into this approach. However, TPM does not emphasise Scripture to the same degree as the exponents of this approach.

b) Affective/ kataphatic spirituality

While the speculative approach may describe theology as “faith seeking understanding”, **Bernard of Clairvaux** (1090 – 1153) describes affective/ kataphatic spirituality as “soul seeking world” (Holmes 1981:57); that underlines his affective approach. The emphasis is on the experience and emotion. The core feature is devotion. **Francis of Assisi** (1181-1226) emphasised a profound devotion to the humanity of Jesus. The influence of Neo-Platonism is clearly seen in the Franciscans, for example **Bonaventure** (1217-1274) who described this devotion as an ascent of the soul by means of the three ways of meditation:

- **Purgation**, meaning that a person “exercises himself on the use of the sting of conscience. Its goal is a clean conscience”
- **Illumination** is the beam of intelligence that allows light into our darkness. By means of this light we can understand God’s promises.
- The latter brings us to the moment of **union**, where we come to face God who is inconceivable. Hugh of St. Victor described it as “a free, penetrating, and fixed gaze”.

(Holmes 1981:66).

When devotion gets out of hand, it could develop into sentimental pietism. Veenhof (1988:188) indicated that Calvin pointed out the importance of a balance between the affective and cognitive elements. Therefore, when piety cannot be supported by well-thought-out theological thought, it can lead to unethicising practices. **John Wesley** (1703 –1791) “had the intellect to redeem many of the pietistic insights” (Holmes 1981:140). What essentially influenced Wesley’s spirituality was the experience of his conversion and, as Holmes (1981:140) put it, he became the foundation stone of Methodist spirituality. Reading from Luther’s commentary on Romans, Wesley experienced how God cultivated faith in his heart. In his own words, cited by Holmes (1981:141), he described it: “I felt my heart strangely warmed”. Wesley’s kataphatic/affective spirituality is seen clearly in many of his hymns. In his spirituality the experience of his conversion, revivalism and the affection of the heart were extremely important.

Another aspect characteristic to this group is that poverty is seen as a way of dedication. In Wesley's case he placed great emphasis on reaching out to the poor.

In this approach the emphasis is mainly on two aspects, namely personal experience (experience of emotion) and dedication. It follows that the impression is sometimes created that people in this approach attempt to climb upwards to God in order to become one with Him. Ed Smith would term it performance-based spirituality, something he is strongly set against. Although the experience of emotion often occurs in TPM sessions, the emphasis is not on it. Therefore, TPM does not fit into this category.

c) Affective/ apophatic spirituality

According to his contemporaries, **George Fox** (1624-1691) rediscovered “to go into the desert and wait on the Spirit” (Holmes 1981:135). It is an apt description of this approach, frequently ending in Quietism.

In the thirteenth century spirituality associations began forming among the laity in Europe. In that way two groups formed in France, namely the **Beguines** (who lived together in houses) and the **Beghards** (who stayed in their own houses). Strongly influenced by Quietism, two mystical movements developed from these groups, namely the “bridal mysticism” or *Brautmystik* and the spirituality of essence or *Wesenmystik*. In the spirituality of these groups the influence of Neo-Platonism was clearly seen: They viewed their creation as emanating from God, and salvation as the ascent of humankind to the One from which we came. With the *wesenmystik* the ascent was about the affinity of the human essence to be absorbed in the divine essence, while the *Brautmystik* was about wholeness experienced in a marriage with the Lamb. Both these spiritualities emphasized the passive waiting for salvation experienced in oneness (Holmes 1981:71).

This type of spirituality already existed in the time of Tertullian (c.160). Holmes (1981:134) described it as follows:

The teaching is that the Holy Spirit is speaking directly to the believer. Its sixteenth century form had continuity with its medieval roots. It is highly subjective, individualistic, millenarian (the belief that Christ’s reign on earth of 1000 years is about to begin), antinomian, anti-institutional (both church and state), and anti-intellectual. It is sectarian, excluding all but the “saved” from its company. It exists today in the way the oppressed, who get little of this world’s goods, assure themselves of their personal worth since there is little or no outward sign of anyone else deeming them worthy.

This approach is a passive waiting for enlightenment by the Holy Spirit. The idea of an “inner light” present in each believer, is common to most exponents. The word “theophostic”, with the meaning of God’s light, reminds one of this inner light. However, TPM is not about waiting for God’s light. It is not a passive waiting, but an active searching for it. Although elements of this approach are present in TPM, TPM cannot be positioned here.

d) Speculative/ apophatic spirituality

**Gregory of Nyssa** (4<sup>th</sup> century) is a bridge between Origen and **Dionysius**, and an extremely important influence on the apophatic tradition. He taught that people were created with a proclivity (obediential potency) for God. That is what he understood by “the image of God”. It is the point of connection that the goodness of God finds in the person. **Dionysius** views

divinisation as occurring when “the mind in the spirit of humanity is infused with the Logos, the mind in the spirit of God” (Holmes 1981:40). That is when he believes oneness is obtained.

The inner urge in people is *eros* (love for oneness) and when it joins to *agape* (love) of God, it produces a “sober inebriation”. *Eros* becomes corrupted when it gives way to passion and pleasure. Therefore human beings must choose between two marriages: the one of the flesh or the marriage of the spirit. We cannot have both. The former denies purity of heart while the latter provides us with the wisdom of God. Gregory sees the spiritual life as a perpetual ascent, in which a person experiences the presence of God through purification. Holmes (1981:33) described it as follows: “It is the presence of God that comes to the purified soul in its emptiness. It is the love of God that penetrates the soul that the soul might participate in God”. Gregory terms it “compenetration” He points out that humankind possesses a natural longing for God, only satisfied by God’s presence. The term “hesychasm” is used to indicate that this possibility for compenetration “depends upon the awakening of the soul and the engendering of an inner quiet or peace by God’s grace” (Holmes 1981:34).

In this approach it is about using isolation and dedication to experience oneness with God. The emphasis is on purity of heart. This oneness is not about what the mind experiences. I do not see any connection with TPM here.

With this I have shown how the different types of spirituality are influenced by philosophy. Except in the case of the speculative/kataphatic spirituality the philosophy has most likely played a greater role than Scripture itself. I can, therefore, come to no other inference than that the manner in which God is experienced, is either reached through whichever philosophical glasses (a social construction) are being looked through rather than through God’s Word. Whenever the differing debates about TPM on the internet are reviewed I am of the understanding that the criticism that is expressed, comes out of these differing spiritualities, where every person interprets the Scriptures according to the spectacles that they have on. This implies that human social constructions play a greater role in the aforementioned review than God’s Word itself.

e) Circle of sensibility

Holmes (1981:119) describes sensibility as “the ability to express a comprehensive, **balanced** whole in experience” [bold mine], in other words, where reason and emotion are in balance, with imagination neither over-emphasised nor excluded. When Holmes (1981:99) describes the spirituality of **John of the Cross** (1542-1591), he indicates what he means by the term Circle of sensibility: “In a very kataphatic and sometimes affective manner, he advocates an apophatic and

speculative spirituality”. He also mentions **Teresa of Avila** who (1515-1582), according to him is an example of a balanced spirituality.

Here I wish to indicate to what degree TPM also fits into this Circle of Sensibility. In my opinion **St Therese of Lisieux** (1873-1897) better represents the Circle of Sensibility. She developed the Way of Spiritual Childhood, based in absolute surrender and loving trust in God without neglecting a completely practical spirituality. Born in France in an age when Scripture was still greatly unknown and unread, she went directly to the Gospels for the root of her spirituality and put it into everyday practice in a sensibility very rarely excelled by anyone but the modern day Theresa of Calcutta. For Therese the only “effort” required, was like a child holding out her arms for her father to pick her up – nothing more, nothing less. Being “a child” in the spiritual sense had nothing to do with being childish or lacking in common sense, but with surrendering totally with trust and abandonment to the loving and caring fatherhood of God (Therese of Lisieux 1976:259).

It speaks to me of a balance between reason and emotion. The image is one of experiencing spirituality like a child, with imagination neither excluded nor over-emphasised. Childlike trust in a Father, leading to an ethical lifestyle, seeking the best for others, is a fair description of a balanced position. In her words I hear a style of spirituality best suited to a TPM facilitator, namely rooted in the Bible, concerned about people in need (emotional need), with a childlike trust in the Trinity to take part in the conversation in every session in order to construct the new preferred life-story of the recipient.

The legacy of the great reformers, Luther and Calvin also had an essential influence on my own spirituality. I also position their spirituality in this category.

**Martin Luther** (1483-1546) placed more emphasis on the presence of Jesus Christ in the here and now. That required attention to that presence (apophatic). On the other hand Luther used very vivid images to justify (kataphatic) this presence. In this way, and by Luther translating the Bible into German and reforming the liturgy (speculative), he opened the way for a deeper spirituality (affective). It led to “a deep piety among the people, unknown for centuries” (Holmes 1981:127). In doing so, he blazed a trail for a genuine lay spirituality among believers.

**John Calvin** (1509-1564) was much more rational, rejecting most ascetical practices. Calvin even views love as a cerebral function and not an affective one (Homes 1981:127). He also clearly wanted to maintain the balance between speculative and affective. He followed **John Gerson** (1363 – 1429) who distinguishes between six steps to repentance that can occur without a specific order. Three of the steps belong to the speculative domain, namely simple intelligence (use of common sense), reason and contemplation (including imagination). The three other steps



belong to the affective domain, namely animal appetite (passion), rational appetite (devotion) and supernatural appetite (love). Gerson never accepted a testimony on feelings alone – it always had to be reasonable. In that way he tried to distinguish himself from both pietism and quietism (Holmes 1981:86-7).

However, Calvin had no appreciation for receptive consciousness. Although he placed the emphasis so strongly on God's part in our salvation, he viewed our sanctification as "we are to be incorporated in Christ" (Holmes 1981:128). Calvin saw the person who lives in Christ is one characterised by piety. The pious person's life is a life of obedience to God as well as love for his/her neighbour: "Piety is grounded in a sense of dependence and reveals itself in service and worship" (Holmes 1981:128).

The influence of the abovementioned on my spirituality becomes clearer as I reflect on my own spirituality. The role of Scripture is very important to me. I want to reflect on discourses by means of common sense and use my imagination when necessary, but I also want to quietly meditate about the Word. On the other hand, like Gerson I also want to experience passion in the affective domain and dedicate myself to God's calling with the love that I have received from Him.

I also want to expand on Benner's comment (Benner 1998:95) that spirituality is a manifestation of God's love in the Christian community, by caring for others and caring for His creation. It links with Hudson and Kotze (2002:276) who point out that spirituality is much more than mere knowledge; rather it manifests especially by ethics. I agree that God should not only be experienced in isolated prayer but that the sharp division between the spiritual and material should recede so that God may be experienced in all my doing and being. In this spirituality I want to line up all my activities according to Christ's will and what is beneficial to His kingdom. In this way I will grow to "a life-giving and ethical spirituality" (Hudson & Kotze 2002:277).

I have given a brief overview of the main traditions regarding spirituality in church history and positioned myself as well as TPM in this discourse. I now wish to focus on the experience of Divine revelation and provide a number of theological/philosophical discourses on the topic.

### **3.2.1.2 Divine revelation/ Experiencing God.**

Under this point I would like to further pursue the discourse on "Divine Revelation and experiencing God", so that it can shine light on the research question about how and why TPM brought change or did not bring change in the participants' lives. Ed Smith (2007:221-3) gives his "statement of faith" in the TPM Basic manual, but apart from a couple of references to

exponents from the Inner Healing approach, he does not refer to theological thoughts which have had an influence on his theory. The choice of thoughts is, therefore, my choice, rather as a leading to what ideas have influenced my thoughts.

William James was the first philosopher who launched a thorough and scientifically trained investigation of the phenomenon of religious experience (Jantzen 2005:97). I judge it important to reflect about his contribution in this discourse about Divine revelation.

### **a) William James (1842 – 1910).**

James was a moralist and someone who believed “in the reality of an unseen spiritual world. In the light of this belief he was willing to take saintliness seriously. For James saintliness is a character transformation which takes place as the result of a deep, sustained mystical connection to a powerful, deeply beneficial, trans-natural level of reality” (Barnard 2005:136). On one hand he was a radical empiricist while on the other hand anti-dogmatic and an anti-absolutist. He took seriously, investigated and tested anyone who claimed to have had a religious experience. King (2005:108) points out that James was very sensitive to what he called the “mystical impulse” within every person. This indicates that he was open to the “possibility of ‘unseen worlds’ beyond the senses”. As a psychologist he had the expertise of psychopathology to equip him to analyse experiences from that angle. His judgment included a large number of religious experiences on the grounds of:

- Immediate luminosity,
- Philosophical reasonableness and
- Moral helpfulness.

James’ findings were that people with strong religious convictions and intense mystical experiences experienced transformation in their lives. He indicated that he was not attempting to prove whether the experiences were genuine or not. Rather, he wanted to convince his readers that religious experiences were both philosophically reasonable and morally helpful. He attempted to empirically show that religion is valuable. James is highly critical of reductionist approaches that explain religious experiences in terms of the neurological functioning of the brain or as projected repressed sexual desires.

Another important conclusion which Jantzen (2005:98) came to point out, is that James did not have “objective truth” in mind in his research, namely that: “mystical states are and have the right to be absolutely authoritative over the individuals to whom they come; yet ‘non-mystics’ are under no obligation to acknowledge in mystical states a superior authority”. If there was an

objective truth, it was either a revelation from God or not. For James it was not so simple therefore he laid the emphasis on the variety of religious experiences. Hereby he brought valuable insight that also has great meaning in a post-modern paradigm

A few aspects from the heritage of James are important for this research. This research about TPM is about the morally helpful. When reflecting on the narratives included in this research, it is clear that most of the participants experienced transformation in their lives after their TPM encounters. James had both of these aspects in mind with his research. Another aspect which also becomes obvious when the sessions unfold is that the revelation which a participant in a TPM - session receives is personal and specific. The emphasis in TPM is also on the variety of experiences. Every experience is acknowledged as the recipient's experience. Smith (2008:1) emphasises that the facilitators may not judge or interpret the recipient's experiences. In the following chapter examples will be described/ pointed out/ given in which God can tell the one recipient to forgive and not say it to another. The uniqueness of each person's relationship with God is hereby acknowledged, both by James and TPM.

Somebody else, who places this individual emphasis on Divine revelation and experiencing of God, is Edith Stein.

## **b) Edith Stein (1891-1942) and the Symbolic Theology**

Edith Stein's view in respect of experiencing God resonates to a large extent with that of TPM. It is important to linger at this point for a while. To understand this viewpoint it is necessary to understand her viewpoint about Divine revelation. Her viewpoint is that a finite being cannot know something or someone outside the temporal finiteness in which the knower exists.

Therefore it is not possible for the finite being to know the Absolute Being: "It is obvious that no one can make statements about a being of which he knows nothing" (Redmund 2000:67). About the Absolute Mind she says: "Everything that is, is in it and is known in it. Hence no being can be unknowable" (Redmund 2000:66). The conclusion is that no one can know Him, but that He knows everyone. A finite being can only know Him when He reveals Himself. She emphasizes very strongly that man can only experience what God reveals.

She also distinguishes between knowledge and knowing. When a being experiences knowledge, then he *knows*. She sees it as truth. She says: "the truth, that is, the possession of a being in knowledge, may be called the goal and result of the knowing" (Redmund 2000:71). What it comes down to, is that when a person experiences factual knowledge on the level of personal experience, only then does he *know*. To that person, that *knowing* is the truth. She argues further that only the Divine Mind knows the real truth, the eternal truth. So real truth can only be known

when a finite being experiences it through revelation from the Divine mind. It is, therefore, personal knowledge which cannot just be applied to others.

Where Edith Stein declares that real “knowing” only takes place when it is personally experienced, it closely echoes TPM principles. The connection she makes between this experience and the term “truth”, also agrees with TPM theory. TPM makes a distinction between “logical truth” and “experiential knowledge” (Smith 2005:19-20). When an individual in a specific situation has a certain experience, which is interpreted in a specific manner within the situation, it is experiential knowledge. This is precisely what Stein describes with the words: “then does he know”. If this interpretation matches a problem saturated story in the individual’s life, it is classed as a lie by TPM. To change this lie TPM relies on a revelation from the Lord. The truth can now be acknowledged as God reveals it. This aspect for me is the core aspect around which TPM is constructed. Therefore it is utterly important to acknowledge Stein's contribution here.

### **c) Karl Barth (1886-1968).**

In order to understand Barth’s viewpoint about a person’s experience of divine revelation, I first need to expound on his theological anthropology. Barth bases his anthropology on Christology with the relationship between God and man at its centre. According to him no person can know what they are if God does not reveal it to them. Real self-knowledge is cultivated by knowing God. People discover themselves in their relationship with God. In the relationship between God and people, God takes the initiative. God chose humankind as the beings to make a covenant with. The knowledge of God as well as the knowledge of creaturehood is received via Christology. From “the perfect man” Jesus Christ we learn what it means to be human. Barth bases all utterances about God and humankind via Christology. The relationship between Jesus and His Father is the analogy for the relationship between God and humankind. Jesus relates to the Father by hearing His Word. Christ became the Word. It implies that humans can only become fully human and fulfil their created destiny by hearing the Word (God’s revelation). Jesus is the revelation of God (Donga 1989:20-1).

Barth emphasizes that God’s Word is a word from one person to another. The meeting between God and humankind takes place in human reasoning. When God reveals Himself, He does so in human language and in a human way. He comes down to our level to reveal the secrets of salvation (Klein Kranenburg 1988:63).

According to Barth there can be no talk about divine revelation without talking about Jesus Christ. He refers to the fact that all religions claim divine revelation and that many people from various cultures rely on earthly and heavenly revelations. However, these revelations are without any authority, as Barth (1966:84) says:

When we in the Christian Church speak of revelation, we are not thinking of such earthly or heavenly revelations, but of the Power, which is above all powers; not of the revelation of a divine Above or Below, but of the *revelation of God Himself*. That is why the Reality of which we are now speaking, God's revelation in Jesus Christ, is compelling and exclusive, helpful and adequate, because here we have not to do with a reality different from God, nor with one of these earthly or even heavenly realities, but with God Himself.

It is also necessary to pause briefly at Barth's view on Scripture. Cunningham (1995:69) states: "Barth read the Bible as a kind of realistic narrative that means what it says". It implies that the meaning of the Biblical stories, do not refer to historical events, or have a mystical or symbolic meaning. They are also not general lessons for human behaviour. For Barth the meaning is in the interaction of the characters, the context and circumstances of the text itself. The Bible interprets itself. Cunningham (:70) refers to Barth's "*Church Dogmatics* where Barth ... sees Scripture as a unified witness to Jesus Christ....The object of the Biblical texts is quite simply the name Jesus Christ, and these texts can be understood only when understood as determined by this object".

Barth sees the Scriptures as a unified witness, not because the Word itself is intrinsically one, but the Word is one because it witnesses about one, Jesus Christ who is one. Barth then makes the acceptance/ supposition that Jesus Christ is the logical subject matter of all theology (Cunningham 1995:69).

It then follows logically that Barth states that all revelation can only be understood against the background of Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and man. Jesus Christ is central in any revelation. A revelation is always a free and sovereign action of God and therefore the Bible does not have an inherent quality to be the Word of God in each and every circumstance (Heyns 1978:20). Scripture is not the words of God written on the page, but it becomes the Word of God to us in the act of proclamation and reading as the Holy Spirit opens our hearts and minds to what God has to say (McEnhill & Newlands 2004:65; De Klerk 1999:54). Nimmo (2007:172) shows then in this respect that the human activity of exegesis:

Can thus only be productive where it is preceded, accompanied and succeeded by the divine activity. Because of this, Barth writes that "one cannot lie down conditions which, if observed guarantee hearing of the Word, for there is no method of Scriptural exegesis which is truly pneumatic, i.e., which articulates the witness to revelation in the Bible and to that degree really introduces the Pneuma". The activity

of the Spirit of God, which governs the subjective reality and possibility of revelation at every point, remains beyond human control. Consequently, Barth is adamant that “because it is the decisive activity, prayer must take precedence even over exegesis, and in no circumstances must it be suspended”.

All human activities to understand Scripture will therefore count for nothing if God does not reveal Himself in this process. For Barth faith is to believe that God’s grace is that “this event of divine movement into the human sphere can and does continue to happen”. TPM relies on an experience with Jesus Christ. All the recipients reported that they had an experience of the presence of Jesus Christ, which may have been visual or auditory or they were simply conscious of Him. As I previously indicated it is that central position that Jesus Christ has in TPM that initially attracted me to this approach. In my opinion, it is the Holy Spirit who reveals Christ to people in TPM. These “revelations” often consist of Scripture being actualised to the person in the Theophostic moment. In the TPM session when the Holy Spirit communicates so personally it becomes God’s Word in that person’s life. Just as Barth believed that every time there is a divine movement into the human sphere to give His Word through Scripture so is it experienced by many recipients of TPM. Ed Smith (2005:17) says in this respect: “When people are ready to receive truth, it seems Jesus consistently brings lasting peace and release”. This is also how I personally experienced TPM. At that moment God’s Word gained a new meaning for me, a deeper insight which could not be gained through human methods. It is as Barth said that it is not just one or other experience, but an encounter with the Lord Himself.

For Barth it further meant that whenever this Scriptural exegesis took place it would always be ethical. It was not about commandments but about Jesus Christ who fulfilled the law. Whenever God Himself revealed things a human being had an encounter with God which would transform him. Barth believed God does not concern Himself with “general and universally valid rules”. According to him there are no “timeless ethical truths” in the Scripture. (Nimmo 2007:180). Nimmo (:184) demonstrates further that Barth believed that out of the Word the Holy Spirit can lead one person not to divorce and lead another to actually do it.

Nimmo (:184) puts it together “... for Barth, the divine command to the individual believer can override the divine command attested in Scripture”. For Barth the ethical aspect is anchored in obedience to God’s voice, within the fellowship of believers who have “the task of elucidating together from the lived history of the covenant of grace the direction of God’s will for the people of God”. This aspect is also extremely important for TPM. Ed Smith has always spoken against a facilitator who wants to operate as a lone wolf, because there is no accountability to the body of Christ (TPM-guideline 17: Appendix C).

I cannot deny that Barth heavily influences my theological positioning in that it is very important that Jesus Christ is absolutely central in any ministry. However, I do not wish to merely echo Barth. As a result of my reformed background it is only logical that I also have a close affinity to the reformed approach. As an illustration of this, I want to align myself to a certain extent with Johan Heyns.

#### **d) Johan Heyns**

Because anthropology is so important in this discourse, I repeat the central aspects of Heyns' anthropology. Scripture sees human beings as beings of relationship. Within this discourse the vertical relationship is important. It is a two-way traffic relationship. Human beings belong to God, created in His image. He concerns Himself with us and always will. In everything a human being is involved with God. In this involvement, the creature has the choice of obedience or disobedience, to love Him or not to love Him. The whole person – spirit, soul and body – is a unity and as a unity is involved with God. God's word about and with humans has made "you". In that way a person becomes a conversation partner with God. God commits Himself to that person. In this connection or covenant with a person, God speaks and the other answers. The way in which the person allows God to speak to him is the way he answers God. When God commands man to reign over creation and he answers God by means of science, technology and art, he realizes his destiny of being a human being. God wishes to converse with people and people find the fulfilment of their existence when they are willing to listen to God. Every person being addressed has the constant choice of whether to answer yes or no (Heyns 1978:119-130).

It is clear that God wants to reveal Himself to people. He is the Subject of revelation and He decides whom He wants to reveal Himself to (John 14:22). Revelation is not a mere coincidence but something that God wills. Revelation is only possible because God chooses to reveal Himself and to be in conversation with humankind. God lives in eternal light, far above human reasoning. Humankind can only know what God chooses of His own will to reveal. (Heyns 1978:3-4) says:<sup>7</sup>

Revelation does not flow from God's Being in an uncontrolled way but it is the result of His will and planning. As the initiator of and Subject of the revelation, it is clear that this personal, cosmic-transcendent God goes ahead of the revelation, not only making it possible but also determining the content, place, time and way...

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<sup>7</sup> 4 Openbaring vloei nie onbeheers uit God se Wese voort nie, maar is die resultaat van Sy wil en beplanning. As inisiator vir en Subjek van die openbaring, is dit duidelik dat hierdie persoonlike, kosmies-transendente God aan die daad van die openbaring voorafgaan en dit dus nie net moontlik maak nie, maar ook die inhoud, plek, tyd en wyse daarvan bepaal. ... Nooit word die openbaring dus 'n geopenbaarheid los van en min of meer selfstandig teenoor God nie. Die soewereine en in vryheid handelende God, gee aan die openbaring nooit uit sy hande oor aan die mens as manipuleerbare grootheid nie".

Revelation is therefore never an act of revealing separate to or possibly independent of God. The sovereign God, Who is free to act as He pleases, never gives revelation to human beings to use as a manipulative (tool of) magnitude.

I agree with this quotation from Heyns. In the abovementioned discussion two aspects are very important with relation to TPM. Firstly, the emphasis that Heyns places on the choice we as human beings have to respond to God's revelation or not to respond at all. Ed Smith sees it as a very important premise in the TPM discourse.

In the latest training manual Smith (2007:135) terms the free will of man "the second most powerful force in the universe". Because God has so much respect for the will He gave mankind, He will never violate that will. At this point, I do not want to fully discuss this discourse since it falls outside the scope of this study. I only wish to indicate how important this aspect is for this discourse.

The second aspect of extreme importance is that humankind cannot restrict God's revelation. I feel that Heyns contradicts himself when he writes about his view of Scripture. He speaks about the sufficiency of Scripture, the traditional Reformed view of "Sola scriptura". (I broach this subject in the next chapter). In his arguments, Heyns refers to Paul who categorically states that there is no other Gospel besides the one he preaches. Heyns also refers to the writer of Hebrews who says that God has said all He wanted to say in the form of the Gospel. Heyns then concludes that no objective or subjective additions may be made. He mentions Rome, which accepts Tradition as an added and independent source of revelation, as well as mystical and spiritualistic movements that add to and expand Scripture by means of internal illumination (*lumen internum*). Apart from Scripture, there are also whisperings of the Holy Spirit in the human soul. Scripture may not be added to objectively by Tradition or subjectively by the illuminating action of the Holy Spirit. Although he goes on to say that a person still needs to search for God's will in each concrete situation and that Scripture does not give an answer to each concrete situation in life (for example, whether I should accept a certain job offer); Scripture is sufficient in the message it means to convey (Heyns 1978:32-3).

My problem with this point of view is that Heyns says that, while we cannot restrict God's revelation, when it comes to Scripture we indeed do exactly that. However we formulate it, it means that we are capable of restricting God with our own knowledge. My intuition is that we indeed use Scripture as "manipulative magnitude". The history of the church shows how people down through the ages used their interpretation of Scripture to manipulate others and in the process abused them.



After I reflect on the contribution of O'Murchu, I will return to this subject and further position myself with regard to it.

### e) Paul Tillich

I wish to highlight Tillich's anthropology in order to fully appreciate his point of view. Tillich (1957:61) says that it is the nature of a person to ask after his/her own being. It is the ontological question. This question is an urgent one since people feel threatened by "not being". That is why we search for a "mighty Being". We experience our being in the here and now, our only experience of reality. It gives us a present experience but also a historical memory.

Tillich views God as the ultimate Being. Every word people say about God can only be symbolic (Tillich 1957:44). When people speak of God in an anthropomorphic way it is because we can only speak of Him from our own experiences. God can only be known if and when He reveals Himself to us. Tillich views the only possible meeting with God in a personal way and in a personal relationship. He states further that it is in this meeting with God that a person experiences himself as he really is (Donga 1989:29). In many TPM sessions I have experienced that recipients only discover their true humanity, being the masterpiece God made them to be, in that personal meeting with God.

Earlier in this chapter I referred to Tillich's "correlation method", where the human question is associated with divine revelation. What is important here is that the content of the question is determined by Christian revelation (Donga 1989:25). People come to TPM with questions, hoping for an answer from God. Then they experience the answer in that unique way that He provides for each individual. Many times my psychotherapeutic background makes me expect a certain answer, only to find that God's answers may not make logical human sense, but that those answers often effect a fundamental change in the life of the recipient.

In this discourse I also wish to reflect on an exponent from social constructionism, by a man who recently came to prominence in South Africa and whose approach I find refreshing, namely Rudolph Meyer.

### f) Rudolph Meyer

Meyer's viewpoint is that Descartes' philosophy still profoundly influences the theologians to this day. He sums up Descartes' ideas as follows:

- Descartes caused the **subject-object split**, by creating the transparent self-consciousness as subject in contrast to the objective world.
- The next step was **to represent** the objects in the mind in a symbolic form, thereby creating and constructing certain knowledge and "truth". All this happened,

- however, in a “decontextualized” mode.
- The further disastrous step was that Descartes cut out representation and **conflated it with presentation** according to “eternal” rules of how things should be. Now, direct contact could be made through knowledge with objects, and alas, so-called direct contact with God in a spiritual way.

(Meyer 2007:6)

The problem is that both Descartes and the modernistic philosophy seek certainty. This results in experiences of divine revelation being questioned and challenged by negative questions from scientific methods, empirical science and positivism. It follows that “many disciplines have turned to the reasoning subject rather than divine revelation as a starting point for reflection and knowledge” (Meyer 2007:8). What it implies is that many theologians attempt to locate God in the consciousness of a person, within a logical human framework of understanding. Within such a framework faith then becomes a form of self-understanding. Previously Descartes’ time divine revelation was seen as the final arbiter of truth. Afterwards, “reason” became the arbiter.

However, the post-modernistic idea deconstructs the ego. Meyer (2007:11) sees deconstruction not as “simple or critical changes, but to demolish the basis of assumptions” upon which the “knowledge” is built. When the ego is deconstructed, “self” is no longer central and its identity is no longer fixed. The Christian is in the process of changing to Christ’s identity. This process is God’s revelation wherein the Holy Spirit leads the person to take up the identity of Christ. God remains the Absolute Other.

There is no reality that needs to be penetrated by divine revelation. He says: “immediacy with God in this life is a fallacy, as we have only ‘indirect’, but vital Spiritual contact” (Meyer 2007:11). We cannot ascend to God by means of mystical meditation. The way for a Christian is the way of trust in Christ, but it is a road of uncertainty since through faith we can only partially know or understand. In this approach “hermeneutics (the science of interpretation and meaning) makes room for deconstruction, showing the assumptions behind modern ‘certainty’ not to be valid” (Meyer 2007:11).

In his view of Scripture, Meyer closely echoes what Barth said. Meyer (2007:16) wants Christians to discover the Word of God through the work and guidance of the Holy Spirit, by making use of Scripture. Without the Holy Spirit the Bible is only empty words. It is the Holy Spirit Who reveals the will of God.

Revelations of God are viewed from the victory perspective of the Kingdom of God. We have already gained the victory through Christ and now approach life from this angle. When the Holy Spirit reveals something to us, it is from this perspective: “The Spirit works from and out of the final Kingdom of God” (Meyer 2007:18).

Meyer leans on Berkhof when he says that a direct meeting with God is not possible: “Revelations of God are taking place in this world and only in the forms of appearance according to this human life. There is no ‘immediate’ contact or knowledge of God, but only through the Holy Spirit in faith” (Meyer 2007:19). Thus theology can no longer use the term “revealed truths” as it makes certain truths absolutes. The Bible is not a deposit of eternal truths. Meyer then continues: “Theology can be human reflection on and communication with revelation” (Meyer 2007:19).

Allow me to position myself with regard to this discourse. When a meeting between God and the recipient takes place within a TPM session, it is the work of the Holy Spirit. In that moment the Holy Spirit sometimes uses Scripture or He may choose not to. But He is still the one transforming the person. Furthermore, Ed Smith made it clear that he and TPM theory also work from the victory perspective of the Kingdom of God (Smith 2007:124).

O’Murchu (2004), inspired by quantum theory in this quest for an experience with God, invites theology to engage in a new discourse as a theology of multi-faith dialogue.

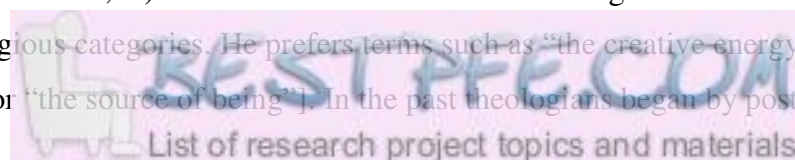
#### **g) O’ Murchu (2004) and Quantum Theology**

I do not intend to discuss the Quantum Theology of O’Murchu (2004) at length. Quantum theology is based on the quantum worldview that developed from research into quantum physics. O’Murchu (2004:30) sees one of the central points of reference as “energy flow is the primary essence of reality”. It is transcending external objectivity. He describes this worldview in the following words:

In essence, it states that everything we perceive and experience is a great deal more than the initial, external impression we may obtain, that we experience life not in isolated segments, but in *wholes* (quanta), that these bundles of energy that impinge upon us are not inert, lifeless pieces of matter, but living energies; that our naming of the living reality we experience will at least be a probability guess at what its real essence is – an essence best understood by interacting with it experientially rather than trying to conceptualise it at an “objective” distance.

(O’Murchu 2004:29)

This worldview leads to quantum theology wherein humans are co-creators of the Divine co-creator [O’Murchu (2004:55,57) and it also refrains from mentioning God because it restricts Divine power to religious categories. He prefers terms such as “the creative energy”, “the ultimate life force” or “the source of being”]. In the past theologians began by postulating a



higher being (God) and argued deductively toward the religious meaning of all reality.

O'Murchu stands on the side of most forms of post-modern theology that tend to begin with people's experiences.

In this study it would implicate that the recipients' experiences of God's voice would form the basis. Those experiences would be used inductively in order to construct certain knowledges about God. However, where O'Murchu in his theology gives specific attention to aspects such as spirituality and divine revelation from a post-modernistic epistemology, it is very relevant to this study.

O'Murchu points out that religion and spirituality are often confused. He rejects the view that spirituality is a formal system of faith in its practical dimension. He points out that millions of people who do not practice a specific religion or belong to a church "still grapple with spiritual questions and strive to live out of a spiritual value system" (O'Murchu 2004:49). Pearce (2007:179-183) agrees with this when he indicates that the modern technological society, with the emphasis only on operational ideas and empirical sciences, has made us lose touch with the spirituality of societies such as the Australian Aborigines.

O'Murchu (2004:14) views the basic meaning of "spirituality" to be "*the human search for meaning*". Religion is only one of the ways in which people give expression to their spirituality. He points out that "religions are in decline, while the revitalization and rediscovery of spirituality engages the human heart and imagination in a range of exciting ways" (O'Murchu 2004:49) and that more theologians, especially feminists, include wider spiritual concerns in their reflections and writings.

For O' Murchu (2004:22) "the spiritual landscape rather than the religious tradition has become the arena for theological exploration". The Christian church claimed a monopoly over the theological discourse and believed that her theological duty was about safeguarding the purity and integrity of doctrine. For him theological exploration is "the human attempt to grapple with divine-human co-creativity in the world – outstripping not merely its ecclesiastical context, but even its religious one" (O' Murchu 2004:22).

With the above-cited statement O'Murchu (2004:80) indicates that whereas in the past different religions were in opposition to each other, each "with its own unique body of revealed truth", theologians now realize that this state of affairs cannot continue if unity is the price to pay. He says that we are moving towards "a new revelatory horizon" where the spiritual challenge is to reclaim the sacred nature of the cosmos in order that "a whole new sense of what theology, revelation and Spirit-power is" can come about. It is God's nature to reveal Himself and while

the physical universe is His creation, nothing that happens in it can be unconnected with its Creator. O'Murchu (2004:81) comes to the conclusion that:

Our primary experience of God's revelation belongs to creation. Consequently, it is more spiritually and theologically responsible to regard each of the major religions as a particular expression of this revelation, offered for and appropriated by specific historical and cultural milieus. What this effectively means is that we can honour the dynamic and creative nature of God's revelation only by interpreting it afresh in each new cultural context.

O'Murchu sees a clear shift in the essence with which theology must concern itself, away from dogma and objective truth, towards a spirituality wherein the search for meaning through divine-human co-creativity opens up new possibilities.

Although I can identify partially with the aforementioned view of O'Murchu, namely that the arena for theological exploration is the spiritual landscape rather than the religious tradition and therefore outstripping its ecclesiastical context, I do not position myself with O'Murchu when he suggests that theology is moving towards "a new revelatory horizon" where theology is responsible to regard each of the major religions as a particular expression of God's revelation. Firstly, I wonder why he only chooses the major religions as an expression of God's revelation. There is no authoritative body of knowledge that can decide when it is an expression of God's revelation and when it is not.

In the event of O'Murchu's standpoint being extended it implies that as William James included every person, who reported a revelation in his research, every claim as an expression of God's revelation must be respected. Although participatory ethics are applied here, so that only those revelations which are ethicising (moralizing) in their nature are accepted, I can respect all revelations as an experience of that person, but I cannot accept a standpoint that every claim must be accepted as a revelation from God. Furthermore one of the major religions, namely the Moslem religion is often not an ethicising practice in the world political forefront (often neither are Christian practices). From their view, they will probably view it as ethical. In the previously mentioned case I am convinced that the problem is not the revelation, but the interpretation of the revelation.

Thereupon Van Huyssteen (1998:25) shows that people in their Theological pursuits operate out of a belief commitment, beyond which cannot be questioned. To reach this point I lean first on Stein who says that the truth is when God reveals Himself in a personal way. He revealed Himself personally to me through Jesus Christ. Furthermore I am influenced by the reformed tradition and I believe, along with Barth, that God revealed Himself in Jesus Christ. If this is true then it is also true that according to His own witness there is no other name through which

mankind can enter into a correct relationship with God. For me this is the belief commitment beyond which I am not willing to question. I take this standpoint precisely on account of my personal experience with Him. I can, therefore, not go along with O'Murchu who, in an inductive way, constructs knowledge about God out of all human experiences and in the process makes Scripture completely relative. I accept herewith that here I hold onto an element of the confessional approach and that this implies that I position myself along only selectively with social constructionism.

I also agree that our theological duty is not the safeguarding of the purity and integrity of doctrine. I would like to converse about my seeking for God with other religions but without abandoning my corner of faith (Jesus Christ as the only way to the Father (God)). If I have to accept that other religions are expressions of God's revelation, it takes away any freeness to share my religious belief with others, which thereupon comes down to the belief that Jesus Christ is the only Deliverer. In this I agree with Ploeger and Ploeger-Grotegoed (2001:20) where they state that the Christian should not withdraw from a post-modern world but that it is all about a **dialogue** between cultures and religions, one in which each can defend what is their own. They emphasize that Christians should not be ashamed of their viewpoints that God revealed Himself in Christ and that He wants to include the whole human race toward His godly ordained destination. The way Bosch (1991) reflected on the World Council of Churches' resolution: "We cannot point to any other way of salvation than Jesus Christ; at the same time we cannot set limits to the saving power of God" (I.26; WCC 1990:32) makes sense to me. He said:

This is not opting for agnosticism, but for humility. It is, however, a bold humility – or a humble boldness. We know only in part, but we do know. And we believe that the faith we profess is both true and just, and should be proclaimed. We do this, however, not as judges or lawyers, but as witnesses, not as soldiers, but as envoys of peace: not as high-pressure salespersons, but as ambassadors of the Servant Lord.

Bosch (1991:489)

This is exactly the place where I stand. From this corner of faith where I stand in a living relationship with God as He revealed Himself to me in Jesus Christ and through His Word, I want to share my faith experience. I do not want to view my corner as a position of power, thinking that I possess "the truth", but I want to have the freedom to share **my** truth, that what is created in my relationship with God. It implies that I must also listen to others in order to hear what road God has led them on. I can take this position as the result of faith in God, Who revealed Himself to me and Who knows how to reveal Himself to each and every other one of His creations. It is not necessary for me to force my doctrines on others. In this process I really just want to be an instrument in His hand. The instrument has no authority of its own – that

belongs to the Hand that wields it. What I can do is introduce a fellow seeker to the God Who revealed Himself to me. Chaplain Muller accurately described this concept of being an instrument in one of the interviews: “TPM is a powerful tool; it is not just asking God and hoping for a miracle, but rather asking God to enter into a conversation with the person”.

Allow me to cite a practical example to illustrate my position. In the event where the possibility arises of offering TPM to a Buddhist, I shall explain to the person that I shall be praying to Jesus Christ during the session. If the person is comfortable with it, we shall continue the session. If the person refuses, I shall employ a different therapeutic model or do a referral. In no way will I consider praying to Buddha and then follow the same TPM process. It will also not be possible for me to facilitate the process where the TPM recipient prays to Buddha. For me Jesus Christ is an absolute reality and I would experience that I would be bringing other gods before God’s countenance. I believe in the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I cannot pray to anyone else. If I were to do so, faith would no longer play a part and TPM would become just another therapeutic process. From my own experience I know that when you use TPM as just another therapeutic tool, you are doomed to fail. In the beginning I also considered using it as an ideal add-on to hypnotherapy – it did not work at all. What I lost sight of was that TPM is in its very essence praying to the Trinity. TPM is about faith and not just a therapeutic technique. I believe: “No Jesus, no change”. After all, it is what Jesus Christ commanded as His last commission, that we testify to all nations (not persuade).

Therefore, in this research I wish to firmly position myself theologically, in order that I can share my own experience of God with others, who are also in conversation with Him. In that way we know that our conversation can lead to each one’s knowledge of God being transformed in the process.

### **3.2.1.3 My personal experience**

In my personal experience with TPM, I had an experience with God that I could not integrate into my existent frame of reference about spirituality at that stage. When I approach it from a modernistic epistemology, where it should fit into a certain Theological framework, I still struggle to position that experience theologically. In this process I experienced that the best way to approach it, is from a post-modernistic epistemology.

Whenever I share this experience it is with the knowledge that human words cannot actually relate it. In the TPM process I relived a memory where I experienced (believed) that I was totally worthless and that I was so bad that God could not actually use me. Because I had

believed this my whole life up to that point, I continually tried to show God that He could indeed use me (performance-based spirituality). In the re-experiencing of this memory Jesus came and sat beside me. It was not necessary for me to wonder. I knew immediately that it was Jesus. I was busy at that point preparing a sermon out of Isaiah 61. Jesus told me He forgave me and that Isaiah 61 was meant personally for me. I could see, hear and feel Him when He placed His hand upon me. For me it was areality. It was not an hallucination. This encounter transformed my life. It was difficult for me to integrate this experience along with other TPM experiences, where Scripture wasn't quoted, with what I believed at that point.

I wish to expound further on the problem. On the one hand there is the revelation of God, that only finds meaning through the human experience of faith. Berkouwer (1989:423-8) describes the task of theology as the quest for relevancy of the truth for human existence. He indicates how fear of the subjectivism led to the emotional experience of the believer being denied. He points out the problem of objectivism that objectifies God's revelation, as if human beings could ever really understand the revelation of God. Furthermore, he mentions the danger of human beings believing that they have found the truth while in reality they will always remain searching for it.

As I indicated above, within the reformed tradition I held fast to the principle of "sola scriptura". This principle means that no objective or **subjective** add-on to Scripture may be made (Heyns 1978:32). (Dr Ed Smith's view of this principle is dealt with in Chapter 4). My experience with TPM changed my views on this discourse. In my own journey with TPM I received healing from the pain I had wrestled with for years, by means of a personal experience of the revelation of God. At that moment God's truth exercised a fundamental influence on my existence. Although nothing in my experience with God's revelation is contrary to Scripture - in fact, Scripture was confirmed by it - from objectivism's point of view the truth that I received by means of my faith experience will inevitably lead to a weakening of the authority of Scripture (Berkouwer 1989:14). When the nature of various criticisms (for example DeWaay 2003:6) against TPM are analysed, it seems that the theological criticism arises mostly from an objectivistic perception.

Within Reformed theology, I was taught to be exceptionally afraid of the theology of experience (Kuyper, 1956:xiii; Bavinck 1998:18). However, it is impossible to negate or rationalize my own experience of God's revelation away. At the stage that I experienced it, I had already been greatly influenced by post-modernistic ideas, and more specifically had already done therapy from a narrative paradigm, but I held fast to the principles of "sola scriptura". The experience with TPM changed my views. For the first time I realized that the Reformed principle of "sola scriptura" cannot be simply accepted as the whole truth. I realized that all Biblical knowledges (doctrines), so-called scripturally correct, in truth are all interpretations of Scripture. That which



was upheld as “sola scriptura” was also a type of interpretation of Scripture. I also became aware that it is not possible to speak about Scripture, to talk from Scripture, or even only to read it, and not interpret it in some way. Tibbs (2007:8) points out that the moment when an experience is penned down, the experience behind the text is no longer accessible. When a theologian reflects theologically about the experience of a Biblical character, the theologian still has only available the experience reduced to writing, while the written text itself is an “interpretation” of that experience.

I still believe firmly in Scripture as the Word of God. I distance myself from other post-modernistic views that relativise the authority of Scripture in such a way that the central message of Scripture is compromised. On the other hand, I also know that when I make the statement “the Word says so” that I actually mean an interpretation of what the Word says. The preacher from the pulpit who announces: “God says so”, can only use those words when he is quoting directly from Scripture, but even then, the way in which he quotes it in his message, is also an interpretation. The sermon is only an interpretation of what God said. From this I conclude that it is not possible to deduct an objective truth from Scripture. I want to agree with Tersteegen, as quoted by Holmes (1981:143), that the Holy Spirit awakens truth in you as a person when reading Scripture, it means “given over to a contemplative intuition of the Word” (Holmes 1981:143). That word is truth to you, but it is a personal truth, not objectively valid for everyone in every circumstance. Therefore Scripture is a Voice, but a most important Voice, in God’s revelation to me. It forms part of a social construction about a present discourse, for example the discourse about the experience of a revelation of God. However, it has room for the Voice of God that I experienced in my TPM experience, to speak within this social construction of the truth that was constructed for me. In the Theophostic moment (the moment when the voice of God is experienced in the TPM session) the Voice of God deconstructed my old interpretation of what occurred in a certain memory. That happened as a result of my experience in the Theophostic moment. This is, however, not a truth outside Scripture because the voice of Scripture participates in the construction of my personal truth. This revelation is not an objective truth, but merely my interpretation of a personal experience of God. Klein Kranenburg (1988:93) points out that between the revelation of God and the human experience of it, there is a process of being conscious of it, with the person becoming aware of it. This process implies that the person also interprets what he experiences. This interpretation is not separate from the voice of Scripture, as it indeed works along in this social construction that I now experience as the truth within my own context. From my own experience, as well as that of most of the participants, this newly constructed truth influences my existence in a profound way.

Now we arrive at subjectivism. The big danger is that from subjectivism's point of view I can again plead my experience (TPM) as a norm for Christian piety (Berkouwer 1989:189). However, when I approach it from the point of social constructionism, it is impossible to retain such a view. As soon as theology believes that she has the truth, whether in one way or the other, a truth that is equally valid in all times (modernistic), then theology usurps the power that belongs only to God. To me it is of essential importance that TPM should be explored from a theological position where all the answers are not already written in stone. I will be able to work from a theological position where theology will **always** be the human **quest** for God. Berkouwer (1989:428) in his book about this search, shows that “seeking” are always a priority above “finding” and ends off with a prayer: “Vader, geef! De zuivere waarheid is toch alleen voor U”. Therefore I want to distance myself from a positivistic epistemology in the theology where truth is a mirror image of reality. Theologically I would like to position myself within post-modern theology: “Post-modernism teaches that there is no fixed body of theological truth available that needs to be communicated from generation to generation” (Herholdt 1998:224). Post-modernism is open to non-conceptual ways of knowing. Herholdt further indicates that where post-modernists see reality as a social construction, they include the intuitive and mystical ways of knowing God with theological methodology. Some of the post-modernists are also returning to the “contemporary literary role for the Bible, motivated by the conviction that the Bible as literature discloses God”. I agree with that. Herholdt then comes to the conclusion that from this an epistemology develops “that takes knowledge as a way of knowing that includes personal experience” (Herholdt 1998:223). That is the theological epistemology wherein I would like to explore TPM practices.

### **3.3 The Practical Theology discourse**

In the past, practical theology was seen as applied theology (Heitink 1993:104) and aimed at the preparation of future clergy, enabling them to more effectively exercise the functions of their office and the development of personal piety. As the result of the influence of Schleiermacher the focus has shifted to ecclesiastical practice. It is about the application of the truth in ecclesiastical practice as extracted from the other disciplines (Louw 1993:70). Currently, experts within the field of Practical Theology agree that Practical Theology cannot be defined as applied theology. Practical Theology has its own place today within theology as a theological discipline. Osmer (1999:126) distinguishes three elements in Practical Theology, setting it apart from other Theological disciplines such as Dogmatics and Ethics, namely:

- i. A performative orientation, where the search is for the best ways in which a certain activity or practice is carried out;
- ii. A theory serving as a guideline according to which the formation and transformation of a certain praxis can be done;
- iii. A practical theological hermeneutic of the field in which an action or practice takes place, locating the actors involved in moral time and space.

According to Hermans (2002:viii) these elements supply the rationale according to which Practical Theology “attempts to provide reasons for how and why to perform an action or practice in a manner that corresponds to and participates in the praxis of God”. It is clear from this why practical theologians, particularly during the last years of the twentieth century, lend to Practical Theology a mature inherent niche as a theological discipline.

Practical Theology has its own scope as Theological science. Hermans (2002:vii) explains that Practical Theology as a discipline with its own scope has as its task to begin to (i) reflect theologically about certain practices, (ii) to analyse these practices (empirical), and (iii) to aim to transform these practices. In that way these “practices” become the object of Practical Theology. Together with Van der Ven (2002:294) I want to ask the most basic question about the object of Practical Theology, namely: “Is it action or interaction, act or communication”?

### 3.3.1 The Object of the exercise of Practical Theology

From the viewpoints of some practical theologians (Furet 1987:260; Van der Ven 1990:46; Heitink 1993a:192) it becomes clear that the **interaction between believers and between believers and God** as well as **the relationship between theory and practice** has become the focal point, as the object of the exercise of this science. The terms “communicative action” and “operational science”, commonly used by theologians, indicate the fundamental influence that the communicative operational theory of the philosopher, Jürgen Habermas, had on these approaches operative in Practical Theology. That is why it is fitting to briefly look at what Habermas means with “communicative action”. Habermas sees three aspects included in the term “communication by means of language”, namely facts, norms and emotions. A discourse comes about. It must be investigated to determine if the facts are true (a theoretical discourse); if the norms are justified (practical discourse) and if the emotions are genuine (expressive discourse). If this goal is not achieved by communicative actions, people will usually move to strategic actions. Habermas sees strategic actions as actions influenced by different kinds of power, such as manipulation or force (Habermas 1973:17-18).

Heitink (1993a:192) sees the central question Practical Theology must concern itself with as: “the **hermeneutical** question about the way in which the divine reality and the human reality, can be **connected** at the experiential level” (bold mine). This is, in a nutshell, the contribution that this research endeavours to make to Practical Theology, namely to investigate how TPM’s principles can contribute to a better understanding of this hermeneutical question. TPM offers an operational model of how *the divine reality and the human reality connect at the experiential level*.

Hermans, (2002:viii) as a result of a proposal made by Browning (1996), implied that he was of the opinion that Practical Theology should make use of a three-phase model of practice-theory-practice. These three phases also fit with the road TPM has travelled so far, as I attempt to prove here.

**Phase I:** This is when a religious community starts to ask questions with regard to the meaning of practising certain practices in the community. *After the first TPM manual appeared in 1995, many critical questions regarding the model were asked, especially on the Internet.*

**Phase II:** Reflection from within theoretical discourses in practical theology takes place. *The posing of the critical questions led to Ed Smith, the founder of TPM, engaging in conversation with various students in the field* (Miller 2006a:1).

**Phase III:** Theology gets practical by means of the practice adjusting to the insights received. *The result is that Smith has already revised the TPM manual three times in order to incorporate new insights.*

The abovementioned proves that Ed Smith, as the founder of TPM, is open to practical theological reflection. It is also the goal of this research to open up further possibilities and developments for TPM. Hermans (2002:ix) then reaches the conclusion that: “It puts the living faith (‘sensus fidei’) of people within the context of society at the core of practical theology”.

It can be inferred from this that the practical theologians see the object of practical theology as (i) communicative action and (ii) the relationship of theory and practice. The relationship between the concepts “theory” and “praxis” also plays a major role in the differences between the different approaches to Practical Theology. Heitink (1993a:151) defined these terms as follows:

**Theory** is understood as a comprehensive hermeneutical-theological statement that relates the Christian tradition to experience, to the life and actions of modern humans.

**Praxis** is understood as the actions of individuals and groups in society, within and outside the church, who are willing to be inspired in their private and public lives by

the Christian tradition, and who wants to focus on the salvation of humankind and the world.

Here follows an indication of the different approaches to Practical Theology.

### **3.3.2 Different approaches to practical theology**

On the basis of the abovementioned relationship between theory and practice, as well as the place ascribed to the Holy Spirit, the practical theological community can be divided into three different schools, namely the confessional-, the correlative- and the contextual schools (Burger1988:84). Dill (1996:114) also adds the hermeneutic approach as well as the constructivist approach. In stead of the constructivist approach I would choose to add the social constructionism approach.

#### **3.3.2.1 The confessional approach**

The confessional approach to practical theology views Scripture as the only source of truth. In the praxis Scripture is used in a prescriptive way while the context is actually totally ignored. Scripture is also the only basis for scientific study, applied in a deductive way. The social sciences are seen as an appendix. This approach isolates Practical Theology as science. In this way there is no room for criticism from the context. This approach is particularly popular in foundationalist circles. Van Wyk (1995:88) describes the characteristics of this approach as:

- a) The study of the Bible is central. It is the only norm and source for Practical Theology.
- b) The Practical Theology theory is based on a specific theological approach, such as the Reformed Theology, and guidelines for ministry in the church are deduced in a deductive way from the theory.
- c) The church and the ministry of the church are central.
- d) Training of the ministers of the Word is the most important task of Practical Theologians.

Keeping in mind the characteristics of this approach it is understandable that my experience is that this approach cannot give full expression to TPM. Most of the criticism against TPM comes from these circles where TPM is judged in a biblistical way on the basis of certain texts, without certain practices being seen in context. Nevertheless, Smith has already done a great deal to make TPM acceptable as an approach by attempting to rally the exponents of this approach, by establishing the Scriptural integrity of TPM. It seems from conversations with exponents of this approach that they are not open to TPM. Because of that I shall not explore TPM from this approach, seeing that this approach only accepts written revelation and communicative actions, when actually administering in the church, as objects of Practical Theology (Myburg 2000:45).

On the other hand, I cannot deny that I have been fundamentally influenced by this approach. Nevertheless, I want to explore the practice from the perspective of Scripture and not the other way around, i.e. in an inductive way as O'Murchu suggests. In this process I do not want to use Scripture as a paper pope, abusing others (as in the case study of Annatjie, for example). The Old Testament is very clear about the fact that God does not tolerate other gods in His presence, and I am not prepared to stand for it either. This truth is one that God revealed to me in Scripture in the context of my relationship with Him. It is not for me to use it to abuse others with it. Having said all that, I choose not to position myself within this approach.

### **3.3.2.2 The contextual approach**

Whereas the confessional approach focuses on Scripture as the norm for Practical Theology, applied deductively, the contextual approach focuses on the contextual situation of living (praxis). This approach focuses on political-social and/or economic problems. Rather, this approach maintains a world orientation as a church orientation, with the goal of furthering social change (Burger 1991:61). Dingemans (1996:28) demonstrates that the contextual approach began as the result of reflections of the people. The subject of this theology is not the academic community, but the voice and reflections of the people. "The deductive way of thinking made way for an inductive or empirical method ion science", according to Bosch (1991:421).

On top of that Bosch (1991:422) showed further that it was Schleiermacher who especially brought the importance of the context to the forefront. Instead of beginning at eternal truths, which deductively apply in practice, principles and theories follow on that which is perceived in the context. Bosch talks, therefore, about a "theology from below". In this approach it is, therefore, about the reflections of God's people from below, in particular the poor and marginalized. The emphasis is on the priority of praxis over theory (:423).

Bosch (1991:424-5) also places an important emphasis, namely that doing is more important than knowing or speaking. For him the emphasis lies on "doing theology" where people who suffer have their burdens lightened. This approach's major concern is to bring about transformation in a given context and to equip the community of believers (Burger 1991:61). This approach wishes to partake in the reconstruction of society by way of the community of believers.

Although I view the emphasis of this approach on the social meaning of Practical Theology as well as the equipping of the community as special benefits, my problem with this approach is firstly that it starts from a standpoint where, through empirical perception, an objective reality can always be perceived, which forms the basis for theologising.

Secondly Scripture is given a subordinate position with regard to praxis. I also believe that dogma must not prescribe, as dogma is just an interpretation of Scripture. I also have a problem where dogma is used as “knowledge” to abuse others. I agree with Bosch (1991:426) that the context must not be so important that it must be identified with God’s voice in the historical process. As Bosch (:426) puts it: “Here this happens, God’s will and power too easily become identified with the will and power of Christians and with the social processes they initiate”.

As I want to work within an approach where there is no established body of knowledge which can be “discovered” on an empirical basis, as well as an approach where there is ongoing discussion between text (Scripture) and context, this approach won’t meet my needs.

### **3.3.2.3 The correlative approach**

Ploeger and Ploeger-Grotegoed’s (2001:76) description of the correlative approach is just right when they write that the challenge of the “new independent” Practical Theology is to place Scripture and tradition as well as the life of believers in the community, here and now, as **equal** points of departure for the exercise of Practical Theology.

Heitink (1993:19-20) who proposes a bipolar approach with his double praxis (with praxis referring to actions), as already shown, places himself within this approach. On the one side he keeps to the mediation of the Christian faith (praxis 1) by means of communicative actions while on the other hand, keeping to the influence of the context (praxis 2). Clearly, he wishes to integrate both the confessional and the contextual aspects in his approach.

I can agree with the abovementioned but that approach still leans heavily on an empirical approach. Van der Ven (1999:331) describes his approach to Practical Theology as a hermeneutical-empirical approach, in which he attempts to connect the two poles (Scripture and context). The hermeneutic aspect offers him the framework wherein the empirical research can be furthered. The empirical research is an interdisciplinary approach, where use is made of techniques and approaches from other disciplines. The problem is that this approach presumes that somewhere there is an objective reality/truth that must be discovered.

When I read the publications of Dr Ed Smith, founder of TPM, I suspect that he might position himself within this approach. I pay more detailed attention to this in the next chapter. However, my viewpoint is that TPM does not deal with objective truth, but with truth that is personal to each individual. Therefore I do not want to position TPM or myself here.

### 3.3.2.4 The hermeneutic approach

Dill (1996:129) states that this approach needs to be distinguished from the correlative approach. For that reason he refers to Furet (1986), Pieterse (1993) and Louw (1993). Dill states that Furet with his two moments, namely the hermeneutic- and agogic moments, offers a solution for the bipolar tension of the correlative approach. In the hermeneutic it is about enlightening, being the understanding of that which is exposed to the light. The “agogic” refers to the moment that God steps in to bring the person to new life, for which the pastor is the instrument. Where both Pieterse (theory of communicative action) and Louw (hermeneutic science intent on the communication between God and man) place the emphasis on communication, the bipolarity of the correlative approach is abandoned. Within this approach it is about understanding the meaning of the communicative actions.

With regard to these four approaches, I want to sum up that within the **confessional** approach the Bible is the only source of knowledge; it is about applying the Scripture to the praxis. The **contextual** approach on the other hand neglects the Scripture and emphasizes only the praxis. The **correlative** approach adheres to the normative theology derived from the Scriptures on the one hand while on the other it considers empirical observations and controls as just as important. The **hermeneutic** approach focuses on the action involved in the interaction between God and man (Dill 1996:113-5).

Dill also adds the **constructivist** approach, where knowledge and truth are created and not discovered by the mind (Schwandt 2000:197). If, based on the constructivist approach, knowledge is created by the mind it is still an intrinsic process within the individual (Gergen 1994:68). I would much rather side with Gergen in the fifth approach. Gergen proposed social constructionism where, as participants get involved in communicative action, new knowledge develops. I prefer to name the fifth approach as **the social constructionism** approach, where knowledge is socially constructed by all the different voices (i.e. God, Scripture, context, dogma) and where no voices are preferred or excluded beforehand.

### 3.3.2.5 The social constructionism approach

Meyer (2003:18) pointed out this very important aspect within social constructionism, when he said:

In a modern framework practical theology applies principles and messages of the Word to situations, but in a post-modern framework the situation and the Word are deconstructed and the contextual experience is constituted, not through dogma, certainty and knowledge, **but through the Holy Spirit and experiences in the context**. No pre-established and final conclusions are drawn.



It acknowledges the role that the Holy Spirit plays in the experience of a recipient of TPM by means of new insight constructed in that moment, wherein specific interpretation of Scripture can be deconstructed in that context. Where a recipient used to believe an authoritative interpretation of Scripture about a certain discourse, the new experience of God's voice through the working of the Holy Spirit may lead to a richer description of the said discourse. It is therefore about the interpretation within a certain context and not about new authoritative knowledge constructed for all times and for all circumstances. The narrative of Annatjie is an example of this. She is in an unhappy marriage where she submits to an interpretation of Scripture, that she has to submit to her husband even though he is abusive. In TPM she discovers a loving God Who does not expect her to stay in that situation. New insight that develops from her experience with God's voice, frees her to leave her marriage. It does not mean that God told her that divorce is permissible. It means that God through His Spirit created truth within her context, and within her context, it is the truth. After all, it places authority back with God, where it belongs.

TPM is precisely about the unique experience that each recipient has with God. Although TPM theory is not based on social constructionism, I want to follow the example of Thiessen (2003:117) and attempt to understand TPM from a social constructionist perspective. When reviewing the four working hypotheses that Gergen (1999:47-50) formulated with regard to language and social construction, it seems ideal that TPM can be understood from that perspective.

- “The terms by which we understand our world and our self are neither required nor demanded by what ‘there is’” (:47). There is no world independent of language. TPM unconditionally respects and accepts the unique way in which God speaks to each individual. In TPM recipients often experienced that God created a new life (Divorce in Annatjie's case) by His words in the TPM session.
- “Our modes of description, explanation and/or representation are derived from relationship...language and all other forms of representation gain their meaning from the ways in which they are used in relationships” (:48). Every recipient describes his/her experience in terms of his/her relationship with God. Annatjie could accept what the Lord told her, because of her relationship with Him. Outside the relationship those words have no meaning.

- “As we describe, explain or otherwise represent, so do we fashion our future” (:48). By describing our world differently we transform our world. The unique experience of God's voice in the TPM session sets the goal for the recipients to describe their world in a new way, so that they construct a new perspective of the matter at hand.
- “Reflection on our forms of understanding is vital to our future well-being” (:49). There are no universal answers to the question of which is the “right one”: “Thus, our ‘considered judgments’ are typically blind to alternatives lying outside our tradition” (:50). TPM fits in here because it is expected of the facilitator to in no way judge what happens between a recipient and God. An example of this is Smith’s response to a letter of a recipient of TPM, where the recipient questioned his facilitator’s conduct, who interpreted his TPM-experience. Smith (2008.03.14) stated clearly: “Your facilitator violated a basic TPM principle when he tried to interpret your experience for you”. When Jesus answered people in the Gospels his response usually led to the people receiving freedom beyond the normal traditional way. In a sense this is what happened with Annatjie in her TPM session.

In closing, it appears from the above that TPM and its practices also comes closest to the Word within the social constructionist paradigm because TPM in its essence allows for space for the voice of God to be part of the social construction of a new preferred story for the recipient of TPM. Where the participants tell their stories about their experiences I am further convinced that the research problem, namely “*How and why Theophostic prayer ministry did, or did not, change the lives and relationships of persons who engaged in it as recipients*” can be best addressed through a narrative inquiry, which can function within the social constructionist paradigm. Gerkin (1997:111) views Practical theology as becoming the task of maintaining the connections between the varied stories of life and the grounding story of the Christian community. Pastoral care becomes the community of faith's living expression of that grounding story. I am convinced that a narrative inquiry provides the best methodology to obtain a better understanding of the contribution that TPM makes with regard to how those “connections” of life stories are maintained by God’s love story (Loughlin 1996:245).

Furthermore, where the influence on the relationships of the participants is also under discussion in the research problem, the role that TPM plays in the faith of the community, in other words the church of Jesus Christ’s expression of love, is also very important. To understand TPM from the perspective of social constructionism, TPM’s influence on the church of Jesus Christ will be richer in its description.

### **3.4 Discourses of pastoral work and pastoral theology**

Various concepts are brought together under the title of: “pastoral work”. The terminology and meanings attributed to this work differ under different authors (Pattison & Woodward 2000:1). There are also many variations over terms such as practical theology and pastoral theology. This is not in the scope of this study and, therefore, I stand by the classification, which De Jongh van Arkel (2000:161) makes in this regard, because it is set out clearly and simply and captures most perspectives in this regard. He defines four forms of pastoral work, namely peer (family) care, pastoral care, pastoral counselling and pastoral therapy. For him the differences lie in the aim and the methods of care. In my view it boils down to the extent of knowledge and proficiency required. For the purpose of this research in positioning TPM I want to use his classifications as a starting point.

#### **3.4.1 Forms of pastoral work**

De Jongh van Arkel (2000:160-164) defines four forms of pastoral work with a view to the extent of knowledge and proficiency required. I state briefly how he understands the various forms of pastoral care:

##### **3.4.1.1 Mutual care.**

For De Jongh van Arkel (2000:161) this is the primary level of pastoral work. It embraces the care and mutual nurture of believers among each other. This care can take place where one believer reaches out to another in a friendship relationship, but also in various small groups in the congregation. Support and encouragement are the keywords in peer (family) care. No formal knowledge or proficiency is required.

##### **3.4.1.2 Pastoral care**

I presume that Smith would want to position TPM here and, therefore, I want to expand a little more on this form of pastoral work. Pastoral care for De Jongh van Arkel (2000:162) is care through dialogue, which demands more skill than the previous level. It is also usually organized and often has a formal aspect: for example where church officials do house visitation. For him the object of this care level is spiritual growth rather than the handling of more deeply seated spiritual problems.

For Gerkin (1997:88) pastoral care's focus is to care for all God's people in all circumstances. He places emphasis on the creation of environments where believers can grow towards their full spiritual potential.

Apart from this care element Louw also adds the aspect that it is a process where the Gospel is communicated in order to facilitate the discourse that flows from the encounter between God and an individual.

Pastoral care and pastoral theology are those disciplines within practical theology, which are engaged with what traditionally has been called *cura animarum* – the care of souls. As part of practical theology, pastoral care deals with God's involvement with our being human and our spiritual journey through life. Essentially, it is engaged with the human search for meaning and our quest for significance, purposefulness and humanity.

(Louw 1999:5)

### 3.4.1.3 Pastoral counselling

De Jongh van Arkel (2000:162) describes pastoral counselling as a more intensive and structured form of care than the previous categories. It happens as the result of a request for help for specific problems from individuals, families or groups in their relationship experiences with themselves, others and with God. It takes place within a form of contextual care where help from the theological sciences are enhanced with insights from other sciences. People who have received training in theology and counselling usually perform it.

### 3.4.1.4 Pastoral therapy

De Jongh van Arkel (2000:163) makes a further distinction, namely pastoral therapy. Pastoral therapy uses long term reconstructive therapy methods to bring healing to deeper seated problems, and will often spread over a longer term. He sees it as a developing profession, where people who are guided in therapeutic skills, do therapy from a pastoral perspective.

I would like to reflect on this distinction. De Jongh van Arkel's distinction, agrees with the distinction that was made in the past regarding psychology. Brammer and Shostrom (1968:7) use the following key terms to show the difference:

| Counselling | Therapy         |
|-------------|-----------------|
| Educational | Reconstructive  |
| Supportive  | Focused support |

| Counselling         | Therapy                   |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Situational         | Analytic                  |
| Problem solving     | Depth emphasis            |
| Conscious awareness | Focus on unconscious      |
| Emphasis on normal  | Severe emotional problems |

*Table 5: Differences between Counselling and Therapy.*

From this perspective De Jongh van Arkel makes sense. In layman's terms it actually implies that you have to be a greater expert to do therapy than to do counselling. In counselling you work with normal people, whereas in therapy you work with the disturbed. De Jongh van Arkel puts it in more sophisticated language when he says that it has to do with the more deeply situated symptoms that have to be reconstructed.

From a post-modern perspective this distinction does not make sense anymore. I want to connect here with Weingarten (1998:3-4) who stated: "A modernist approach entails the observation of persons in order to compare their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours against pre-existing, normative criteria". Anderson (1997:31) defines it as a "hierarchy". Although De Jongh van Arkel (2000:165) indicated that "the distinctions we have made between the four levels of pastoral work do not denote a hierarchy", in practice it cannot be denied that according to his own words, it implies different levels of expertise. This approach leads to a place where expert knowledge places the therapist in a power position that can lead to abuse. From a post-modern perspective, there is no hierarchical relationship where the one "knows" and the other one is "disturbed". It is not about an objective outsider, but about an active participant in a process where a preferred story is co-constructed.

It, therefore, renders the distinction between counselling and therapy irrelevant. I personally prefer the term "therapy", as "advice" is inherent in the meaning of the word "counselling". In Afrikaans one can clearly hear it in the word "be-raad-ing" ("raad gee" means to "give advice") It once again has the connotation of "knowing"...As Smith (2005:26) makes it very clear that in TPM "the facilitator is not expected to provide advice, counsel or diagnose the person's condition, or guide the process in any direction, but simply to pray and ask questions that are directly reflective of the information reported by the ministry recipient", TPM should not be viewed as counselling. Against this, therapy can be connected to the Greek word θεραπευω (therapeuo) that "expresses willingness to serve....and has in view something good and the

advancement of the subject to which it applies” (Beyer 1964:128). Beyer (:129) further points out that this term in the New Testament, especially in relationship to Jesus, has the meaning of “healing”. The word “therapy”, in my perspective is, therefore, more applicable.

I would rather not use either of the two terms with the baggage that they bring with them from psychology. I would prefer to refer to pastoral conversation. Lynn Hoffmann (1997:xii) refers to Anderson and Goolishian, who were the first, who did not want to see therapy as the search for pathology, but rather as a conversation, because therapists should be functioning out of a not-knowing position.

### **3.4.2 Positioning of TPM regarding the different forms**

The following indicates that TPM can be positioned as pastoral care:

- Smith (2005:26) makes a clear distinction between professional help and this ministry. He sees it as a non-professional ministry where someone in the position of believer has the opportunity to extend help through prayer. (A complete discourse on this topic will be done in chapter 4 in 4.2). Smith (2007:6) points out that the skill of the ministry facilitator plays an important role in the successful handling of TPM. As a prayer ministry facilitator must first receive intensive training, before (s)he can begin facilitating it, therefore, implies that it is not to be seen as mutual care.
- Smith (2007:200) further advises that TPM should preferably happen within what he calls the “Body Life Model”, where members of a small group minister to one another. For Smith TPM is primarily a prayer ministry. Accordingly, one will have to place it within one of the first two of De Jongh van Arkel’s forms. Smith wants to see the ministry as an official ministry, which functions within the formal operation of a church. In that sense it will then be seen as pastoral care.
- With the Body Life Model, the creation of a space or habitat, where spiritual growth can take place, is also emphasised. It is in line with what Gerkin (1997) saw as characteristic of pastoral care.
- Louw sees, as pointed out above, pastoral care as a process where the Gospel is communicated in order to facilitate the discourse that flows from the encounter between God and an individual. TPM also fits in well with this description.

However I find it difficult to see TPM as only pastoral care. Smith (2007:200) calls the other model, alternate to the Body Life Model, the “therapy model”. Especially in the naming of these two models, the dilemma becomes evident. Although Smith tries very hard to protect the non-

professional nature of TPM, he cannot get away from the clearly therapeutic nature of TPM. TPM is, after all, about the healing of deeper seated problems, which can stretch over a long period of time. Although expert knowledge is not necessary, from for example psychopathology, TPM facilitators are trained to be experts in facilitating a conversation between the recipient and God. TPM is focused on creating a space where recipients in a therapeutic context come before Jesus Christ. This requires that the facilitator masters certain basic therapeutic abilities. Although TPM is prayer, not any believer is able to do it. The process further brings deeper seated problems to the forefront. It fits in with De Jongh van Arkel's description of pastoral therapy, but I would, in the light of my earlier argument, see TPM as pastoral conversation. Then the emphasis will fall on the dialogical character thereof.

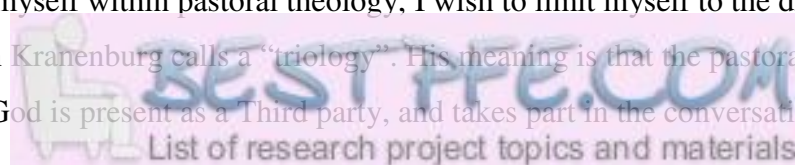
The concept "pastoral theology" is not yet made clear. I want to agree with Graham (1992:20) who sees pastoral theology as that branch of theology that focuses on the ministry of care. He wants to "correct the individualistic bias in pastoral theology. It brings the theory and practice of care more fully into relationship with the larger systemic realities". I use "pastoral theology" as a concept that includes all four forms of becoming pastoral, that De Johgh van Arkel identifies.

### **3.4.3 Pastoral Theology**

Pastoral theology has to be careful of a theological reduction on both sides. On the one side the person's problem is limited to "sin" (Thurneysen, Adams). As Louw (1999:28-9) indicated, this approach flows from an anthropology where the emphasis is on the total fallenness of human nature because of sin, and where people can only gain new life through Jesus Christ's death on the cross. On the other hand there is the psychological reduction, where the basic problem is limited to inner blockages and the need for self-realization (Clinebell 1984). This approach comes from anthropology where sin is seen as secondary. The human potential, present from creation, is the key to pastoral therapy (Louw 1999:31).

I would like to position myself within an approach where these two aspects are not in opposition to each other, or where the one does not become confused with the other. The distinctive character of pastoral care is the care for people's spiritual needs (Louw 1999:6). Such an approach must also keep sight of "the transcendent dimension of the Christian faith" (Louw 1999:6).

In order to position myself within pastoral theology, I wish to limit myself to the discourse with regard to what Klein Kranenburg calls a "triology". His meaning is that the pastoral conversation is a meeting where God is present as a Third party, and takes part in the conversation (Klein



Kranenburg 1988:10). I am only going to cite the different views of a limited number of theologians in order to indicate the main views about the way in which God is present in the pastoral conversation.

### **3.4.3.1 Confessional approach**

According to **Thurneysen**, proclamation of Scripture is central in the pastoral conversation. God works through His Word and He is present where His Word is being proclaimed. The working of the Holy Spirit regulates the effect of the spoken Word. As the pastor is certain of the work of the Holy Spirit, the pastor will do everything within his power to lead the conversation according to the Word. A meeting with God takes place when two people involved in the conversation meet each other before the opened Scripture. (Klein Kranenburg (1988:62,66,71). Together with Thurneysen, the work of **Berkelbach van der Sprenkel** and **Brillenburger Wurth** can be mentioned, as all of them place the same emphasis on the role of Scripture in pastoral care. The former places the emphasis on the pastor withdrawing when Scripture is read, because the conversation must then continue between God and the person. This moment is also emphasized in TPM, although the emphasis there is not on Scripture. Brillenburg Wurth emphasises that the pastor must be an authoritarian interpreter of Scripture (Klein Kranenburg 1988:237).

The problem with this approach, apart from nuance differences, is that certain interpretations of Scripture are considered authoritative and the partner in the conversation must be confronted with this objective truth. It opens the opportunity for the pastor to abuse his power.

### **3.4.3.2 The contextual approach**

Ploeger and Ploeger-Grotegoed (2001:632) describe the contextual pastorate as theology that works with philosophy and psychological insights to provide help. Within this approach the abilities and possibilities of the person are central and have to be fully actualised. Pastorate is then nothing else besides mobilising the person's hidden and/or blocked abilities by means of certain psychotherapeutic techniques and the skills of the pastor.

Northcott (2000:151) also indicated the importance of the social context within which pastoral practice takes place. Pastoral Theology is also shaped by different social structures with the aim of social transformation. Therefore, I chose **Catharina Halkes** (1977:119; 1995:112, 125, 168) as exponent of this approach. She is a representative of feminist theology. She also emphasized social transformation. Although many feminist theologians can be seen as social constructionists, I do not find in Halkes the characteristic ideas of that approach, especially because of the place she gives to Scripture. She views the way in which each person describes their experiences in



their history as the place where God is found. God does not reveal Himself from the outside, but along the way in which each person becomes more humane. His indwelling was the purpose of creation.

Her view of Scripture is that there are certain fundamental moments of revelation while the rest are stories in which the limitations of human nature are clearly illustrated. However, when the person wants to hear the Spirit, she must listen to the voice within. God reveals Himself to the person in her own experiences. Becoming human is a process of being free. God closely links this freeing to an ongoing revelation. Therefore the pastor becomes a type of midwife, an enabler, a facilitator, a growth awakener (Klein Kranenburg 1988:120,121,237; Meyer 2003:227).

This perspective resonates in some ways with what happens in TPM. Her views on Scripture though, differ completely from those of Smith, as well as from my personal perspective. I would, therefore, not want to position TPM here.

### **3.4.3.3 The correlative approach**

Heitink suggest a bipolar principle according to which God can remain God and the person remain himself. God chooses to communicate with people in a human way within a covenant relationship. It consists of three aspects:

- a) He reveals Himself to the person in the field of human experience. It happens in the normal way in which people gain experiences and become conscious of things.
- b) He walks alongside the person in this learning process. In that way the person's history becomes part of Salvation history.
- c) By choice He works in diverse ways. He uses people to help other people. He does it by means of the working of the Holy Spirit (Heitink 1977:174).

Thus, Heitink understands it is about God's revelation being understood when the people gain certain insights about certain experiences. The function of the pastorate is to facilitate the partner in the conversation to interpret certain experiences in terms of God's love and concern in Jesus Christ.

### **3.4.3.4 The hermeneutic approach**

Thiessen (2003:12-3) indicates that the discipline of hermeneutics in explaining texts since the late eighteenth century (Schleiermacher) focussed all the more on the role that human behaviour

played, much more than what was merely on paper. The importance of the hermeneutic question became more important. When Heitink (1993:179) points out the importance of the language and the prejudice of the interpreter of a text of human behaviour, he emphasizes that hermeneutics are of essential importance in any scientific practice. In this approach the emphasis is on the way in which faith experiences are interpreted in the pastoral conversation.

As an exponent of this approach I choose D.J. Louw. He sees pastoral care as not only focused on the kerygmatic aspect (Adams). It is not about proclamation and admonition, but also about communication within the establishing of a relationship of trust and empathy. Louw (1999:7) wants a pastoral hermeneutics of care and counselling that:

...deals with the naming of God and religious experiences which refer to spirituality and the ultimate....Central to a hermeneutical approach in pastoral care is dealing with different metaphors which reveal God's compassion and care. Hence the importance of God-images and the interpretation of experiences of faith. In short a pastoral hermeneutics of care and counselling is about religious experiences which give an indication of believers' perceptions of God and their interpretation of the significance of their existence: hence the quest for spirituality in a pastoral strategy for counselling.

(Louw 1999:7)

Louw (1999:8) described that the meanings of these metaphors are not a systematic description of God. They are not doctrines where there is a rational reasoning about God. It is about how God can be understood by way of experiences of faith within contextual issues of suffering and painful, problematic events. It means that the experiences of faith help the counselee to understand God in the midst of pain and suffering. Louw (1999:9) said:

But then, understanding is not the *intellectus* of speculative rationality, but that understanding which entails different experiences of God. Understanding is a **process of contextual interpretation**, not of rational explanation....Theological and pastoral communication is more than merely interpreting and denoting messages. Pastoral communication entails communion, fellowship, i.e. that kind of communication where people can experience the presence of God as a space for intimacy and unconditional love.

There are a few aspects of Louw's approach that resonate with TPM. When the recipient experiences God's voice, an understanding becomes embedded on a deeper level than the rational, and becomes part of the personal relationship with God. Through this experience the memory context is re-interpreted. I do realize that this is not Louw's starting point, where he places the emphasis on the communion and fellowship experienced with God. I only want to show that aspects of the hermeneutical approach resonate with TPM.

This approach is already quite close to the social constructionist approach. Where this interpretive process, within the abovementioned approach, is added to with terms such as

“deconstruction” and “rich descriptions of experiences”, I think that it may offer even more opportunity to understand TPM.

### **3.4.3.5 The social constructionist approach**

When the pastorate is practiced from the social constructionist approach, meaning and understanding is being constructed in the pastoral conversation. In that way pastoral help comes from a not-knowing position, as the pastor always positions himself so that he is “informed” by the recipient (Levin 2007:115). When understanding is established in the pastoral conversation, it is the result of an active co-operative negotiation of people within a creative relationship. In the pastoral conversation it means that people meet in discourse and that therapy is about new insight, which comes about as the result of what happens in the relationship (Dill 1996:251).

Within the pastoral conversation it is then the task of the pastor to deconstruct these “dominant stories” and help to co-construct alternative stories, for instance by allowing God’s story to be part of this co-construction, as Hudson phrases it: “... it involves nestling their personal stories within the Biblically grounded God-narrative, which is both transcendent of the human story and active within that ongoing story” (Hudson & Kotze 2002:271).

I would like to position myself within the social constructionist approach. The core of Harlene Anderson’s (2007:9) collaborative approach is the foundational points, which are (1) knowledge as a social construction and (2) language as “the primary vehicle through which we construct and make sense of our world”, where language is not seen as the mirror of truth. Although I have already indicated that Ed Smith, founder of TPM, might fit more into the correlative approach, I wish to study TPM from the perspective of this approach, because of the stance it takes with relation to the following:

- a) In the first place, Smith states that TPM is prayer and not therapy or counselling. However, the way in which the facilitator prays is directed by way of a method of conversation that agrees with the typical way of caring in a therapy session. In my opinion it is not necessary to distinguish if it is therapy or not, when the discourse about TPM is reflected upon from within this approach. With Smith’s approach that TPM is prayer therapy, the pastor becomes only a facilitator and Jesus Christ is placed in the therapist position. In this way the improper use of power is avoided. A space is created where God’s voice can partake in the co-construction of a preferred story of faith, love and hope. This is in line with the role that Anderson (2007:18) gives the therapist or facilitator.

The therapist's role is to invite and foster a dialogical space and process, self-identities (meanings) transform to ones that permit self-agency (action or a sense that action is possible), varied ways of being, and multiple possibilities regarding the life circumstances we sometimes think of as problems. Meanings and actions cannot be separated.

- b) This approach gives opportunity for every participant to find his or her own voice. There is no privileged knowledge. In that way the work of the Holy Spirit, as He works in each participant, comes to light through the participants. The facilitator is in a not-knowing position regarding the problem of the recipient. This is not about ignorance, but an avoidance of certainties and pre-understanding.

There is a difference though between what Anderson sees as not-knowing, and that which happens in TPM. For Anderson (2007:a:46) the not-knowing means that the therapist respects and accepts the story of the recipient and the way in which he tells it, as reality. The therapist has no expectations that the story has to unfold in a certain way, and asks no suggestive questions. Up until this point it is exactly the same as what is expected from a TPM facilitator.

The difference comes in where Anderson (2007:a:46) states: "Nor does the therapist think in terms of, or look for, theory-suggested linguistic cues that inform problem definitions and solutions". Although the recipient in TPM can talk about whoever and whatever (s)he wants to, the TPM facilitator listens to the recipient focused on identifying the lie. It is focused by the TPM theory. It does not lead however to professional knowledge being brought in from the outside to identify the problem. The facilitator only reflects to the Lord that which the recipient reports. This implies that the TPM facilitator does lead the sessions according to a certain theory, but is totally not-knowing – regarding the content and outcome of the process. For me the essence of the not-knowing position is not touched, as the client's knowledge is totally respected and accepted as valid.

- c) Where Anderson (2007a:47) sees the therapist and client join in a mutual inquiry, where the issue at hand is being dealt with, it agrees with TPM. The facilitator wants to understand the problem from the perspective of the recipient, where they together lay it before the Lord to receive His perspective. In this way there can never be blame. Where the TPM process is about looking for a lie, the problem is externalised so that the person no longer identifies with the problem. This is also a non-blaming focus.
- d) The TPM facilitator lives in the hope that with the voice of the Lord a more hopeful story is always possible. For Anderson (2007a:52) it is also a process where language

transforms both therapist and recipient. In TPM it is about God's words that transform by way of reconstructing old interpretations.

- e) It gives opportunity for humility, the position I believe from which research should be done. In that way all participants can take part in this research process in an ethically responsible way. It is not just to place certain knowledge on the table but also to help co-construct this research, as Eph. 4:15-16 reads: "we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love".

Harlene Anderson, (2007:12) in her description on the difference between constructivism and social constructionism, points out that individual authorship is exchanged for multi- or plural authorship of your life story. For me this gives a good summary as to why social constructionism is the best position for TPM. In its core, this is what a TPM session is about, i.e. that a recipient of TPM gives up his individual authorship of his life, for a multi authorship where the Voice of God and Scripture are co-authors in the reconstruction of his/her life story.

### 3.5 Closing remarks

In this chapter, in the first place, I positioned myself with regard to the Theological discourse about human experience of divine revelation. I have provided an historical background with regard to spirituality and reflected on those traditions from the viewpoint of Holmes' apophatic/ kataphatic and speculative/ affective scale.

Following that, I also positioned myself within Practical theology discourse and more specifically with regard to the pastoral care and theology discourse. In both abovementioned discourses I positioned myself with regards to the following approaches.

With regard to the **confessional** approach I do not view the Bible as the only source of knowledge. Also, I do not want to neglect Scripture, as does the **contextual** approach and only emphasize the praxis. With regard to the **correlative** approach I do not believe that there is a normative theology or that empirical observations and controls are the way in which the praxis can be studied. However, I can align myself with the **hermeneutic** approach that focuses on the action involved in the interaction between God and man. Selectively, I would like to position myself with **social constructionism** and more specifically a narrative paradigm since, like Gerkin (1997:111), I view the task of Practical Theology as maintaining the connections between the varied stories of life and the grounding story of the Christian community. Pastoral care

becomes the community of faith's living expression of that grounding story and as participants get involved in communicative action, new knowledge develops. I use the words “selective positioning” because I also acknowledge and respect the Bible as the authoritative voice of God.

I want to conclude this chapter with the words of Meyer (2007:20):

The glorious message is that Christ still heals and empowers today through the work of the Holy Spirit, but the mode of modernistic principles hamper this work. The post-modern and deconstructive way of honouring people in their uniqueness and the tentativeness of knowledge, and to trust Christ, is a way forward out of the dilemma of fundamentalism.

## Chapter 4

### TPM RELATED DISCOURSES FROM PASTORAL THERAPY AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

Before I allow TPM to speak for itself, I think it important to explore the landscape in which TPM finds itself. In the next chapter I want to explore the landscape in which TPM operates through the discussion of verbatim accounts of individual TPM facilitated sessions with one of the participants. In order to have a full understanding of this discussion, it is necessary to read the discourses which are under discussion. It is also necessary to have a good understanding of TPM's origins. This background knowledge is necessary to understand what happens in a TPM session. Without this it is difficult to understand the participants' responses concerning their interpretation and experience of TPM in the correct context. Where background knowledge of a participant is necessary and the discussion would be outside of the scope of this research, I will not discuss any of these discourses comprehensively. I will restrict myself to that which is relevant towards understanding the research results.

**Firstly**, TPM is seen as an Inner Healing Prayer-model (IHP) within an ecclesiastical landscape. Therefore I will start off by providing a short introduction of the origin and development of the IHP.

**Secondly**, different discourses from pastoral care and therapy as well as psychotherapy are important in this discourse about TPM. I also explore these discourses in order to let the important aspects of these therapies assist in the exploration of TPM. The discourses I reflect on are important in Chapter 5 where I am going to allow TPM to speak for itself by using the verbatim accounts from some of the TPM sessions of one of the narratives from this study in order to provide a clear image of TPM practices.

The discourses I reflect on are:

- The discourse of the professional
- The “not knowing” position of the facilitator
- The free will of man

- The voice of the Bible
- Free association, repression and repressed memories
- Childhood sexual abuse memories
- Demonology
- Retraumatizing

I will first attend to TPM as part of the Inner Healing Prayer-Landscape.

#### **4.1 TPM within the Inner Healing Prayer-Landscape**

The ecclesiastical landscape has seen much change during the last few centuries. The comprehensive Pentecostal-Charismatic movement in which three great waves of the Spirit can be identified (Theron 1998:192) characterized the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The First Wave was the Pentecostal Movement which originated during the first decade of the century and led to the Pentecostal Theology. The Second Wave of the Spirit is associated with the rising of the Charismatic Movement which began amongst mainline Protestants during the early sixties. It is more difficult to define the Third Wave. It consists of Evangelicals who do not want to be known as Pentecostal or Charismatic, but as “the theologically more sophisticated charismatic position these groups formed non-denominational local churches and centres” (Theron 1998:192-3). Thiessen (2003:45) places the rise and development of IHP (Inner Healing Prayer) within these last two “waves”. It must be kept in mind, however, that although those movements exercised a very definite influence, TPM originated within a mainline church, namely the Southern Baptists in the USA.

The term Inner Healing was a common term used in these ecclesiastical landscapes. That is why this term was always widely known in this landscape before it was described in the landscape of the academics. Although the term “inner healing” is widely used, most of those involved in its practices do not appreciate the term (Thiessen 2003:46; Sandford & Sandford 1992:53). Michael Scanlan (1974:9) defines Inner Healing as “the healing of the inner man. By inner man we mean the intellectual, volitional and affective areas commonly referred to as mind, will and heart but including such other areas as related to emotions, psyche, soul and spirit. Inner healing is distinguished from outer healing commonly called physical healing”. He further defines healing as “that process by which what is wounded or sick becomes whole and healthy. Healing has meaning in direct relationship to a negative situation or a specific hurt” (Scanlan 1974:5).



Kelsey (1973:69:75) showed in his work that the healing of the Lord included the category of inner healing. The evangelists had grouped healing into two categories which were physical healing and “mental illness generally described as demon possession”. Scanlan (1974: 15) said inner healing is “intercessory prayer seeking health in the inner being of a person who is present and is seeking such healing”. For Scanlan (174:27) the healing comes when the person is experiencing the love of Jesus in the memory. According to these definitions TPM qualifies as an inner healing model. However, Ed Smith (2005:13) chooses to view TPM as “mind renewal”.

In the development of the Inner Healing Movement the main exponents, according to Thiessen (2003:47), are the Sandfords (Elijah House), Leanne Payne (Pastoral Care Ministries) and Ed Smith (TPM). I also would like to reflect on the contributions of David Seamands, Charles Kraft and Dennis, Mathew and Sheila Linn. Agnes Sanford can be seen as the pioneer of the Inner Healing Movement, as she mentored both John and Paula Sandford as well as Leanne Payne.

As TPM forms a part of this landscape, it is important to further explore the landscape by summarizing the central contribution of each of the exponents.

#### **4.1.1 Agnes Sanford**

According to her biography on her website (<http://www.agnessanford.com/?pg=biography>) Agnes was the daughter of a Presbyterian missionary and spent her childhood in China at the Southern Presbyterian Mission. As a result of hostilities, missionary work was made impossible for Westerners and Agnes lost faith in God. Many years later, through the prayers of a minister who believed in the healing power of prayer, Agnes Sanford was cured of acute depression and subsequently, she became very active and successful in a healing ministry where others were cured of mental and physical ailments through prayer.

Thiessen (2003:49) indicated effectively how Agnes Sanford was influenced by her experimentation with a blending of scientific and religious discourses.. Some of the influences in her life were: autosuggestion, Glenn Clark of the New Thought-movement (<http://glennclark.wwhubs.com>), the writings of Emmet Fox, Norman Vincent Peale's positive thinking as well as Mary Baker Eddy's Christian Science.

Sanford discusses in her *The Healing Gifts of the Spirit*, not only her own cure but also the gift of healing in general and its growing recognition in the contemporary church. Agnes was an Episcopal laywoman, and was active in the church in the area of healing long before the charismatic renewal set in. Her involvement in this ministry grew out of her own experience.

Agnes Sanford herself suffered from severe, recurrent depression for many years and she experienced that she finally began to break out of her chronic depression after a protestant clergyman had laid his hands on her head and prayed for her. Through her own healing and afterwards through experiences during World War II where she volunteered for the Red Cross caring for wounded soldiers, she experienced the power of healing through prayer. Agnes Sanford taught that the principles of prayer and healing are universal - that is, they are included in all religions - yet transcend all religions.

#### **4.1.2 David Seamands**

Seamands (1985) started to use the term “healing of memories”. Seamands points out how pastors and counsellors developed strategies to help people to forget their past and taught them coping skills to deal with the future. He discovered the value of going into the past and using prayer to return to the memory and re-experience it. His own description of a case gives a good example of his approach: “As we prayed our imaginations were literally “back there” in time. She was not simply remembering the past. She was reliving and refeeling incidents, often in remarkable detail, as if she were actually there now. Although it was a struggle, she was forgiving the many people who had hurt her, and in turn, she was receiving God’s forgiveness for her long-held resentments against them”. Seamands emphasizes the re-experiencing of the memory and forgiveness in his approach.

In the TPM approach Smith (2007:64) sees that it is not the memory that needs healing but the emotional pain caused by the interpretation of the memory. Healing occurs when the interpretation of the memory (lie) is re-interpreted in *God’s light* (Theophostic). This aspect is further explored in Chapter 5. Although forgiveness is also very important in TPM, it is approached differently (Smith 2007:179).

#### **4.1.3 The Sandfords (Elijah House).**

The Sandfords as well as Charles Kraft approached Inner Healing with the background of the Deliverance Ministry of which they were a part. From the first TPM-manual it seems clear that Smith was influenced by their approach. In that manual, Smith approaches the role of the demonic from the stance of a Deliverance perspective. Smith (2005) has since then completely altered his approach in that regard. In the meantime, he (Smith 2007) has moved even further away from that approach. Miller (2006b:8) states: “Smith’s pendulum has swung so far from the excesses of the deliverance movement that in my view he now underestimates the power of the Devil”. That aspect will be addressed more thoroughly later on.

Smith himself indicates that TPM closely links up with the work of Dr. Kraft. According to Kraft's model, he “takes people back to the womb and has them visualize being born. In this process he invites the Lord to speak truth to them about their birth experience and then moves on through their life. His process has many similarities to Theophostic” (Smith 2000:247).

#### **4.1.4 Leanne Payne**

Leanne Payne emphasizes the experience of the presence of God when healing is being prayed for. During the prayer sessions she first helps the recipient to experience God’s presence. Then she helps the recipient to relive the memory where the problem originated before inviting Jesus Christ into the situation. She views healing as being in the recipient’s experience of Jesus - Who provides the healing within the memory. She calls it “ practicing the Presence” (Payne 1989: 23). This involves the recipient acknowledging God’s presence as a form of prayer in an attitude of obedience. She describes it as follows: “Through listening prayer, through reception of the words and the pictures that come from God, through learning to practice the Presence, thereby bringing every thought of the mind, every imagination of the heart captive to Christ” (Payne 1989: 131).

#### **4.1.5 Dennis, Sheila en Matthew Linn (1993).**

Because Dennis, Sheila and Matthew Linn work with a lot with addiction, their model closely resembles the well-known twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonamous where they mainly focus on emotional issues. Step 11 places heavy emphasis on prayer, namely: “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out” (Linn, Linn & Linn 1993:167).

**To summarize** the abovementioned approaches it seems that the following aspects had an influence on the theory of TPM:

- Power of healing through prayer
- Demonology
- Experiencing the presence of God in a memory through listening prayer
- Conscious contact with God

When working through Smith’s TPM theory, it is clear that these approaches exercised a great influence on it. It will gradually become clearer in the next chapter by means of my journey through the landscape of TPM..

In order to do justice to the discourse about TPM in the next chapter, I want to reflect on the following discourses and their connection to TPM.

## 4.2 The discourse of the professional

Ed Smith, founder of TPM, is very clear on the issue that TPM is neither therapy nor counselling. He chooses to speak of facilitating and of a facilitator. **Why does TPM use the term facilitator?** In the Basic Seminar Manual Smith (2005:26) states: “The facilitator is not expected to provide advice, counsel or diagnose the person's condition or guide the process in any direction, but simply to pray and ask questions that are directly reflective of the information reported by the ministry recipient”. He makes a clear distinction between professional help and this ministry. He sees it as a non-professional ministry where a believer has the opportunity to extend help through prayer. This places the question of professionalism in the spotlight.

Although he has a Doctor's degree in Ministry and a Master's degree in Education, and he makes a living from his ministry (Miller 2006:2), Smith (2005:26) does not see himself as a professional. What does being professional mean to him? Smith finds himself in a legalised environment where providing aid is very strictly controlled by law. According to him there are three qualifications for being a professional, namely:

- a) They must have equivalent training and certification of knowledge and skill so that the job one professional would do is the same as another;
- b) They are in charge – responsible for the outcome through their expert skills;
- c) They use only proven methods to produce a predictable outcome.

(Wilder & Smith 2002:19)

To Smith TPM is a prayer ministry wherein the crucial focus is on a relationship with God. The prayer minister cannot control God by prayers, but rather remains dependent on Him while searching for what God wants to accomplish in the recipient's life: “Prayer always defies the scientific tests for procedure and outcome and cannot be evaluated on that basis”. Smith finds himself in the dilemma where modernistic thoughts place him. It is clear that he wants to protect the prayer nature of this ministry by ensuring that God remains in control of the process. Prayer is about the facilitator's relationship with God and not the scrupulous following of a rigid technique. God uses well-trained as well as untrained people, those who are clever and those who are not, while it sometimes would appear that He has a preference for the weak, poor and rejected. **Prayer ministers do not necessarily understand the problem of the person in front of them.** Their job is just to follow God. In that process they will sometimes discern what the problem is and sometimes not, but they do not cease to pray. The outcome of the process can never be the responsibility of the prayer minister. The outcome can also not be predicted. That is

why Smith (2007:11) indicated that because TPM is fundamentally prayer ministry, TPM can only help when there are lies to be deconstructed (deconstructing meaning “showing the assumptions behind [beliefs] not to be valid” (Meyer 2007:11). With regards to psychopathology that cannot be attributed to lies or misinterpretations, TPM is not the appropriate tool to use. Viewed within the aforementioned framework, TPM can never be seen as a professional service (Wilder & Smith 2002:19-21).

When Michael White (1997:119) writes about professional discourses, he indicates that these discourses make claims of knowledge. Psychology claims that certain “truths” have been identified regarding the human condition, wherein the status of objective reality is attached, that is universal and represents the true nature of life. An example of this is the knowledge of psychopathology. It implies that a certain diagnosis can be made to which certain procedures can be attached. This knowledge is based on empirical research that exposed that knowledge. The professional therapist is the expert of that knowledge and has to use that knowledge to help the client, who then becomes the object of that knowledge. That interaction between therapist and clients is regulated by certain rules, where the rules determine what can be viewed as legitimate knowledge and who the legitimate holders of that knowledge are. White (1997:121) indicates how this process results in technologies of power with which people are then classified and labelled. In other words, Smith’s knowledge is cancelled by these technologies of power and becomes illegitimate knowledge.

However, Smith still functions and thinks from a modernistic paradigm. The practice shows very clearly that when God is again allowed His rightful place within a ministry, it becomes unbearable within the modernistic paradigm. The “sparkling moment” in TPM’s story occurs because God is placed in the centre of the ministry while the “not knowing” position of the facilitator is very strongly emphasised.

### **4.3 The “not knowing” position of the facilitator**

In traditional therapy the therapist is the expert searching for the “non-sense” of pathology in the conversation. The therapist identifies “non-sense” on the basis of his professional knowledge. By means of this knowledge the therapist attempts to lead the client to solving the problem, using a certain therapeutic orientation and certain therapeutic techniques. There is a diagnosis with an accompanied therapeutic strategy. Unfortunately it leads to a therapist probably not being totally receptive to the client’s full story. Anderson and Goolishian (1992:30) describe it like this: “...

(It) is to reach for regularities and common meaning that may validate the therapist's theory but invalidate the uniqueness of the client's stories and thus their very identity".

Anderson and Goolishian (1992:26), important participants in this discourse about the "not knowing" position of the facilitator, say they view the "not knowing" position of the therapist from a perspective where therapy is seen as a linguistic system that cannot best be described by objective observers, but by the participants of the system. The dialogical character of the therapeutic conversation lends itself to construction of new meaning and understanding. In this dialogue new meaning with regards to the problem is developed by mutual search and exploration, and the problem is gradually "dissolved" by it, as Anderson (1993:325) puts it:

Problems are, therefore, not solved, but dissolved. Dis-solution of the problem may be born of the client's newly required sense of agency and self-capability. This sense can evolve from an altered understanding of the problem, which is then no longer viewed or experienced as a problem and may actually be dissolved through actions. Change, whether in the cognitive or behavioural domain, is a natural consequence of dialogue.

In the process where the therapist operates from the not-knowing position, he/she will set aside his/her own dominant personal discourses as well as professional discourses. When he/she listens to the story of the client, he/she concentrates to understand the client's interpretation of the story rather than trying to interpret it with existing knowledge by means of a diagnosis. Anderson (1993:325) calls it "respectful listening". They see therapy as the process in which the therapist and client struggle to understand and to come to an interpretation. This search also includes looking for the "not-yet-said", leading to the construction of an alternative story with a different interpretation (Anderson & Goolishian 1988:380).

However, Anderson (1993:325) points out that the not-knowing position does not mean that the therapist knows nothing or that all that knowledge must simply be ignored. It also does not mean that the therapist must sit back during the therapy conversation and not have an opinion. It is unavoidable that the therapist will bring his/her own self and his/her knowledge to the conversation. For Anderson (1993:325) it means "the therapist's pre-experiences and pre-knowledge do not lead. In this process both, the therapist's and the client's expertise, are engaged to dissolve the problem". The therapist's expertise lies in the creating of a space for conversation by means of therapeutic questions, asked "from a tentative attitude" (Anderson 1993:325) and by becoming a participant-observer and participant-facilitator. It means that questions are asked from a position of "not-knowing", "rather than asking questions that are informed by method and that demand specific answers" (Anderson & Goolishian 1992:28).

I want to compare the “Basic assumptions and principles of TPM” (Smith 2004:31, 2007:15) together with the TPM practices, with the abovementioned in order to reflect on the position of the TPM facilitator in terms of this discourse. In my opinion the TPM facilitator operates from a “not-knowing” position. However, the question may well be asked that if the facilitator uses questions to guide the recipient in the direction of listening to Jesus, is it really not-knowing? This question becomes even more serious if the direction/context is not the one in which the recipient thinks or lives. Is the choice of a dialogue between the recipient and God not a clear manipulation of the conversation? Is it not that the word that comes from Jesus is not-knowing, but that the facilitator in the terms of Anderson and Goolishian really still has a knowing position.

From the above discussion, I understand that the “not knowing” position of the facilitator implies the following:

- a) By means of the dialogical character of the therapeutic conversation, new meaning is constructed that brings about an altered understanding of the recipient’s interpretation because the facilitator is on equal footing with the recipient and does not participate from a level of privileged knowledge.

This is exactly what happens in TPM. The “**Basic assumptions of TPM**” are discussed in Chapter 5 (5.1.1). One of these assumptions is:

Theophostic Ministry assumes that all people are in dire need of mind renewal, both ministry recipient and ministry facilitator. **In the area of mind renewal the ground is level.** (bold mine). It is not about the more “spiritual” ministering down to the wounded but rather the acknowledgement that we are all on a lifelong continual journey of being exposed in our deception and being transformed by His truth.

(Smith 2004:31)

In TPM it is precisely in the conversation with Jesus than *an altered understanding of the recipient’s interpretation* takes place without the facilitator using any knowledge to make it happen, apart from laying it down at Jesus’ feet. It can now be argued that this is “knowing”. However, a TPM conversation takes place within a pastoral context where prayer is an accepted practice. It means that recipients usually choose to receive prayer ministry from their own conviction of faith. In prayer the facilitator and recipient are equal before God. Any recipient has the choice to work within the process. For example, Ed Smith (2007:92) says: “If the recipient says he is not comfortable with TPM, then do not do it”. Furthermore he also firmly points out that no person should be facilitated before they are thoroughly informed about the TPM process. He says: “It is very

important to educate the recipients in what they are about to experience: there should be no surprises” (Smith 2007:88).

A TPM facilitator may never force prayer on any recipient. The TPM guideline reads: “TPM facilitators should never pressure you to go to any particular memory, or to do anything that you do not choose to do” (Panozzo & Smith 2007:36). In my opinion, Ed Smith (2007:135-144) over-emphasises the aspect of free will (belief and choice) in the recipient. The TPM viewpoint is that the facilitator will not under any circumstance violate the recipient’s will because God never violates a person’s will. I further reflect on these discourses with the following point.

It implies that no one will be forced to hear from Jesus. It does happen that when the prayer-conversation is in process that a recipient may choose at a particular moment not to hear from Jesus. In that case the facilitator needs to explore why the recipient chooses not to hear. Then it is dealt with in the usual TPM process in the same way one deals with guardian lies (For an explanation of this aspect, refer to Chapter 5). If a person chooses not to listen to Jesus any further, the facilitator needs to respect it and end the conversation.

- b) The therapist or facilitator makes no assumption about the problem of diagnosis. The therapeutic conversation is solely about understanding the recipient’s interpretation of what is important and together searching for an alternative interpretation. Michael White beautifully describes it as the thin description of a problem saturated story exchanged for a thick description of an alternative story. He says: “they (clients/recipients) suddenly discovered many previously neglected experiences of the past” which he refers to as “unique outcomes” (White 1995:75). Around these unique outcomes the alternative story is co-constructed or as Anderson (1993:324-5) says: “in which the therapist and client engage each other in co-exploring the issue at hand – the problem- and co-developing newness”.

In this way the transformational power of the narrative helps to narrate incidents in our past in a new way, giving them a totally new meaning. To achieve this, it is important for the narrative therapist to take on the “not-knowing” position, just as it is for the TPM facilitator: “The ‘not-knowing’ position entails a general attitude or stance **in which the therapist's actions communicate an abundant, genuine curiosity**. That is, the therapist's actions and attitudes express **a need to know more about what has been said**, rather than convey preconceived opinions and expectations about the client, the problem or what must be changed” (Anderson & Goolishian 1992:29).



In the TPM session this is again what happens. The guidelines say it clearly: “TPM facilitators should not diagnose or offer their opinion about your problem or mental condition”. The whole TPM process is focussed on the facilitator asking certain questions to find out what the interpretation of the recipient is about a certain memory (the lie). Without judging that interpretation in any way, it is laid before God for His interpretation. It comes down to the facilitator only facilitating a dialogue between the recipient and Jesus, in order to create alternative interpretations in that dialogue. Indeed, it is then socially constructed.

- c) The uniqueness of the recipient’s story must be preserved. The facilitator only uses what he receives from the recipient and places it before God. Ed Smith (2004:31) rejects any efforts from a facilitator to force the process in any particular direction. Another of the “Basic Assumptions” reads:

Theophostic Ministry assumes also that everything that is needed for a memory to be healed is already present and known by the person at some level. Therefore, there is no need for the facilitator to insinuate, suggest or lead the person to believe anything the person does not surface on his own.

Ed Smith (2004:31)

Appreciation must be expressed for the way in which TPM facilitators are trained. In order to ensure that facilitators keep to the guidelines, great emphasis is placed in the training on the fact that they must first of all receive healing for their own pain before they can facilitate. TPM theory connects a “need for power” to lie-based thinking. If sufficient healing is received, the facilitator will no longer have that need. When facilitators personally experience the process, they can also trust the process. I am of the opinion that this is why it is possible for a TPM facilitator to operate from a position of “not-knowing”. The healed TPM facilitator has no need to be in control or to prove something.

In our organization, FTF, we set strict requirements for qualifying to facilitate TPM within our organization, starting off with a minimum of ten hours personal healing, followed by assisting an experienced facilitator for twenty hours. At that stage, the roles are switched and thirty hours are required with the trainee facilitating, assisted by an experienced facilitator.

- d) Michael White (1995:72) warns that therapists (including him) can very easily make the mistake that “we possess truths that should be privileged above other knowledge”. When

that happens, therapy becomes very prescriptive. The facilitator does not operate from a position of privileged knowledge.

The question now is if the same is true of TPM. The TPM facilitator is trained in TPM theory. There are strict guidelines according to which TPM facilitators must operate. The Theophostic Prayer Ministry Guidelines (See Appendix C) serves as guideline for facilitators. In practice it is expected that recipients sign an acknowledgement after each session that the facilitator remained true to those guidelines. From a social constructionist viewpoint the application of strict guidelines can naturally be questioned. Is it the same danger of which White speaks?

When examining the four basic components of the TPM process (discussed in detail in the next chapter) - namely a presenting emotion, a memory, a lie (certain interpretation of what happened in the memory) and the truth from the Lord, it cannot be argued away that it is certain knowledge from which TPM operates.

As quoted above, Anderson argued that the therapist does not enter the therapy session like a tabula rasa, but that the pre- knowledge and pre-experience of the therapist do not lead the recipient in any way. The therapist's expertise lies in the creating of a space for conversation. In TPM the facilitator is an expert in the facilitation of the conversation between the recipient and the Lord. The abovementioned knowledge of the facilitator (components of TPM) is merely a way in which space is created for the recipient to formulate their interpretations of a memory. Then they are helped to lay their interpretations at the feet of Jesus. As already mentioned, the TPM guidelines are there to ensure that facilitators do not use their knowledge in the TPM process. After all, the knowledge that the TPM facilitators use does not result in undermining the basic "not knowing" position of the facilitator. In actual fact the process is applied in such a manner that no privileged knowledge is used as a power tool in the life of the recipient. Other therapeutic orientations, such as narrative therapy, that also work in a socially constructionist paradigm, also work according to certain guidelines, implying certain knowledge. But the knowledge must not guide the facilitation process.

There remains the question of when a facilitator leads a person to listen to Jesus if it is a "knowing" or not. However, to introduce recipients to Jesus is an essential element of the pastoral conversation. Gideon van Dam (2005:4) says that it is precisely part of the essential task of the pastor to "guide people in opening their hearts and minds to the mystery of God".. In the Christian faith God is the Trinity and Jesus the Son of God. Together with Van Huyssteen (1998:25) this is the point where my faith cannot do otherwise. I see the fact that Jesus is invited

to join the conversation as another Voice taking part in the social construction of truth for the recipient.

The question may be asked if the facilitator himself cannot hear and receive visual images from Jesus and utilize this in the process. Ed Smith is clear that “TPM facilitators will not share any visual images or “prophetic words” that they believe are related to the recipient’s memory, so that their ideas are not implanted into the recipient’s thinking” (Panozzo & Smith 2007:37). That is why facilitators may not share with recipients what they see or hear from God in a session. Indeed, it may be grossly prescriptive and knowing. That explains why Smith formulated such strict guidelines according to which a facilitator is not allowed to use his/her own suggestions, interpretations or his/her own insight in any way to influence the recipient.

Although it cannot be denied that a certain “knowing” plays a role in TPM, the practices of TPM come quite closely to the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator, as described above. An example where “knowing” does intrude is with this TPM guideline (Appendix C):

I will be careful to discern and call attention to any aspect of “truth” or visual you might receive during a ministry session that does not appear to be authentic and/or Biblically consistent. Should this happen, I will encourage you to determine what is true or not and where the false information originated (this is formulated from a modernistic framework).

This guideline makes it clear that it is expected of the TPM facilitator to judge what is authentic and Biblically consistent, which implies that the TPM facilitator still functions from a “knowing” position. As already indicated the way in which it is done is with great respect for the relationship between God and the recipient. However, it highlights the discourse about the voice of the Bible in counselling. (It is discussed under 4.5).

When viewed as a whole, while taking into account that TPM had its origin within a pre-modern<sup>8</sup> paradigm, it still seems that the position of the TPM facilitator agrees in many respects with the “not-knowing” position within social constructionism.

#### **4.4 The discourse of the free will of man**

Free will has probably become, as explained in the new TPM-manual (Smith 2007:135-143), the most important principle that Smith builds his approach to TPM on. He calls it “The second most powerful force in the universe”. According to him the two most important forces at work in TPM are “God’s power” and “our free will”. In this discourse I do not want to become entangled in the age-old discussion about predestination and man’s free will. Smith (2007:138) has the point of

<sup>8</sup> Pre-modern refers to the time phase of submission as explained in chapter 2.

view that God never violates a person's will. Here I only wish to reflect on this aspect. As I am approaching this research from the viewpoint of social constructionism, it is not about a dogmatic evaluation of this issue. It is, however, essential to understand Smith's viewpoint and I reflect on this without agreeing with or dogmatically criticising it.

It ties up with the important TPM principle: **“People are in emotional bondage due to two basic factors: belief and choice”**. (Smith 2005:33) When Smith (2005:171) discusses this aspect, he refers to Phil 2:13 (ESV) “...for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure”. He argues that in the power with which God works in us, He built in a limiting switch, namely our free will. God places more at our disposal than we can ever imagine or ask for (Phil.2:12-13). However, He will never force it on us, wanting us to make the choice. That which often stands between that choice and us is that which we believe: “They want to be free and are choosing to go as far as they have come, but they are also making a choice not to go any further. We want to be free, but we don't want to go through the pain” (Smith 2005:171). It often happens during a ministry session that people desperately want to move forward, declaring themselves willing to feel the pain but they are unable to proceed. It is a case of volitional conflict. Smith (2005:172) states it categorically: “Anytime a person is stuck in a ministry session it is always due to their choosing,” no matter the kind of blockage, be it anger, amnesia, demons or dissociation.

Smith (2007:136) now describes “will” as a verb. In the past he viewed it as something you own. To him will is “whatever we are doing in any given moment.... Wherever we are in any given moment is an expression of our will or choice, based upon what we believe” (Smith 2007:136).

The central issue is Smith's viewpoint that God will never violate a person's will. He may indeed orchestrate our circumstances so that it motivates us to make choices according to His will.

However, He will always wait for us to make the choices. To illustrate it, he uses the example of Jonah. When Jonah refused to go to Nineveh, God did not force him. He allowed him to make free choices that took him in the opposite direction. Smith refers to Jonah 1:4 and 17: “But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea ...” vs.17 “...And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah”.

Smith (2005:172-3) makes the following statement:

God does make it difficult for us to make bad choices at times because He loves us and we belong to Him. God will cause things to occur in the life of the people to whom you minister to motivate them to go where they need to go during the ministry session.....If you want to pray according to God's will for a person who becomes stuck, ask the Lord to “hurl a great wind” or “appoint a fish” to motivate them.

Smith views the free will of man as the greatest human factor in the application of TPM. The question is whether he does not lend too much weight to that facet. Although there might not be enough Biblical evidence to prove that God never violates a person's will, from a social constructionist point of view this is not important. I, however, do not believe that a mere human being can decide that God will never violate the human will. When Edwards argues that indeterminism is not reconcilable with the human dependence on God and His sovereignty and that *free will* comes down to "man is not dependent on God; but God is rather dependent on man in this affair; for He only operates consequentially in acts, in which He depends on what He sees we determine, and do first" (Ramsey 1957:469). It is clear that Smith's viewpoint cannot be accepted blindly.

As in other discourses, no absolute truth can be found here. Again we must "dance with uncertainty" (Meyer 2003), because people do not know the full truth. Although I easily accept the TPM principle of belief and choice, since it is a respectful approach, I also think that Smith elevates his knowledge about the human will - his own interpretation of Scripture - to a fundamental truth, in fact restricting God's power. I believe that God respects human will and therefore I can concur with the principle under discussion. However, then we as human beings have to respect that we cannot speak for God because we do not really know.

#### **4.5 The discourse of the voice of the Bible**

Questions on the authority of Scripture point to a discourse that is currently very controversial. As this aspect falls outside the main scope of this study I am not going to attempt to present a full argument of it. An attempt will only be made to judge TPM's position with regards to the voice of Scripture. In a certain way Smith approaches the Bible with a naivety that reminds one of a noncritical, fideistic mode (Stiver 2001:77).

The voice of the Bible is without doubt the main player in the co-construction of knowledge in the landscape of TPM. There can rightly be asked if the respect with which the facilitator in Harold's case (Chapter 5) handled the recipient did not allow the recipient's perception to play a more important role than the voice of the Bible. Miller's (2006a:7) question becomes relevant: "Does TPM place experience and feelings over Scripture and reason"? Miller indicates that most of TPM's critics adopt this stance.

The question is raised as to how Scripture is interpreted when this question is being asked. From Miller's article it is clear that he accepts a certain Scriptural interpretation as the truth. It implies that he approaches it from a certain dogmatic angle. The question is on what grounds other

Scriptural interpretations can be rejected. With regards to the hermeneutic of Scripture, Imminck (2002:160) writes about the traditions as follows:

It is important to note that theories that deal with textual meaning shape our understanding of the preaching event [and counselling]. In the circles of historical criticism the meaning of the text is tied up with the author's intention. Modern literary criticism, however, advocates a somewhat different approach: The meaning of a text is *in* a text. So the emphasis is not on the (historical) author, but on the literary work itself. The text has certain autonomy, and that implies that a meaning of a text is not found in its origin, instead in its *performance*. So the meaning is not found in the intention of the author; rather, in the interaction with the hearer/reader.

Furthermore there is the important difference that the author looked upon the texts as a *result* of certain events whereas the reader uses the text for interaction and making events happening (Craddock 1985:113). Especially when Biblical texts are used in the pastoral conversation, - counselling or -therapy, it often happens that the search is not for the meaning of the text but as a generator for certain behaviour and interactions. In this context often the text's literary form is not appreciated. In these conversations the emphasis is more about the therapeutic impact of the text and justice is not done to the literary form of the text within its context.

The abovementioned makes the dilemma clear. I do not want to get bogged down in the hermeneutic discourse about which hermeneutic method is better. I only want to indicate that it is not possible to use Scripture and reason to judge TPM, as Miller puts it. Furthermore it seems that other criteria are needed in order to judge. I shall return to this later.

It must be remembered that theology, that is socially constructed, is not equal to the Bible. On the one side we have the Flesh-Incarnated as well as the Scripture-Incarnated Word through Whom God revealed Himself to us, while on the other side we have human thought about God's revealed truth that is socially constructed. In Chapter 3 (3.3.2) the different approaches to using Scripture in counselling were already indicated, namely the **confessional** approach, the **contextual** approach, the **correlative** approach, the **hermeneutic** approach as well as the **social constructionist** approach. I repeat what was said about the last mentioned approach, that knowledge and truth are created and not discovered by the mind (Schwandt 1994:125). Meyer (2003:18) states that:

In a modern framework practical theology applies principles and messages of the Word to situations, but in a post-modern framework the situation and the Word are deconstructed and the contextual experience is constituted, not through dogma, certainty and knowledge, **but through the Holy Spirit and experiences in the context**. No pre-established and final conclusions are drawn.

I have already explained that with deconstruction Meyer (2007:11) means that it is not about small changes, but "it involved the overthrow of the system itself. The aim of deconstruction is

to show that texts are not based on the ultimate truth, final distinctiveness and concluding certainty”. Because texts use language, words are always a representation of what is present. When a fact or story is described in language, it is no longer the fact itself, but a representation of it. It implies that if the voice of Scripture agrees with the social construction of truth for a particular person, facts are no longer the object as much as the interpretation of those facts. Then it is necessary that the Holy Spirit interpret the text for that person within his or her own context.

This applies to TPM, when the recipient experiences what the Holy Spirit reveals to him/her in the experience of the memory context. The memory context is the context in which the lie or wrong interpretation is seated. It is also the context in which the Holy Spirit brings truth to the person. On the surface it would appear that the experience of God’s truth plays a more important role than Scripture itself. Such a position would put TPM within the framework of social constructionism, as indicated above. Citing the example of Harold (next chapter), the question can rightly be asked that if what he reported –that Jesus did not want him to forgive his father– can really be inspired by the Holy Spirit. I also want to compare the experience of another participant, Marinda. To quote from the summary of her research interview: “When her daughter was molested, she took scissors to kill the perpetrator at his home. If she sees the same person now, she would ask God to forgive him. In answer to the question of whether it was merely time healing the wounds, she replied “no”. She relates how God showed her in a TPM-session, that He loves the perpetrator as much as He loves her. It was difficult to hear, but since it is the truth and because she received it directly from God, she can accept it. Now she can bless that person”. Can it be inferred that the Holy Spirit gave two contradictory messages to two participants?

It also leads us to the following question that Miller (2006a:6) asks: “Does TPM function as extra Biblical revelation?” TPM has already been severely criticized about this aspect. Bobgan and Bobgan (1999:7) took the lead in this by alleging that Smith claims that he received TPM as a revelation from God. Smith denies this categorically and explains that he only came to understand Scripture in a new way in those circumstances (the inception of TPM). Smith (2005:278) indicates that no new truth is revealed to the recipient, but that God only personalizes the truth already revealed in Scripture. Smith and TPM, reasoning from within modernism, judge these “revelations” as being about truth, while post-modern thoughts see it in terms of accountability. However, post-modern thoughts ask how the recipient can be accountable for what he or she has heard from God.

To Smith (2005:136-9) there are four possible sources for the truth that the recipient receives: (1) oneself, (2) the facilitator, (3) an evil spirit or (4) the Holy Spirit. The facilitator’s task, according to the TPM guidelines, is merely to make the recipient aware that his own logical

thoughts or a false Jesus (demon) could play a role. After that, the process is left in the hands of the real Jesus. The criteria whereby this truth must be tested is firstly Scripture and secondly the fruit or result of it in the life of the participant. TPM accepts that the voice of Scripture has higher authority than the experience of any recipient.

It brings to the fore the dilemma of how we know what Scripture says. In post-modern thoughts and social constructionist terms we are limited to an interpretation of Scripture. If TPM accepts Scripture as the higher authority, the dilemma is what interpretation of Scripture is used in a certain situation. Nobody, apart from the Holy Spirit can say directly, "The Bible says so". All that we can say is, "I understand the Bible in that way". When the Holy Spirit reveals the "truth" to the recipient, the truth for the recipient is also the recipient's interpretation of the truth that he/she received from God. It again begs the question of what criteria can be used to judge what God said. Used in the TPM session, the facilitator has only his own interpretation of Scripture in order to judge what the Holy Spirit reveals to the recipient. The facilitator cannot use his/her own knowledge to manipulate the recipient. On the table is absolute trust in the work of the Holy Spirit. God is very able to lead the recipient as He chooses.

Even the understanding of Scripture and what God reveals therefore is something that is socially negotiable in the TPM session. It follows that there is no external reference point for judging the "truth" of what happened in a session. Kotze (2002:17-8) points out the dilemma by saying:

Not having any external or fixed point of reference leaves us as confused as a chameleon on a rainbow. The realisation that our deepest "truth" is based on nothing, but one interpretation among many others, creates fears of "anything goes", of relativism, of chaos and anarchy. What we fear most is losing control – and in Western discourse control is seen as a primary, unspoken value.

However, it is not about an "anything goes"-approach, but another criterion comes to the surface, namely the effect of the "truth" on the recipient and on the people around him/her. It goes together with the criteria that Chaplain Muller used to identify the "not so successful" narratives, being the fruit or result of TPM in the life of the participant. The ethical aspect of this is fully discussed in Chapter 8. According to Smith (2005:278) TPM experiences are not infallible, but must always be tested against Scripture. The problem with this approach is that there are so many interpretations to Scripture. In the end the TPM experience is actually tested against an interpretation of Scripture and not Scripture alone. An example of this is Smith's shift concerning his viewpoint of demonology. Initially his stance was criticized by one sector of theologians. Now with his new approach another sector is dissatisfied. It is very positive to me that Smith is open to discussion and that TPM is continually being reconstructed. It is almost as if TPM already works in a social constructionist manner in the way that discussion about TPM



continually leads to reconstruction of TPM. As regards the example of demonology, it would appear that Smith was led to his change of approach by another factor, namely the impact of his knowledge on the recipient's lives. This led to his reconsidering his theology, in which the voice of Scripture reconstructed his approach to demonology.

I also discovered that the common denominator for many of the demonic manifestations that I was encountering was me. I believed the person was a victim of the devil and needed to be rescued. When the person believed this as well, it became a deceptive arena Satan was allowed to operate within. As my theology has become more consistent with what the post-resurrection passages declare about the devil's defeat I have witnessed little to no demonic manifestation in the ministry sessions I now facilitate.

(Smith 2008e:1)

The discourse about demonology is further discussed in 4.8. Here I am simply using it to point out how closely Smith comes to a social constructionist approach in that he allowed the impact that his method had on the recipients and Scripture to persuade him in the reconstruction of his theology. It is not explicitly clear to what degree he allowed the voices of the recipients to influence him in this reconstruction. I shall further reflect on this and social systems in the last chapter.

#### **4.6 The discourse of free association, repression and repressed memories**

The first TPM principle (Smith 2007:15) is about suppositions, which are grounded on the psychological concept of free association. The current emotion is not the true cause of the emotional pain and so the recipient is expected to relive old emotions from previous memories. When Smith (2005:67) discusses "association" he acknowledges the influence of Freud and psychoanalytical thinking. However, he refuses to be known as Freudian. His stance is that if Freud said something that corresponds with how God made human beings, then he accepts it. It does not make him Freudian, seeing that there are many other aspects on which he differs from Freud. Consequently I will briefly attend to the influence of Psychoanalysis on this discourse.

##### **4.6.1 Freud and the Psychoanalytical contribution to this discourse**

Sigmund Freud initially designed the technique of "free association" according to which his patients were requested to report the first memory that came to mind, regardless of how superficially unimportant or potentially embarrassing the memory threatened to be. This technique supposed that all memories are arranged in a network, so that the patient would sooner or later reach a crucial memory (Brown 1964:17; Meyer & Salmon 1988:48; Tydeman

1989:521). Freud discovered then that in spite of a patient's attempts at remembering, there remained a resistance preventing them from remembering the most painful and important memories. This led to him using the term "repressed memories" (Van der Kolk, Weisaeth & Van der Hart 1996:54).

To understand "repressed memories" it is important to first understand repression. According to Psychoanalysis, repression is the most important defence mechanism. It is the subconscious exclusion from the consciousness of deprecative and unacceptable impulses, thoughts and memories. The ego pushes down the material to the subconscious and then acts as though it does not exist. The supplanted material can seep through to the consciousness in a repressed or symbolic form, usually taking the form of dreams, default and neurotic symptoms (Gouws et. al. 1979:259).

Although research has been done to support the repression of desires, thoughts and wishes, no real research results exist that support the repression of memories (Lynn et al. 1998:131-6). Bass and Davis (1988) were controversial with their book, *The courage to heal*. The book is known as "The Bible of the survivor" (Freyd 1999:19). In it the authors claim that many people were abused in their childhood without remembering anything about it. It led to an "epidemic of recovered memories of abuse that began in the 1980's" (Pendergrast 1999:40). Pendergrast (1999:54) further indicated that recent research has indeed shown that hippocampal shrinkage is connected with documented trauma. However, it is still not sufficient proof of massive repression. It makes repressed memories one of the most controversial subjects in Psychology. Karle and Boys (1987:201) indicate that different psychotherapeutic approaches define the term "repressed memory" in different ways, just as the term "unconscious mind". From within social constructionism it makes sense, seeing that the term is socially constructed in all the different approaches. Because of that I do not want to provide a **definition** that is generalized. For the purpose of this research, repressed memory is defined as a memory (often traumatic) of an event or environment, inaccessible to the conscious mind (Karle & Boys 1987:201). Some theorize that these memories may be recovered (that is, integrated into consciousness) years or decades after the event, often via therapy. They may also re-occur in dreams (Beail 1994:161-2).

In the 1980's and 90's a revival of interest occurred in the recovering of memories within Psychology, what Taub (1999:6) calls "a fad, craze or moral panic". It has a connection with "False memory syndrome", with its accompanying lawsuits and scandals, and fell into disfavour during the last few years (Freyd 1999:17-39).

## 4.6.2 Primal Theory and Therapy

Mention has already been made of Primal Therapy. Primal therapy as an approach in many respects resonates with that of TPM. When I initially came across TPM, I thought it was primal therapy which had donned a spiritual coat. Primal therapy's point of view is that suffering in the present developed as the result of the repression of pain in the original memory. While that pain is unresolved, it will occupy mind and body and will physically manifest in all sorts of symptoms like phobias, obsessive behaviour, addiction and psychosomatic symptoms.

The principle of Primal therapy is to help the person to feel the pain that was initially repressed. Janov (1973:79-82) teaches that when a person can connect with the primal pain in their life, they can be completely freed from it. For Janov the primal pain is the foundation of all "neurosis". Janov (1973:79) says, "The neurotic is a totally feeling person; only his feelings are kept locked away by tension. He is constantly full of those old unresolved feelings surging for final connection".

In this, Primal Therapy agrees with Seamands, (Inner Healing Prayer) who I have already referred to. Seamands also teaches that the re-experiencing of the pain in prayer will bring healing. The valuable contribution that TPM adds to this discourse is that it is not only about re-experiencing, leading to re-traumatizing but that the interpretation of the event is responsible for the painful emotions. This aspect is discussed further in the discourse about re-traumatization (4.9).

## 4.6.3 Perspectives on memory from the discourse on brain structure and - functioning

Janov did a significant amount of research about the structure of the brain and its functions. Janov (2000:24-33) identifies three brain systems as the driving force of human behaviour. It is the so-called reptile brain or brainstem (the lowest level) that processes instinct and survival functions; the limbic system responsible for emotions and lastly the cortex (newest part) that operates the conscious-awareness. The brainstem manages the basic, automatic functions such as eye reflexes, heartbeat and breathing, while it also produces the drive that energizes feelings. The limbic system translates instincts into feelings and sends the combination to the frontal cortex. In ideal circumstances the three systems work in harmony. However, early trauma produces a blockage from one level to the next. Both the brainstem and the limbic system produce their own inhibitory chemicals to keep the message of pain out of the hands of the frontal interpretive cortex. It gives the cortex the opportunity to continue with its thought activities, enabling the

person to carry on with his/her life. If these lower-level imprints become too powerful, they break through the protective barrier and the person suffers from disorders such as panic attacks, phobias and obsessive-compulsive behaviour. The lower imprints are constantly busy trying to make the cortex aware of the things that the cortex does not want to know about: “It wants to tell the cortex that it feels unloved and hurts, but the cortex is too busy trying to get love to listen to this message” (Janov 2000:27). The result is that these messages are translated into palpitations, migraines, hypertension, etc.

The limbic system consists of several structures, including the hippocampus and the amygdala. These structures have almost completely formed by the age of 20 months, although the hippocampus keeps developing into adulthood. The amygdala is a pair of almond-shaped structures on the inner surface of the temporal lobes, adjacent to the hippocampus. As the amygdala assigns emotional significance to the input (Rowan 2006:33), it is the focal point of emotion, sending to and receiving messages from the organs via the hypothalamus. It also transmits emotional information to the thalamus which translates it for the frontal cortex. In this way we become aware of our feelings. The amygdala develops long before the hippocampus and is dominant in the processing of emotional information. The amygdala itself secretes a derivative that takes away the perception of pain, when there is an emotional overload (Janov 2000:27). A shutdown follows and no transfer takes place: “The amygdala contains many opiate and benzodiazepine receptors which, if blocked, interfere with the conditioned emotional response” (Rowan 2006:33). A variety of somatic symptoms such as a raised fever appear “and brain cells are recruiting supporting cells in the service of repression”.

The hippocampus is situated just behind the amygdala. The hippocampus is responsible for the “declarative memory”, meaning the context and circumstances of the event, while the amygdala is responsible for the emotional content. This description aids to better understand repression. The sensory and emotional memory can never be “false”. The explanation, that it is a function of the hippocampus, means that logical thoughts give meaning to what the amygdala releases (Zuehlke 2007).

In setting it out, there seems to be enough reason from the neuro-biology to support the TPM principle that states that the negative emotions that are presently experienced match the exact emotions that were experienced in the original memory (Allers 2008:7). This happens because the brain spontaneously associates the negative emotions of an original experience with the present. It often happens that emotional reaction does not make sense within the present situation, but does in the original experience (Smith 2007:16).

This background information helps to understand the neuro-biological and psychological processes of association and memory which lay the foundation of TPM. Especially when we respond to the “why” research question, this voice from these sciences will take part in the co-constructing of new knowledge.

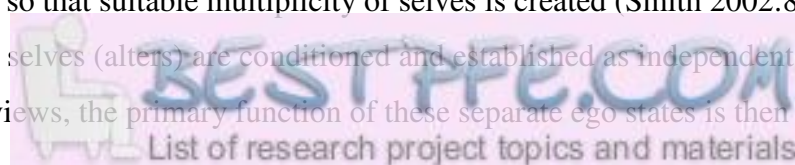
#### **4.6.4 Satanic Ritual Abuse memory (SRA).**

Satanic Ritual Abuse (SRA) does not fall into the scope of this research. Seeing that it is present in Harold’s narrative, I only wish to give a very brief definition. The reason why I am giving attention to this discourse is so that it may serve as background when I reflect on it based on Harold’s experience.

When Ed Smith (2002:52) discusses SRA, he explains that he compiled the data used for his definition from what victims reported in their facilitated sessions and he used no other sources. Smith (2002:53) defines SRA as follows: “Intentional and systematic abuse designed to create a dissociative state in the victim whereby the evil person can control and manipulate them at will. These evil and depraved people knowingly and knowledgeably work in concert with demonic realities. Their agenda can be far reaching from personal and immediate gratification to being a part of a network and possible global society of evil”.

Within the framework of literature, this phenomenon is questioned as the results of reported memories seem so far-fetched and some seem physically impossible. In the early 1980’s certain Christian writers such as Hal Lindsey and Johanna Michaelsen made allegations of satanic cults that operate in secret, kidnapping children and then using them for human sacrifices. In their own work, therapists such as Colin Ross and Bennet Braun made the hypothesis that a part of the abuse taking place in the cults is aimed at inducing multiple personalities (Mollon 1994:140). He indicated that various “reports from the USA have associated ritual abuse with multiple personality disorder”. Smith (2002:117) states that this is also the goal of SRA trauma mind controlled dissociation.

Smith (2002:54) further explains that there is a great similarity between what is called SRA and the “human research” that took place in Nazi Germany in the concentration camps. It comes down to the people in question focusing in particular on traumatizing children between the ages of eighteen months and three years by means of intense pain, such as using electric shocks, as well as sexual abuse so that suitable multiplicity of selves is created (Smith 2002:88). In the process the alternate selves (alters) are conditioned and established as independent entities. According to these views, the primary function of these separate ego states is then to hold



traumatic memories in a secure neural network, keeping them out of the consciousness of the original self. This frees the person to continue functioning in daily life as if nothing had happened. Some of the ego states also called “alters”, take turns controlling the body. Some take responsibility for learning at school, or for work and career and others for seeing the doctor for mysterious illnesses or injuries, some self-inflicted. Sometimes each alter reports remembering only the times when they were “out” and in conscious control, and report amnesia for all other periods (Goodwin 1994:34).

Evil people use programmed people by gaining control of an alter, which is conditioned to come out when the person comes into contact with certain triggers, such as a telephone code. When the person answers the telephone and hears a certain code word, for example “There is no place like home”, the person dissociates and the alter comes out. This alter then receives orders such as committing a crime. When the original person returns to consciousness, he is completely unaware of what the alter did. The person is not aware of having committed a crime. The forming of alters or dissociation is described by Smith (2007:152) as a God-given ability of the brain. In that process the original personality is protected from the pain of trauma. In other words evil people misuse that God-given ability.

Several experts question the existence of SRA (Victor 1998:195-7; Sakheim 1998:58). Although this discourse about the authenticity of this theory falls outside the scope of this research, it is necessary to discuss some basic guidelines, because if the experts are correct in saying that SRA does not really exist, it influences the reflection on Harold’s session. During the 1990’s hysteria developed, about the occurrence of SRA and a so-called worldwide satanic cult (Miller 2006a:6). Victor (1998:196) terms it “a moral panic”. It happened as the result of the reporting of such memories to several therapists (Goodwin 1994:34). Miller (2205:21) points out that those therapy sessions “employed hypnosis, guided imagery, or some other form of directive therapy. The sessions were intended to treat many of the problems that TPM also deals with, such as eating disorders, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse”. All those therapeutic orientations, like TPM, search for the solutions in repressed traumatic memories from childhood. To Miller (2205:22) there was enough positive evidence disproving important cases. Accordingly he accepts that the False Memory Syndrome (FMS) convincingly explains the stories.

Initially Smith also presented an “Advanced Level II” course, which focussed specifically on handling Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) as well as Satanic Ritual Abuse (SRA). Since then he has withdrawn the training material. He explained that it was far too complicated and gave out way too much information and that he is now working much more simplistically. He also said that he has learned not to take everything that is reported as the truth (Smith 2008c:1). It is likely

that the result of False Memory Syndrome (FMS) that has been construed, especially in the USA, as the result of various lawsuits, also influenced Smith.

FMS is not included in the DSM IV TR. Several persons were falsely accused on the basis of Recovered Memory Therapy. Lynn et.al. (1998:133) explains that we now know as the result of research in that field, that when the person experiences flashbacks and parts of the memory are still absent or impoverished, people fill the gaps with their own imaginative constructions about what could plausibly have occurred (Lynn et.al. 1998:133). For example, parts of a ritual memory are remembered and because the person makes certain assumptions, she may begin to believe that it is a specific uncle who committed the deeds. It can also be that similar memories may be mixed together. Lynn et.al. (1998:132) says in this regard”, ...often our memories achieve a semblance of coherence because we edit, splice, and cut and paste them into a story”.

Lynn et.al. (1998:134) also refers to the research of Nash (1987) who reviews the past 100 years’ research about age regression in hypnosis and who concludes that “no matter how compelling age-regressed experiences appear to observers, they reflect participants’ fantasies and beliefs and assumptions about childhood and rarely, if ever, represent literal reinstatements of childhood experiences, behaviours, and feelings”. It suggests that the memory does not reflect the true facts of what happened. It is a mere construction of what happened. The process of recovering of memory is therefore nothing else but a social construction of memory.

Some supporters of FMS alleged that people recover memories as the result of their therapists’ suggestions. The following quotation witnesses to this:

In situations where individuals cannot recall specific aspects of their past that could explain or account for current problems, they might assume that they have repressed memories of abuse and trauma, and therefore they may be particularly amenable to suggestive procedures or explanations from authority figures that trauma can account for current difficulties.

A highly suggestible or hypnotizable client with a history of maltreatment during childhood, depression, or other psychological problems, and with a propensity to believe in Satan and satanic evil, may be particularly vulnerable and more prone to create an imaginative satanic ritual abuse scenario with a therapist who uses highly suggestive memory recovery techniques, believes in repressed memories and the traumatic long-term effects of child abuse, and mixes religion with therapy.

(Lynn et.al. 1998:131)

For Smith (2005:302-305) it is important to indicate the differences between Recovered Memory Therapy (RMT) and TPM. He dedicated an entire chapter to these differences. In summary, the differences that Smith pointed out are as follows:

- RMT makes use of a check-off list of symptoms. According to that theory, the presence of those symptoms will indicate repressed memories. TPM is orientated towards never making any kind of diagnosis.
- RMT finds it necessary to recover repressed memories in order that symptoms can be relieved. According to TPM emotional pain is the result of the misinterpretation of certain events which in turn led to faulty thought processes. TPM is only interested in exposing lies. If the process leads to the recovery of memories, it is only in order to correct the misinterpretation of an event with the truth.
- RMT makes use of group therapy so that group members may easily integrate another's story as their own. TPM encourages individuals to embrace their own pain and to seek healing in that way.
- RMT makes use of regression techniques as well as guided imagery, making people susceptible to suggestions. TPM clearly avoids these techniques, rather helping people to identify their present pain and go back to earlier memories containing the same pain.
- RMT also makes use of relaxation techniques. TPM would rather intensify the emotion than help the person to become calm.

Smith further indicates that TPM is focused prayer and will in no way stand for any suggestions regarding memories. He says further: "Those who charge the TPM process (closed eyes, inward focus on feeling and thinking) with being a form of hypnosis or a relaxation technique must concede that all religions that promote prayer and meditation are guilty of the same practices" (Smith 2005:305).

Another aspect that is very important is the fact that when the facilitator works, the recipient's reality is accepted as the reality wherein he works: "To provide effective ministry to such people, requires one work within the framework of the victim's reality. It is in their reality, and not one's own that truth must come" (Smith 2002:52). TPM is not interested in how "true" a memory is. It is all about the lie that has to be uncovered. It is therefore not a problem to accept that no recovered memory will ever be likely to be a completely accurate version of the factual event. However, the opposite is also true that "all forgotten memory is not false" (Smith 2007:73).

**In summary** I want to say that where SRA memories occur, the facilitator usually accepts it as the recipient's construction of memory and makes no assumption about the authenticity of it. It is the reality of the recipient. What is important is that the recipient made an interpretation of the memory and has built their life story on it. If it is a problem-saturated story (or a lie), TPM is used to receive truth from God about the lie, in order that emotional pain, connected to the



recipient's interpretation of the memory, may be healed. The problem that the FMS movement created, namely the prosecution of possibly innocent accused, usually is not an issue when healing has taken place. In my experience and in that of many other facilitators, when the pain is healed, the recipients have no desire to prosecute the so-called offenders.

In the following chapter the narrative of Harold will be judged according to these guidelines.

I conclude this discourse with a quotation by Smith (2007:74):

Theophostic Prayer Ministry is not about revenge. It is about truth, grace and forgiveness. We recommend that a person never confront an abuser until it can be done in perfect peace and from genuine compassion, unless there is the danger of more abuse taking place. ... The wounded person can avoid acting out of wrong motives by first finding full renewal of his own lie-based pain.

The discussion of Harold's TPM-sessions places this discourse in the open which makes it essential for reflection to take place. This research neither attempts to validate or deny the existence of something like SRA. It is accepted as the reality in which Harold experiences his memories. With this socially constructed knowledge, a framework, in my opinion, was constructed in which discourse about Harold's experience could take place. This leads to a better understanding of how and why Harold and other participants experienced or did not experience change.

As **childhood sexual abuse** occurs in Harold's story and is also present in a large percentage of the participants' stories, I briefly want to discuss it. It is a subject about which volumes have been written, but only information relevant to this study is handled here. Here therefore, as previously stated, we will only concentrate on that which is essential to see the response to the research question about sexual abuse in perspective with what has already been said.

#### **4.7 Childhood sexual abuse memory**

For the purposes of this study childhood sexual abuse is defined as "sex forced on a child by an older person". With few exceptions, the objective is the sex itself" (Rowan 2006: vii). It includes any activity of an older person with a younger person, a dependent minor child or adolescent, with the view to sexual gratification (Makhubu 2005:10).

According to Rowan (2006:19) percentages for the incidence of childhood sexual abuse in the USA reveal that 10 to 15% of men and 15 to 25% of women were sexually abused as children. In South Africa the Human Sciences Research Council [HSRC] (2008) states in their report that there is no really reliable research data about the incidence of childhood sexual abuse in South Africa. Various factors are responsible for the lack of data, including different definitions of it

and a lack of a standard way of collecting data by different authorities. Recent research in South Africa, according to the HSRC report, shows that factors such as socio-economic and socio-cultural circumstances, unequal power relations between men and women, poverty, unemployment and over-population, coupled with dysfunctional family structures, contribute to the problem.

The following aspects were highlighted in the research:

- a) The myth that having sex with a virgin can cure HIV/AIDS does not have a significant influence on the incidence of childhood sexual abuse;
- b) The perpetrators are not a homogenous group. It occurs in all socio-economic levels of society;
- c) Alcohol and substance abuse often precipitate sexual abuse of young children;
- d) The societal belief that women are inferior to men is identified as an important cause;
- e) The lack of respect for students at school as well as the lack of consequences for perpetrators play a role in schools;
- f) The commercial sexual exploitation of children and child trafficking are significant and growing problems in southern Africa.

The effect of childhood sexual abuse is so powerful that in most cases children find it overwhelming and impossible to handle. Rowan (2006:34-5) points out that detachment, numbness and passivity follow. He says that de-personalization originates from it and then identifies mainly three mental disturbances that develop, namely Somatization Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder and Dissociative Identity Disorder. Rowan explains that self-harm often occurs amongst survivors as a way of coping with a sense of disconnection. They harm themselves in order to feel *something*. The identity is fragmented in order to help the survivor present a normal façade to the world. With basic trust destroyed, the survivor has no safe place. Especially if a family member is involved, the child is isolated from the rest of the family as well as friends. One aspect that often occurs among survivors is that they experience that passive family members failed them. As a consequence, trust also becomes an issue in any future relationship. It causes a split between intimacy and sexuality that ultimately leads to dysfunction.

Early sexual activities often cause hyper-sexuality as well as early puberty. Prostitution may also follow “in order to have more control over who has access to their bodies and to make their partners pay for it” (Rowan 2006:36). Another aspect is confusing emotions. Negative emotions

are understandable, but the survivor also experiences the erotic aspect of the abuse. Involuntary sexual arousal occurs, leaving the survivor with guilt feelings. The survivor often sees herself as “damaged goods” which leads to a low self-esteem and possible destructive behaviour.

Rowan (2006:40) also aptly describes the survivors who develop Borderline Personality Disorder. They “have problems with relationships, self image, affect, and impulse control. They may do anything to avoid perceived abandonment, have intense and unstable interpersonal relationships, struggle with poor self-image, feel chronically empty, demonstrate inappropriate and intense anger, and they may dissociate”.

It also appears that sexual abuse played a role in a large percentage of the other narratives. The danger is that facilitators, who are aware of these symptoms, may reason deductively and then out of their knowledge of this phenomenon deduce that abuse took place, when a recipient reports some of these symptoms. To Smith it is totally unacceptable that a facilitator attempts in any way to diagnose. This has not occurred in any of the narratives in this research. In these narratives although some of the abovementioned aspects manifested in TPM sessions, it was approached from the viewpoint that events in the memory may be wrongly interpreted (lies) by the survivors, which they have built their life stories on. The TPM process aims to deconstruct those interpretations or lies with the truth, which is sought from God in prayer. It is also illustrated in Harold's narrative where the abovementioned serves as the background for my reflection on this aspect of Harold's narrative.

## **4.8 The discourse of demonology**

The facilitator in Harold's case dealt with the “devil” according to the guidelines of the previous manual, “Beyond Tolerable Recovery” (Smith 2000:84). Smith completely revised this guideline in the 2005 manual, quoting his own words: “I am at a very different place today than I was a few years ago concerning how to deal with demonic involvement in a ministry session” (Smith 2005:207). In summary the change is chiefly about a different way of asking questions when one or other aspect of the demonic comes to the fore. Previously, he would have asked, “How do I drive this demon out” but now the question is, “Why is this demon here”?

### **4.8.1 Demonisation**

Smith's position on demonisation can best be understood by means of the “key foundational points” (Smith 2005:209-214) that he formulated:

- a) Driving out the demon is not the primary goal of TPM, because for the most part, Smith believes that the demon is the symptom, not the cause of the person's problem.

- b) There is no reason to engage the devil in a struggle or a fight. The authority we have in Christ is full and final.
- c) Defeat does not render the devil brain-dead, thus, he is still actively at work in the hearts of the “sons of disobedience” and seeks to deceive and devour believers who do not walk in truth.
- d) Satan does not hold the same position today in the post-resurrection time period as he did prior to the cross.
- e) Viewing Satan's current position from a post-resurrection perspective does not invalidate the earlier pre-Calvary passages.
- f) Demonisation in the individual is directly related to the person's belief system and ultimate choosing.
- g) The demon's primary hold on a person is due to the person's own beliefs and choices.
- h) Demonised people are not helpless victims that need to be rescued from the devil.
- i) Demons must comply in a ministry setting where authentic authority is in operation.
- j) There is a distinction between the influences a demon has over lost humanity and the redeemed.
- k) The real source of practical evil in this world is humankind and not the devil.
- l) Casting out a demon is not evidence of life-changing transformation.

In the latest manual Smith (2007:125-6) reviewed his position with regards to this discourse. Smith stressed his viewpoint that demonic aspects have to be judged from a post-resurrection position. The Cross completely defeated demonic powers. It is not necessary to fight a defeated enemy. The devil is in a completely different place today (post-resurrection) than he was before the Cross of Jesus. We must not attempt to handle him from a pre-Calvary position. When demonic workings occur in a session, it is an expression of the belief and choice of the recipient (Smith 2008a). The healing lies in deconstructing the belief of the recipient, after Jesus is asked what His truth is in order to deconstruct the belief. I use the language of the narrative paradigm for a reason, in order to illustrate the similarities between these approaches. In this research I judge TPM from the narrative paradigm. In the language of TPM, healing is connected with the terms “healing” and “lies”.

Smith (2007:125-6) summarizes his position with regards to this discourse in four statements:

- a) A demon cannot violate a person’s will, so whatever is happening is occurring within these limitations.
- b) People are not victims that need to be rescued but rather people believing lies that need the truth.
- c) Something very decisive occurred 2000 years ago at the cross. Satan is no longer in the same place he was prior to Calvary.
- d) Be careful not to deceptively reinstate the position he lost by engaging him in battle. He knows that he was rendered powerless and only has deception left at his disposal.

If demonic manifestations are handled in this way, it demonstrates great respect for the recipient. Smith (2007:125) suggests that in such a case, the recipient be asked if they wish the manifestation to stop. If the recipient wills it, the demon can merely be ordered to be silent since the recipient's will cannot be violated. Often people believe that they are powerless against demonic manifestations and in that way give demons power. By teaching the recipients about their position in Jesus Christ, the recipients can end a manifestation on their own. Smith points out that if the manifestation does not stop, the problem is not demonic, but due to the will of the person.

I can fully align myself with Smith's position. This view leads to the recipient's will being respected. But I would like to add more. Is it my place as facilitator to try and figure out whether it is a demonic manifestation or not? If the recipient identifies it as such, I shall handle it as such. Otherwise I shall keep to the normal TPM process and deal with it as with any other guardian lie. In any case, it is all about what the recipient believes and about the deconstruction of it, if it contributes to the problem-saturated story.

Another aspect that is associated with this discourse is that of a false Jesus. This issue also appeared in the conversation with Harold (chapter 5).

#### **4.8.2 False Jesus Manifestations**

Smith (2005:232) proceeds from the assumption that one of the ways in which demons manifest in sessions is to summon a false image of Jesus or pretend to mimic His voice. According to Smith it is easy to differentiate the impostor from the true Jesus. One method is to ask the recipient what emotions the figure evokes. If the emotion is negative, then it is an impostor. The real Jesus shows His love, comforts, extends security, etc. It is, however, not an airtight distinction. An impostor often wants to present an easy solution to keep the recipient from reaching the true lie or area of pain, but the demons can only do it to the extent that corresponds with what the recipient believes. If anything is reported that does not agree with the Biblical Jesus, it is most probably an impostor. Smith suggests a couple of ways of handling this, such as the facilitator using his authority to command the impostor to reveal himself or commanding that he goes to the feet of Jesus. He also further suggests that through questioning the recipient, the facilitator can better discern the lie believed in, that gives the demon the room to act in that way. Smith indicates here that the facilitator must use certain knowing to judge whether or not the Jesus that the person experiences, is true or not. In certain circumstances this may lead to abuse where one knowledge dominates another. Therefore, I do not agree with it. As facilitator, I

cannot make that call. The real Jesus could also tell me something that I won't like that will give me a negative feeling at that moment, while a demon could tell me what I want to hear and illicit a positive emotion. I would like to suggest that the recipient also be responsible for the story at this point. Everything occurs according to the recipient's will. If a question arises about the "truth" the recipient received from Jesus, I believe that it must be discovered whether this truth will be helpful in constructing a preferred alternative story and deconstructing the problem-saturated story. The recipients must make their own choices. After all, the false manifestation is nothing more than a deep-seated manifestation of the recipient's will. In that way the recipient remains the author of his own story, while the facilitator keeps to his "not knowing" position.

In this whole discourse, the core issue remains to be the facilitation of a process where a space is created for a recipient to construct a preferred story of faith, hope and love by listening to God. The facilitator creates that space by praying to the Trinity. He/she is not praying to a false Jesus. Therefore the facilitator can trust the One to whom he/she is praying to be in control of the situation and trust that He knows how to handle whatever comes forward in a session. Time will show and I agree with Smith (2007:130) when he said:

Within the TPM context, there is a built in test for knowing when God has spoken. This is simply that when He speaks, something always happens. Evidence of God's presence is seen as people's lies are removed, they are able to move forward in their memories, they receive truth resulting in perfect peace, and they forgive and show compassion to their offender.

#### **4.9 The discourse of Retraumatizing**

Is the revisiting of the memory where the trauma originated, retraumatizing? One of the participants did not see the necessity of going back to the past. This is a problem for some people in need of therapy. Another participant initially thought TPM's practices were retraumatizing. This can be a problem within certain therapeutic approaches. This raises the question of the necessity of the practice of TPM to revisit the trauma memory.

To answer this question is important in order to understand trauma. People who have undergone a traumatic experience are psychologically wounded. The normal emotional reaction to such wounding is emotional pain and suffering, Below is the formal definition of a traumatised person as contained in DSM IV's (1994:627-8) diagnostic criteria for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder:

The person has been exposed to a traumatic event in which both the following were present:

- The person witnessed, experienced, or was confronted with, an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others;
- The person's response involved intense fear, helplessness or horror;
- The person shows intrusive and avoidance symptoms.

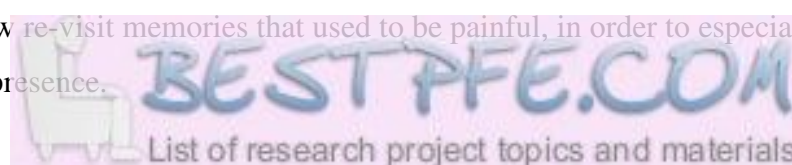
According to the DSM IV (1994:627-8) the intrusive symptoms include the re-experiencing of the traumatic event in one or more of the following ways:

- Recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event; including images, thoughts or perceptions.
- Recurring dreams of the event.
- Reacting or feeling as if the traumatic event, was recurring (includes a feeling of reliving the experience, illusions, hallucinations, and dissociative flashback episodes, including those that occur on awakening or when intoxicated).

Gathered from the above, in the case of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder the person is in any case re-experiencing the traumatic event as a result of the trauma. Although one might be concerned that revisiting a trauma memory may lead to retraumatizing, avoidance could potentially have the same effect. Ann Jennings (1994) describes in an article how health is affected by avoiding the real issue, namely a traumatic event in her daughter's childhood. This retraumatized her daughter. She believes that this consequently led to her daughter's death. Foa and Cahill (2002:45-6) described the emotional processing of a trauma and refer to the emotional processing theory that indicates three conditions that promote recovery from anxiety disorders, i.e. (a) emotional engagement with the feared stimuli, (b) habituation of the fear responses represented in the fear structure, and c) modification of the erroneous cognitions embedded in the structure. This resonates with the three basic components of the basic TPM-process.

In TPM, not like in other emotional flooding therapies, the aim is not the re-experiencing of the memory, but looking for the lies that have to be deconstructed. This is the real issue. All the participants in this study that worked through traumatic memories experienced total relief from all the emotions involved. Marinda, who initially thought that the TPM process would be retraumatizing, commented on revisiting her traumatic memories through TPM and said, "It is the only way in which I would want to be helped. It was not a pleasant process at all, being very painful. I liked the fact that I could get to know the truth. The only way to receive healing is to hear the truth from the right source".

I have already referred to Smith's viewpoint that it is the lie that causes emotional pain, not remembering the event. In that light, from the viewpoint of TPM there is no question of re-traumatizing. When the person re-experiencing the memory, the recipient, discovers the lie and when he/she receives God's truth, the pain disappears. A number of recipients have witnessed to the fact that they now



The emotion and the memories attached to it form part of the basic components of TPM and are thoroughly attended to in the next chapter.

#### **4.10 Closing reflections**

In this chapter I have reflected on the most important discourses regarding TPM and their relationship with Pastoral Therapy and Psychotherapy. Firstly I demonstrated what influence the IHP landscape had on TPM. It is especially the emphasis which these approaches place on an experience of God's presence coupled with listening prayer which made a great contribution. Through this it was made possible to create the space in which the voice of God could take part in the reconstruction of people's beliefs.

Because Smith wants to protect the non-professional nature of TPM, he places great emphasis on the "not-knowing" position of the facilitator. Smith's starting point differs by nature from that which Anderson and Goolishian intend. In the process Smith actually comes very close to achieving the same effect, namely that fundamental knowledge, like diagnosis or theological positions, does not influence the therapeutic process. A further benefit of this is that the facilitator is on an equal footing with the recipient and does not participate from a position of privileged knowledge. Although TPM facilitators use certain knowledge, it does not result in undermining the basic "not knowing" position of the facilitator. By working in such a way that no privileged knowledge is used as a power tool in the life of the recipient, the space is created in which new knowledge can be socially constructed. The only exception is that the facilitator works in a directive way when Jesus is invited to take part in this social construction. This would, however, never be done without the permission of the participant. The facilitator creates this space in such a way that the recipient can meet Jesus according to his/her own beliefs and perceptions. Through this the boundaries between denominations are broken through, in contrast to what frequently happened in church history. Often combined efforts between denominations led to God's children choosing to oppose one another rather than evangelising the world. When I peruse the debates on the internet it appears that this has already happened with TPM. Within this approach to TPM lies this secret for me that God's children can take hands across denominational boundaries to bring healing to people's emotional wounds. I, as a member of the Reformed church, have personally experienced how a Pentecostal facilitated a TPM session with me without ever compromising my theological position. In fact through this process I experienced something of the unity of Christ's church.

With the discourse on free will I demonstrated that we should rather dance with uncertainty than decide on God's behalf to not violate a person's will. This approach, which acknowledges the



belief and choice of every human being, creates the space for a conversation between God and a person, without interference from other people...

With regard to the role of the voice of the Bible, I have highlighted the very important aspect that Scripture and reason cannot be used alone to judge TPM. It is essential that the impact that TPM has on the recipients must contribute to this judging. In this, the discourse about demonology serves as a good example of how Smith, perhaps without realising it, actually works within a social constructionist framework.

I have also highlighted the neuro-biological and psychological aspects with regard to memory and free association, which contribute to a better understanding of the process which is facilitated in TPM. It provides a framework in which the participant's experience can be understood. The essence of important aspects, with regard to the discourses about SRA and childhood sexual abuse, has been conveyed for the same reason. Although this information can help facilitators to be more empathetic towards the recipients, it is important that it is never used as knowledge to influence the facilitation process.

With reference to the discourse about retraumatising it appears that TPM's position is different to other flooding therapies. As TPM is focussed on bringing lies before God's light, the re-experiencing of traumatic memories is not in the foreground. The fact that everyone, who has worked this through (using TPM), has experienced total relief from their pain, shows that there is no actual retraumatising taking place.

This discourse makes a contribution towards understanding how and why TPM influences participants' lives. As the founder of TPM did not operate explicitly from a specific epistemology, I reflected on these discourses from a social constructionist paradigm. By doing this it became clear to me that by viewing TPM from this perspective it opens up more possibilities for TPM to be acknowledged as a valued approach within pastoral care, counselling and therapy.

In the next chapter I am going to allow TPM to give an exposition of its basic principles and components by using the verbatim accounts from some of the TPM-sessions of one of the narratives from this study, while I am reflecting at the same time on the practices of TPM from different discourses which are expounded on in this chapter.

## Chapter 5

### THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE LANDSCAPE OF TPM

Veltkamp (1988:14) compared pastorate with a parable. He speaks of the experiences at Emmaus. Two people share their stories of hope and disappointment with each other before becoming aware that a third has joined them, who gradually shares in the conversation.

“Uiteindelijk herkennen zij de derde als de Levende in hun midden ” and then He is gone again. It is about “een existentiële ervaring waar ik nog geen woorden voor had”. Although Veltkamp wrote those words before the name TPM was construed, his words resonate with the experience that is known as “a theophostic moment” within the TPM-community.

In this chapter I want to explore the landscape wherein TPM practically operates. I am not going to try to provide a comprehensive description of TPM. That is already available in the Theophostic Prayer Ministry Basic Seminar Manual 2007 (Smith 2007). Nor am I going to attempt to answer all the doctrinal questions arising from this approach. Neither am I going to give a critical analysis of TPM. I choose rather to explore the TPM landscape by attempting to provide a glimpse into how TPM is applied by focussing on the specific practice of a TPM minister. In this process I would like to tell the story of a believer who obeyed the voice of God and enrolled in this ministry. In this way I believe that new knowledge of TPM will be co-constructed and that it will contribute to better understanding this pastoral praxis.

In the previous Chapter I explored TPM-related discourses. In this chapter I want to continue demarcating the landscape according to the influence these discourses have/had on this landscape. All this will be explored by means of the ministry of Chaplain Andre Muller. In my opinion the TPM-landscape can best be explored by discussing the various aspects of TPM using the narratives of the participants in the eighteen narratives about their experiences of TPM through the ministry of Chaplain Muller.

It is important to note here that I am not speaking about the therapeutic skills of the facilitator. It is indeed an important factor in the success of any approach. It is the reason why I chose to use the ministry of a more experienced, but lay facilitator, who has no professional qualifications, in this research. Indeed, if a detailed analysis was made of these conversations, I could reflect on the merits of certain therapeutic techniques. However, it falls outside the scope of this research

and therefore I did not focus in my reflection on his therapeutic skills. It is not about the way he deals with the process, but about the process of TPM on which I reflect.

In this discussion I will depend very heavily on one of those eighteen narratives, namely that of Harold. A clear view of the practices of TPM and how they relate to the discourses that were reflected on in the previous chapter, will be obtained through this journey with the participants. This journey includes working through parts of the transcriptions of three of Harold's facilitation sessions in order to explore the practice of TPM. The primary reason why I wish to do it in this way is to practically explore the basic principles of TPM by means of this narrative. As the greater framework for this discussion I use the four basic components of the TPM-process, namely:

- a) The presenting emotion - "*Stirring the darkness*".
- b) Identifying the original memory.
- c) Discerning the lie-based thinking or lie message held in the original memory.
- d) Offering the exposed lie up to the Lord to receive His truth perspective.

Lastly, I explore in what way TPM confirms the healing and what the effect of it is on the lives of the participants.

## **5.1 Starting the Journey through the Landscape of Theophostic Prayer Ministry (TPM)**

With our start on the Journey through the Landscape of Theophostic Prayer Ministry (TPM), as already mentioned, I will try to understand TPM from the viewpoint of social constructionism, although it is not based on this paradigm.

Dr Ed Smith, while working with women who were abused during childhood, experienced that their therapy was not progressing. Out of options and frustrated after a group session, he called out to God. He became aware that while he prayed at the beginning and end of each session, he did not do so during the session (Miller 2006a:2). As the result, he prayed during the next therapeutic session for God to show His truth to the woman present. The woman then had an experience of God and received her healing from her emotional pain in one moment. Smith was amazed. He asked her to attend a follow-up session, only to find that she was truly released from that emotional pain. He then tried the same prayer strategy with other women from the group and the results were the same. It can rightly be said that in practice this approach was constructed in the interaction between therapist, prayer and client.

In the 2007 TPM manual Smith (2007:2) defined TPM as “intentional, focused prayer leading to an authentic encounter with the presence of Christ, resulting in mind renewal and a subsequently transformed life”.

### **5.1.1 What then are the basic assumptions of TPM?**

The basic assumptions of Theophostic Prayer Ministry

Smith (2004:31) formulates the basic assumptions of TPM as follow:

- a) TPM assumes that a person's emotional pain is rooted in what he believes. If he believes he is worthless, unloved, stupid, rejected, etc., his emotional state will match his belief.
- b) TPM assumes that the lies producing these painful feelings were for the most part, originally implanted during early childhood experiences and later reinforced by similar experiences throughout life.
- c) TPM assumes that when these lies are “triggered” in the present by people, current life events, circumstances or one's own personal thinking, the same original emotions will surface and be re-experienced.
- d) TPM assumes that when this original pain is triggered and stirred, the person is prone to make poor choices that will result in more painful experiences.
- e) TPM assumes that when a person is willing to return to the original places of pain (memory) and identify the false thinking, he is in the right position to receive a freeing truth from God.
- f) TPM assumes that when a person receives truth from the Spirit of God in his memory experience, the lie will immediately be dispelled, and the truth he receives will produce God's perfect peace.

(The two last assumptions were already discussed in Chapter 4 [4.3. a and c] where they were more relevant).

Schematically it can be explained as follows:

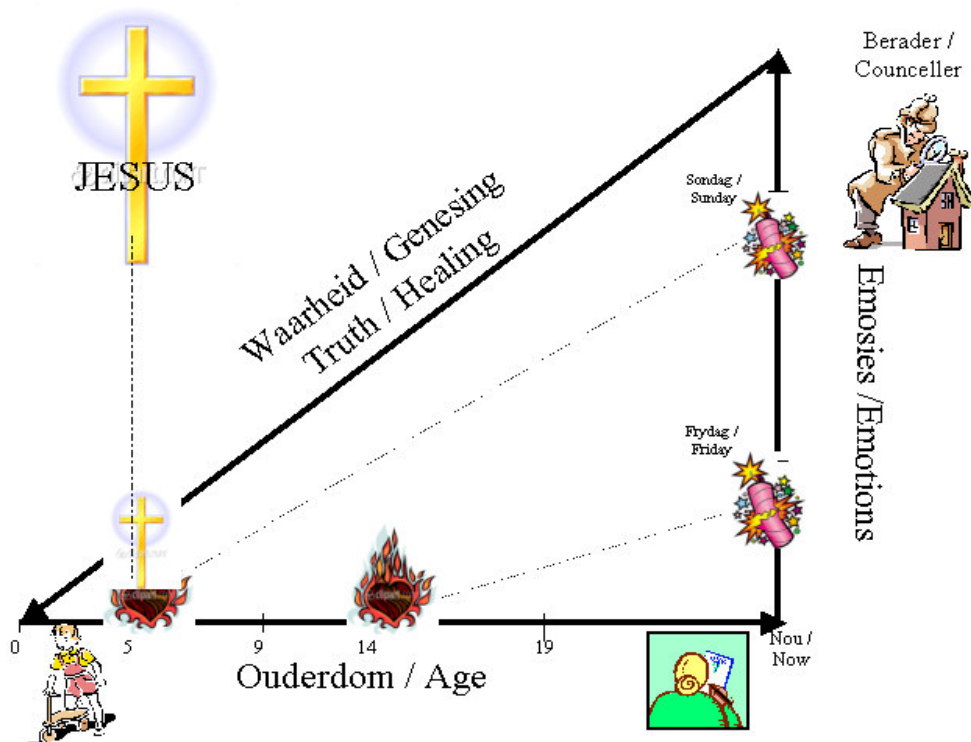


Figure 3: TPM-process schematically represented (Created by Chaplain Muller).

The horizontal axis represents the age of the person while the vertical axis is a representation of the emotions the person is experiencing in the present. According to the illustration above, the woman had a traumatic experience at the age of five. She interpreted the event wrongly and started to believe some lies about the event from her experience as a child. For instance, as a five year old she did her best to clean her bedroom and expected to be credited for her effort, but instead was told that she was lazy and did not do her best. At that moment she started to believe that her best was not good enough. In the present she is always expecting to hear that her efforts are not good enough. No matter how hard people try to convince her otherwise she still believes that whatever she does is not good enough.

TPM assumes that a person's present behaviour and emotional experiences are determined by what the person experientially believes. When someone else tries to convince her that what she does is indeed good enough, it only registers on a cognitive level. Her belief is embedded in her experience. She might believe for a time that what she does is good enough, but as soon as that same emotion is triggered again she will again believe that she is not good enough. She actually believes a lie. Applied to our belief system, for example, it means that if I believe that God is in control of my life I should never worry about what is happening around me. In a time of crises our reaction is telling what we really and truly believe. Our behaviour shows our belief, as Ed Smith (2004a) said: "When the fire comes I am exposed because whatever I truly believe will

surface during the time of testing. If I know truth in my innermost part (not just logically and cognitively) I will remain in peace. If I have lies I will respond to the suffering from my lie-based thinking and painful emotion will surface that matches my belief. ”

This is a short summary of the basic assumptions from which TPM functions. Now I wish to illustrate how these assumptions connect with a cognitive psychotherapeutic approach such as Cognitive-behavioural therapy.

### **5.1.1.1 Cognitive-behavioural therapy**

The aforementioned TPM assumptions greatly agree with what Albert Ellis constructed with his Rational emotive therapy. Prochaska (1984:179) summarises it as follows:

At point A are the **Activating Events** of life, such as rejection by a lover or failure to get into a graduate program. Point B represents the **Belief Systems** that individuals use to process the **Activating Events** in their lives. The **Beliefs** can be rational, such as believing that the rejection was unfortunate and regretful or that the failure was annoying and unpleasant. The **Beliefs** can also be irrational, such as thinking, “It was awful that I was rejected,” or “My lover shouldn't have left me”. At point C, the person experiences the personal and emotional **Consequences** of what has just occurred.

Therefore, if an “**Activating event**” is interpreted by an “**irrational Belief**” there follows an “**inappropriate Consequence**” (ABC) namely the emotion. The steps according to Anderson, Zuehlke, and Zuehlke (2000:106) that are taken in Cognitive-behavioural therapy consist of the following:

- a) The client is helped to see the connection between his negative thoughts, the emotions created by the thoughts and the behaviour that flows from it.
- b) Then the client is taught to recognize those negative thoughts or distortions of reality and to monitor them. Those thoughts or beliefs are then identified as ineffective and dysfunctional. They are improper responses.
- c) The client is taught to search for evidence “for” and “against” those perceptions. The evidence is weighed up in order to decide if it is rational or irrational. Then the client has to decide whether he wants to continue believing his thoughts.
- d) If the client decides that what he believed is false or irrational, he must replace it with new thoughts and new ways of responding.
- e) Lastly, the client is helped to replace the inappropriate assumptions that distorted his experiences with other assumptions.

From the above it becomes clear that TPM makes similar basic assumptions. The difference is that cognitive-behaviour therapy is based on human logic to affect the change in thoughts. This approach teaches that certain knowledges are rational and others irrational. TPM's viewpoint is that logical reasoning does not affect permanent change in the belief system of a person, when our "experiential knowledge" is contrary to our "logical truth" (Smith 2007:17). According to TPM only the Holy Spirit can bring truth into my thinking, in memories where we harboured lie-based thoughts (Smith 2007:24). It is therefore an act from outside and not from inside the person and also outside the control of any human being.

Cognitive-behaviour therapy operates from a modernistic paradigm. The important difference is that TPM allows God's voice to take part in the conversation and that it is no longer about a pre-meditated thought. I am convinced that the value of TPM will be seen more clearly when TPM can be further developed from a post modernistic socially constructed rational.

Now I want to focus on the various aspects of TPM by means of this study's eighteen narratives of recipients' and their nominees' experiences of TPM. The focus will be mainly on transcriptions of TPM-sessions of one of the participants (Harold) conducted by Chaplain Muller.

## **5.2 The Journey with the participants through the TPM landscape**

The metaphor of visiting an exotic island comes to mind. We are on a re(search) journey to the TPM island with Harold as well as the seventeen other participants. We went searching through transcriptions from some of Harold's facilitation sessions and the experiences of the other participants for diamonds hidden away on this island of prayer facilitation, known as TPM. In this re(search) for the diamonds the hindrances on the way will also be described. I trust that at the end of the journey a number of diamonds will sparkle for each reader.

As already indicated, this journey involves using parts from the transcripts of three of Harold's facilitated sessions to explore TPM theory and practices from a narrative perspective. In discussing it I only quote the relevant parts from the transcripts. These sessions were initially recorded for internal use. After it happened that Harold was selected as one of the narratives to be studied in this project, it was decided to make use of the transcription of his sessions as part of the exploration of this landscape. At the time the sessions took place, the facilitator had no idea that the transcriptions would be used for research purposes. He was only approached later and gave permission for their usage. The goal is not to present a model session. Rather, it illustrates what can be expected to happen when an ordinary TPM session is conducted by a lay facilitator.

Let us join Harold on his journey with TPM.

*When he was eight years old, Harold was removed from parental care as the result of uncontrollable behaviour. When he was removed, he was in the care of his mother. His parents were never married and their relationship ended when Harold was still a baby. In Harold's second and third year he visited his father for two weeks. Upon his return from that holiday there was a drastic change in his behaviour.*

*Enuresis occurred and he was unmanageable. In the meantime his mother became involved in a common law relationship and a daughter was born to the couple. Harold's behaviour could be controlled by neither his mother nor his grandmother. He also reacted aggressively towards his little sister. His unmanageable behaviour and his grandmother's threat to seriously hurt him, led to him being admitted to a psychiatric hospital. From the hospital he was placed in a Place of Safety. At that stage he had regular contact with his mother. That contact was stopped after unacceptable sexual behaviour towards his sister was reported. After being taken from the family he was placed in several places of care. During that time schools were also unable to cope with him. Many times the school indicated not long after admitting him that they could no longer accommodate him. Excerpts from a report written by one of the institutions read:*

- His attention span is very short;
- He tends to act babyish at times;
- Harold throws terrible temper tantrums if he cannot have his way;
- He does not like structure at all;
- Harold's behavior is extremely demanding;
- He demands full time attention;
- He does not listen to instructions at all;
- He knows how to manipulate the staff;
- He becomes aggressive and wants to hit his caregivers and swears at them excessively;
- His limbs are always moving and it seems as if he has no control over his movement;
- He always get into places where he is exposed to danger. He climbs on the roofs and jumps on the top beds. He gets into the school bus through the window and loosens the hand brake;
- Harold is exposed to situations in which he can get hurt, as he forever slips away from staff supervision.

*The Children's Home was not aware of Harold's actual mental state when they agreed to admit him. They were not equipped to handle such children. At the time of his admittance his behaviour was severe, as testified by his housemother in the research interview: "When Harold came to the children's home he screamed all the time. He was demanding and when you held him, there was a heaviness surrounding the child. He needed one person to deal exclusively with him all the time. Harold is one of the worst cases I ever have dealt with". (See Chapter 7) Shortly after*



*being admitted, he was referred to the Children's Home's psychologist who decided to refer him for TPM urgently.*

*Harold was involved with TPM for a period of two years. During that time the TPM process was supplemented with other disciplines such as Social Services, Occupational Therapy and Remedial Education. After two years Harold's improvement was such that he was restored to parental care (see the case history) after his mother, seeing the change in him, also took part in TPM.*

*Harold began his journey with TPM at a camping facility. It is the custom of the Children's Home where he was cared for to remove the children from their environment for a few days and to minister to them in an island set-up. At that camp he met his **facilitator**<sup>9</sup>.*

To Smith (2007:2) TPM is a prayer ministry that is “in its most basic form, simply intercessory and petitioning prayer”, wherein the crucial focus is on a relationship with God, and therefore the **facilitators** are prayer ministers, who do not necessarily understand the problem of the person in front of them. Their job is just to pray.

In the first session with Harold there is an example of how the facilitator implemented the abovementioned guideline. When Harold asked the facilitator to pray for his mother, he did not try to find or interpret why it was important to him. He merely followed the need of the recipient and started praying without knowing what role that aspect played in the problem.

- 001 F How old are you?  
002 H Nine.  
003 F When is your birthday?  
004 H I don't know.  
005 F You don't know?  
006 H No. Every day is my birthday.  
007 F I believe from the auntie (the housemother) here that you're such a big man around the house. Is that true?  
008 H Yes, big man.  
009 F Do you have any sisters?  
010 H Only one, but I have two Children's Home sisters.  
011 F Where do you go to school? Do you go by bus?  
012 H No, they take us with the Children's Home bus.  
013 F What do you want to be when you grow up?  
014 H I'm going to be a fireman.  
015 F Why do you think we're talking to you?  
016 H I don't know.  
017 F Do you know that all of us here, including the auntie are here to help you? What should we help you with?

<sup>9</sup> TPM uses the term **facilitator** because the terms “counsellor and therapist” are associated with the professional move in the church.

- 018 H To pray for my mother, to get better and not be in a car accident. I want her to be safe and not land up in hospital.
- 019 F Do you love your mother?
- 020 H Yes.
- 021 F Shall we pray for her now?
- 022 H I pray for her every night, morning and every afternoon.
- 023 F Close your eyes. **Father God, we just want to bring Harold's mother to You and pray that You keep her safe from accidents, heal her, look after her morning, afternoon and night. We ask you to heal her body and keep her in health for Harold's sake because he loves her. I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.** Is that better?
- 024 H Yes.

(*F = Facilitator, H=Harold, HM=House mother*).

It seems in the process that his concern about his mother is a dominant discourse in his problem. In one of the later sessions it emerged that the abusers threatened him that if he talked, they would kill his mother. The big change in Harold's behaviour occurred after God replaced that "lie" with truth. By merely dealing with Harold's need there and then the facilitator established a very good rapport with him. Furthermore, at that stage the facilitator had no idea how significant that prayer at the start of the process was. Modernistic therapeutic approaches would probably have made different hypotheses as to why Harold made that request that would have directed the process. In that event, the prayer might not have been made. That stresses the importance of the "not-knowing" position of the facilitator.

### 5.2.1 The "not knowing" position of the facilitator

Anderson (1993:325) once referred to the "not-knowing" position of the facilitator as "respectful listening". At the end of Harold's first session there is another example of the way the facilitator respected the recipient's view.

- 499 F Ask Jesus if He wants you to forgive your father.
- 500 H He says he doesn't.
- 501 F Listen carefully. Ask Him nicely and wait for it. **Lord Jesus, do You want Harold to forgive his father's abuse with the sjambok?**
- 502 H He says I mustn't.
- 503 F Okay. Let's go back there. Is Jesus doing anything for you?
- 504 H Yes.
- 505 F What is He doing?
- 506 H I don't know.

Although the facilitator believes that unforgiveness cannot be justified from the Bible, he tries not to force that dogma. He refers Harold back to his conversation with Jesus. The facilitator respects the recipient's relationship with Jesus (the discourse of forgiveness is discussed in 5.3.3). Without it being his intention, the facilitator came very close to what Anderson and Goolishian (1992:26) describe as the "not knowing" position of the facilitator. In the previous

chapter I indicated that one of the characteristics of this position is that the facilitator puts aside his own pre-experiences and pre-knowledges. Here the facilitator succeeded in it.

The central role of a TPM facilitator is to facilitate the dialogue between the recipient and God. The facilitator is in that way an expert in the creating of space for the recipient to learn from Christ, but takes a not-knowing position with regards to the recipient's problem or solution. The facilitator's knowledges may, apart from the abovementioned, not play any role in the process.

The use of questions from a "not-knowing" position plays an important part of it. Whereas the facilitator as the expert in running the TPM-process, seeks the emotion and the lie that directs a dominant narrative in the recipient's life, it follows spontaneously that this curiosity about the recipient's description of that lie directs the conversation. The facilitator in the "not-knowing" position never needs to interject his own preconceived ideas. By means of the questions the recipient gets the opportunity to present his problem-saturated story to God. By further questions in prayer form, Jesus' reaction is obtained and the ensuing dialogue between Jesus and the recipient is facilitated.

However, it does not mean that the TPM facilitator has no preconceived ideas; it only means that the facilitator will not allow them to influence the session. This is illustrated in the previously mentioned example, where the facilitator believed that unforgiveness was not in line with Biblical principles. That is why he again tested the recipient by asking him to confirm that he had heard God correctly. When the recipient confirmed the answer, the facilitator could comfortably leave it in Jesus' hands, knowing that Jesus knows when the time is right to lead the recipient to forgiveness. He did not allow his knowledge to direct the process.

## **5.2.2 The discourse of the voice of the Bible**

In my opinion the way in which the facilitator handles the question of forgiveness, is a good example of where Scripture is not used as a paper pope and it demonstrates that the facilitator respected what Harold experienced. On the surface it would appear that that the experience of God's truth plays a more important role than Scripture itself. I reflected on this discourse in the previous chapter. The facilitator handled it in such a way that Scripture was not used as a power tool to manipulate the recipient according to the facilitator's point of view. It is not necessary either, seeing that the Third Party in the conversation is well able to construct new knowledge around it with the recipient. Therefore the facilitator can adopt the position of "not-knowing" in TPM because the facilitator is aware of the fact that he has no idea what the problem of the recipient contains or what the answer to it is. What remains is absolute trust in God, Who really

knows and Who directs the conversation where new knowledge and a new narrative are constructed for the recipient.

According to the criteria of Smith (2005:136-9), as set out in the previous chapter (4.8.1), it would mean that the answer that Harold received came from self or an evil spirit. If those words are judged from a “not-knowing” position, it is possible that the Holy Spirit could answer Harold in that way because he was not yet ready to forgive his father. The facilitator does not know where God is leading the recipient. His task, according to the TPM guidelines, is merely to make the recipient aware that his own logical thoughts or a false Jesus could play a role. After that, the process is left in the hands of the real Jesus. It begs absolute trust that God Himself will lead His child and the process can be totally left in His hands (Chapter 4 (4.8)).

When Harold’s story becomes clearer later on in the facilitation process, exposing the influence that his father had on him, even human reasoning can understand that time was not fit for it and understand why the Holy Spirit could lead him in that direction. A couple of months later, when the question of forgiveness was again placed before God, God indeed told Harold to forgive his father. At that time Harold was ready and could do it immediately.

The question can now be asked how and against what norms the message the recipient of TPM receives can be measured. TPM Guideline 14 (Smith 2007:225) clearly says that the facilitators must focus the recipient’s attention on what “does not appear to be authentic and/or Biblically consistent”. The question is whether too much is expected of the facilitator. However, the request is only that the facilitator focuses the attention of the recipient on it. If it is handled in that way, it remains the responsibility and choice of the recipient to listen to God and then the guideline is not a problem. In Harold’s case the facilitator handled it in that way. It concurs with what Maturana and Varela (1987:98-100) call “perturbation”. They see perturbation as a trigger that sets off a series of interactions which leads to transformation. Maturana explains to Poerksen (Maturana & Poerksen 2004:86) that when two “closed, structure determined systems” interact in a harmonious way, so that the one does not destroy the other, that this change is due to a perturbing agent. The structure of the perturbed system determines the nature of the change. When applied to TPM it boils down to the facilitator introducing the Bible, without any pressure or interpretation. In this way the facilitator elicits the recipient's own interpretation and offers that to the Lord for His response. The recipient's views are respected. There is no need for the facilitator to give his opinion, because he trusts the Lord to convince the recipient with whatever the Lord wants for the recipient. In that way the Bible becomes a companion in the conversation (Cochrane et al 1991:20).

The voice of the Bible is an integral part of the way TPM works and if it is handled as Maturana suggests, and was done in Harold's case, it is one of the most significant voices that takes part in the co-construction of a new preferred life story for the participant.

### **5.2.3 Application of the basic principles of TPM through the four basic components of the renewal process**

The next discussion will be on how the basic principles were administered in Harold's case. As previously indicated, the goal is not to present a model session, but rather to illustrate what usually takes place in an ordinary TPM session.

The TPM-process contains four primary components that are essential to bringing about mind renewal, subsequent release of emotional pain and the presence of peace. Smith 2005:65

Identified the following components as:

- identifying the person's current presenting emotion,
- encouraging the recipient of ministry to identify the original memory holding the falsehood,
- discerning the lie-based thinking or lie message held in the memory which is causing the emotional distress, and
- offering the exposed lie up to the Lord to receive His truth perspective

#### **5.2.3.1 The presenting emotion**

The recipient will ordinarily indicate at the start of the session what motivated him or her to seek prayer ministry. The facilitator will listen closely for an emotion to surface. Then the recipient must be given the opportunity to identify and own the emotion.

After establishing the rapport the facilitator proceeds to listening to the recipient's story. It must be kept in mind that when this session took place, Harold was a 9-year-old boy with the intellectual handicap of a few years. The facilitator assumed that it might not be possible for the boy to verbalize his true emotional problem at that age. He started off by asking what bothered Harold within his living space. When Harold mentioned what he did not like, the facilitator asked about the **emotion** that accompanied it.

The starting point is identifying the current presenting emotion. The extent of the pain that is linked with that emotion usually becomes clear when the recipient describes it as it presents in a specific memory. The facilitator now asks about a recent event where the emotion was felt.

- 029 F Tell me something that happened just the other day that wanted to make you hit them.
- 030 H They swore about my mother.
- 031 F What did they say? Your mother is bad?

- 032 H She's ugly, like a swear word.  
033 F Which one?  
034 H I don't like swearing.

By asking Harold to name the swear word, the facilitator tries to help the boy to experience the emotion that accompanies it in the here and now. It is an important aspect. Where Harold is going to be asked to identify the original memory, the emotion is the essential factor that will help him to do so (this aspect will be discussed later). Harold does not want to repeat the swear word to the chaplain. The formal pastoral set up in which facilitation sometimes takes place may be a hindrance to recipients to show their true emotions. Immediately, the facilitator moves on to the concrete situation in which Harold experienced the emotion.

- 035 F Who are the ones talking about your mother?  
036 H All the kids in my house.  
037 F When last did you see your mother?  
038 H Two Saturdays ago.  
039 F What did you talk about?  
040 H I forgot.  
041 F Was she happy to see you?  
042 H Yes and I was happy to see her.  
043 F The auntie told me you're a big boy and everything you tell me will be because you're a big man.  
044 H I don't like it when they say those things about my mother. I want to cry because I love my mother.

The facilitator is successful in returning Harold to the emotion. It is still about identifying the **presenting emotion**. The dual problem with which Harold presents is: (1) that it upsets him terribly when the other children make negative comments about his mother, and (2) that he feels alone in not being with his mother, but in substitute care. It would seem that Harold blames the other children in his house. It becomes quite clear from the non-verbal behaviour which cannot be reflected here. If we blame our emotional pain on other people or the circumstances of our current situation, we lapse into “an irresolvable cycle of emotional pain and defeat” (Smith 2005:31). In that way we hand over power to someone else and become dependent on his or her alteration for our own healing. It can be presumed that Harold wanted the other children to stop teasing him. However, the solution lies in searching for the original and true source of the pain. It introduces the other basic principle of TPM: “**The present situation is rarely the true cause of our ongoing emotional pain**” (Smith 2005:31).

- 045 F We're also going to talk about things you don't want to talk about.  
046 H I protect my parents and myself. And my second auntie, grandmother and grandfather.

The facilitator prepares Harold to face an original memory where a great deal of pain is suspected to be stored. In the next few responses the facilitator focuses on identifying the emotion correctly and reflecting it back to him. The present emotion is used as a springboard for

the next step to identify the memory that contains the lie (Smith 2007:88). In the past Smith mentioned at this point that "darkness" must be stirred.

**“Stirring the darkness”** is a term which Smith used in previous manuals to indicate that the emotion should be intensified for the process to work more effectively. The reasoning is that if the emotion is stirred the brain can more easily make the connection with the original memory. It corresponds with the methodology that Primal therapy, categorized by Prochaska (1984:239) as an Emotional Flooding Therapy, also makes use of. In the TPM manual of 2005 Smith indicates that he no longer believes it necessary to “stir” emotions for the process to work. “I have come to realize that it is not the level of emotion that is important but rather people's willingness to simply feel whatever level of emotional pain they need to in order to identify its lie-based source” (Smith 2005:70). It was however emphasized in the previous manual and the session with Harold took place before the manual of 2005 was published. In Harold’s case, it seems that the facilitator only reflected back his emotions to him (see response 59) in order to stir that emotion.

- 047 F Are there other people you care about?  
048 H Yes, but then half my family died.  
049 F How did that make you feel?  
050 H Upset.  
051 F And when you're upset, how do you feel?  
052 H I cry.  
053 F Are you still all right? Are you still strong? Think back on that day when the other boys teased you. Do you remember?  
054 H They teased my mother.  
055 F Okay, when they teased you about your mother and you got upset, wanting to cry and hit them. Why did you want to cry?  
056 H *Because I love my mother very much. and my first nanna (grandmother). She's in East London with my auntie*  
057 F *I want you to be strong. Close your eyes for me and make fists. Remember that day those boys teased you and upset you.*  
058 H *They teased my mother.*

According to my judgment, the facilitator accurately reflected the recipient's emotion here. This seems to be very important in the deconstruction of the problem-saturated story. Later in Harold’s sessions there is an example where the facilitator stirred the darkness and where it may possibly be judged as re-traumatizing. I will reflect on that later (5.2.5).

### **5.2.3.2 Identify the original memory**

During the conducting of the session the facilitator asked: “*Let's ask Jesus to show...*”. (Response 59). According to the old guidelines the prayer was that Jesus should indicate the

memory. In the meantime Smith (2005:72) has somewhat altered this guideline: “As soon as the person identifies his present emotion, the minister asks him to allow the Spirit of Christ to help him find the memory that contains the same feelings”. This change is motivated by the fact that this process is the responsibility of the recipient and not God’s. Accordingly, the facilitator will only ask the Lord Jesus Christ to assist the person in going back to the memory, where the lie is contained.

One of the participants in this project make the following comment on this issue:

“In my opinion it is a sensible change because the respect for the recipient’s relationship with God is emphasized and it prevents the facilitator from misusing his power in the situation. If a recipient cannot then retrieve the memory, it would mean that God did not answer the prayer. I have observed sessions where the facilitator did not have the necessary respect and where the recipient’s relationship with God was discounted in that way. Then the facilitator operates from a position of power and misuses his power”.

059 F They didn't realize that Harold loves his mother and that she is very special to his heart. You wanted to hit them, kick and beat them. Let's ask Jesus to show us the other time when you were much smaller .

060 H When I was a baby.

061 F When you got hurt in your heart, you got upset and your heart was sore. Just remember the time you cried so much. Lord Jesus, just take Harold by the hand and show him the first time when he was little, when his heart was sore, when people hurt him. Just keep your eyes closed. How old were you?

062 H Two years old.

The next TPM guideline comes into play here: “Present feelings have their roots in a first time experience” (Smith 2005:32). It is connected with the natural neurological process of association. The brain registers each and every thought, feeling or experience that the person experiences in his or her life and stores it as memory. If something happens here and now that elicits the same emotion as stored in an earlier memory, the brain will spontaneously make the association. For example it is clearly illustrated that when one person tells a story in a group, other members of the group will spontaneously share similar experiences. The first person’s story served as stimulus that triggered the memory of the others. When Harold focuses on the emotion he experiences with regards to his mother, he returns to the memory where, according to him, he is two years of age. The neurological functioning of the brain explaining this phenomenon was dealt with in the discourse on memory and brain functioning in the previous chapter (4.6).

Another TPM principle states that the negative emotions that are presently experienced match the exact emotions that were experienced in the original memory. This happens because the brain spontaneously associates the negative emotions of an original experience with the present. It often happens that emotional reactions do not make sense within the present situation, but do in



the original experience. Furthermore the TPM principles make it clear that “if we try to resolve our present conflicts without resolving our historical lie-based woundedness, we will find only temporary relief. However, if we find renewing truth for our past lie-based thinking, we can redeem our present”. This leads to the next component in the TPM process.

The following component is the identification of the lie or the interpretation leading to the negative emotion.

### **5.2.3.3 Discerning the lie-based thinking or lie message held in the original memory**

Usually therapy is directed toward change in a person’s thoughts, mood and behaviour. Various therapeutic orientations teach the client to cope with the present circumstances. If a person manages to control his behaviour it is a significant achievement, but according to Smith (2004:30) it is not true victory. Smith says that true victory can only be achieved when Jesus Christ heals the lie-based thinking.

It is therefore fitting to take a closer look at some of the TPM principles (Smith 2005:32):

- a) Since many of the negative emotions we currently feel are reflections of the past, they provide opportunities for the lie-infested wounds of our lives to be exposed, and thus for mind renewal to occur.**

If we choose to follow the “smoke trail” of our stirred-up emotions back to their original memory, we can discover the lie-based belief that is causing the emotional pain. TPM is a ministry of discerning the experiential lie-based thinking of a person, and the process of leading them to the place where they are able to receive a healing word through prayer. In that way Harold comes to the memory of being on the balcony. He experiences loneliness together with the fear of dying. In that way his lie-based thinking is exposed.

- 063 F What do you see?
- 064 H I see my mother, I see my Nanna, my auntie, uncle and my other uncle. That's all.
- 065 F What are they doing?
- 066 H They put me on the balcony where the steps are, when I was in a baby rocking chair.
- 067 F What are they doing?
- 068 H I'm alone on the balcony. I'm scared to fall off.
- 069 F And if you'd fall?
- 070 H Then I'd cry.
- 071 F What would happen to your little body if you'd fall?
- 072 H I would die. I would be dead already.
- 073 F And then?
- 074 H Then I wouldn't be here.

Lie based thinking often dictates a Christian's life. Smith's viewpoint in 2005 was that the Christian who has a problem and has strong will power and self determination may perform at a higher level of "success" in combating the problem, but cannot call what he is doing, genuine victory. Controlled behaviour is self-effort, according to him, and nothing more than works salvation. When lie-based thinking is replaced with truth, the Christian can walk in effortless victory in that area of his life, which is maintenance free.

Smith (2007:25) alters his viewpoint about this after the criticism of Miller (2005:20) who points out that Smith confuses the concepts of healing and victory. A person's successful resistance to temptation is victory in Biblical terms. Miller argued that it may be that later the recipient was touched by Jesus so that he no longer experienced the same temptation and his inner war was over, but this would be healing worked by Jesus and not a victory obtained by the person.

The "battle" that Smith used to describe as "not genuine victory" he explains by means of an example. He tells that he used to battle very strongly against the desire to smoke, but he now has no desire for it. Smith (2007:25) describes it:

Fighting against sin, controlling behaviour, and diligently striving to overcome is not the same, since victory dependent on continual effort can be lost as soon as we succumb to temptation. I might call this "present victory" or "moment-by-moment victory" in that we have to wrestle non stop with sins pull on us. Resisting temptation is necessary for each of us who desire to live godly lives. ... The person who battles every day against sin should not feel that his success is second hand victory. ... However there is a victory that is effortless in the place where the word of Christ dwells (Col.3:16), where the Spirit of truth rules, and where the believer can actually rest (Heb4). As you allow the Lord to expose your painful places in your thinking, you can have this victory.

The point that I am making is that TPM does much more than only helping the person practice controlled behaviour. When a person hears from Jesus, where God is in control (Col 3:16), God grants complete peace. When temptation comes, it is easy to withstand because the hook that sin had in that area of your life is just no longer there. However, I want to agree with Miller and rather use the term healing than victory. Victory places the emphasis on what we do, while this is all about the Spirit freeing us, without any human effort. In Harold's narrative there is an example of this with relation to his compulsive eating (responses 458-469) that totally disappeared after he received healing in the TPM-session.

The next TPM-principles to take into account are:

- b) When someone believes a lie, it may as well be the truth for that person, because the consequences are the same.**

The power of a lie is such that if we believe it to be true, we will experience it as true in our lives. That is why Jesus Christ has to bring truth to the memory for there to be real deliverance and peace. It can happen that the person still feels guilty about an event, although they believe they are forgiven. The belief that produces the emotion is the belief they actually hold true. In the balcony-memory Harold believed that because he was alone he would die, when falling from the steps. Every time he felt alone he experienced that fear, because for him that was the truth.

**c) If we suppress or deny the lies, we believe we cannot get free from them. We must identify and own the lies.**

The natural human inclination is to want to deny the lie. If a person perseveres in this the consequence is a perpetual cycle of defeat. As long as there are lies in our memories, we will experience emotional pain whenever the lies are triggered by circumstances. For complete healing to take place the person has to be prepared to acknowledge the lie they believe as well as the emotional pain that accompanies it in order to experience God's release from it. That is why it is important for Harold to embrace that fear. The facilitator helped him in the following way:

075 F Who would you miss the most?

076 H My whole family.

077 F See yourself on that balcony. You're all alone and two years old, okay? You look around. There is no one to help you. It's very high and you're scared. Can you feel how scared you are?

078 H Yes.

079 F Is your heart beating?

080 H My heart is pounding.

By helping Harold to re-experience that fear, Harold experienced the grip of this fear on his life.

**d) In the midst of our darkness we must come to realize how utterly bound we are to lies, and how helpless we are to overcome their debilitating grip on our lives apart from God's divine intervention.**

This aspect is crucial to the healing process. Many people find it difficult in the midst of the "darkness" of emotional pain to come to the realization that they are totally helpless against the debilitating grip of the lie. It is common that people find it difficult to own their emotions and to acknowledge the lies. "Freedom is not a 'You and me, God' process but an 'I am weak but you are strong' **realization**" (Smith 2005:35).

In Harold's session the facilitator explored what took place in that two year old's memory. In the process he identified what Harold's interpretation of the event was, causing the emotion of fear and being alone.

081 F You're very scared. You're going to die if you fall. Shall we see what Jesus wants to show that little boy? Lord Jesus, can we ask You to show **this little**

**boy, all alone on the balcony; he's scared to fall and die. Can we ask You to help him out?**

After the facilitator identified the lies, he prepared Harold to receive truth from God (the next component in the TPM process) by reflecting Harold's emotion in the memory (response 077). Firstly, the facilitator made sure that Harold was on the experience level of the memory. Then he placed Harold's belief -that he was alone and going to fall and die- at the feet of Jesus. The facilitator connected with the way in which Harold narrated the memory. It is all about Harold's formulating and interpreting of his memory that had to be taken to Jesus. Facilitators are trained to only use the words of the recipient when offering up the exposed lie to the Lord (response 081).

#### **5.2.3.4 Offering the exposed lie up to the Lord to receive His truth perspective**

Smith (2007:35) accurately describes this component when he says:

When you see people receive truth and watch their countenance resolve from pain into peace, you are seeing the glory of the Lord demonstrated very clearly. Every time they discover the lie-based reason for their pain and are willing to hold it up to the Lord, Jesus will show Himself faithful. In my ministry experience, I have found that God graciously reveals His truth when we are willing to become clean before Him.

Here Smith makes the assumption that a person will hear from Jesus directly when asked for His truth. Smith also states that if someone does not wish to hear from Jesus, it is the result of that person's belief and choice. He does acknowledge that the skill of the facilitator play a role in the successful "hearing" of the voice of Jesus (Smith 2007:35).

Two aspects stand out:

- a) The belief that Jesus will answer.
- b) The person's belief and choice determine the success of it.

In Harold's case it seemed that it also happened when the facilitator put the lie before God in order to receive His truth.

- 081 F You're very scared. You're going to die if you fall. Shall we see what Jesus wants to show that little boy? **Lord Jesus, can we ask You to show this little boy, all alone on the balcony; he's scared to fall and die. Can we ask You to help him out?** (Pause) What do you see?
- 082 H I see that I'm safe.
- 083 F Describe it to me. Where do you see yourself in that memory?
- 084 H Not near to the steps.
- 085 F Away from the steps?
- 086 H Yes.

- 087 F What else do you see?  
 088 H That's all.  
 089 F Is there anybody with you?  
 090 H I'm all alone, but now I don't feel scared anymore.  
 091 F What do you feel?  
 092 H I feel happy.

After God was asked, the facilitator allowed a time of silence and only then asked the person about his experience. In that case he asked what Harold *saw*. It would have been better if he asked him what he *experienced*. God responds in any way He chooses. He can use visual, auditory or kinaesthetic means or even a silent "knowing". The facilitator has no idea what method God is going to choose. In asking the recipient about experience, he opens the door for the recipient to respond in whatever way.

When Jesus entered into the conversation, He showed Harold that he was not near to the steps and therefore in no danger. By way of what Jesus revealed to Harold, he discovered that he was indeed safe and in no danger of falling. In that way the memory was re-interpreted. With this re-interpretation the fear disappeared and Harold experienced joy. The facilitator did not share his perception of what happened. Here the not-knowing position of the facilitator is clearly illustrated (apart from the fact that he asked what the recipient *saw*). The principles of TPM do not allow a facilitator to share any insights. In this conversation with Jesus *an altered understanding of Harold's interpretation* took place without the facilitator using any knowledge to make it happen, apart from laying it down at Jesus' feet. In Michael White's words (White 1995:75) this is a unique outcome where Harold discovered a neglected fact (far away from the steps) from the past memory which helped him to co-construct an alternative story, where fear was totally deconstructed.

After the Theophostic session is over, the facilitator may reflect upon the session. This guideline -not interfering in the dialogue between the recipient and Jesus- helps the facilitator to handle the conversation with the greatest respect. The reflection following the session forms part of the next aspect in the TPM process, and serves to "confirm the healing".

So far the application of the basic components of the TPM process has been illustrated. Smith (2007:107-110) in die 2007 TPM-manual slightly amended the process following the conclusion of the basic components. In my opinion it makes no difference to the essentials and therefore I stick to the exposition in the 2005 TPM-manual, where Smith (2005:158-166) indicates a few more steps after the basic components have been applied, namely:

- Confirm the healing (5.2.4).
- Process residual lies, residual sadness and other associated memories (5.2.5).

- Ask the Lord to affirm and bless the recipient (5.2.6).

[The latter aspect is only discussed in point 5.2.6., as it only appears much later on in Harold's session].

I first want to reflect on the basic components of the TPM-process as illustrated through Harold's session.

By discussing Harold's TPM-sessions my aim was to bring a better understanding of what this pastoral praxis is about. Doing this I also want to explore the possibility of also positioning TPM in a social constructionist paradigm. The main aspect that helps to fit TPM in this paradigm is the "not-knowing" position of the facilitator. I also observed many similarities between the basic TPM process and the narrative therapy process and want to point this out as further motivation.

Morgan (2000: iii) identified the following aspects of the narrative therapy process:

- Naming the problem (Externalising conversations);
- Tracing the history of the problem;
- Exploring the effects of the problem;
- Situating the problem in context: Deconstruction;
- Discovering unique outcomes
- Naming an alternative story.

In TPM it is about telling your memories, which is story telling in essence. By focusing on the emotion and the lie, externalising conversations follow, where the problem is the problem. In the whole conversation the focus was never on what Harold did wrong, but on his emotional experience. By looking for the original memory, the history of the problem is traced. For the deconstructing, Morgan (2000:47) described how the problem has to be situated in the context: "The therapist listens for any assumptions about life or relationships that may be in the interests of the problem and seeks to inquire about them". That is exactly what Harold's facilitator did (see responses 063-072). Harold, sitting all alone in a rocking chair, feared falling down the steps. Harold made an assumption that he would die (in TPM terms - the lie). Deconstruction of this belief started when the facilitator started to ask questions to discover what Harold believed about the context. When Jesus entered into the conversation, He showed Harold that he was not near to the steps and therefore in no danger. By way of what Jesus revealed to Harold, he discovered that he was indeed safe and in no danger of falling. In that way the memory was re-interpreted, by deconstructing Harold's assumption and showing him the reality of the context. With this re-interpretation the fear disappeared and Harold experienced joy. In that way the alternative story was named. In my opinion it was a socially constructed re-interpretation that took place. Jesus was the therapist who partook in the therapeutic conversation. In the course of

the conversation an alternative story was co-constructed. The role of the facilitator is now to explore the meaning of the “unique” outcome. In this case it is the stairs that were far from the rocking chair.

The basic point I wanted to make here is that the basic TPM-process just make more sense to me when it is approached from a social constructionist paradigm.

The remaining steps that have to be discussed are part of the thickening of the alternative story and resonate with the re-authoring of outsider-witnesses. When Jesus is seen as the therapist, the facilitator becomes an outside witness. The way it is presently conducted is discussed under the next points. However, TPM can still learn a lot from Narrative therapy in this regard.

#### **5.2.4 Confirm the healing**

This concept of "confirming the healing" closely agrees with what is known as “thickening” in narrative language. After the recipients receive truth from God, they are asked to return to the memory in order to “feel” through it, to make sure that total healing has taken place. Many times the recipients report a single word, a healing picture or only an impression that they have received from God. It is then necessary to confirm that the person is aware of everything that God has revealed. That is why the recipients are asked to look around or listen to see if God is showing them anything else. A memory must not be concluded before the recipient experiences total peace in that memory. Further prayer can be made, asking God if there is something else He wants to point out or if there is another memory He wants the person to go to.

- 087 F What else do you see?  
088 H That's all.  
089 F Is there anybody with you?  
090 H I'm all alone, but now I don't feel scared anymore.  
091 F What do you feel?  
092 H I feel happy.  
093 F Why?  
094 H God saved me.  
095 F Are you proud of God?  
096 H He's the only One Who can save you and keep all your sin and punish you.

In Harold’s last answer it seems that he has not yet experienced total peace, with the possibility that there may be further lies or interpretations causing emotional pain. It points to the next step (5.2.5), but the facilitator wants to continue confirming the healing first. From a narrative viewpoint it could be said that he should take the “sparkling moment”, being the truth he received from the Lord, and help with the thickening of Harold’s alternative story before moving on to the newly revealed "lie".

- 097 F In this case He saved you. Do you trust God?

- 098 H Yes.  
 099 F Do you love Him?  
 100 H Yes.  
 101 F Are you special to Him?  
 102 H Yes.  
 103 F Is He going to make you a fireman?  
 104 H Yes.

The facilitator did some confirming of the healing here, but in my opinion moved too quickly to the next issue. It is clear from the following dialogue that Harold was not ready to move forward with the process:

- 105 F I want you to take God's hand, okay? Take Jesus' hand. Jesus is going to take you to other memories of when you were small and they were painful. Are you willing?  
 106 H No.  
 107 F But if Jesus is with you and wants to also heal you where you no longer feel scared?  
 108 H Yes.  
 109 F Once you go with Him, all the pain disappears and you're never going to think about it again or feel unhappy. See yourself that this is like a journey. Aren't you excited about it?  
 110 H Yes.  
 111 F God wants big men like you to go with Him. Lord Jesus, Harold is now ready for You can take him to another memory that is very painful and he is going to tell You everything? Which memory are you in?  
 112 H I don't know.

It is possible that the facilitator was too hasty at that point, without adequately controlling that Harold really made a decision of his will to proceed. He did not keep one of the very important TPM principles in mind, namely: "People are in emotional bondage due to two basic factors: belief and choice" (Smith 2005:33). This principle was discussed in the previous chapter (4.4). The facilitator tried to bridge it by asking Harold to put the question to God, but that did not work either. The facilitator also spoke for the recipient. Harold indicated that he was ready to go with Jesus, but in no way indicated that he was ready to tell the whole story. Objectively, the facilitator abused his power in this situation to violate Harold's will and force him in a direction he was not yet willing to go. According to the new TPM guidelines, this is wrong. In this moment the facilitator abandoned his position of not-knowing. It is interesting to note that the reaction to it was actually negative towards the process.

In this case the facilitator should first have explored why Harold did not want to go further. In TPM terms it is an indication that guardian lies are probably present. Smith (2007:53) describes a guardian lie as:

The primary purpose of guardian lies is **to provide a defence** for people so that they do not have to move forward in the process. When ministering each lie needs to be addressed as it surfaces (bold mine). As you successfully move beyond these



protective lies, you will be able to expose the core lies that are at the source of people's pain. When the core lies are replaced by the truth God will provide, it will result in true release and genuine recovery for the person.

In the process it is about identifying the belief that is contrary to going forward. When God brings truth about it, the person can move forward.

The facilitator cannot continue from this point and subsequently returns to the recent memories in order to try and again stir the old emotion.

113 F Which one do you remember?

114 H The balcony.

115 F Okay, another one that was very painful. Ask God to help you. Say, God, give me a painful memory.

116 H The kids that talk about my mom.

117 F See all the kids there, teasing you, saying things about your mom. See yourself crying, see your heart is very sore, okay?

118 H When I came into the house, one of the boys turned my arm and it nearly broke.

119 F Stay there. See the picture where you were crying. Do you see the picture where you wanted to hit them and were upset? See the picture. **Lord Jesus, can I ask You where all those boys are teasing Harold that You will come and fix and mend his broken heart?** (Long pause) What do you feel or see?

120 H Now I see nothing.

121 F Is your heart still sore?

122 H No.

At that point it seemed that Harold experienced peace in that memory. The facilitator rectified the situation by not pursuing Harold's unwillingness to proceed, but rather by confirming the healing. It is so important to verify with the recipients that they truly experience peace with regards to the memory. This aspect is emphasized in one of the TPM principles: **"When we know the truth experientially, having received truth from God in our memory experience, we can walk in genuine maintenance-free victory in these areas of our lives"** (Smith 2005:36). In areas where God's truth was received, lie-based emotions can never be stirred again. This emotional pain is often the primary driving force behind irrelevant behaviour. When it is healed, the person is able to live in maintenance free victory in those areas. The experience of truth enables people to live in righteousness.

As the possibilities to enhance this part of the process are not clearly illustrated in Harold's sessions, I reflect on these issues in the last chapter

### **5.2.5 Process residual lies, residual sadness and other associated memories.**

If any residue pain or lies remain which are not yet perceived as totally untrue, then the whole process is repeated. In the case of sadness it must be kept in mind that it may be a truth-based

emotion. Smith differentiates between lie-based emotions and truth-based emotions. The latter is handled differently. There is no further search for lies, although it may sometimes happen that the person believes lies about sadness (i.e. it is their responsibility to carry the sadness). In that case the lie must first be discovered or the person must be led, as far as they are willing to do so, to ask God to take the sadness upon Him.

From Harold's response (line 96) it seemed that he verbalized another lie. The facilitator continued with the process. By posing a challenge, the facilitator succeeded in engaging Harold further in the conversation.

- 123 F You're doing all right. Are you ready to go to the big stuff?  
124 H What is big stuff?  
125 F Very sore things that only God can help with. Ready? Tell me about your dad.  
126 H The first time he abused me.  
127 F He abused you? How old were you?  
128 H I think I was three years old.  
129 F Three years old! Okay, tell me, what did he do?  
130 H I don't know. My mum said he abused me. He hit me with a sjambok (hide covered whip).  
131 F Where was this?  
132 H At his house.

Gradually Harold shared more about the hiding his father gave him with a sjambok.

[Up to this point the full verbatim of the first session was quoted. As the rest of it is mostly a repeat of the same process, only selected parts of interest to this study will be quoted from here on. ]

In summary it can be said that the next part of the conversation made it clear how difficult it was for Harold to continue with the process. It can partly be ascribed to the fact that Harold was not totally willing to continue. The question can also be asked if the session's duration was not too long for someone of his age. On the other hand, the danger was that if the session ended before he experienced total peace, it would probably be very difficult to motivate him to come for a follow-up session. Furthermore, those memories were probably very painful and it was not easy for him to return to them.

Harold could not remember everything that happened in the bathroom.

- 169 F Let's ask Jesus if He can help you. See yourself in the bathroom in your dad's house. Lord Jesus, is there anything else You want to show Harold or tell us about this day when his father hit him? Can you show Harold anything else in this memory picture? What do you see? Make the auntie proud of you, and Jesus. Tell us what happened or what you heard.  
170 H (silent and crying. It is as if Harold went into a deep trance).

The impression here is that re-traumatizing may have taken place. The discourse about it was debated in the previous chapter (4.9). From the new TPM guidelines perspective, the facilitator was not respecting the will of the recipient. Smith's (2007:148) point of view is now:

Jesus will not expose anything that recipients are not willing to reveal. He will not violate their will by telling the person their memory. If they do not remember what they need to know, there is some reason. Only when the reason (guardian lie) is exposed and Jesus replaces it with His truth can they move forward.

I just want to remark here, that it is interesting that when "knowing" entered the process, the process got stuck.

Afterwards it was almost impossible to get a response from Harold. The facilitator later left the room to give the housemother a chance to comfort Harold. When the facilitator returned, Harold was no longer crying but did not give any verbal response. The facilitator then used the technique of having Harold answer questions by means of signing. This technique has the disadvantage of suggestion inevitably creeping in. However, the facilitator tried to keep it as neutral as possible. He tried to discover if any form of dissociation was present. During the process Harold indicated that the "devil" talks to him. Here follows the dialogue:

- 187 F Let's ask Jesus something else quickly. Lord Jesus, can You help us if we're dealing with some other form of dissociation and we want to address another personality if it is. Harold, is there a little boy or girl inside your head to help you? Say yes or no. (No response). Do you sometimes hear voices in your head that talk to you? Adults or children?
- 188 H (shakes his head).
- 189 F Not one of them. Say it quickly then it's over. Is it your own voice? The voice of Jesus?
- 190 H (shakes his head).
- 191 F Animals?
- 192 H (shakes his head).
- 193 F The devil?
- 194 H (nods his head).
- 195 F Are you scared of it?
- 196 H (nods his head).
- 197 F Is there only one devil in your head or lots of devils?
- 198 H (shows 1 finger).
- 199 F Does this devil have a name?
- 200 H (shakes his head).
- 201 F Do you hear it when you dream? When you play outside?
- 202 H (nods his head).
- 203 F At school?
- 204 H (nods his head).
- 205 F Is it a good devil or a bad devil?
- 206 H (shows 2<sup>nd</sup> finger, indicating a bad devil).
- 207 F Do you remember the time the devil came in you?
- 208 H (shakes his head).

- 209 F You can't remember? Are you scared of him?
- 210 H (shakes his head).
- 211 F Do you feel him now? Does he talk to you?
- 212 H (shows 1 finger for yes).
- 213 F Do you want me to make him quiet? Yes? Devil, I come to you in the name of Jesus. I come against you and command you to be quiet and still. I bind you up in the name of Jesus and command you not to speak to Harold. You will only address me. Do you understand? You will not speak if Jesus doesn't give you permission. Until then, you are powerless. I don't want to hear from you. You will not communicate. If you disobey orders, I will send you immediately to the feet of the Lord Jesus, or ask Him to collect you. I command you now to be still in Jesus Christ's name. Is it better?
- 214 H (shows 1 finger for yes).
- 215 F Do you also want to tell the devil to keep quiet like that? Is he still speaking to you or is he quiet? Is he still talking?
- 216 H (nods his head).
- 217 F What is he saying? (No response).

The conversation became bogged down again. In this case demonology appeared. The discourse about it was fully debated in the previous chapter (4.8) where I discussed Smith's new approach to it. The facilitator dealt with the "devil" according to the guideline of the previous manual, "Beyond Tolerable Recovery" (Smith 2000:84). I suspect that the facilitator would have progressed easier if he had asked Harold if he was willing to connect with the emotion that he experienced while the devil spoke to him, as Smith's new guidelines suggest. The same applied to the "false Jesus" aspect that came up in the next part of the dialogue. In this part of the conversation, when Harold was scared of Jesus, the facilitator explored the possibilities of a false Jesus. The facilitator tried the ways Smith (2005:232) suggested in handling the situation (see previous chapter – 4.8). When a child has a fear of Jesus, it may relate to children, who were involved in Satanic Ritual Abuse, who have been taught to be afraid of Jesus. Harold had already indicated that he believed Jesus punishes children. The facilitator tried to make Harold see that there is a difference between the Jesus Harold fears and the Jesus the facilitator knows. He employed the metaphor of a mask. It seemed that Harold could not face that Jesus. As this subject was dealt with in the previous chapter and not part of the main scope of this study, I am not quoting the whole dialogue in respect thereof. It is available in Appendix A.

It must also be kept in mind here that the facilitator follows the previous TPM guidelines. However, this is again a clear illustration of what happens when "knowing" slips into the process. The facilitator allows his "knowing" to guide the process. My sense is that in his desire to bring healing to Harold, the facilitator started using alternative solutions from his knowledge about demonology. If the new guidelines were followed, he would not have tried to figure out if a false Jesus was present or not, but would have realized it to be a manifestation of Harold's will. Then the focus would have shifted to the guardian lie which hindered Harold from moving

forward. In my opinion the new guidelines are a great improvement. Smith changed them as the result of his experience of when the process is blocked and the fact that this is always connected to the person's will. The guidelines he suggests emphasize the "not-knowing" position of the facilitator - an extremely important one.

Again the practice reflects that the "not-knowing" position of the facilitator is very important. The way in which the TPM process developed to reach its present point, is indeed totally different from that of the narrative paradigm in which the conclusion is reached by means of a socially constructed paradigm. In TPM the facilitator must completely give way to God Who does the work. I sense that it is part of God's amazing plan that both these orientations arrive at the same place after developing from totally different paradigms.

Nowhere in any of Ed Smith's publications does he acknowledge that he consciously took note of post-modern thinking or social constructionism. However, more than one author -for example Thiessen (2003) and Meyer (2007) - have noted that TPM easily fits into social constructionist thinking. In the last chapter I shall reflect on this further.

The facilitator left the room when he got no response from Harold in order to give his housemother the opportunity to comfort him. An important remark from the facilitator during the previous dialogue, which I want to quote, was a remark towards the housemother.

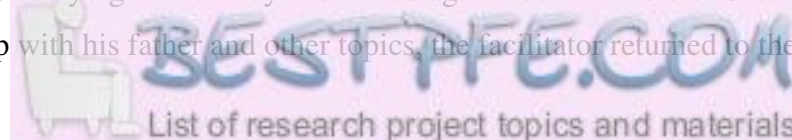
- 275 F (aside to HM in Afrikaans: You see, that is how God works. He connects the memory of the balcony with this one. The same emotion). Were you scared because you're going to die alone or because your father didn't love you?  
276 H (shows 1 finger- meaning yes).

It is important to see the relationship between the balcony memory and the bathroom memory. That was the reason why the facilitator could not stop the process at that stage.

When starting the conversation again, the facilitator continued by purposefully repeating the facts incorrectly, allowing Harold to correct them and in that way he gradually led him back to the experiential level.

- 324 F In your room?  
325 H His room.  
326 F Did you sleep in his room?  
327 H On the floor. He slept on the bed and another girl was also there in the bed.  
328 F Did he hit you once or many times?  
329 H Many.

Eventually the facilitator led Harold back to experience those two emotions, namely that he was alone and that he feared dying. After they had talked again about the role of Satan, about Harold's relationship with his father and other topics, the facilitator returned to the identified emotions.



- 426 F Look at your father's face when he was hitting you. Was he angry?  
 427 H Yes.  
 428 F Upset?  
 429 H Yes.  
 430 F Taking out all that punishment on you?  
 431 H Yes.  
 432 F You feel you're going to die?  
 433 H Yes.  
 434 F You feel alone?  
 435 H Yes.  
 436 F Your mummy is not there?  
 437 H Yes.  
 438 F No one can help you?  
 439 H Yes,  
 440 F Sit still and listen. While he's hitting you and you're saying to yourself that you're going to die, your father is killing you; what does Jesus say. Let's see what Jesus wants to tell us. Lord Jesus, can we ask You to reveal to Harold Your truth about what happened and how he's feeling in that memory? Tell me if you can see Jesus. Can you?  
 441 H (speaking in voice of 3yr old) He's healing the people.  
 442 F Where are you while He's healing the people?  
 443 H I don't know.  
 444 F In the bathroom?  
 445 H No.  
 446 F In your room?  
 447 H No.  
 448 F Where are you?  
 449 H Outside.  
 450 F Are you far from Jesus?  
 451 H No, not far.  
 452 F Can you see Him clearly?  
 453 H Yes.  
 454 F Look at Him and say when He's looking back at you. Is He friendly?  
 455 H Yes.  
 456 F Is He happy to see you?  
 457 H Yes.

Here the facilitator checks that it is the real Jesus by asking if He is friendly and eliciting positive emotion. As I indicated in chapter 4 (4.8.1). this can be misleading. However the facilitator worked according the guidelines that were applicable at that time.

- 458 F Can you go to Him or is He coming to you?  
 459 H He's coming to me.  
 460 F Tell us everything you see.  
 461 H He's healing me.  
 462 F With what?  
 463 H With His power. He's giving me food.  
 464 F What else?  
 465 H Water. And giving me bread, fish, vegetables.  
 466 F Why is He giving you all those things?  
 467 H I don't know.  
 468 F Ask Him.

469 H Because I'm hungry and thirsty.

It is amazing how God knew exactly what to do for Harold. When Harold arrived at the Children's Home, one of his greatest problems then was that he ate non-stop, eating everything in sight. That aspect was also highlighted in the research interviews. Harold's social worker responded after this session:

When Harold first came to the Children's Home, he was always hungry. From the moment he woke up, he would not stop eating. Even after a large breakfast and quite a few sandwiches in his lunchbox, he would still beg for food at school. His housemother eventually made a plan and offered him carrots whenever he complained about being hungry. This did not even help.

Theophostic Prayer changed him completely. He was able to wait to be served at the table and did not fight the other children for the food. He never begs for food anymore. Even when he gets sweets, he is able to restrain himself from eating everything all at once – this is truly amazing!

Looking back, the relationship between fear of dying and food can easily be understood. At the time of the recorded session the facilitator was totally unaware of the existence of the problem. Without it ever being mentioned, God answered Harold exactly according to his need. Harold (line 468) initially also did not understand why God did it, but afterwards his behaviour totally changed. In my opinion it is only God Who could know about this and change it. It is highly unlikely that a therapist of any approach would have used the word "hunger" at this point. It does not come to mind. Initially not even Harold understood why God answered him in that way. There are no suggestions of something like hunger in the session. But this answer brings about a real transformation in Harold's behaviour. Harold experienced it as **God's voice in the session**, the assumption on which the whole of the TPM process rests.

I also want to refer to two research interviews with Alice and Annatjie in this regard. Alice mentioned what she experienced during her sessions: "God suddenly gave me such an extraordinarily 'truthful' answer that surpassed human knowledge. Only He could know that I'd been pondering on some things in that specific situation" and she then knew without a doubt that it was God Himself talking to her.

I quote from Annatjie's interview: "It is only He Who could summarize my past, present and future into one moment and immediately set me free". As a matter of fact, that aspect was addressed in a number of the research interviews. Everyone questioned about it, answered without exception and without hesitation that they are convinced that it is God Who communicated with them.

Smith's (2007:35) view is that God wants us to walk in the light and truth. God wants to free us from evil and deception. When we do what He asks of us and are prepared to face the truth, God

will show up. Scriptures like Luke 11:9-13, James 1:5-6, 1John 5:14-15 and Mark 11:23-24 all support this view. Miller (2006b:6) also indicated that whereas God may have a positive purpose for leaving us in physical or circumstantial afflictions, He has no positive reason to leave us languishing in Satan's lies, and so if we are willing to face the truth, about such beliefs, He is willing to reveal it to us. This seems to be a fact that is intuitively true, based on the character of God revealed in Scripture, and that can be inferred from the combined teaching of the following Scriptures: Psalms 25:5; 8:14; 84:11; Hebrews 6:18; 1 Timothy 2:3-4; John 3:19-21; 7:17; 1 John 1:5-7; 3:8.

The Scripture texts emphasize that God answers prayers of dependence. This is the assumption on which TPM prayer is grounded. Together with Meyer (2007:16) I do not want to view these texts as giving us eternal truths but to state that God uses these texts, by means of the Holy Spirit, to awaken our faith to wait in utter dependence for "the living Word of God for us". In this way God's voice in the session is a participant in the social construction of a new preferred story.

The prayers in Harold's session are not the traditional prayers accompanying miracles of healing, as believers pray who believe they have received the "grace of healing". In pointing this out, I do not judge in any way, I merely point out the difference. This is a prayer in which God is asked to become a part of a conversation where a new interpretation of a story about a memory is co-constructed. The example cited above is an illustration of how a facilitator keeps it a primary dialogue between the recipient and God, creating space for God to have free choice to respond according to His own will and for the recipient to choose to hear from God as (s)he perceives God. It is within this conversation that a new preferred narrative is constructed, leading to transformation in Harold's behaviour.

After Harold had received truth from the Lord, the facilitator checked if Harold had experienced total peace in that memory.

- 471 F What else is He (Jesus) doing?  
472 H That's all.  
473 F Is He next to You?  
474 H Yes.  
475 F Standing or sitting?  
476 H Sitting on a rock.  
477 F Is Jesus standing or sitting?  
478 H Sitting next to me.  
479 F Is He talking to you?  
480 H Yes.  
481 F How does it make you feel?  
482 H Happy.  
483 F What is Jesus saying?



- 484 H I don't know.  
 485 F Let's ask Him. Lord Jesus, I ask You to make everything quiet around Harold and tell him whatever You want to tell him.  
 486 H He's telling me... I don't know.  
 487 F Ask Him to tell you again.  
 488 H He's telling me He's going to heal my whole family.  
 489 F Do you love Jesus?  
 490 H Yes.

I want to reflect on Response 487 and 489 as examples of cases where knowing do enter into the conversation. In both cases the facilitator is prescribing to the recipient. Regarding Response 487, the “not-knowing” position could have been retained if the facilitator framed the question for example in one of the following ways:

- Can you perhaps ask him to tell you again? or,
- Would you like to ask him to tell you again? or,
- May I ask him to tell you again?

In that way respect towards the recipient would have been shown more clearly. Regarding Response 489 the facilitator failed to show an affinity with the recipient’s response and introduced his own agenda, in other words his knowing intruded the process.

- 491 F Ask Jesus what happened to that other false Jesus with the mask.  
 492 H He said it wasn't the real one.  
 493 F Where is that one?  
 494 H He took the mask off him.  
 495 F Ask Jesus how He feels about Satan in your head.  
 496 H He took Satan out of my head.  
 497 F Did you want to keep him?  
 498 H No, he's a stupid devil.  
 499 F Ask Jesus if He wants you to forgive your father.  
 500 H He says he doesn't.

Here the facilitator again made sure that Harold experienced peace about all the lie issues that came out during the session. I have dealt with the aspect of forgiving his father. Afterwards the facilitator continued confirming the healing. He did not reach the last step, as suggested in the manual. The nature of the conversation meant that it would not have been appropriate at that moment. It was used at the close of the second session.

## 5.2.6 Ending off the session: Ask the Lord to affirm and bless the recipient

Smith indicates the importance of rejoicing with the recipient. He relates that he often asked God in prayer if He wanted to give them anything further. He then leads the recipients to wait quietly to see if God wants to show anything further. Often the recipients report that they received the gift of joy, peace, life and also Him. “It seems to be very affirming and encouraging for them to receive such affirmation directly from Him in an experiential manner” (Smith 2005:163).

465 F Is Jesus close to you?

466 H (nods his head).

467 F ***Can I ask You to pick him up in Your arms and just hold him in Your arms.***  
Did Jesus pick you up?

468 H (shows 1 finger for yes).

469 F Is it nice?

470 H (shows 1 finger for yes).

471 F ***Lord Jesus, can I ask You to put the jacket of love on him. Can we ask You to bring his angel to him? Show him that his angel is only for him because he's a special boy. His dad is the bad one. This is such a special boy.***

(F leaves room to let HM comfort him).

At the end of Harold's second session, the facilitator ended off in the following manner:

Although the facilitator did not keep strictly to TPM guidelines here by making specific requests of God, the aspect of truth was not the most important consideration here. The facilitator used the moments of truth that Harold received from God as affirmation. In the language of the narrative paradigm, here the facilitator contributes to the thickening of Harold's new preferred story of faith, hope and love.

In order to give a more detailed image of TPM, I wish to add certain issues from Harold's second session to explore the practices of TPM by means of these issues.

## 5.2.7 Other issues from Session Two with Harold

Of the issues that were dealt with in Session Two, I would like to highlight the following:

- verifying the memories from the previous session (5.2.7.1);
- healing of emotional pain contained in the memory about the hiding (5.2.7.2);
- the memory of Satanic Ritual Abuse (SRA) (5.2.7.3); as well as
- the memory of childhood sexual abuse (5.2.7.4).

Only the relevant parts of the verbatim report of this session are quoted. The complete transcription of the verbatim of Harold's session 2 is available as Appendix A.

### **5.2.7.1 Verifying peace in the memories of the previous session.**

Smith (2007:108-9) explains that it is essential to affirm the healing that took place in the previous session and to join the recipient in rejoicing in the mind renewal. As a part of this, the memory has to be re-checked to see if any of the initial powerful emotions are still present in the memory. If the recipient does not experience complete peace and calm, the mind renewal was not real. Then the memory has to be re-visited to find out if the returning pain still stems from the same memory.

#### **HAROLD SESSION TWO**

- 005 F Yesterday you were crying and now you're happy again. Why?  
006 H I don't know.  
007 F Do you remember what we spoke about yesterday? The kids who did not like you?  
008 H Yes.  
009 F They swore at your mother.  
010 H Yes and that boy took my arm and turned it against the window.  
011 F Are you still upset?  
012 H (shakes his head).  
013 F Why not?  
014 H Because Jesus is living in my heart.  
015 F That's the one incident. Let's go to the other memory at your old house.  
016 H At the flat.  
017 F At the flat where your mum, nanna, auntie and other uncle pushed you onto the balcony on the stairs.  
018 H They put me there.  
019 F They put you there? All alone?  
020 H (nods his head).  
021 F And you were scared?  
022 H (nods his head).  
023 F Of what?  
024 H Scared to die.  
025 F Do you still feel that way?  
026 H No.  
027 F Why not?  
028 H Because God is living in my heart.  
029 F Okay. Do you feel safe when you think about that now?  
030 H (nods his head).  
031 F What did He do for you yesterday?  
032 H He made me not to be scared.  
033 F He moved you away.  
034 H pushed me away.  
035 F Away from where?  
036 H The steps.

It seems that Harold experienced calm in the memory of the balcony. After this, the facilitator also returned to the memory of the hiding. Harold did not yet experience peace in that memory. In this next session Harold also received truth about lies that were still contained in that memory. As the conversation developed, Harold also arrived at a memory of Satanic Ritual Abuse. I would like to focus on this memory since it is a very controversial issue. Harold also went to a memory of childhood sexual abuse.

### 5.2.7.2 Healing of the emotional pain from the “hiding”-memory.

Because Harold had not yet received complete peace in this memory, the facilitator now tried to identify the lie.

- 065 F Does your father like you?  
066 H No.  
067 F Remember when your father hit you in the toilet. Was it sore?  
068 H (nods his head).  
069 F How sore?  
070 H Very sore.  
071 F Why do you think he hates you?  
072 H I don't know.  
073 F Why do you think the lady at school hates you?  
074 H I don't know.  
075 F In that bathroom, how did you feel? What did you think was happening?  
076 H Dying.  
077 F See the picture. Be brave. Do you know what happens when you die?  
078 H (shakes his head).  
079 F How do you feel in your little heart when your father wanted to kill you?  
080 H Upset. Feel like I'm going to die.

The lie “I'm going to die” is again mentioned. It implies that Harold had not yet experienced the truth about that lie.

- 081 F Let's ask Jesus what He thinks. Close your eyes. **Lord Jesus, we ask You to bring Your truth to Harold. Is there someone else in the toilet? Lord Jesus, do You want to show or tell Harold what You think?**  
082 H I see God.  
083 F What is God doing?  
084 H He is stopping my father.  
085 F How is He stopping your father?  
086 H I don't know.  
087 F Keep your eyes on Jesus. What is He doing?  
088 H He is looking at me.  
089 F How does it feel?  
090 H Happy. He's calling an angel.  
091 F He's calling an angel? Is there an angel there? What is he doing?  
092 H He's going to look after me.  
093 F Is he going to look after you? An angel? You've got your own angel?  
094 H No, it's His angel.  
095 F Ask Jesus what this angel is to do for you.

- 096 H He must look after me and that my father won't hit me.
- 097 F Do you want to go to Jesus?
- 098 H Yes.
- 099 F We're so proud of you. You are doing so well. Close your eyes again and tell me everything that Jesus is doing.
- 100 H I don't know.
- 101 F Is Jesus there with you?
- 102 H No, only the angel.
- 103 F Only the angel now? Do you want to talk to the angel? What do you want to ask him?
- 104 H That he will guide me every time.
- 105 F Ask him to tell us what he says.
- 106 H He says he will.
- 107 F How does that angel make you feel?
- 108 H Happy.
- 109 F Are you sad or scared?
- 110 H No.
- 111 F Is the angel small or big?
- 112 H Big.
- 113 F Will your father be scared of him?
- 114 H Yes.
- 115 F Will the lady at school be scared of him?
- 116 H Yes.
- 117 F **Lord Jesus, is there anything else that You want to show us? Can we ask You and Your angel to bring Harold truth in this memory?** What do you see?
- 118 H The angel comes with me to school and the lady runs away.
- 119 F This angel is always there to protect you.
- 120 H Yes.
- 121 HM How do you know?
- 122 H Because God knows.

The conversation continued about two incidents where he and his little sister were involved, firstly where he squirted oven cleaner in her eyes; and secondly where he used inappropriate sexual behaviour towards her. Then the facilitator again returned to the aspect of forgiveness towards his father.

In this the facilitator is true to the ministry guideline: "I will be careful to discern and call attention to any aspect of 'truth' or visual you might receive during a ministry session that does not appear to be authentic and or Biblically consistent. Should this happen, I will encourage you to determine what is true or not and where the false information originated" (Panozzo & Smith 2007:36). This discourse was discussed in the previous chapter. From the perspective of social constructionism it is the facilitator's knowing that intrudes here.

- 208 F Can you look at Jesus?
- 209 H (nods his head).
- 210 F I'm going to ask a question and then you must tell me what the answer is. **Lord Jesus, can You explain to Harold about forgiveness towards his father?**

**Should he forgive him and is it necessary to do so now?**

- 211 H He tells me it isn't necessary to forgive him, because he hit me.  
212 F Close your eyes again. **Lord Jesus, do You want Harold to forgive his father and if You don't, please explain why.**  
213 H He says I mustn't.  
214 F Ask Jesus why.  
215 H Because he hits me so much and abuses me so much and shows me other things.  
216 F Does your dad know Jesus?  
217 H No, he believes in the devil.  
218 F How does he pray to the devil?  
219 H I forgot.  
220 F Does he also have a church?  
221 H They have such a small church.  
222 F For how many people?  
223 H Only six or seven can go in there.  
224 F Is the church in someone's house. Where is it?  
225 H Far away.  
226 F What do you see when you go in?  
227 H Things. Candles.  
228 HM Was it pretty?  
229 H No! It's disgusting. Outside it looks pretty.  
230 F Do they wear church clothes?  
231 H Long clothes. Blue, white, orange and grey.  
232 F Are they all men, those six people?  
233 H The women go on the other side, next to the boys' church. Each one gets a church.  
234 F What does it look like inside?  
235 H Oh, it looks disgusting. It looks like dirt in there.  
236 HM Are there shining lights?  
237 H No lights.  
238 F What do they use for lights?  
239 H Nothing.

The fact that they again returned to the subject of forgiveness, led to the discovery of the memory. The question may well be asked if the memory would have surfaced if the facilitator had not returned to the subject. Harold described that memory by talking about events that can be interpreted as rituals, for instance the chairs that shock you if you do not obey commands.

- 284 F It shocks you when you move?  
285 H Yes, but when you sit still you see sparks all over.  
286 F Did you shout?  
287 H It shocks you.  
288 F When you try to talk?  
289 H It shocks you.  
290 HM Did someone tell you to keep quiet?  
291 H It shocks you.  
292 F Were the other children also tied up?  
293 H (nods his head) It has on every single chair.  
294 F How many chairs are there?  
295 H Seven chairs and one other chair.  
296 F That minister there, he doesn't sit? He talks? What does he say?

- 297 H He talks about stuff.  
 298 F What stuff?  
 299 H Like devil's stuff

In a previous session the facilitator asked a question about the mask of the false Jesus, and he used the word “shock” (See response 301 and 302 in Session One). Reading back over that part of the conversation, the possibility exists that the word triggered old emotions in Harold. It may explain why he was so afraid to remove the mask. The use of electric shocks to condition children is well known within satanic circles (Coleman 1994:249). The possibility exists that God prepared Harold through His Spirit for his next session by guiding the facilitator to use the keyword “shock” in his conversation with Harold.

Further confirmation of the abovementioned hypothesis is reflected in the following dialogue:

- 323 F If I ask you if you'd want to go to that church again?  
 324 H No, its ugly.  
 325 F Do they talk about Jesus?  
 326 H Yes, they say bad things.  
 327 F What do they say?  
 328 H I don't want to talk about it.  
 329 F Are you scared that they will find out if you talk?  
 330 H **Yes and Jesus can punish me if I talk about His name.**  
 331 F In that church, did they make you scared of Jesus?  
 332 H Yes.  
 333 F Is that the same Jesus Who appeared to you with the angel?  
 334 H Different one.  
 335 F Do you think that the Jesus with the angel can beat the false Jesus?  
 336 H Fake one.  
 337 F How do you know it's a fake one?  
 338 H Because I'm clever.  
 339 F Let's ask Jesus something.  
 340 H I don't want to.  
 341 F Don't you want to see your angel again?  
 342 H Yes I do but I don't want to close my eyes anymore.  
 343 F Remember that big angel with the sword. Can you see he's got a sword?  
 344 H Yes, a special sword.  
 345 F See Jesus and the angel. Remember how he protects you. What do you see in His eyes?  
 346 H Hearts.  
 347 F When He looks at you like that, do you feel special?  
 348 H Yes.  
 349 F Do you trust that Jesus?  
 350 H Yes.  
 351 F Why?  
 352 H Because He's the real one.

Here is an example where the facilitator used every opportunity to contribute to Harold's thickening of his trust in the real Jesus.



In this dialogue the discourse about Satanic ritual abuse, which was discussed in the previous chapter, came to the fore.

### **5.2.7.3 Satanic Ritual Abuse memory (SRA).**

This conversation between the facilitator and Harold provides enough evidence to conclude that Harold's memory can be connected with Ritual Abuse. The discourse about Satanic/sadistic Ritual Abuse (SRA) has already been discussed in Chapter 4.6.4. Lynn et. al. (1998:133) alleged that there is no empirical evidence that something like SRA exists. During the abovementioned conversation with Harold there were no suggestions. Both the housemother and the social worker confirmed that there was no mention of a similar subject at the Children's Home. Both these role players have no knowledge of SRA. From the spontaneous way it came out during facilitation, it is clear that the facilitator in no way tried to steer the conversation in that direction or to create any such scenario. It is not an aim of this study to confirm or deny the existence of SRA. The information was part of Harold's reality and is treated as that.

This stresses a very important aspect, namely the fact that when the facilitator works, the recipient's reality is accepted as the reality wherein he works: "To provide effective ministry to such people, requires one work within the framework of the victim's reality. It is in their reality, and not one's own, that truth must come" (Smith 2002:52). TPM is not interested in how "true" a memory is. It is all about the lie that the recipient believes, that has to be uncovered. In fact, Smith (2008b:1) indicates that:

Today I am also choosing to live in what I know to be true and not in the reported reality of the person and his or her memory. Unless I have court proof evidence that what is reported is valid then I do not assume that it is true. Far too much of what is taught about SRA is based upon reported memory that cannot be verified. It is easy to get caught up in the dramatics and complexity and fail to see the simplicity of belief and choice. This is not to say that what they report does not have some measure of validity for I believe that some is indeed true. But until I have true evidence I will hold loosely what is shared. ... However, I do believe that much value can be realized as we practice the Basic Principles as taught in the Basic Training seminar when working with people reporting SRA memory.

It seems that Smith now places even more emphasis on the facilitator not in any way judging the truth of the memory, but strictly sticking to the basic principles. The conversation with Harold provides a good example of how the facilitator keeps to the basic principles, despite the reporting of SRA, to find the lie. In Harold's case the memory was just a hallway leading to the memory where the lie was contained. The SRA memory received no further attention. During his healing process Harold also did not return to that memory. If Harold's narrative is examined in detail, the hypothesis can indeed be constructed that the experience was probably connected to his "eating



problem”. With God Himself deconstructing the lie, the memory served its purpose and it was never necessary to return to it. Harold did not revisit the memory and therefore it was not dealt with any further. It shows that TPM is not interested in proving whether certain phenomena exist or not, because it is only about deconstructing lies or interpretations that dominate a “problem-saturated story”.

In the remainder of the dialogue between Harold and his facilitator, he shared about his memory where his dad sexually abused him. Child sexual abuse is another topic that regularly appears in TPM sessions.

#### **5.2.7.4 Child sexual abuse memory**

As the full verbatim is available in Appendix A, I am not going to quote it here. The facilitator helps Harold to reconstruct the whole memory in a playful way. In the past Ed Smith (2002a:24) strongly emphasized the need “to abreact through the entire memory in order to move out of denial” and to embrace the pain, seeing that the pain is connected to the lie believed in. In Harold’s case it was also handled in that way. However, I disagree. It is important that the pain in the memory be embraced. It is also important that the recipient does not avoid certain parts of the memory because it is painful. But I do not believe that it is necessary to reconstruct the entire memory or to focus on unnecessary detail. When the lie that caused the pain is exposed, the goal is achieved. In my opinion the facilitator, who followed the guidelines of the time, focussed too much on detail while it was already clear what the lie was. In that process the facilitator made suggestions in the way he asked the questions. Ed Smith (2007:100) pointed out that it is extremely important not to ask suggestive questions when working with children because they are so open to suggestions. If the facilitator had focussed on the way Harold formulated the lie, he would not have made that mistake. In this case he allowed his knowledge to intrude in the process. His prayer also contained suggestions.

The facilitator is not supposed to make any suggestions, also not to God, by the questions asked. In this case the facilitator did make suggestions and it cannot be accepted as pure TPM. If a recipient such as Harold does not react, the facilitator is tempted to prompt. That can be understood, but it is not strictly TPM and in that way resulted in the facilitator's knowledge directing the process.

Here is an example of what Michael White (1995:72) refers to, showing how easily a facilitator may make the mistake of allowing his own knowledge to influence the process.

By using the transcriptions of Harold's sessions, I have illustrated how a lay minister put the TPM principles into practice. A study of the TPM manual reveals how the ideal process should look. The question is whether a lay minister can reproduce it in practice. These sessions were initially videotaped for private use only. The facilitator had no inkling that these recordings would one day be used for the purpose of research. In my opinion the facilitator succeeded in implementing most of the TPM principles, giving a clear example of TPM implemented in practice. It illustrates that lay ministers can master the TPM principles and effectively put them into practice.

Part of the Basic teachings of Dr. Ed Smith, is the **four-fold test of healing**. As I am discussing that in chapter 9 as part of the "why" research question, I am not going to expound on it here. For the sake of completeness, I am only going to mention the four relevant questions here, namely:

- a) Is the truth the person received from God during the session consistent with Biblical truth?
- b) Does the person experience and demonstrate the perfect peace of Christ in the healed memory?
- c) Does the person have genuine compassion and forgiveness for the one who hurt him/her?
- d) Does the healing result in genuine transformation and life change?

With respect to Harold's narrative the responses to these questions are attended to in chapter 9.

### **5.3 Mind renewal is a lifelong process**

It goes without saying that all the lies the person believes cannot be resolved in one session: "In reality, total release would not even be possible within a lifetime" (Smith 2005:37). Yet it is possible that people can experience complete and lasting victory in some areas of their lives. When someone is willing for God to expose the lies in their life, that person experiences a great deal more pain. On the surface it might appear that their emotional life is worse than before. Many of us have suppressed pain for so many years that when we allow it to surface, it might seem overwhelming. But God is walking alongside the person. Smith (2005:38) indicates that he experienced it personally. Despite the fact that there were moments when he felt so overwhelmed, it is very clear to him that he is in a much better place emotionally than ever before.

## 5.4 Closing reflections

We travelled together with Harold and his facilitator through the landscape of TPM. I indicated how the four basic components of the TPM process were put into practice in the facilitated sessions with Harold. These are:

- The presenting emotion;
- Identifying the original memory;
- Discerning the lie-based thinking or lie message held in the original memory;
- Offering the exposed lie up to the Lord to receive His truth perspective.

As previously indicated, TPM originated within a modernistic paradigm. Ed Smith's publications give no indication that he positions himself epistemologically. It is almost as if he works from a pre-modernistic perspective. In working through the various components, I judged TPM from a postmodern perspective and more specifically from a socially constructive epistemology. Stiver (2001:11) pointed out that the new postmodern paradigm can be seen in three areas, namely: experience, knowledge and language.

- Experience:** For the postmodernist the world is experienced as a meaningful whole: "Meaning comes with the experience" (Stiver 2001:11). That is what TPM teaches. When the recipients of TPM re-experienced the original memory from the Lord's truth perspective, new meaning evolved. TPM sees that experience as crucial for transformation to take place.
- Knowledge:** There is always a link between experience and knowledge. Harlene Anderson (2007:9) said: "We can only know the world through our experience; we cannot have direct knowledge of it". There is no knowledge that is not socially constructed, because it is created with one another, where our experiences are continually interpreted. By offering the recipient's interpretation up to the Lord to receive His truth perspective in TPM, the Lord gets the opportunity to partake in the social construction of new knowledge for the recipient. This was illustrated through Harold's narrative.

Therefore the "not-knowing" position of the facilitator is so important. To my mind this is the "sparkling moment" in TPM-theory. In explicating the TPM-process through Harold's sessions, I indicated that almost every time that the knowledge of the facilitator entered the conversation, the process got stuck. By emphasizing the fact that the facilitator's knowledge or opinion must not in any way lead the facilitation-process, Smith helps the facilitators to "give authority to the

client's (recipient's) voice and (to) not overshadow, divert, or subjugate it with their own knowing” (Anderson (2007a:49), the way Harlene Anderson defines the "not-knowing" position of the facilitator in her Collaborative approach.

- c) **Language:** Anderson (2007:10) indicated that we are always foreigners in trying to understand another's language. The meaning of a word lies in its use between certain people. A family, for example, often has its own language. The words they use have a specific meaning in the family. An outsider won't necessarily understand what they are saying. I have indicated in this chapter that when a facilitator offers a recipient's interpretation of a memory to the Lord, it is important to use the recipient's own words. Therefore a facilitator is also not allowed to interpret what a recipient received from the Lord. The words used are the language between the recipient and the Lord. The facilitator may understand it differently. The way this aspect is respected in TPM fits into the social construction epistemology.

In my opinion, when TPM is being judged according to the three areas mentioned by Stiver to identify a paradigm, it seems that TPM can fit in nicely with the postmodern paradigm and the social constructionist epistemology. Harold's sessions illustrated how the four components of the Basic TPM-process offer a structured way in which recipients can reconstruct the thin descriptions (beliefs/lies) according to which they narrate their life stories, into thick descriptions of stories of faith, hope and love. In this process, other voices (God and Scripture) are invited to take part in the co-construction of an alternative preferred story.

In terms of the norms indicated here by which genuine healing is measured, I showed that if Scripture is used correctly, as one of the significant voices working together on the co-construction of a new preferred life story for the participant, it fits in with the social constructionist paradigm. However, if Scripture is used in a fundamental way, it may contribute to abuse of power.

Although certain knowing is present, having knowledge and skills of how to apply the components thereby making experts of facilitators and creating a space for God's voice to become part of the social construction of an alternative preferred story means this knowledge is used in a respectful way, preventing the facilitator from using his knowledge as a power tool, leading to abuse. In spite of the fact that Harold's facilitator deviated from the TPM protocol at times, his basic approach that TPM is only the facilitation of the conversation between God and the recipient, helped him create the necessary space for Harold. These sessions illustrate that when a facilitator keeps to the TPM guidelines, a space is created for the reconstruction of people's realities.

Looking back on Section A, the five chapters of this section describe (i) the landscape wherein the research had been conducted as well as (ii) the landscape wherein TPM functions. This provides a framework in which the research results can be discussed and be understood.

## SECTION B

### WEAVING THEMES TOGETHER.

#### CO-CONSTRUCTING NEW KNOWLEDGE

“Weaving is an art that symbolizes connections and re-connections,” says Shumbambini (2005:44). In reporting the research I would like to follow her example in this section by “weaving together themes that run through most of the participants’ stories” in such a way that the patterns that are formed will highlight the diamonds discovered in this research process with bright colours. At the same time it will create the opportunity for limitations to be weaved into new patterns in a new context, so that TPM can become a true work of art to the glory of our Father.

While I created a framework in Section A in which the research was done and the background was sketched against which it could be understood, I will be reporting and reflecting on the research results in Section B. Therefore I am going to reflect on the research questions (as expounded in chapter 1) in chapters 7, 8 and 9 and in chapter 6 I will introduce the participants in this research project.

The research problem was formulated in chapter one as follows:

*How and why did, or did not, Theophostic Prayer Ministry change the lives of persons who engaged in it as recipients?*

Firstly the ‘how’ question comes to the fore, where the following two aspects are focused on:

1) **The participants’ interpretations of the healing possibilities of TPM.** (Chapter 7).

(Did they, or did they not, experience any change in their dominant life stories from problem saturated stories to new preferred stories of faith, hope and love after their encounter with TPM).

- a) What effect do the participants' responses seem to indicate has TPM on the way they narrate their lives or construct their realities?
- b) Does God's voice appear to be an active participant in the dialogues that led to any changes?

c) Do the practices of the TPM process appear to play a part in any reconstruction of reality?

2) **The participants' experiences of the practices of TPM and the ethics of the process.**(Chapter 8).

a) How did the participants experience the practices of TPM?

b) What were the influences of the participants' experiences on their relationships?

c) In what way did the participants' responses testify of an ethical practice? What did the participants find helpful and what was perhaps harmful or created more problems?

d) What is the influence of a lay facilitator on the process?

Secondly the focus is on the 'why' question:

3) **TPM as a changing agent in the participants' lives.** (Chapters 9 and 10).

a) Why did it work in some cases and not as well in others?

b) What are the indications and contra-indications for TPM to be the designated orientation for pastoral care, i.e.:

i) What role does the theological orientation/ church denomination of the participants play in the appropriation of TPM;

ii) Is TPM more appropriate with respect to certain problems?

## Chapter 6

### **EIGHTEEN NARRATIVES: INTRODUCING THE PARTICIPANTS (CO-RESEARCHERS).**

I would dearly have liked to present the unabridged research interviews in this chapter, so that these eighteen participants could tell their own stories about their journey with TPM. Together with their nominees, they are after all the co-researchers in this project, with each one being the expert about their own journey. However, the extent of the data is too big to be accommodated in this research report and a summary of the major changes according to their experiences (in table form) is offered as Appendix B. Apart from the abovementioned eighteen participants, there is also another important co-researcher in this study, namely Chaplain Andre Muller, who was the facilitator in all the narratives.

This group consists of black, coloured and white South Africans. Their mother languages include Sepedi, Setswana, English and Afrikaans. One immigrant of Bulgaria is included. Ten are women and eight are men. They range in age from 9 to about 65 years of age, with the average age being 40. The participants represent the whole spectrum of demoninations, including Roman Catholic, Anglican, Reformed, Pentecostal and Charismatic Theological traditions.

It is a very great privilege to introduce my co-researchers by means of a short background sketch of each. I respected the right of participants who chose to tell their stories using their own names, as well as those who chose pseudonyms for themselves [Chapter 1 (1.5.3)]. Although I discussed it at the start of the research discussions with each participant and pointed out all the implications, I realised, in a few cases with the transcribing of the research interviews, that some of the participants (the “not-so-successful” group) apparently did not really understand the full implication of using their own names. In those cases I chose pseudonyms for them, in order to protect their identity.

As expounded in chapter 1 (1.5.2), the first step was to do a pilot study and then to select the participants for each category, namely the successful-, the “one session”-, the randomly selected- and the not so successful group. I introduce them to you according to these categories.



## **6.1 The Facilitator**

Chaplain Andre Muller, the facilitator, became involved in pastoral care after completing the chaplaincy course in 2001. He started serving in this capacity on a part-time basis at the Emergency Services. As the result, he focused mainly on trauma counselling. He was also involved in a deliverance ministry. Thereafter he received a diploma in Christian Counselling from Dr Sarel van der Merwe at the Oasis congregation.

He came into contact with TPM in 2001. After becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the modus operandi of the deliverance ministry, he completed the basic course in TPM as well as the Advanced Levels I and II.

Chaplain Muller has a heart for people from a low economic background and established a part time ministry amongst people who would not otherwise be able to afford therapeutic services. He is also the co-founder and current chairman of an organization, Family Transformation Facilitators (FTF). FTF provides training in TPM and provides a TPM community where recipients can find a wider audience to contribute to the thickening of their new preferred stories of faith, hope and love. The goal is for each one to find their place in the Kingdom within the congregation and community God calls them to.

In one of the interviews, Chaplain Muller so aptly described it in these words: “TPM is a powerful tool; it is not just asking God and hoping for a miracle, but rather asking God to enter into a conversation with the person”.

Next I want to introduce the selected participants who received TPM from Chaplain Muller. From each participant’s interviews I took a certain phrase from the interview to describe something that is identical of the narrative. It can be either their direct words or a paraphrase of it. First there was the pilot study.

## **6.2 The Pilot study**

By performing the pilot study the whole research process was tested, before the other participants were selected.

### **6.2.1 Jacques - “Transformed from stuttering to public speaking”**

At the time of his facilitation Jacques was an unmarried man in his early thirties. His parents’ divorce when he was five years old had a huge impact on his life. His mother remarried and he grew up with her and a stepfather, later also a half brother and sister.

Jacques experienced much rejection during his school years. Following an unhappy incident where he had to read out loud, he started stuttering. His stuttering isolated him socially. He always felt that he wasn't good enough and that he had to "perform" to be noticed. Jacques relates how he asked the Lord to send someone across his path to help him with his inner pain. Then he met Chaplain Muller who invited him to come to his house and speak to him. It was there that he was introduced to TPM.

Jacques received total healing from his stuttering as the result of TPM. Currently he is constructing a new story around a positive self-image. The result is that while in the past he could not establish a lasting romantic relationship, he is now married.

Following his own experience with TPM, Jacques qualified as a TPM facilitator.

### **6.3 The Successful group**

After the pilot study was completed, Chaplain Muller selected four participants for whom, he believed, TPM was successful.

#### **6.3.1 Harold - "How God can change a person".**

Harold's story was already told in Chapter 5. He was nine years old when he started receiving TPM while still in child-care. Currently he has been restored to his mother's care.

#### **6.3.2 Alice - "Inner voices exchanged for God's voice"**

Alice is an unmarried woman in her mid thirties who was both physically and sexually abused from a very early age. Although expected to achieve six distinctions at school, her psychological problems undermined her and still prevent her from establishing a career. Psychologists and psychiatrists diagnosed her with multiple mental disorders to such an extent that a psychologist told her flatly that there was no hope for her.

She started seeing yet another psychologist. In time he referred her to Chaplain Muller, who introduced her to TPM. She consulted him for two sessions, but preferred to continue with the initial psychologist, who also took up TPM. She joined FTF and completed the basic course in TPM in order to better understand the process. She also needed a safe environment in which to socialize and to provide her with a wider audience to contribute to the thickening of her alternative story.

Currently, she is in the process of coming into contact with her emotions, developing the freedom to show feelings and no longer having to be ashamed of it. Her growth in learning to trust people is slow but steady.

### **6.3.3 Minah - "Healed overnight"**

Minah is a divorced woman in her mid fifties. She is both mother and grandmother to her deceased daughter's children. At her work for a pharmaceutical company she is very popular among her colleagues due to her spontaneous personality.

Minah's daughter and grandson both died of AIDS within a week of each other. A month later, her younger sister also died during childbirth. Minah could not function as a result of those unhappy events. Her Human Resources manager at work referred her to Chaplain Muller. He offered to help her with the aid of TPM.

TPM changed her whole life. She compared her depression to a machine that kept on rattling inside her head, making a chirr, chirr-sound. "Now all of that noise is gone," she says. She calls it a beautiful ("mooi") counselling.

### **6.3.4 Michelle - "A huge breach in the wall"**

Michelle is a woman in her late thirties. She has been married for nineteen years and has three children.

She grew up in a Children's Home, arriving for the first time when she was only two years old. She returned to live with her father, who had remarried, when she was about 6 years of age and remained there for two years. Again as a teenager, she spent a short time with her dad before returning to the Home. When she turned 16 she moved in with her mom. In order to prevent her daughter being sent back to the Home, her mother had to find suitable accommodation. In that way Michelle and her mother moved in with the man who was to become Michelle's future husband.

Michelle consulted with psychologists since her 16<sup>th</sup> year. Five years ago she started attending church and became a Christian. She began to experience flashbacks and it became unbearable. A friend at church invited her to go for TPM.

She found TPM very scary in the beginning. She felt things she never thought existed. She experienced true release from her negative emotions. Jesus truly became a reality for her.

## **6.4 The “one session” group**

While going through his case load, Chaplain Muller also chose recipients who had only experienced one TPM session.

### **6.4.1 Beryl - "A cleansing experience"**

Beryl is a Caucasian middle-aged divorced woman living on her own. Both her father and uncle sexually molested her at a very young age. That pain and hurt remained with her. After her divorce more than twenty years ago she started building a wall around her, knowing that she had the responsibility to look after the children. Her youngest son was only a baby then. When her ex-husband's new wife cursed and put a spell on her using witchcraft, she decided to consult a witchdoctor to help her get rid of those curses. Presently, her second child is in jail for rape. He too was molested as a child.

After her son's conviction, she believed that “nothing in her life was going right”. She shared some of her problems with a friend, who referred her to Chaplain Muller. She had never consulted a psychiatrist or psychologist before and therefore is not in a position to compare it with any other way of help. However, it was a positive experience for her.

### **6.4.2 Joe- "Anointed"**

Joe is a fireman and chaplain at the Emergency Services Unit. He is also ordained as a tent-maker pastor and ministers to his own congregation. He is married and has two teenage sons. Joe attended the basic TPM course, but has not yet completed it.

He relates that during a service while laying hands on a sick person, he became bedazzled while praying. He had to ask fellow ministers to take over from him. It was as though the whole episode heralded a very negative change in him. He did not notice it immediately, but his wife and sons did. He became very negative and short-tempered and could not communicate with his family. His sons, being used to a dad playing with them, found that he totally ignored them. He then contemplated committing suicide. He had anticipated using rodent poison and then shooting himself to make doubly sure of his death. When his wife phoned him, he told her that he planned to end his life. She immediately phoned Chaplain Muller and made an appointment for a TPM session.

The manner in which Chaplain Muller ministered to him and also the way in which he came in contact with God was, in Joe's words, “absolutely lovely”. TPM definitely had a big influence

on him. He could make it on his own after his experience with God. Difficult decisions at work have now become easier.

### **6.4.3 Dawid - "Freed from the shame"**

Dawid is a Bulgarian who came to South Africa to seek asylum. Both his parents are still alive, and live with his one sister in Bulgaria. He obtained permanent residency after marrying a South African citizen. Dawid is an unqualified pastor without a steady income. He ministers from a sports hall. Poverty is a reality to him.

He was introduced to TPM by his then fiancé. He carried a lot of emotional baggage, resulting from bad experiences in the past. His experience was that he was never really welcome as a son in his father's house. There were issues that he had to work through as the result of past relationships with women. He felt that there were generational curses of lies, unforgiveness, poverty and bad fortune on him and his family.

He experienced TPM as a process that is guided by the Holy Spirit. When God revealed the stumbling blocks in his own mind to him, he experienced the power and knowledge of the Holy Spirit in the session. He had to confess things from his past, many that he did not remember before being facilitated in TPM. Even though he had not been aware of it, they had been affecting him all along. He also had a lot of forgiveness to do. That was made easy for him when he experienced the "light" in his session. It felt like it was wiped from his memory. Afterwards he felt peaceful and calm, the weight having been taken off his shoulders.

### **6.4.4 Ruth - "You're precious in My eyes"**

When selecting the narratives for this research, Chaplain Muller was under the impression that Ruth only had one session. During the interviews it came to light that she had had more.

Ruth is a woman in her early forties. Recently she was ordained as a tent-making pastor. She comes from a large family. Her father died early in her life and her mother had to raise the children in great poverty. Ruth's first husband died in an accident and she recently remarried. She has no children.

She heard of TPM at a home cell she attended. Initially she did not attend the home cell herself, but was searching for answers to a variety of questions concerning life. She was very depressed and reached the point where she no longer wanted to live. She was unhappy all the time and was tearful and sorrowful about everything. On an evening when she was particularly depressed, she attended the home cell and asked for help. She was referred to Chaplain Muller for TPM.

She could never have guessed that a person can communicate with the Lord in the way she experienced it in TPM, as a personal experience of His presence in her life. She has now been free of depression for two years.

## **6.5 The randomly selected group**

The process which was used to randomly select five TPM recipients from Chaplain Muller's case load is described in chapter 1. The following participants were selected:

### **6.5.1 Annatjie - "A corpse coming to life"**

Annatjie is a middle-aged divorced woman, mother to one daughter who is married. She is the breadwinner in the home, managing her own bakery, rising at 4am in the morning. She was raised as a Pentecostal and is a very practical believer.

Annatjie related how, about 12 years before she started reading books about inner healing, in one of those books she read that you have to invite the Holy Spirit into a traumatic memory. She had constant nightmares and could not get rid of them. Consciously she could not remember anything that could be the cause of it. She asked the Holy Spirit to show her. She was four years of age when her father molested her. In that session with the Holy Spirit the memory, of her lying on the bed and what her father was doing, came back clearly to her. She then asked God: "Where were You when it happened?" Then she saw in a vision of the memory the door to the room opening and Jesus coming in, picking her up from the bed and carrying her out over His shoulder. She experienced that He showed her that He came to take her out of the situation. It affected a total healing of the emotional pain surrounding the molestation. It has been five years since her sexual life was completely changed, healing the coldness, after that TPM session with Chaplain Muller.

Afterwards she completed a course in Christian counseling. One of the subjects was TPM. Working through the course, she realized that it was exactly what she experienced and that her experience had a name. But although it now had a name, it remained an experience with the Holy Spirit. It is only He Who could summarize her past, present and future into one moment and immediately set her free.

A friend, who also did the course with her, introduced her to Chaplain Muller and two TPM sessions followed.

### **6.5.2 Glen - "Changed from shy to cheerful"**

Glen is a panel beater in his early thirties. He is married and has two daughters. Born as the youngest of three siblings, poverty has always played a role in his family. His parents are still alive. His whole family is quiet and withdrawn. His wife is addicted to over-the-counter-medicine and also has an alcohol dependency problem.

His life did not run smoothly. He tried hard to lead a normal life, but could not keep head above water. He went to see Chaplain Muller about three years ago. He went because of his deceased brother who had been involved in drugs and because of wrong friends. It affected Glen when growing up. He did not feel that he had intimacy towards his own children.

TPM helped him. When he talked about his problem, it felt better than keeping it all inside. It ate away at him. He only went for one session. Afterwards he was afraid of himself and never went back. He saw himself as a shy person who spoke to no-one. He even found the research interview difficult. Therapy was not a pleasant experience, but it felt better than to keep it a secret. His wife's response about the influence of TPM on Glen was: "He changed from a quiet, shy person to a cheerful person".

### **6.5.3 Marinda - "Two different people"**

Marinda is a housewife and until recently ran her own pottery business. Married to an ex-policeman, the couple has two sons and one daughter. She serves as a counselor in her church. She completed the TPM course and the whole family has already received TPM.

Marinda completed the Elijah House Counseling course. The pastor at the church introduced her to Chaplain Muller with the words: "You have the same heart". They spoke about TPM, but she did not agree with him, saying that it sounded as if people were re-traumatized. As an example, he had spoken about how a woman who had been raped was taken back in her memory to where it happened to her as a small child. Nevertheless, she did the TPM course because she did not like disagreements stemming from lack of knowledge. The course changed her view and she went to Chaplain Muller for facilitation.

About TPM she says: "It is the only way in which I would want to be helped". It was not a pleasant process at all, being very painful. She liked the fact that she could get to know the truth, and liked nothing about the process except finding the truth. She believes:

The only way to receive healing is to hear the truth from the right source, should the facilitator want to prove his own cleverness in the session, then he misses the mark. People can make up memories just to please the facilitator. Neither is it an

information session. As soon as information and personal opinion interfere, the whole thing falls apart. The recipient gets confused.

#### **6.5.4 Gert - "God has a goal for everyone"**

Gert is a married man and father to five children. His eldest son died very young, while the youngest died a day after his birth. The remaining three children were removed from their care when the couple could no longer provide the basic essentials for the upkeep of the children. Unemployment and addiction played a role.

His son in the Children's Home received TPM. As it is FTF's goal to reunite families, the organization reached out to Gert and his wife. Both of them received TPM.

Gert related that the influence of TPM changed his life. There is no longer any pain when he thinks of the past. From the time he received therapy, his life has improved by 90%. He praises God and tells what God did for him. He realized that he could not blame God for what happened. God has a goal for everyone. It had to be bad for nineteen years for him to now appreciate life.

#### **6.5.5 Magriet - "Fireworks"**

Magriet is employed in the public relations department of a Children's Home. Before that she was head of the baby section at the same Home. She is a divorced woman with three adult children. Having completed the Basic and Advanced Levels I and II TPM courses, she herself is a facilitator.

Initially Magriet was introduced to TPM during a Life Enrichment Seminar. When she heard at the Children's Home that training was to be given, she immediately became involved. "With TPM relief or healing of certain aspects happens so quickly," says Magriet. Her opinion is: "It brings better insights in certain situations. Issues that have been troublesome for many years are changed in an instant. Full sessions are not even always necessary. You can administer self-TPM on the spot to find peace about certain issues".

### **6.6 When TPM was not so successful**

It was indicated in Chapter 2 that Chaplain Muller was requested to select four narratives for which he deemed TPM to be not so successful. Because it is a relative concept, I asked him to give an indication about how he went about selecting the group. **Chaplain Muller** responded in his own words:

*<sup>10</sup>When one refers to candidates where TPM was not so successful, you have to keep*

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<sup>10</sup> I put Chaplain Muller's reflections in italics throughout the document.



*in mind that nothing is guaranteed. This topic reminds me of a couple of people I once knew that gave up their Christian faith to follow another religion or sect. These people were not just Sunday Christians, but used to be devoted followers of Christ. Why the change? I keep asking myself this question continuously but the real answer lies with the persons themselves. Only they know the real truth.*

*Coming back to answer the question as to why I classified these candidates as being not so successful with TPM, the answer is quite logical. Examining the New Testament and looking at the type of people that confronted Jesus, the observation is always the same – they CHANGED. Coming into the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal existence of Life, change or effect have to take place. Sometimes we forget that through the TPM process we allow the EMMANUEL within us to help. Knowing who our God is, I find it difficult to believe that God will not act out on His beloved-formed image. Where does this leave one, when there is no action and there are no results?!!!*

*Focusing on the people who I have named as not so successful, there are many reasons for my comment. I will highlight some of the points that I observed and for the mere reason that I know most of these people well.*

*First of all, most of these people did receive an encounter with our Lord Jesus Christ, whether it was through a Godly illustration, a vision or any other method that God sees fit to bring His Truth. The only difference between these narratives and those seen as successful is the example of Luke 17:11 about the 10 lepers. Only one returned out of gratefulness to the Master and there he received complete restoration. From this illustration it's easy to differentiate between people who are truly thankful, who want to serve God fully, and those who only appreciate the encounter. The one is seen as a true believer (full of Faith) while the others are seen as religious – 1 Cor 2:14. Some of us keep the wood on the fire while others only enjoy the warmth of the fire while it lasts. I personally believe they did receive revelation from God but disposed of it as a figment of their imagination.*

*My second view is of those that are not interested in the works of our Lord Jesus Christ. These people were either forced to come or were curious to find out if they could also receive according to someone else's testimony. This will be the perfect example of the parable of the sower, where the seed fell on rocky places and eventually died. (Mat 13:4).*

*These people would have an emotional experience during their TPM session, but there is no support structure to encourage or guide them.*

*My last observation is of those that do not experience anything Godly in the TPM session.*

*This group of people eventually get "stuck" in a memory, where nothing else happens, and eventually leads to nothing. The memories that they work through are either too sensitive or too painful to allow the facilitator to address. Embedded in these types of memories are usually unforgiveness, shame or disgust. If people are not willing to look at their own past, there is no way for success.*

*Summary:*

*Because of personal involvement, friendships and other forms of commitment with these people, it's quite heartbreaking to observe when no personal or spiritual change is evident. Constant support and encouragement to help address their spiritual dryness also did not help. I usually compare this type of spiritual dryness to that of a street beggar. Unless you can take out the street from that person you will*

*battle with him regardless. My only conclusion for the not so successful TPM attempts is that the Lord Jesus Christ is aware of the reason and is still in charge of the person's transformation. Our only function, as facilitators, is to stay being a willful instrument in the Surgeon's hand. At last, I just want to leave the reader with this Bible verse, "Seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened.*

If I may summarize here, it seems that Chaplain Muller's criteria for selecting these particular narratives was that he did not notice personal or spiritual change in the lives of the recipients. It must be strongly emphasized that this is from his perspective.

### **6.6.1 Veronica - "A divorce would have been a mistake"**

Veronica is a married woman in her late twenties with two young children. She grew up in a foster family where physical abuse occurred. She was diagnosed with schizophrenia and is on a disability pension. She has never had permanent employment. Currently, she and her family share a house with her sister-in-law's family.

Veronica consulted various psychiatrists and psychologists about her problem. She suffers from terrible nightmares and gets very depressed about things that happened in the past. At night she also experiences hallucinations when she is awake. She sees things like spiders and black creatures at the window. These things cause great fear.

Her family joined a home cell and it was there that she requested Chaplain Muller to help her with the problem. Veronica said that TPM helped her enormously to handle her problems better.

Her husband tells of how he never gave up hope. He felt powerless. He could do nothing to help her. He often rebuked the "things" in Jesus' name, but it did not help. He often felt that if he too could see the things, he could reckon with them. In the past, she had nightmares or hallucinations up to 5 or 6 times a week, but that has lessened considerably after TPM. In the three months prior to our interview she had only experienced nightmares three times. They were of brief duration and not very intense. Her husband mentions that apart from the changes that were mentioned, he only experienced an enormous change in her willingness to co-operate.

Chaplain Muller related that at the time they initially met, the couple approached him and said, "It's enough, we want a divorce and no one is going to stop us". If someone had told him at that time that they would get together again, he would not have believed it. The couple did not go for marriage counselling but between advice given to her husband and Veronica's TPM, her healing improved the relationship. It now seems that a divorce would have been a mistake.

At the time of the research interviews, the abovementioned was true. Since then, Veronica has again had extramarital affairs, weakening the marriage. Presently, the couple is again working at their relationship at an effort to save their marriage.

### **6.6.2 Edward - "A boy who let his Father down"**

Edward is a married man in his middle twenties with a two-year old son. He works as a bank clerk and lives in his own house. He is an extrovert and has boundless confidence. Edward grew up with alcohol misuse, assault and a lack of moral values, for example respect. He qualified as a TPM facilitator but is no longer active in the ministry. He is rebellious and currently not in relationship with God.

Experiencing great stress at work, he became very negative and depressed. It led to him consulting Chaplain Muller. During the TPM session, God explained to him why he need not feel stressed or depressed and things improved tremendously. Although it improved so greatly in the beginning, his Christian life totally deteriorated again. Stress of normal living has returned, but he has not had the depression that he experienced before.

### **6.6.3 Emily - "Voice of a woman"**

Emily is in her mid fifties and is a single mother. Although her two children are grown they both still live with her. She divorced in 1994 after being married for twelve years. She experienced a lot of violence in her marriage. There was also verbal abuse and no love. About the same time that she got divorced, her mother, to whom she was very close, died.

Emily has recently been diagnosed with bipolar mood disorder. She works at a pharmaceutical company.

As a result of passive aggression, she started shouting at every one, both at home and at work. She had no patience with her daughter and at one stage she could not handle it any more and threw her out of her house. After this incident, as a result of all this anger and because there was no happiness in her life, she decided to go for counselling. She knew about Chaplain Muller's counselling and decided to consult him.

Emily related that it was a blessing for her to receive TPM from Chaplain Muller. The main influence on her life was that she learnt to get in contact with the Lord. She also learnt what forgiveness is all about. She cried a lot and that helped her to experience real relief. Emily indicated that she valued TPM very highly and added: "I am a very changed person".

### **6.6.4 Roelf - "I did not want it to work"**

Roelf is a concrete thinker and has difficulties with abstract thoughts. One of six children, he spent a good deal of time in different care situations. He is married and has two children. A



couple of years ago the family's house burnt down and they no longer had the means to care for the children, who were then placed in the Children's Home. Addiction and an irresponsible lifestyle contributed to the occurrence of child abuse.

After his wife went for counselling with Chaplain Muller, the chaplain also invited him to come for counselling. He did not really want to but he went anyway. He knows that it was very difficult for him at that stage, seeing that he was still very influenced by his misuse of alcohol and drugs.

He verbalizes that it hit him hard that his wife went for counselling while he did not want to. He was overly sensitive about what the people of the neighbourhood would think of it. A question asked by Chaplain Muller upset him and angered him greatly, and he did not want to co-operate further. Although Roelf does not believe it's necessary to ever delve into a person's past, about which he has a problem, he has no problem with counselling in general.

## **6.7 Closing remarks**

The aim of this chapter was to introduce the co-researchers. Each one has his/her own unique experience of TPM. Different perspectives will certainly evaluate each one differently. In the following chapters I aim to reflect on those unique experiences from a perspective that respects the uniqueness of each one's personal experience, but also one in which new knowledge about TPM and the influence of it on people's lives can be constructed.

In Chapter 7, I will examine their own interpretations of their experience of TPM. In Chapter 8, I intend to reflect on the ethical aspect of their experiences, while in Chapter 9, I wish to reflect on how the change took place.

## Chapter 7

# THE PARTICIPANTS' INTERPRETATIONS OF THE HEALING POSSIBILITIES OF TPM

Seeing that this study is about the participants' experiences and interpretations, I would like their own voices to be heard as much as possible. I worked through all the interview process notes in order to reflect on the “how” question (the first research question), as expounded on the previous page. In this chapter I am going to share the participants' responses to the question of how they did or did not experience change in their dominant life stories from problem saturated stories to new preferred stories of faith, hope and love after their encounter with TPM. Through the participants' responses to the two sub-questions below, their interpretations of the healing possibilities of TPM will shortly become clear. In the next chapter I am going to reflect on their experiences of the practices of TPM.

The first sub-question is:

What effect do the participants' responses seem to indicate that TPM has on the way they narrate their lives or construct their realities?

In this section I report the participants' responses, as they formulated their experiences. I do not judge the truth thereof or try to interpret their responses from a theological perspective. I accept their formulations of their experiences as legitimate experiences. That is the truth for them and I respect it as such.

During the research interview I asked the participants to rate the changes they identified on a scale from 0 to 10 (with 0 being “not at all” and 10 being “completely”). The number indicates the extent of the shift that they personally experienced. In each case, the nominees were also asked to do the rating. (In some cases the nominees only rated those aspects that they felt adequately familiar with). The experiences of the nominees serve as confirmation of the experiences of the participants. When kept in mind that, with the exception of four narratives, all the nominees live in the same households as the participants, it places the nominees in excellent positions to judge the effect of TPM in the lifestyles of the participants.

In four of the narratives I did not obtain the ratings of the participants or the nominees. After I provide a table summary of the ratings (both of the participants and nominees) of the other

fourteen participants, I give the verbal responses of the nominees of the four participants who I did not get a rating from.

### 7.1 The participants’- and nominees’ assessments of the shift in the way they narrate their lives

The table below presents the average rate of fourteen of the participants’ shifts in the way they narrate their lives or construct their realities, firstly according to their own experiences and secondly according to the nominee of each. This table was adapted from the tables that occur in fourteen of the narratives. In each of them (see Appendix B) is a table where the aspects are listed in which the participants experienced change as the result of their exposure to TPM.

| Participant   | Participant Average Rate | Nominee Average Rate |
|---------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Alice         | 6                        | 6.24                 |
| Michelle      | 7.62                     | 7.88                 |
| Beryl         | 6.29                     | 3.63                 |
| Joe           | 6.53                     | 6.13                 |
| Dawid         | 8.11                     | 7.63                 |
| Ruth          | 7.61                     | 9.09                 |
| Annatjie      | 8.36                     | 8.67                 |
| Glen          | 6.69                     | 6.13                 |
| Marinda       | 8.82                     | 9.2                  |
| Gert          | 9.64                     | 8                    |
| Magriet       | 9.08                     | 9.09                 |
| Veronica      | 3.25                     | 3.5                  |
| Edward        | 3.61                     | 3.2.                 |
| Emily         | 7.82                     | 2.21                 |
| Average group | 7.1                      | 6.48                 |

*Table 7-1 Changes participants experienced*

It is notable that the participants that indicated that they have not yet made a significant shift in the way they narrate their stories, are the same narratives where Chaplain Muller rated TPM as not so successful. Emily is an exception to the rule. Regarding the average shift made by each participant, there is a negligible difference between their own rating and each nominee’s rating. The fact that the nominees also experienced the shift in that way can serve as confirmation that it is a realistic rating. The difference between the rating of the participant and the nominee is significant in only two narratives, namely Emily’s and Beryl’s. This aspect, as well as the narratives where TPM was deemed not so successful, will be discussed more fully later on.

Rounded off, the group as a whole experienced an average shift of 7 on a 10-point scale. Seen as a whole it is clear that numbers show that the participants experienced a noteworthy shift in the way they narrate their lives. The implication is that they experienced that certain aspects of their problem-saturated stories have been effectively deconstructed, in other words: “showing the assumptions behind beliefs not to be valid” (Meyer 2007:11).

Numbers may well indicate a clear shift, but as Pinnegar and Daynes (2007:17) say, numbers are “sterile” and cannot express the true depth and extent of each participant’s experience. Put differently, it is a rather thin description of the shift that some of the participants experienced. It is therefore necessary to enrich this description of the shift by allowing the participants to co-author the words. The focus will be on how each participant narrated their own “problem-saturated story” and how they narrate it after receiving TPM.

Before discussing it, I want to give opportunity to the other four participants to voice the change they felt they experienced.

### **7.1.1 The voices of the nominees**

The following are excerpts from the research interviews with the nominees of those four participants whose nominees did not rate their experience of change.

- Jacques' nominee responded with: “It is as though he was a child and is now all grown up. After giving his heart to Jesus, he went to church but persisted in going out on Friday evenings. He tried to ‘perform’ at church. He still sought something he could not find. Since experiencing TPM, he is on fire with it. He wants everyone to experience the same healing”.
- Harold’s nominee said: “Of course, slight problems remain but from where it was chaos, he is now a ‘new creation’. He used to eat continuously from morning to night, but now he knows how to share”.
- The nominee noticed the change in Minah a couple of months after starting TPM. Minah had changed and now fears God. She started praying for others and witnessing to what God had done for her. Before TPM the nominee (the HR manager at her work) sometimes received complaints from other workers that Minah ridiculed them. She told herself that it was merely Minah’s spontaneity that others wrongly interpreted. After TPM she no longer received any complaints. “It was probable that after TPM humanity emitted from Minah”.

There is also the narrative where TPM did not achieve a positive result.

- When the nominee was confronted by the question of whether she felt that TPM made a change in Roelf's life, she could not give a definite "yes" or "no". But she indicated that there are two reasons why TPM was not so successful, namely the personality clash between Roelf and Chaplain Muller; and Roelf's negative view of counselling as a whole. He did not want to be part of any counselling or anything of the sort.

### **7.1.2 Reflecting on the participants' experiences of the effect TPM had on the way they narrate their life stories**

I will now provide a description of how each participant experienced TPM, as far as possible in their own words, from the research interviews. Although it is not possible to repeat everything without a certain amount of interpretation, I have tried hard to reflect it as accurately as possible. Throughout the discussion of all the narratives I first indicate the responses of the participants and their nominees as well as that of their facilitator where applicable. Then I follow that up with my reflection on each of the narratives.

Firstly – the pilot study.

#### **7.1.2.1 Pilot study – Jacques - “Transformed from stuttering to public speaking”**

I take a look at how **Jacques** described his problem-saturated story, seeing himself as a person with a communication problem, which especially manifested itself in stuttering. He could not get along with Black people; his unbridled temper played a big part in this. At the same time he experienced an inability to establish a relationship with a girl and was not able to find a satisfying job. He could not see his way open to speak in public and experienced that he had no communication with God. In an attempt to solve his problems, he abused alcohol and became involved in a romantic relationship that led him into contact with the occult. He was suicidal and there was a strong sense of being unappreciated. Jacques' story was dominated by his feelings of worthlessness and low self-esteem. Being directionless (“a drifter”) as well as poor at relationships appeared to be the strongest characteristics of his story.

Jacques related in the interview that the following changes, following his TPM-sessions, meant the most to him: self-confidence, a positive self-image, improved communication and the fact that he no longer drinks. Chaplain Muller related that when they met, Jacques was a broken



person and drifted from one church to another. Now he assumes leadership at one of their house churches that meet in a hall and people hang on his lips.

In my conversations with Jacques there was no indication of any stuttering. Furthermore, Jacques has married and now holds down a permanent job. In my dealings with him, I experienced in certain circumstances that Jacques still may well be unsure of himself, but he is able to competently facilitate TPM-sessions and also lead a cell group in his church. It also became clear to me that Chaplain Muller became a role model for Jacques and in my opinion this greatly contributed to the thickening of his preferred life story.

### **7.1.2.2 The Successful group**

The responses of the four participants selected for the successful group:

#### **a) Harold - “How God can change a person”.**

**Harold's** narrative was already told in Chapter 5, where his problem-saturated story became clear. As his housefather said, “Harold was a boy written off by everyone. No one could handle him”. Harold’s own words in the interview simply but very clearly express the change he experienced, when he says: “The old Harold was bad and the new Harold is a good boy. He is a kind boy now”. Harold's housefather related that many people believed Harold to be a lost case, and then God changed it. He was a loner, now he makes friends. Now the children like him and he is kind to them. The nominee (his housemother) said when she told people of the change, they often could not believe it, but she believed it because she saw it for herself.

What can a finite human being say when you see a miracle occurring before your eyes, when God changes a person? I cannot call it anything else but a miracle. The change in Harold was so dramatic that everyone in his environment noticed it. In fact, it led the Children’s Home concerned to add TPM to their staff’s training. Harold does, however, have a considerable emotional handicap and further therapeutic attention is needed to steer him towards a balanced lifestyle and future.

#### **b) Alice - “Inner voices exchanged for God’s voice”**

**Alice's** relation of her “problem saturated story” can probably be described by the word “hopelessness”. Initially she presented as a person who had little or *no hope* that she would ever be able to lead a normal life. There was no hope of having a career, getting married or leading a normal family life. She remained dependent on her parents and there was no hope for an independent, self-sufficient life. Psychologists and psychiatrists diagnosed her with Dissociative

Identity Disorder (Multiple Personality Disorder), Bipolar Mood Disorder, Borderline and Schizoid Personality Disorders to such an extent that a psychologist told her flatly that there was *no hope* for her. The other central theme in Alice's "problem saturated story" was the lack of trust. Caused by her traumatic experiences and the reactions of various parties in the past, she related that she found it exceedingly difficult to trust anyone.

To probe Alice's "problem saturated story" further, mention can be made of poor reality testing. One of the most prominent aspects of it was that she had no identity of her own. According to Alice's own description, establishing an own identity was made almost impossible by the co-existence of many alters, a few of which played a leading role in handling the demands of everyday life. *[According to the DSM IV (1994:487) an alter can be described as a distinct identity or personality state, each with its own relatively enduring pattern of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about the environment and self.]* She related how she was dependent on those personalities in order to maintain herself in her environment. Her thoughts were filled with irrationalities. Obsessive compulsivity was also present. She could not skip a line in her journal. She became extremely anxious when she could not go out and buy a book immediately. She would never dare to hold a different opinion to others, afraid of rejection. She held to what others expected of her. An independent existence was impossible for her.

While other people like her nominee (her psychotherapist) consider the change in Alice as remarkable, Alice is not yet convinced of it. Various members of the organization she is part of, have made spontaneous remarks about the changes they have seen. Although Alice has already started developing an alternative narrative of her life, it still appears that she cannot give herself credit for the moves she has already mastered. Alice admitted that denial probably still plays a big part in it. When Alice was asked to read the report about the group reflection of her narrative, there was partial amnesia about the event. During the reflection much credit was given for her progress. It was seen as a part of the thickening process. It seems to me that she is still in the process of establishing her alternative story. Even though it is still difficult for her at this time to give herself credit for her progress, there are also indications that she has already come a long way with it. In her own words during the interview:

- "I only recently discovered that I have an own life and if I differ from others, it is okay".
- "There is certain knowledge that I have and if it differs from someone else, it is not personal".
- "Now when I write, I can skip a line without feeling guilty about it.
- She could hold her own when her mother attempted to persuade her otherwise.
- "Now it happens seldom that I analyse a sentence word for word and then come to the strangest conclusions.

- She is now able to control herself by saying to herself that she has to wait before reacting. She is able to see the irrationality of it.

What struck me at the time of the interview was that only a handful of the original alters were still active. Alice was already learning to cope independently from the alters. At the time of writing this research report, she indicated that a total integration of all the alters had taken place. This integration of alters can be seen as significant from a therapeutic viewpoint.

It seems to me that she is well on her way to finding her own identity. For example, she legally changed her name. Her parents gave her an impartial name, but she has now chosen a new combination of family names. She views it as her roots and a way to form an identity of her own.

### **c) Minah - "Cured overnight"**

After the death of her child and grandchild as a result of AIDS, **Minah** described herself as yelling at everyone in her “problem saturated story”. She attributed it to the inability to handle frustration. It seems to me that her state of mind may be compared to that of major depression. She reported that she could not eat, that she could not sleep and cried the whole night. In her own words: “I nearly died”. There was a continuous noise in her head that she described as a machine that rattled. Minah said excitedly during the interview: “Now all of that noise is gone”. As already reported it is very clear from the response of her nominee (her HR manager) that she experienced that TPM had a major effect on her life story. TPM changed her whole life. Minah related that after having had a TPM session she had a renewed appetite and the insomnia left her immediately. In her words: “I slept so peacefully that I did not even hear the children’s noises”. She calls TPM a beautiful (“mooi”) counselling.

The spontaneous way in which Minah took part in the research interview, stood out for me. Specifically in this interview the non-verbal was more important than the verbal. The excitement, with which she took part, is witness to TPM having great importance to her. It persuaded me that TPM must have had a real effect on the way she narrates her life.

### **d) Michelle - "A huge breach in the wall"**

The way **Michelle** narrates her life is evident of a huge positive effect TPM had on her life story. Once a person who withdrew into her own world, Michelle developed into a bubbling, sparkling person who “will go out of her way to cheer up others” with her infectious laugh. That is the way her family experiences it. A real “problem saturated story” unfolds in her interview. Her nominee related: “Always pessimistic, she could see nothing positive and was negative about everything”. It is the story of a little girl, abandoned at two, standing beneath a big tree, watching her mother drive away. She was in and out of children’s homes on a few occasions. Chaplain

Muller describes her life narrative as one with some of the most severe trauma he has ever had to deal with. The only way in which she could cope with life was to be different people. The person on the outside did what was expected of her in order to survive. The other person on the inside she revealed to no one, not even her husband. According to her description her biggest issue was trust.

Although a setback took place a couple of months ago, Michelle is convinced: "TPM changed my whole way of thinking". Before TPM her children would have told her jokes and she did not laugh. Now she is the one who laughs the most. She never thought it possible to have a life like the one she now has.

Her nominee (husband) witnessed that he only became aware of the change over a period of time. For him, the difference lay in "the hole in the wall". In the past she completely cut him out of her inner life, but since TPM she has started opening up towards him. It seems that he played an active role in the further taking down of the wall with his positive experience of the change that had already taken place.

My conclusion is that it is from that abandonment experience that the little girl constructed the thin description of her life story, using her landscape of action to construct her landscape of identity, seeing herself as unloved, abandoned, good for nothing and someone with nothing to laugh about. Michelle experienced according to her own rating (see table in interview 1 – Appendix B) that there was almost a 100% shift in the direction of her preferred story. The setback she had a few months ago, according to Chaplain Muller's experience, was God's way of further deconstructing the old story and helping her with the transition to the new preferred story. I can understand that in Michelle's experience it felt like a 100% shift, but I believe that there is still a long road of reconstruction ahead of her.

### **7.1.2.3 The "one session" group**

This group was selected from participants who only received one session. In one of the narratives, the research interview revealed that the one participant, selected for this group, actually received more than one session, but the decision was taken not to exclude her from the group.

#### **a) Beryl - "A cleansing experience"**

In Beryl's narrative there is a difference of opinion as to whether TPM was really successful or not. It is clear that the nominee experienced that TPM did not cause sufficient change in Beryl's life. Being the leader of her cell group, the nominee probably had a different expectation to Beryl

when she went for the session. Chaplain Muller remembers it as one of the easiest sessions he facilitated. The implication is that Beryl very quickly discovered the lies that influenced her thoughts and received God's truth about it.

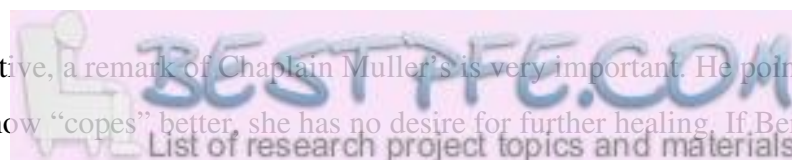
At this point the focus will be on Beryl's motivation, why she asked for help. Her motive is described as believing that "nothing in her life was going right", after her son's conviction. When taken into account that Beryl had also approved of her son consulting a sangoma (traditional healer), as long as he just talked to someone, the impression is created that Beryl acts from the framework where she wants to neutralize (deconstruct) the negative effect that the past may have on her. Any way would have been good enough. According to her, the fact that she could open her heart about being molested brought her relief. Her nominee said: "It is as though she cannot fully comprehend the extent of the healing that TPM brought her".

The greatest value that TPM had for Beryl is that she is now able to be in contact with her emotions, while she dissociated from them in the past. She also experienced total relief from the negative influence her marriage had on her. This change was brought about by forgiveness. She experienced the forgiveness of the Lord intensely in her TPM session. According to her, that formed the basis of the change.

It is clear to me that Beryl is totally content with what she achieved. The question of what effect TPM had on the way she narrates her life and constructs her realities has to be reflected on from her own experience. It would seem that she was indeed successful in deconstructing the aggressive, irascible and apathetic Beryl, while TPM helped her to co-construct a calmer, friendlier Beryl. She is however not very sure whether TPM is responsible for the change.

According to the nominee, sufficient deconstruction did not take place. She does not see enough change, in that Beryl still has a fiery temper. It seems from the conversation that the nominee ascribes this lack of deconstruction to Beryl's spiritual growth. When judging it, she measures the effectiveness of an alternative story in the way that Beryl made a commitment to Jesus Christ. Beryl does not view the commitment to Jesus Christ as central. She makes no distinction between a religious person and someone who made a full commitment to Jesus Christ. Beryl experiences that she has constructed a new preferred story, in which the negative aspects of the molestation and her divorce were overcome. If the nominee does not see the changes she expected, it is because the nominee has her own preferred story for Beryl that differs from Beryl's.

In judging this narrative, a remark of Chaplain Muller's is very important. He pointed out that while she feels she now "copes" better, she has no desire for further healing. If Beryl



experienced a meaningful shift, it would mean that she now narrates her life story differently to before. It is abundantly clear that the therapeutic approach used is of little importance to her. She has no experience of other approaches. The possibility exists, however, that the same result could have been achieved using other approaches. Beryl's experience of Chaplain Muller played an important role. This aspect is dealt with in another chapter. This research is not focussed on proving that TPM is better than other approaches, but wants to explore the effect of TPM on the lives of the recipients. Therefore it is irrelevant to what extent Beryl believes that it is specifically TPM that brought about the change. In this narrative the facilitator made use of TPM. The question currently under scrutiny is what effect the TPM-session had in the way in which the participant narrates her life story after receiving it. Judging from the research interviews it seems to have undoubtedly made a difference.

### **b) Joe - "Anointed"**

In **Joe's** story a narrative comes to light where a participant described a change in himself from someone who had lost all hope to someone who proclaims the Gospel with boldness. According to him, TPM changed his whole being. His opinion of himself changed radically.

His "problem-saturated story" unfolds where he tells of how a kind of spiritual blanket covered him after he prayed for a sick person and laid hands on her. It is as though the episode heralded a very negative change in him. He did not notice it immediately but his wife and sons did. He was very negative and short-tempered and could not communicate with his family. His sons, used to a dad playing with them, found that he totally ignored them. With regards to the church, he avoided contact with the members. He was abrupt, to the degree that he was reprimanded about it. Before the TPM session he had completely ceased to pray. His sermons deteriorated. He no longer did home visits. He then planned to commit suicide. He wanted to take rodent poison and then shoot himself to make doubly sure of his death.

For Joe the greatest value is that TPM changed his whole humanity. His whole opinion of himself has changed. He referred to his experience earlier on the day (the day of the research interview) at a course of the emergency services. Some of the others there voiced their doubts about whether they would be able to implement the course. He immediately knew that he could implement it and would be a good officer.

I wonder if Joe viewed his experience described above, regarding the laying on of hands, from a deliverance perspective. That would imply that he might have believed that he lost against the devil. In his experience, it would mean to be without the power of the Holy Spirit. Joe could have experienced that God had abandoned him (Joe has read this reflection and is satisfied with

these comments). In such a case it would mean that Joe's theology actually strengthened his "problem-saturated story" of being of "no value to the Lord". If taken into account that theology is socially constructed, it implies that this socially constructed theology robbed Joe of an intimate relationship with God. By allowing the voice of the Lord to take part in this conversation, a new meaning of the incident was socially constructed.

### **c) Dawid - "Freed from the shame"**

**Dawid's** problem saturated story centred around the facts that his own family rejected him and he arrived in an alien country without hope and without a future. His entire lifestyle was intent on survival. In that process he qualified as a pastor, but in effect he was still in a struggle for survival. He thought he had to "achieve spirituality". He had issues with his father who never embraced him and made him feel unimportant. Being single troubled him. These are a few aspects of his problem-saturated story.

Dawid did everything possible to better himself and his situation. As a stranger he had only himself to rely on. In his training as a pastor he received Biblical counselling. It did not make him feel better about himself. After TPM it became clear to him that he misunderstood his father, and change started taking place. In particular, he experienced that he looked at all his memories through glasses of guilt and shame and it made him feel worthless. By experiencing Jesus revealing to him that it was a lie, he is now able to look differently at the same memories. He describes his new identity as being someone who believes that he is unique and for whom God has a destiny in mind. He is now calm, friendly and wants to encourage others. After the lies in his life were unmasked and he confessed, he felt really safe. It made him more comfortable in talking about his faults. He explained that if someone had reprimanded him before, he could not face it. He then just denied it. Now it is easy to apologize. Chaplain Muller described the outcome: "Today Dawid has finally conquered the obstacles in life and stopped trying to be someone else".

It seems to me that Dawid did everything possible to deconstruct his problem saturated story. That driving force compelled him to keep seeking a partner in the deconstruction process, whom he found in Chaplain Muller. Today he is diligently progressing in constructing that alternative story. According to Dawid he was able to view his landscape of action from another perspective since his TPM session. It enabled him to begin constructing an own identity. God's voice, as he experienced it, was a partner in the deconstruction of the old story.

### **d) Ruth - "You're precious in My eyes"**

When Chaplain Muller described **Ruth** before she received TPM, he talked about someone with low self-esteem who looked neglected. Ruth gives a thin description of herself when in her “problem-saturated story” she views herself as a liar, gossip, someone who is difficult to get along with, difficult to please, cries for weeks, is stressed, depressed and cannot forgive. She always tried to be a good person. She has always believed that she has to take care of her brothers and sisters. She always took responsibility for everyone. She also believed that she was not serving God in the right way, and it always felt as if she would never get it right.

God released her from this, by showing her in the TPM session that it is not about “performing”, but only about honesty. Ruth related that now she knows that she is capable of anything. Now she no longer has these unrealistic expectations of herself and her sister now describes her as “calm and there is a beauty within her”. According to their ratings, her sister is even more convinced of the change that became evident in Ruth's life.

From my perspective it stood out for me that the thin description she used to evaluate herself, was truly deconstructed in the way in which her body image changed. Initially she was preoccupied with her appearance but in the research interview it was absent. According to her testimony, Ruth experienced that God's voice deconstructed those old beliefs, which had led to the thin description by which she had described her life before.

#### **7.1.2.4 The randomly selected group**

Five participants were randomly selected from Chaplain Muller's total case load.

##### **a) Annatjie - “A corpse coming to life”**

The effect of TPM on the way **Annatjie** narrated her life story, became obvious during the research interviews. The way in which she presented herself during the interview, revealed a cheerful, spontaneous woman who knows who she is and where she is going. According to Chaplain Muller the woman who sat across him at that first TPM session did not know who she was or where she was heading. Her nominee described the change as a corpse coming to life and Annatjie confirmed that this is exactly what happened: “I would be hard pressed to find a better description”.

Annatjie related that her marriage partner had a problem. He wanted everything done for his own comfort. All her input made no change. Three years ago he decided to leave their home. Annatjie rated the personality change that she experienced from that moment onwards using a full 10. The marriage still made her hold back. She experienced that religious-minded people have no perspective. They wanted her to stay in the marriage. When you change the perspective of your



destiny, you ask the question whether God wants you to stay in the marriage. She stayed for 28 years so that her children would not go through the trauma of a divorce. After 28 years she left the marriage when she asked her husband if they could work on their relationship and he replied that it was not possible.

She experienced that the Holy Spirit released her from the framework in which she was held captive. After she was released from the power the molestation had over her, she could still not be fully woman because of her marriage. She had to shoulder all the male responsibilities. It was only during the past three years that she could learn to be a woman, since it was taken away from her at age four.

Annatjie related that she was quiet and submissive in her marriage. She never argued, and took all the responsibilities on herself to allow the family to function. According to her, TPM played an important role in helping her work through the damage that submission to male domination had on her personhood. After her initial healing of the molestation, she tried hard to repair her marriage relationship, but came up against a wall. Her sessions with Chaplain Muller helped her while she was still married. It is her conviction that TPM gradually healed her. After those sessions she still had to walk a long way alone with the Holy Spirit to become the person she is today. If she had stayed in that marriage, it is now clear to her that she would not have reached her destiny that she believes the Holy Spirit has for her.

From the interviews I gather that the divorce played a major role in the change she experienced. When it is taken into account that TPM, according to her, played a major role in the deconstruction of male power in her life and it enabled her to be strong enough to ask for a divorce, the effect of TPM on her life became evident. This is one narrative where words cannot suffice to illustrate the actual enthusiasm and conviction with which she related about the effect TPM had on her life. To try and capture something of it, I want to say: "What a remarkable woman".

#### **b) Glen - "Changed from shy to cheerful"**

Three years before, **Glen** received one TPM session. His wife still testifies to a great change. Glen does not give himself much credit. Chaplain Muller's reaction also makes it seem as though he is very surprised with the progress Glen made in those three years. According to the testimony in the interviews, TPM definitely made a difference in Glen's life. It is especially clear from his wife's reaction. After TPM she experienced a great change. Glen started taking responsibility and is now in control. He put down his foot, is stricter but more loving. He plays with the little one. He listens to his wife and tries to fix whatever bothers her. The nominee, his spouse, saw

herself as the “soft” one whom everyone took advantage of. When her sister offered her a job but nothing materialized, Glen called his sister-in-law and stood up for her rights. In that moment she experienced his care, which she seldom experienced before. She related that he is still taking responsibility for their marriage and she is proud of him. She credited the change to the effect of his TPM-session.

The question is whether Glen himself narrates his story differently after his TPM session. During the interview he admitted that he used to feel like a nothing but now he feels like a person. Crucial to Glen’s experience is the fact that he could talk to someone about an issue that he was unable to share with anyone, and it made a huge difference.

When Glen talks about not being able to share his problem with anyone, he mentions a “hellish fear” of even talking to his father. After his brother’s death he felt driven to open up. That is when he went to Chaplain Muller. Now he can easily talk about anything with his father. His relationship with his children also changed after the session. After the session he discovered that he could play with his children. It is as though a light was switched on and he had a better understanding about his brother. It helped him to forgive his brother. Before the session he could not talk to his mother-in-law, as he believed her to be such a difficult person. Now he also sees her in another way.

He related that he had a general fear of speaking to people. TPM helped him. When he talked about his problem, it felt better than keeping it all inside. He saw himself as a shy person who found it difficult to speak to anyone. He found even the research interview difficult. Therapy was not a pleasant experience, but it felt better than to keep it a secret. His wife's response to the influence TPM had on Glen was: “He changed from a quiet, shy person to a cheerful person”.

Asked why he thought TPM worked, he said that he gained many things through it, especially confidence. However, the measure by which he narrates his life story differently is not as much as his wife rates it. His “problem-saturated story” is not yet effectively deconstructed. Being the result of only one session, even the amount of the shift he narrates is remarkable. More attention will be given to the discourse of effective deconstruction under a later point.

### c) **Marinda - "Two different people"**

The way in which **Marinda** narrates her life story, made the effect of TPM on her life story evident. Before TPM she sketched herself as an extremist, stopped by no one. Marinda stepped over everybody to get what she wanted. After TPM she is still assertive but now handles it in a different way. Now the concerns of the Kingdom of God have become more important than fighting her way to the top.

It would seem that in writing her “problem-saturated story” fear dictated to her. It becomes clear from her story that when she lost her mother at an early age, her fear of living on the streets taught her to stand up for herself. In her experience the shift is evident in that she no longer has the same fear that she will not be provided for. The following is an example of it: “When God told her to sell her business and that He would provide for her, she experienced anxiety at being without income for four months. But her anxiety was less than before. At least she could follow through with it. In the past she would have become hysterical in such a situation”.

This fear was closely linked to her image of God. It seems that growing up in the Old Apostolic Church, she believed that she had to do something to win God’s favour. The concept of grace was seemingly absent. In TPM she experienced that God is “merciful” and that He is God and not just “a projection of people’s thoughts”. She discovered that she could approach Him with anything, “even if it’s the most scandalous thing”. It can be said that her TPM experience makes an alternative image of God visible. Three quotations from the process notes on the interviews are examples of this:

- “According to Chaplain Muller her view of God was hard and unyielding”;
- “Her perception of His Essence has changed completely”, and
- “She now experiences God as her main man”.

According to Marinda, TPM played a very important role in the deconstruction of fear in her life. From the interviews I got the impression that TPM played an important part in the construction of a new image of God. It led to a change in the way in which she narrates her life.

#### **d) Gert - "God has a goal for everyone"**

If the **Gert** before TPM is compared with the Gert after TPM, it seems that both Gert and his nominee rated the shift at the maximum. His “problem-saturated story” includes a serious addiction, the inability to hold down a job as well as serious marital problems. In his words: “I did not know how to manage life”. People thought him useless and abused him. He related that he was sulky and could not tolerate jokes. There was no interest in church. At a time he considered committing suicide.

As part of Gert's new preferred story he relates that he now respects his wife, no longer thinks about suicide, no longer drinks, has a good appetite, stands his ground and spends time with his family. He is experiencing a close relationship with God. In the research interviews both his daughter and wife confirmed that they have experienced these changes.

Even though it might be possible that all three participants in these interviews sketched a rosier picture than the actual reality, Gert's change remains remarkable. It struck me that even his physical appearance underwent a metamorphosis. He is steadily employed. I was familiar with the family before Gert received TPM facilitation and from my experience the atmosphere in the household differs radically now from that before the TPM process. It was also evident to me that the marital relationship is now more relaxed. In his case, God helped him deconstruct the image of the family who harmed him by making Gert see them from His perspective. It deconstructed the lies or false perceptions that Gert had about them and he could forgive. He also actively repaired his relationships with the people involved.

#### **e) Magriet - "Fireworks"**

**Magriet** described TPM as "fireworks" because she experienced that "issues that have been troublesome for years are changed in an instant". She related that her sense of guilt, low self-esteem and inabilities were changed by means of TPM. The fear that dictated her life, up to the stage before she received TPM, disappeared afterwards. This change was evident in her landscape of action when we take a closer look at the example of how she handled the children in the Home differently. Her nominee (the manager at the children's home) testified to that effect that she also observed a definite change in her landscape of identity.

From the above description of her experience of TPM as well as her positive attitude towards TPM and her involvement in the promotion of TPM among her family and friends, I conclude that TPM had a significant effect on the way she narrates her life story.

#### **7.1.2.5 Narratives where TPM was not so successful**

Chaplain Muller judged that TPM was not so successful in the lives of these participants. His motivation for it was set out in the previous chapter. Here I only want to mention that it is possible that others may judge the narratives differently.

#### **a) Veronica - "A divorce would have been a mistake"**

It must be kept in mind that **Veronica** is a very concrete thinker and that abstract concepts are a challenge to her. Ultimately it influenced the level of discussion in the interviews.

Depression is part of her dominant story. She has learnt to cope with her circumstances by means of anger, fear and sadness. Accordingly she had no vision for the future while she believes that she is not able to establish satisfying interpersonal relationships. However, on the contrary, she indicates that her family relationships improved vastly. At one stage she saw a divorce as the

only solution, but now has a meaningful marital relationship as well as better relationships with her children.

The presence of nightmares and terrifying hallucinations during the night are silent witnesses that her “problem-saturated story” was dictated by fear. Its origins may be greatly due to the harsh and rigid educational practices her foster parents made use of.

The only area where Veronica can give herself credit is in her spiritual life. Seen as a whole, it is her relationships that show the greatest change as the result of TPM. She is adamant that these changes are indeed due to TPM. Both her nominee and she report that she has already received so many other types of therapy and counselling but none brought about real change. Her statement is: “TPM is direct help from God. God takes you to the memory and frees you from the pain contained therein”.

Her nominee (her husband) sketches a picture of the radical change that took place in her. He admits that there was not a personality change but it is of great importance to him that her nightmares and hallucinations occur significantly less frequently and are also less intense. According to his faith framework, he ascribed those things to evil forces. The nominee uses the language of faith to describe Veronica’s change. Seen from any angle, it is indeed a huge step for Veronica. She used to see herself as someone helpless in the clutches of evil but now realizes that it is not true. That is the first thing she mentions when she talks about TPM.

To me the theme in Veronica’s dominant story is trust. It is evident from the interviews that both she and her nominee have experienced that fear has been greatly deconstructed in her life. However, as she remains focussed on the negative –there is no improvement in her anger management – she is unable to take credit for the other changes. Veronica gives herself very little credit for the progress she has made since first receiving TPM. However, the nominee highlights the great changes that took place in her. By means of such positive comments the nominee actively contributes to the deconstruction of Veronica’s dominant story, although she cannot yet acknowledge it in spite of the obvious changes. She finds it difficult to deconstruct her own “problem-saturated story” and to begin construction of a new alternative story.

The research interviews aimed at establishing an audience so that an alternative story could be co-constructed by means of validation. As she is a concrete thinker, it is difficult for her to integrate external validation.

It is therefore understandable that the TPM process also proceeded very slowly. The indications are clear that many lies still remain in her thoughts to be deconstructed. If Veronica’s total picture is investigated, however, it is more than evident that TPM had a positive influence on her

healing process. In human terms a divorce seemed inevitable, but her healing has turned the situation around. I would rather deem her narrative to be one where TPM is progressing slowly, not a narrative where TPM is not so successful.

It is as though there exists an unwillingness or inability to recognize the progress. From the outside it may seem that Veronica does not want to let go of the thin description of her life. Within the systemic approach it would be asked what secondary advantage it holds for her. It is as if there is an inability to interpret the landscape of action in support of her landscape of identity. However, looking from a TPM perspective, I think there are still many guardian lies remaining keeping her from acknowledging her progress. As the result of her childhood experiences many lies probably still remain regarding authority figures and they also call out for deconstruction. In my opinion this narrative is one wherein deconstruction has barely begun. The role of fear is greatly deconstructed, but further deconstruction is necessary for many other aspects of her dominant story. Further discussion and alternatives are addressed under a later point.

Seen as a big picture, it must be said that even though it is clear to Veronica's audience that there is a major difference in her behaviour, Veronica herself does not experience a significant shift in the way she narrates her life story. This narrative also stresses an important point namely, that TPM is not a quick fix or the sole answer for a recipient's problems, but part of a process, which may include other disciplines. This is why Smith (2005:26) promotes that facilitators should surround themselves with health professionals. He recommended that in all difficult cases that facilitators "require that recipients begin seeing a Christian mental health professional on a regular, consistent basis, allowing the facilitator to take the back seat to the work being done" (Smith 2008f:2).

### **b) Edward - "A boy who let his father down"**

During the first interview I could not understand why Chaplain Muller classified this narrative as not so successful. It was only in the third interview that **Edward** responded on this topic as follows: "I searched for God and discovered His love but now my desire to seek God's face daily has disappeared". Edward thinks that God is angry with him because he got lost in the first place. He believed that TPM freed him but also disturbed his relationship with God.

Edward's problem-saturated story is characterised by fear, uncertainty and insecurity. Accordingly he views himself as a failure. Its origins lie in a difficult childhood. He believed that he could not build a successful career or be able to provide for his family. His experience was that he had no control over his life.

Initially great changes took place. What probably affected it was that he experienced within his session that “Jesus returned the control to him”. It can be expected that the transition would have taken hold. He also experienced that after the session the depression as well as the bitterness disappeared. Although there is backsliding, it is still evident that real and permanent change occurred.

The nominee (his spouse) saw an enormous change in Edward, before and after the TPM session. Although he is difficult again, it is not nearly as bad as it used to be. Before TPM he was a terribly jealous man, always right and never wrong. She was exposed to horrible “verbal abuse”. His words broke down her self-esteem. Many of his words still haunt her, but it has greatly improved. He no longer belittles her. Edward used to only exist for himself.

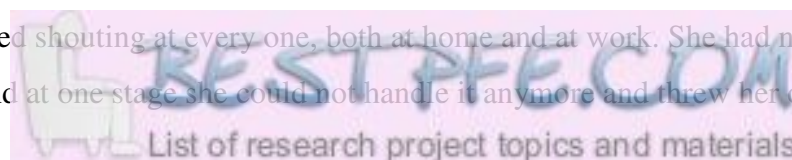
These aspects that the nominee pointed out testify that the TPM process had an effect on Edward's jealousy and narcissism. It would appear to me that as long as Edward was able to hear God's voice deconstruction of his “problem-saturated story” as well as construction of his preferred story took place.

As in the previous narrative it appears from Edward's behaviour that fundamental change took place. Initially he started living out his new preferred story, but as is evident from the interview, he felt that he had disappointed God and could therefore not accept the alternative story for his life. It seems as if Edward cannot allow himself to make use of the positive aspects from his landscape of action to help him construct his landscape of identity (the discourse about why Edward could not succeed in narrating his life story in a new preferred way will be discussed in chapter 9).

### **c) Emily - "Voice of a woman"**

**Emily** is the only participant who volunteered to be part of the project. What is significant about this narrative is the great discrepancy between how she judges her own progress and how others view it. It again makes room for the question: from whose point of view is success really success? In a few of the previous narratives the recipients rated their own success lower than their audience did. Here we find the opposite. Emily is so totally convinced of her progress that she wanted to proclaim the success in a research project. In the meantime, her audience still comment on her “disturbing behaviour”.

Emily's “problem-saturated story” was already indicated in Chapter 6. As a result of passive aggression, she started shouting at every one, both at home and at work. She had no patience with her daughter and at one stage she could not handle it anymore and threw her out of her



house. After this incident and as a result of all this anger and because there was no happiness in her life, she decided to go for counselling.

Both her facilitator and her nominee, however, agree that great progress took place in her spiritual life. Emily experienced that it was possible for her to forgive. God became a reality to her. She experienced that the TPM process contributed to the deconstruction of her inability to forgive, her lack of love and arrogance. According to her it is thanks to “revelations from God”. During the interview she could not produce an example of it, but maintains that the revelations are responsible for the transition.

Chaplain Muller wondered whether the vast improvement Emily attributed to herself could be due to her condition, recently diagnosed by a psychiatrist as bipolar mood disorder. In my opinion Emily, coming from a situation where male power silenced her voice, experienced the deconstruction of that power in TPM. That is why she views it as an enormous shift. It is the experience that leads her to narrate her life story differently. Her audience agrees that there was a change in her spiritual life.

With bipolar mood disorder in mind, it must be remembered that Smith (2007:11) indicated that TPM is fundamentally prayer ministry and can only help when there are lies to be deconstructed. With regards to psychopathology that cannot be attributed to lies or misinterpretations, TPM is not the appropriate tool to use. I am reflecting further on this aspect in chapter 9.

#### **d) Roelf - “I did not want it to work”**

The following background information is necessary to understand Roelf’s narrative in its proper context. **Roelf** attended TPM sessions with Chaplain Muller three years before the research interviews were conducted. The research interview was conducted just after Roelf was a recipient in a couple of new TPM sessions that he had asked for with another facilitator. At the time he was relatively positive about his future and about TPM in general. The positivity following the second set of sessions, however, did not last long. His brother died soon afterwards and Roelf again became totally negative. He refused to talk to anyone about counselling.

After the first set of sessions with Chaplain Muller he even abstained from alcohol for at least three months. According to Roelf he stopped drinking for those three months because he feared his wife would also be separated from him, because according to Roelf, Chaplain Muller said that he would remove his wife to one place and his children to another and that Roelf would only see them on TV. As I had assisted Chaplain Muller in that session I know that it was a misinterpretation of what Chaplain Muller said during the session. In my opinion Roelf took



what Chaplain Muller said literally while Chaplain Muller intended it figuratively. His concrete thinking led to a misinterpretation where upon he reacted negatively. This narrative reveals the importance of communicating on the level of the recipient's understanding. I reflect on this issue further in the last chapter.

Apart from a recovery from an addiction for a very short duration, there is according to Roelf and his nominee no sign of any change in his behaviour after his TPM-sessions administered by Chaplain Muller. When his current negative attitude towards TPM and his relation of his inner experiences are taken into account, it became apparent that neither Roelf nor his nominee (his spouse) experienced any long term effect that TPM had on the way he narrates his life story. I will reflect further on the reasons for this in chapter 9.

### 7.1.3 Summary

It would then appear that seventeen of the eighteen participants experienced that TPM had an effect on the way they narrate their lives or construct their realities. In reflecting on this, it is worthwhile to take the factors that Smith (2007:5-14) specified that impede the effectiveness of TPM into account. As these factors in some way provide explanations for the effectiveness of TPM, I reflect on them in chapter 9, where the "why" question is addressed.

In the cases of Beryl and Emily, both women are convinced that they narrate their stories differently, although neither their audiences nor their landscapes of action testify to it. What is important is that they experienced that TPM had an effect on their lives and it is not for me to judge this. In Emily's case where her behaviour afterwards had a negative influence on other people the issue of ethics is raised. This will be attended to in the next chapter.

In terms of Veronica and Edward it seemed that although there are still lies that prevent them from making a conscious shift in the way they narrate their life stories, their audiences deduced from their behaviour that there was a change in their landscape of action. However, they have not yet used their unique outcomes to construct a new landscape of identity. The debate surrounding this discourse will be further explored under the heading of one of the other research questions. The same is true for the other narratives classified as "not so successful".

The second sub-question will now be discussed: **Does God's voice appear to be an active participant in the dialogues that led to any changes?**

## **7.2 The voice of God and the transition in a participant's life story**

When reflecting on the part that the voice of God played in the transition of a participant's life story the quotation from Veltkamp (1998:14) about an Emmaus experience must be kept in mind: "Uiteindelijk herkennen zij de derde als de Levende in hun midden " and then He disappears again. It is about "een existentiële ervaring waar ik nog geen woorden voor had". In writing, I'm trying to explain in mere human words what I realize is actually a conversation with God.

In TPM God is explicitly invited to be a participant in a conversation on certain issues in a recipient's life, in order to reveal His perception (truth) about the matter at hand. Some people receive a visual experience (visual communication); some receive an auditory experience, while for others, like Dr Ed Smith (2000:124), it is only a realization that comes from the Holy Spirit. In any case, in TPM the process is a dialogue between God and the recipient, facilitated by a third person. As Thiessen (2003:118) puts it, "God's very presence as a participant is the beginning of the deconstruction of the story of His absence, in the recipient's problem-saturated story".

### **7.2.1 The Pilot study – Jacques ("Transformed from stuttering to public speaking")**

It is clear from the interviews that Jacques experienced God as taking the leading part in the construction of his alternative story. Before TPM, Jacques had no communication with God. It is clear from both his and his brother's responses that in their experience Jacques' real behavioural change took place after TPM and not following his initial conversion.

In TPM it was the result of the unmasking of the lie that Jacques believed as the result of the feedback from both his fathers who played a part in his life. While they viewed him as worthless and "good for nothing", God unmasked the lie by showing him his achievement in the field of athletics. In the "theophostic moment" Jacques experienced the Lord showing him a visual image of himself as he stood as the winner at the top of the podium. Jacques still often refers to this "experience of truth" in conversations. It shows that the voice of God plays a central role in the change that took place in his life.

It seems to me that to Jacques his encounter with God in TPM was the most significant factor responsible for the deconstruction of his negative self-esteem. The very fact that Jacques experienced God's view of him as a winner, led to the immediate constructing of an alternative story. In that way God became a role player in the co-construction of the new Jacques.

With regard to the “transition”, from my experience TPM places less emphasis on the fact that the person should be the author of his own new story. But it remains important in TPM that the person makes a deliberate faith-filled choice to accept the new story in the way that it was revealed through the TPM session. In Jacques' narrative, a clear choice took place to make what God said his own. The person's paradigm of faith is of essential importance. It is therefore inferred that a person's paradigm of faith plays an intrinsic role in the success or failure of the establishment of a new story.

## **7.2.2 The Successful group**

### **7.2.2.1 Harold (“How God can change a person”)**

Chapter 3 described the various occasions where God’s voice made an impact on the way Harold narrates his life story. The fact that the boy believes that God is with him is because God showed him an angel who always walks alongside him. It boosted the boy’s self-confidence. His housemother kept reminding him of it. Time and time again it brought about a drastic change in his behaviour. One of Harold’s problems was his eating. His social worker wrote: “From the moment he wakes up, he will not stop eating”. After the Lord offered him food in TPM he never begged for food again.

In chapter 5 it is clearly indicated that the facilitator was unaware of this problem at the time and the Lord gave Harold exactly what he needed. To my mind this is one of the clearest examples where this change cannot be attributed to any factor other than God’s voice.

A debate about the discourse of angels is not relevant here. What matters is that God communicated with a little boy within his own frame of reference and at his language level. As in all other narratives it seems that the conversation was uniquely designed for the recipient, in this case a child, in order to deconstruct the “problem-saturated story”, enable transition and help co-construct the alternative story.

### **7.2.2.2 Alice (“Inner voices exchanged for God’s voice”)**

Before TPM, when Alice underwent psychotherapy, great strides were made in establishing a relationship of trust. After a variety of negative experiences of therapy it was necessary to spend a great deal of time in establishing trust in the process of therapy itself. Different approaches were used in the therapeutic process. The problem was that Alice did not have her own life story at that stage. Rather, it was the story of the different alters who helped her handle her world.

Therapy itself proceeded very slowly. Although better insight was probably developed about the problem, very little progress was made in dealing with the different alters. True change only came about after she started receiving TPM.

Alice told of how she discovered that Jesus' words are her truth. Initially she battled to trust Him. He said something to her on one occasion, that only He could know, it made her realize that she was indeed dealing with the living God. In her desire to be "free as a bird" she had studied bird physiology and learnt that birds' skeletons are hollow, allowing them the lightness to soar. In a session He made her look inside herself and also experience that same lightness and that sense of freedom, as opposed to the heaviness of her life circumstances that had constantly dragged her down.

She also realized that He took care to work with her on her own level. He only revealed to her as much as she could handle. As time went by, she listened with increasing trust to His words, so that at this stage she is excited to hear what He will say next. She said: "His words became an anchor for me". When she refers to His words, they are not words from the Bible but what she experiences that He tells her personally in TPM sessions. Alice indeed started writing her alternative story from the moment she began trusting in what Jesus showed her during TPM sessions. The process is still ongoing, wherein Alice gains the freedom to participate in this process in which God and she are partners.

Alice stressed the fact that the success lies in a personal experience of the voice of the Lord. When I asked Alice for more detail, she responded that the important words were "personal experience", and therefore fairly difficult to explain. She continued: "Perhaps an even more important word is 'truth'. I wish I could explain how much that truth means to me. It is probably the only trustworthy thing I can cling to". She added, half in jest, that she is an expert in voices, in that she has a lifetime of experience in telling the difference between "voices" and God's voice.

Alice's conclusion is that God's voice in the TPM process gave birth to the co-construction of her alternative story of faith, hope and love. This story illustrates quite clearly that the only reason why it can be viewed as a success is because there was a personal experience with Jesus Christ and His truth. Most evident from this is that Alice experienced a personal dialogue with God and that the conversation remains the means in constructing her preferred story of faith, hope and love.

### **7.2.2.3 Minah ("Cured overnight")**

My first impression of Minah was of a woman not easily defeated. During the research interviews she radiated a childlike faith. It became clear that she did not possess that faith before TPM. According to her and her nominee, the transition of her story occurred during the “theophostic moment” when two people in white robes passed slowly in front of her. She experienced that as they passed her, the noise left with them. That was two years ago and it has never returned. With the visual as well as the auditory message she received from God, the “noise” disappeared in a single moment.

As her facilitator mentioned, referring to Minah’s appetite immediately returning: “Nothing that I could have said, could have made such a change come about. It is only God who can intervene in a person’s life that way”. In this narrative it is clear that God's voice was an active participant in the dialogue that led to the change. It is as though in her narrative, God also immediately provided opportunities for the thickening of her alternative story, for example the return of her appetite that happened straight away.

### **7.2.2.4 Michelle ("A huge breach in the wall")**

The reconstruction of Michelle’s preferred story has already progressed much as reflected in her own rating of the changes. In her mind there is no question that the shift came about as a result of the TPM process, seeing that since the age of sixteen, she has consulted many counsellors and therapists without experiencing a perceptible shift in her thought patterns: “TPM changed my whole way of thinking”. The shift came about as a result of a personal experience with Jesus Christ, wherein He deconstructed some of the lies that her problem saturated story was constructed on. In the process He started co-constructing her new preferred story with His truth. Michelle did not wish to share direct examples of this.

During the interview Michelle was adamant that the transition of her problem saturated story to an alternative story took place when the experience of Jesus Christ became an absolute reality to her. After that she was able to gradually deconstruct the “problem-saturated story”. God’s voice was definitely a participant in the co-construction of a new preferred story. It seems to me each time that God's voice is the “turning point” that enables recipients of TPM to start a reconstruction process of an alternative preferred life story.

## **7.2.3 The “one session” group**

### **7.2.3.1 Beryl ("A cleansing experience")**

When Beryl’s research interviews are analysed it seems that in her experience TPM revealed and brought everything forward that hurt her. She said during the interview: “During TPM you tell what has to be said”. Her intense experience of forgiveness from the Lord formed the basis of change for her. Beryl resented her mother, for she never protected her from her father. In TPM she realized that she had never told her mother about it. Then it was possible for her to forgive her mother. As a result of what the Lord showed her, she could forgive her father and uncle as well. After that she experienced peace and calm regarding the molestation: “It was a cleansing experience”.

Chaplain Muller remembers it as one of the easiest sessions he facilitated. The implication is that Beryl very quickly discovered the lies that influenced her thoughts and received God’s truth about them. The way Beryl related her story implies that certain of her perceptions were very quickly deconstructed by God’s voice and that He is an active participant in the reconstruction of her reality.

### **7.2.3.2 Joe ("Anointed")**

Joe had both a visual as well as a kinetic experience in his “theophostic moment”. Two angels came to him and put their arms around him. Joe experienced that his hair became wet. He did not understand what was happening when his hair became wet. Chaplain Muller encouraged him to ask God what it meant. Then God said to him that He was anointing him. He also experienced that Jesus held him in His arms. Since that evening, the idea of committing suicide has never again crossed his mind.

The main reason why he experienced change, according to Joe, was because he could hear God’s voice and “he could make his own what he experienced from God”. It is absolutely clear from the interviews that for Joe it was a real experience and not just imagination. When Joe was asked whether “seeing” Jesus in the session is not merely human imagination, he reacted very strongly that what happened is not something he expected. He does not know what it is, but it is definitely not from his own imagination. He did not even understand what was going on. He experienced it “as real as the present conversation”. It did not come from his mind.

When Joe said: “Jesus helped me to look at myself in a new way”, it implied that he allowed God to deconstruct the negative self, to allow the transition and to begin with the reconstruction

of the Joe whom God anointed. Joe, together with other parties in his life, used the opportunity to further co-construct his alternative story.

### **7.2.3.3 Dawid ("Freed from the shame")**

Dawid related about his experience in the TPM-session by comparing it with the Biblical counselling he had received during his search for emotional healing. He prepared for the TPM session by fasting and praying. He believes it contributed to him being able to hear God's voice very clearly. Dawid related what happened in the session. Dawid grew up believing that his father did not want his first child to be a son and doubted that Dawid was his son. In the TPM-session God showed him a crowd of people through which he ran to embrace his father. Now he has nothing against his father anymore. According to him he experienced the power and knowledge of the Holy Spirit in the session.

In Biblical counselling his experience was that the counsellor wanted to give him answers, while in TPM the facilitator stood before God with all his issues and humanity and sought His will. It helped him to be more open and to truly seek God's truth. In that moment he discovered that he is unique. Beforehand, he condemned himself, but that experience helped him to leave the judgment to the Lord. He experienced release from a lot of stress. What he especially liked was the way the facilitator helped him work through his memory, bringing him to the point where he was able to release everything to God. In particular, he experienced his guilt and shame removed by God's voice.

I became convinced during the research interviews that the lies Dawid believed regarding his father were deconstructed by the vision he received from the Lord. Further deconstruction took place when he confessed his sin before God. Biblical counselling helped him towards the deconstruction of a weak self image, but TPM played the major role in allowing him to co-construct a new identity.

### **7.2.3.4 Ruth ("You're precious in My eyes")**

Ruth believes that it is definitely God's voice that brought about the change. She related that God showed her that she is a precious diamond in His sight. Those words brought transition. With those words, God deconstructed her low self-esteem, inferiority complex and negative thoughts about herself and her body image in one moment and effected transition. Ruth indicated that it was a choice set before her. She began co-constructing her new preferred story when she

accepted those words. It sounds impossible that only those few simple words could make such a difference.

In this narrative Ruth clearly identifies God as the co-creator of her new preferred story. What stood out for me in this narrative is that the **choice** she had to make in accepting what God showed her, was the “turning point” according to her experience. God included her as a participant in the reconstruction of her alternative story. God’s voice appeared to be an active participant in the dialogue that deconstructed her “problem-saturated story”.

## **7.2.4 The randomly selected group**

### **7.2.4.1 Annatjie (“A corpse coming to life”)**

Annatjie is a participant with the ability to describe her experience in the TPM session very well. She uses the description of a “revelation”. Through the visual, Annatjie experienced that God made her as a foetus in the womb stand upright. With it came the realization that she was in God’s breath when He planted her in the womb. She interpreted the message as being that she has “a destiny appointed by God”. In that way God deconstructed the lie that she is only a plaything in the hands of male authority figures. That experience of God’s truth formed the moment in which He started co-constructing her alternative story.

During the group reflection Annatjie was challenged about her conviction that it was God Who spoke to her. It was put to her that it could be a mere product of her imagination. The conversation made it clear that Annatjie has no doubt and that there is no way that she is going to be convinced by human reasoning to doubt it.

In Annatjie’s narrative we are up against mystery. I received the impression during her interview that her experience is something that happened between Annatjie and God. Previously it was also said that the written word cannot do justice to the inspired way in which Annatjie speaks about the experience. As listener, I only know that this is holy ground. TPM is only a **tool** that God used to begin the reconstruction of Annatjie’s alternative story. God Himself chose the “sparkling moment” to achieve it. By means of the absolute respect with which TPM deals with the moment, the facilitator became a witness (audience) of how God and Annatjie co-constructed her alternative story.

### **7.2.4.2 Glen (“Changed from shy to cheerful”)**

It was very difficult for Glen to identify what brought about the change in him. In response to the question, he said firstly that “the stuff is no longer inside of me” and secondly that he



experienced God in the session. The way in which he reacted made it clear that what made the greatest change for him was having been able to open up about the secret. In the session Glen experienced that the devil was on one side, telling him not to talk while God on the other hand was telling him to let it out. That is why he finally shared the secret. In that way he connected the voice of God with what brought him such great relief. Indirectly Glen did indeed experience that God's voice helped him to make a transition.

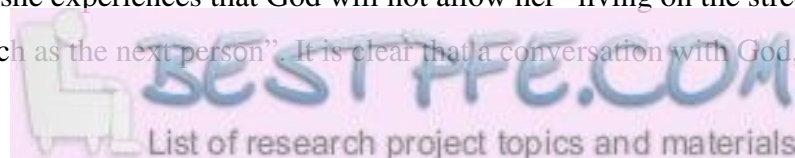
Glen did not share with his wife about the details of the session, but she noticed the change. She related that for three days after the session he was difficult, but when the change set in it was a "miracle". She did not think it possible for him to change so much. She had tried for years to change him but it was in vain. Asked what she thought of TPM, she saw it as coming into contact with God. Glen started reading the Bible whereas before he was too shy to read the Bible to the children. He made new choices and chose to go to church again.

If we view Glen's landscape of action it becomes clear that the change set in after his conversation with God in TPM. Glen responded during the research interview to the question: *According to you, what role did TPM play in these changes?* with: "I did experience the Lord in the session". From his words it is clear that he connected the shift he experienced with the influence of God's voice in the TPM process.

#### **7.2.4.3 Marinda ("Two different people")**

It sounded like a refrain during her interview that her great change was ascribed to God's voice in her life: "I was placed in the position to hear the truth" and "it mattered that it came from God". She emphasized that she did not always like what she heard but, because it was the truth, it changed her life. The clearest example of this was probably the occasion when God showed her that He loved the perpetrator just as much as He loved her. It is understandable that someone will want to commit murder upon hearing that his or her child was molested, but God's voice led her to a totally new perspective of other people.

When her mother died when she was young, she had a fear of "living on the street". As a result of this fear, a "problem-saturated story" of an extremist, who wanted to be right in everything, who hid her anxiety and helplessness behind anger and performance, developed. This can be related to her image of God. Jesus removed the fear through His truth, by showing her another image of God. Now she experiences that God will not allow her "living on the street" and that "He loves me as much as the next person". It is clear that a conversation with God, in other



words “prayer”, has new meaning for her and that this conversation has been responsible for her transition.

To me it is clear that in the establishing of Marinda's alternative story, God’s voice plays a very important role. The dialogue between her and God contributed to the reconstruction of her image of God (discussed in more detail in point 7.3.2), in turn leading to the deconstruction of fear in her life. This enabled her to begin writing an alternative story.

The very important role that God's voice played in co-constructing a new perspective on other human beings is also clear from her narrative. He only told her that He loved the perpetrator and that deconstructed her view of her “neighbour”. If a therapist had tried to deconstruct her construction with the truth that God also loved the perpetrators, it would probably have had little to no effect. It would have cost a therapist many sessions and many strategies to deconstruct that belief, but the voice of the Lord did exactly that. Her alternative story can be clearly seen in that she now would rather pray for the people in debt to her than prosecute them (the ethical aspect in question will be discussed under the relevant research question).

#### **7.2.4.4 Gert ("God has a goal for everyone")**

According to Gert he often talked to the social worker about his problems (his children were in substitute care). It brought no change. On the contrary, Gert is convinced that **prayer** made the change. In Gert’s narrative God helped him to see the family who injured him from His own perspective. This helped him to reach forgiveness. The impact of that prayer becomes clear when Gert went to the family, without any further motivation, to repair the damaged relationships.

As I was involved with this family before the TPM-process started, Gert’s transition is remarkable to me, especially so, when it is remembered that social workers tried their best over a period of years to motivate him, but the results were meagre. It is as though the lies or false perceptions that Gert had were deconstructed when the TPM process helped him to reach forgiveness. I also want to highlight that, according to Gert's experience, it was the prayer in his sessions that brought about the transition in the way he now narrates his life story.

#### **7.2.4.5 Magriet (“Fireworks”)**

Magriet described her experience of TPM with the word “fireworks”. In her case she did not receive any visual or auditory messages in her initial sessions, but only the realization of truth. “I did not hear a voice in the sessions; it was just a sense of knowing. It is truth that comes to me and is confirmed by the picture images”. When challenged that it could be a mere product of her imagination, she answered without hesitation that she knows it came from God. Most of the time

participants reacted in the same way when confronted with that statement. It is not something that can really be described in human terms. In a TPM session she experienced that God was like a “fire around me” and it made her feel safe.

It would seem that the latter experience was responsible for the main transition to a preferred story of faith, hope and love. The fact is that Magriet also experienced that her sense of guilt, low self-image and inabilities were deconstructed in the TPM process.

Magriet’s narrative is a good example to me that God has a unique relationship with every person. Any pastoral therapeutic model, that does not have absolute respect for the uniqueness of the relationship between God and every person, turns into a hindrance for the way in which God works with that person. Magriet is clear on it that the voice of God is responsible for the deconstruction of the “fear” that dictated her life up to that stage. Her nominee (the manager at the children’s home) related for example, that she handles the children at the Home in a different way since her TPM. This confirms that Magriet's view, that deconstruction of a belief of inability must have taken place, is legitimate. She succeeded in taking this achievement from her landscape of action to help her to construct a new identity in her landscape of identity.

## **7.2.5 Narratives where TPM was not so successful**

### **7.2.5.1 Veronica ("A divorce would have been a mistake")**

The only area where Veronica can give herself credit is with regard to her spiritual life. Seen as a big picture, TPM brought about change in her relationships as well as with the irrational fear that she experienced often. She is adamant about it that the change was caused by TPM. She and her nominee state that she had tried so many different types of therapy and counselling which had made very little difference. On the question: “What in TPM brought the change”? she declared: “TPM is direct help from God. God takes you to the memory and frees you from the pain contained therein”. When she was asked to further explain and to provide examples, she found it difficult to respond.

I suspect that due to Veronica's concrete cognitive functioning she does not really possess the necessary understanding of the abovementioned question. She had already learnt much about TPM theory and may have been influenced by that and logical knowledge, more than by real experience. What is important is that she sees God's voice as having a real influence on her.

The question here is to what degree Veronica allowed her experience of Jesus Christ to co-construct an alternative story. If the question: “Does God appear to be an active participant in the

dialogues that led to any changes”? was put directly to Veronica, she would probably respond in the affirmative. However when her landscape of action is taken into consideration it seems as if she is still on her way to allow the dialogue with God to assist in co-constructing the alternative story, but not there yet. As a result of her childhood experiences, many lies regarding authority figures may still be in play and still need to be deconstructed.

Here is a narrative of meeting Jesus and His truth while the deconstruction of the problem-saturated story is not yet completed. Although Chaplain Muller judged TPM to be not so successful in Veronica's narrative, it seems that Veronica experienced God's voice in the TPM process. Change did take place, but perhaps not sufficient for external expectations.

When God, through prayer, changes a person, it does not necessarily mean all her/his problems disappear. It creates a new place from which the recipient and the facilitator/therapist can work out new possibilities and effects in his/her life, in other words, a new landscape of action grows out of the new identity/consciousness which must further develop and grow.

#### **7.2.5.2 Edward ("A boy who let his father down")**

Initially Edward experienced an amazing change. What probably made the difference was when, during the TPM session, he had the experience that “Jesus returned the control to him”. It can be expected that at that point transition would have occurred. He also experienced that his depression and bitterness disappeared after the session. Although backsliding took place, it is also clear from his nominee (his spouse) that real and permanent change did take place. When he tells his life story, confirmed by his nominee, it seems that aspects such as jealousy and narcissism mostly disappeared because of TPM.

In his session, he experienced how God picked him up to sit on His lap and allowed him to lean against His breast. God told him that he was His child and showed him how he was riding on a horse with a sword in his hand. He interpreted the meaning of that as being that God would make him successful: “There was something in my life that I could look forward to”. He knew that God held him in His hand: “I’ve got nothing to worry about. He is my Father who protects me”. It gave a whole new meaning to his life. He was immediately released from all those negative emotions, especially the anger and the fear that he had carried with him since childhood. He came to the understanding that the anger made him a horrible person. TPM released him from it. Despite the backsliding, he is not back where he started. It is evident here that God’s voice brought about change in the way Edward now narrates his life story. The nominee also has no doubt that the transition was affected by Edward’s experience of Jesus Christ, when she says:

“The reason why TPM works is because Jesus makes the difference. God is there and that which He reveals to you cannot come from human thoughts”.

When Edward tried to explain his backsliding, he mentioned that he felt like a small boy who let his father down. He knows that God will not reject him but his own disappointment is greater. He views it as burn out. After his initial healing he dedicated himself entirely to God’s work in such a way that his wife complained that he neglected her. He felt that he had failed again. Edward experienced that God did not let go of him, but that he disappointed Him. Fear holds him back, the fear of disappointing God again. This fear keeps him from being prepared to give God’s voice another chance.

What I could gather from the research interviews, is that Edward wanted to return for more TPM-sessions, but because he could not be helped immediately, he withdrew and just could not motivate himself again to get involved in further TPM. This raises questions about follow-up practices in the administering of TPM that I will attend to in Chapters 9 and 10.

It would appear that when Edward allowed himself to hear God’s voice, both deconstruction of his “problem-saturated story” as well as construction of his preferred story took place. What can be gleaned from this narrative is that Edward’s image of God is still coloured by lies which need to be further deconstructed. By this I mean that his current image of God may still contribute to his problem-saturated story. Although there was backsliding, the voice of God definitely helped towards the co-construction of a new preferred story.

### **7.2.5.3 Emily ("Voice of a woman")**

All the participants in the group reflections agreed that great change took place with regard to Emily’s spirituality. The TPM process helped her to reach the point where she could forgive. God became a reality to her. Emily experienced that the TPM process helped with her inability to forgive, her lack of love and arrogance. According to her it is thanks to “revelations from God”. In the interview she could not provide an example of those revelations, but to her they were responsible for the transition that she experienced.

It is difficult to understand why Emily could not remember the revelations she received from God. Other participants usually remember their experience of God’s voice very clearly. Together with the fact that there has been no change in her behaviour according to her nominee and facilitator, it invites the question as to what degree Emily really allowed God’s voice to deconstruct her old story and to co-construct the alternative story. According to the nominee’s interview it became clear that Emily’s behaviour at work still leaves much to be desired. For

example, she fights in public just after preaching the Gospel at work. It begs the ethical question about who really benefits from TPM. If TPM co-constructs a preferred narrative for her, but that narrative leads to the abuse of others, it cannot be viewed as an ethical practice. In a next chapter this ethical discourse will be discussed as well as possible reasons why TPM was not as successful.

However, in this research it is about the participant's experience of the effect of TPM and according to Emily's experience it was God's voice that affected the way in which she now narrates her life story. As previously indicated, Emily experienced that she was freed from male dominance and to my mind that is responsible for the change she has experienced.

#### **7.2.5.4 Roelf (“I did not want it to work”)**

According to Roelf he did hear God's voice in his session. That begs the question as to why TPM works in so many narratives, with God deconstructing lies, while Roelf remains unaffected. Is the noise of other voices in his life so disturbing that he cannot hear God's voice? Or does he indeed hear, but is unwilling to accept it? His wife's response was: “TPM works when you are really serious about your relationship with God”. From the research interviews, questions could be raised questioning the seriousness of Roelf's relationship with Jesus Christ. According to his spouse he is not serious about this relationship.

My opinion is that Roelf's image of God plays a big part in his problem-saturated story. From the research interviews it seems to me that Roelf cannot comprehend what God's grace is about. Whatever he heard or experienced in the session had no influence on his beliefs or behaviour. When Roelf said that he did not want TPM to work, he actually indicated that it was not his preferred story to hear truth from the Lord. From that I made the assumption that this perception of his led him to not give God's voice an opportunity to influence his life. This narrative emphasises the importance of the “belief and choice” principle in TPM, which Smith (2007:27) pointed out.

Here the question about whether TPM can also be successful in the case of unbelievers becomes an important one. When the basic principles are applied, it can indeed be fruitful, as long as the person is prepared to give Jesus Christ the opportunity. If the person is not prepared to do so, the person will probably not be helped since God never violates a human being's will (this relates to the discourse on the free will of man. Chapter 4 [4.4])

## 7.2.6 Summary

From all these narratives it seems that every time a participant actively experiences God's voice changes follow. Perhaps all the participants' experiences are best summarised by Veronica's words: "TPM is direct help from God. God takes you to the memory and frees you from the pain contained therein".

Regarding the last few participants, where efficient change, according to the facilitator, did not occur, the words of Thiessen (2003:118) which I already referred to, might be applicable: "God's very presence as a participant is the beginning of the deconstruction of the story of His absence, in the recipient's problem-saturated story". Roelf's narrative illustrates that when that factor is absent, TPM has no effect. The basic principles of TPM regarding own belief and choice become evident and will be discussed further later on. In all but one of the aforementioned eighteen narratives, where God was explicitly invited to be a participant in the process, something transpired in the dialogue between God and the recipient that effectuated a transition. In seventeen narratives the participants indicated that it was their preferred story to hear God's voice regarding their problem-saturated stories. It is significant that it was only in Roelf's narrative that it was not his preferred story to hear from God.

One or other aspect of the problem-saturated story, called a lie in TPM terms, was deconstructed and gave birth to a new preferred story. Almost without exception it took place during a personal encounter with God. As illustrated very clearly in the interviews, it is very difficult for the participants to describe the encounter in words. In some narratives, some had a visual picture in their minds while others heard a voice. Still others had a realisation of truth. The question already posed and reflected on in Chapter 4 is to what degree it is a product of human imagination or of subconscious functioning. None of the seventeen participants, who had the experience, were prepared to accept that it was only their imagination. Harold's session is fully transcribed. No suggestions were ever used, so that it can be argued that it might be a hypnotic suggestion that influenced the experience of a recipient. This aspect will be further attended to in chapter 9.

All the participants continually report the "knowledge" that God communicated with them.

It is interesting that so many of the participants still retain crystal clear memories of the visual pictures or words they experienced during the "theophostic moment", even though it happened years ago. "While other visualizations and dreams always fade, the TPM moment is so vividly imprinted that you never forget it" Annatjie reported.

It also is noteworthy that in all narratives the experience led to a change in behaviour. It is true even of three of the narratives classified as “not so successful” (excluding only Roelf). Although the change cannot be said to be major enough to qualify as successful according to Chaplain Muller, the participants and their nominees agree on actual behavioural change. Edward still treats his wife differently and asserts himself in an adult way; Emily’s spirituality is on another level, while Veronica experiences drastic changes with regards to nightmares and hallucinations. The TPM-practice “to offer the exposed falsehood up to the Lord to receive His truth perspective”. Smith (2005:91) indeed makes God's voice part of the healing process. In actual fact, God’s voice becomes an active participant in the dialogues that lead to change.

Looking back in narrative therapy at how I delved for “sparkling moments” in clients’ stories in order to contribute to the thickening of the preferred story, and so assist in the gradual co-construction of the alternative story, makes the participants’ stories sound too good to be true. However, the same witness is given almost every time. It is therefore clear that TPM rediscovered the power of God’s voice as an agent in changing dominant life stories from problem-saturated stories to new preferred stories of faith, hope and love.

Another aspect I want to emphasize is the shift in TPM from a position where the pastor sided with God and ministered God’s Word to the recipient to a position where the facilitator sides with the recipient and where both together seek the Lord’s guidance.

To continue weaving this work of art, I want to inspect other practices of the TPM process that also played a part in the reconstruction of participants’ realities. I, therefore, want to now address the next research question:

Do the practices of the TPM process appear to play a part in any reconstruction of reality?

### **7.3 Practices of the TPM process that play a part in reconstruction of reality**

The most important practices of TPM that play a part in the reconstruction of reality are the four basic components of the TPM-process, as set out in Chapter 5. These practices work together in deconstructing the “lies” (in TPM terms), or interpretations of events from the past of the participants, on which they built their problem-saturated stories.

#### **7.3.1 Deconstructing the lie**

The four basic components, describe how the practice of TPM deconstructs the lie. These four components consist of:

- Looking for the emotional echo from the past



- Identifying the original memory
- Discerning the lie-based thinking or lie-statement held in the original memory
- Offering the exposed lie up to the Lord to receive His truth perspective

The fourth component was attended to under the previous heading. A discussion of the other three follows here. In this process the focus is on identifying the lie. It is a form of externalising the problem. The person is not viewed as the problem but the lie is. In the narrative of Alice it became clear that because TPM searches for the lie in which the receiver of TPM believes, it helped her to externalise her problem. The focus was on the lie sought, not on what was wrong with her. Alice indicated in her interview that it helped her to no longer see herself as the problem and that her thoughts changed. It played an important role in the transitional phase where she was busy constructing her new story.

Smith (2005:88) views the correct identification of the lie statement or lie-based thinking as the “most difficult” but also the “most crucial” component of the ministry session: “If the person does not identify and expose the lie-based thinking that was planted in her mind when the event happened, little or no change may result from the ministry process”.

The eighteen narratives will now be explored in order to develop a better understanding of the relative importance that the first three components had in each story. However, it cannot be denied that it is clear from the research interviews that all of the eighteen participants connected with emotional pain in their memories. Only the narratives, which can help us towards a better understanding of how TPM practices contributed to the deconstruction of the lies, on which each one’s “problem-saturated story” was built, are reviewed.

It is interesting that during the interviews, few of the participants spoke about the lies they believed. Thiessen (2003:169) confirmed the same tendency in his research. They all focused on the truth that they received from God. Therefore it seems that the lie no longer played a role in the way they narrate their lives. It is perhaps an indication that the lie was probably effectively deconstructed in their lives. It may also be that the identifying of the lie is not as important as Smith (2005:88) made it out to be. On the other hand, it creates the problem that where participants did not share much about it, little information is available to describe it. This is only speculative and no real conclusions can be made for this research project.

According to the available information, the influence of these TPM practices will be examined by means of those participants that shared their experience in this regard. I want to focus first on how the participants **narrate and interpret** the ministry process regarding these components in

helping them to deconstruct the lies in their lives, and secondly on their **experience** of these practices (attended to in the next chapter).

### **7.3.1.1 Reflection on the participants' interpretations**

Here follows my reflection on the following participants' interpretations of the role that these three components or practices of TPM, namely the presenting emotion, revisiting the original memory and identifying the lie, played in their narratives.

#### **a) Jacques ("Transformed from stuttering to public speaking")**

Jacques related that his painful stuttering started after he was expected in Grade 7 to read his essay in class and how the children laughed at him. He dealt with this fear in practicing TPM. The emotion of fear helped him to identify the original memory. In his interview Jacques related that he is convinced that most of these changes came about as a result of Jesus pointing out the lies in his life and replacing them with truth. In that way TPM practices led to the lies being identified. Once done, the lies were deconstructed by means of God's voice.

#### **b) Harold ("How God can change a person")**

Chapter 5 thoroughly dealt with how the process helped Harold to deconstruct the lies in his life. From Harold's narrative it is clear that his life was overshadowed by the belief that **nobody** loved him or cared for him. This belief was accompanied by feeling alone. In Chapter 5 I indicated how Harold went back to a memory where he was alone on a balcony, and how God deconstructed that lie. Various other lies were also deconstructed in such a way that during the research interview Harold could name **everyone** who loved him.

#### **c) Beryl ("A cleansing experience")**

When Chaplain Muller indicated that Beryl's session was one of the easiest sessions he facilitated, he meant that Beryl very quickly discovered the lies that influenced her thought processes and then received God's truth regarding them. It implies that certain of her perceptions were very quickly deconstructed by God's voice and that He was and is an active participant in the reconstruction of her reality. Chaplain Muller related further that one would have expected that some of the trauma would have elicited more emotion but that never happened. However, the degree of honesty that Beryl showed proved that she was very brave to revisit those memories.

From this it is clear that Beryl did really revisit the original memories and that the abovementioned practice of TPM contributed to the success Beryl experienced.

#### **d) Joe ("Anointed")**

Joe told that he revisited memories when he was growing up and how it was unacceptable to be close to God: "Children have to be seen, not heard". Although already a pastor, the lie remained in his life. He compared TPM with a traditional deliverance-ministry where God may have taken the problem away, but the lie remained and the problem would return. His experience was that TPM works because it removes the lie. Chaplain Muller added that TPM renews your mind so that you experience your circumstances differently.

It is evident that the abovementioned practices of TPM deconstructed the lies that influenced Joe's dominant life story and opened up the possibilities of the construction of a preferred story, to put Chaplain Muller's words in another frame.

#### **e) Dawid ("Freed from the shame")**

It seems from Dawid's research interviews that he felt really safe when the lies in his life were unmasked and he confessed his sins. He said that those lies were exposed when God showed him his past. His father did not want his first child to be a son and doubted that Dawid was his son. He had issues with his father who never embraced him and made him feel unimportant. As a result of those lies in his life, he always wanted to be someone else. The lies were deconstructed in the TPM session by means of the vision God showed him of his father. Today he has finally conquered the obstacles in life and stopped trying to be someone else. Now he has nothing against his father anymore.

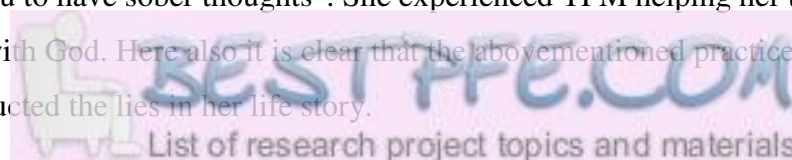
#### **f) Ruth ("You're precious in My eyes")**

Ruth shared that she believed the lies about her body image, namely that she is obese. She also believed that she was responsible for caring for her siblings. She described her experience:

In TPM you look for the emotion and where the problem started, where the fire started burning. God shows you where the problem is; you are a child again and see where the lie is. Then the facilitator gives the pain to God. I closed my eyes and the Lord showed me a diamond. "You're precious in My eyes", He said to me. God cares.

She had to choose whether to accept it or to hold on to the pain. She chose to let go "Now the pain is completely gone".

Ruth came to the conclusion: "TPM works because it cancels out the influence of the lie on your thoughts. It helps you to have sober thoughts". She experienced TPM helping her to be completely honest with God. Here also it is clear that the abovementioned practices of TPM effectively deconstructed the lies in her life story.



### **g) Annatjie (“A corpse coming to life”)**

There were two significant themes in Annatjie’s “problem-saturated story”. Firstly her emotional state where she described herself as “flat as an ECG when your heart is no longer beating”. The second theme was the abuse of manly authority in her parents’ home, in her marriage and in the church. She lived with the firm belief that divorce can never be an option. She had made her bed and had to sleep in it. It is no wonder that the woman who first came to Chaplain Muller was deeply depressed and saw no future for herself.

By God taking her back to a memory where she was a foetus in the womb and there showing her that He had a destiny for her, the lie that she believed, about only being a plaything of manly authority, was deconstructed. While she had no father figure to look up to, God became her father at that moment. There was no earthly father with a lap for her to sit on or to tell her that she was important. In that instant she received all she had missed. Annatjie experienced the TPM sessions with Chaplain Muller as opening the curtain to making changes, such as leaving her marriage and escaping the patriarchal structure within the church. She discovered that her female emotions are not weaknesses.

Here too can be seen that this TPM practice contributed to the deconstruction of the lie her dominant life story had been built on.

### **h) Marinda (“Two different people”)**

In my opinion Marinda’s story is the one where the deconstruction of the lie by means of God’s voice is the most clearly illustrated. Marinda’s “problem-saturated story” was constructed around fear, the lie being that she had to make it safe for herself by building a “wall” around herself, something she did by using “aggression”. God gave her a visual image, showing Him literally taking the wall apart, stone by stone, i.e. deconstructing it. He spoke so directly to her, so “matter of factly” and there was no meanness. She wanted to build a wall between them because she was afraid that He would invade her space. He showed her that He did not want it that way.

Marinda related that when a recipient of TPM experiences something as coming from God, then it is easy to believe. When the recipient believes it, it becomes truth to her and she starts living accordingly. It is evident from the interviews that TPM played an important part in the construction of a new image of God for Marinda. Two quotations from her interviews are examples of this. According to Chaplain Muller her view of God was “hard and unyielding”, and “her perception of His Essence has changed completely”. It seems that as she was raised in the Old Apostolic Church she believed that she had to do something to win God’s favour. The concept of grace was seemingly absent. In TPM she experienced that God “mercifully sent

someone through whom she could discover who He really is”. I cite the following quotation from the first interview: “He showed me that He is God and not just a projection of people’s thoughts”. She discovered that she could approach Him with anything, “even if it’s the most scandalous thing, I can go to Him”. According to Marinda, this experience in TPM was responsible for deconstructing the old image of God, helping her reconstruct a new image of Who God is. It helped her to enter into a living relationship with Him.

### **i) Magriet (“Fireworks”)**

Magriet’s narrative illustrated that in her TPM-process the original memory was effectively retrieved, although she was not aware of the memory beforehand. She said that when memories came up in context, you couldn’t doubt them. Regarding her fear, she related that before the session she would wake up at night, worrying about her finances. Focusing on the fear in the session, her fear was linked to children’s games when they spooked each other with “the china man”. After that TPM session the fear was gone and has not returned since.

It is truth that came to her and was confirmed by the picture images. She did not hear a voice in the sessions; it was just a sense of knowing. During the session after the car accident she saw herself as a three-year-old girl, completely alone. Magriet said that when she went back to check the emotion, it was gone. Magriet is of the opinion that, according to her experience, ordinary psychotherapy does not take effect immediately. Therefore she has no doubt that God did it. By sharing her experience of these practices of TPM, Magriet contributed to the co-construction of the value of these TPM-practices in the deconstruction of lies in people's dominant life stories.

### **j) Edward ("A boy who let his father down")**

Edward indicated that he indeed worked through memories and in the process certain lies were deconstructed. He also said that God showed him the truth that he does have control over his life. In that way the abovementioned TPM practices did bring about change. However, what seems lacking is that not enough deconstruction of lies was done concerning his image of God. It is probably connected to the fact that he only received one session.

## **7.3.2 Summary**

From the knowledges the participants shared, according to their interpretations, it is clear that the three components of the TPM practice of deconstructing the lie, i.e. (a) Looking for the emotional echo from the past, (b) Identifying the original memory, and (c) Discerning the lie-

based thinking or lie statement, played a significant role in the process of deconstructing their lies or interpretations that contributed to their problem-saturated stories. Their experiences of these practices are attended to in the next chapter.

#### **7.4 Closing reflections**

This chapter was about “the participants’ interpretations of the healing possibilities of TPM”. In their response the focus was on what changes they experienced, what role God's voice played in those changes and how the practices of TPM contributed to the deconstruction of lies which they believed, that contributed to their dominant problem-saturated stories.

Most of the participants experienced that God’s voice played a huge part in the healing process that opened up new healing possibilities for them. We have listened to the story about a stutterer who was healed and is now a fluent public speaker. Many of the stories tell of a new identity in Christ, with low self-esteem and a negative self-image mainly de-constructed. These stories encompass healing from depression, from suicidal tendencies and from a pathological grieving process. We heard about multiple personalities integrating and the story of a severely traumatized child receiving healing. It helped someone who never laughed to tackle life with a smile. These are narratives of renewed hope. But we also listened to a story of someone who do not want to change and of someone who is so disappointed in himself that he never wants to face God again, which shows that TPM does not have all the answers.

It however appeared that in seventeen of the eighteen narratives the participants experienced that the practices of TPM did help them to get solutions for their problems and contributed to the change in their dominant life stories from problem-saturated stories to new preferred stories of faith, hope and love. In 15 narratives the participants' responses seem to indicate that TPM had a definite positive effect on the way they narrate their lives and construct their realities. In Edward's narrative there initially was a clear shift, but although there is still a shift, aspects of his problem saturated story overshadow the progress once made. In Emily's narrative she narrates her story differently, but the effect there-of on her behaviour that her nominee experienced, cannot always be justified ethically. It is also not clear that the shift she experienced was brought about by TPM. Other factors also played an important role.

The research interviews indicate that God's voice in the process appeared not only to be an active participant in the dialogues that led to changes, but certainly the most important factor in the change. It appears that in the experiences of the participants, the four basic components of the TPM process did indeed play a role in the reconstructing of their preferred stories and that these practices of the TPM process supported God's voice in the process.

What I have learnt from the participants is that these practices helped them to externalise their problems. The focus shifted to the lie they believed as the problem and was not on them . Although it is challenging to connect with emotional pain from the past, most participants saw it as important in order to receive proper healing. Their experiences of the Lord's participation in the process were so positive that they saw it as worthwhile to go through that process, as it helped them to identify the lie.

As I had reflected earlier on the importance of identifying the lie, the question was raised as to whether the identification of the lie was as important as Smith made it. Although the Lord certainly does not need our processes to reveal whatever He wants to reveal, all the participants in this research experienced that the Lord revealed His truth at that moment when the lie was held up to Him for His truth. A few of them testified to the effect that they prayed before about the same problem without experiencing any results. However, in Harold's case the Lord revealed truth to him about his inappeasable appetite in the theophostic moment, without the facilitator knowing about the problem. From this I conclude that the Lord participates in this process, but is certainly not restricted to the TPM process, as set out by Smith. However, these narratives show that identifying the lie and holding it up to the Lord, brought about the moment where they received truth from the Lord.

These narratives show that where participants allow TPM to create space for the voice of God to take part in the social construction of new preferred stories, new possibilities for healing are created for a variety of problems. Looking at the participants' narratives the participants presented among others with the following problems:

- Addictions;
- Childhood sexual abuse;
- Depression;
- Dissociative Identity Disorder;
- Eating disorder;
- Fear (phobias);
- Low self esteem;
- Marriage problems and abusive family relationships;
- Obesity;
- Post Traumatic Stress;

- Stuttering;
- Uncontrollable behaviour;
- Underachievement;
- Unforgiveness.

I referred earlier to the issue that where psychopathology is present, TPM cannot be the only cure. However, when one looks at the variety of problems represented by the participants, it became evident that TPM creates healing possibilities for a rich variety of problem-saturated stories. It seems that where a person's dominant story is built on the wrong interpretation of what happened in their past, TPM practices can help identify this misinterpretation, and secondly that God's voice plays a significant role in the deconstruction of it.

TPM is therefore not an instant miraculous change or solution for all problems, but it creates new space for growth, change and choices which can lead to other lifestyles. TPM opens the doors through which people can walk to new lives, together with their facilitators, although their facilitators did not open the doors. **God is the one who opens doors**

In this chapter I attended to the participants' interpretations of their experiences of TPM practices and the effects it had on the ways they narrated their life stories. The next aspect to be addressed is an exploration of how the participants **experienced** the practices of TPM and an evaluation of those experiences to establish if TPM can be judged as an ethicising practice. This will be done in the next chapter.



## Chapter 8

### THE PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES OF THE PRACTICES OF TPM AND THE ETHICS OF THE PROCESS

*An ethic of participation rather than a search for “the cause” or “the truth” is now emerging as a central value of social thought and action.*

(Hoffman 1992:22)

The quotation above indicates the importance that the ethical aspect has within the social sciences of today. In his book about ethics, “Gentle Shepherding”, Bush (2006:12) describes how he tried to teach Western ethic concepts to the people of Fuji. Ethics come to the fore for Bush (2006:2) when “people make decisions that affect other people”. He relates how “a well-respected minister in the community” asked him at one of his lectures to please explain the difference between “self” and “other”. In this community in which there is no difference between “self” and “other”, the abovementioned definition makes no sense. It emphasizes that there is not a set of ethics valid for everyone, but that ethics must be socially constructed by means of participation. The experiences of the participants of the practices of TPM are important participants in the “ethic of participation”.

In the previous chapter I focussed on the first part of the “*how*” research question, namely the participants’ interpretations of the shifts that they experienced. In this chapter we now focus on the ethical aspect of the “*how*” research question, namely if the participants experienced the practices of TPM and their effect on themselves as well as their environment, as an ethicising practice. The abovementioned quote by Bush indicates the importance of this. Therefore, in this chapter we (all the researchers) reflect on the following research questions:

- a) How did the participants experience the practices of TPM?
- b) What was the impact of the participants’ experiences on their nominees?
- c) In what way did the participants’ responses witness to an ethical practice?
- d) What did the participants find helpful and what was perhaps harmful or created more problems?

- e) What is the influence of a lay facilitator on the process?

It would have been easier to respond to question “c” according to a set of ethical practices or criteria. Even the most basic ethical principles, namely “do no harm” and “do good” (Lebacqz & Driskill 2000:39) would not have the same meaning in all circumstances. The conceptual traditions from which ethical principles developed in the past was described in Chapter 2 under the headings of “Submission” (The phase of Ancient Greek and Medieval periods) and “Observation” (The phase of Enlightenment and Modernism). It led to the formulation of a “model of professional ethics that stresses the skill, knowledge, autonomy, service orientation and unselfish motivations of professionals” (Lebacqz & Driskill 2000:39). However, Lebacqz and Driskill (2000:39-40) point out further characteristics of the model:

- a) Recognizing the power gap between professional and client: professionals have power, where clients are vulnerable;
- b) Understanding that those with power are responsible for behaving appropriately, for instance, for setting appropriate boundaries;
- c) Accepting fundamental norms of “nonmaleficence” (do no harm) and “beneficence” (do good). These norms reflect the understanding that those with power over the vulnerable are to avoid harming their clients and to work for the client's good over their own good.

These principles are obviously power based and therefore create distance that can lead to isolation and alienation. The third phase is “Participation” (the phase of postmodernism). If ethics are combined with participation, problems can be bridged. Therefore I propose **an ethic of participation**.

Using ethics in therapy and research is “a continuous participatory act of co-creating, discovering and doing in a transparent and accountable manner” (Louw 2003:71). Bush (2006:5) describes the “ethics of doing” as “to act in a way consistent with principles”. In that way he still does not escape the power that is attributed to certain knowledge. It is clear how difficult it is to really move away from a power-based ethic where expert knowledge is the norm according to which the ethic is formulated. Solely looking at certain principles, and determining if the way in which TPM ministry was done actually took place according to those principles, cannot answer the research question. Smith (2005:168-9) went to a great deal of trouble to establish the TPM guidelines according to which each facilitator should act to ensure an ethical practice. The bulk of these guidelines are to ensure that the facilitator stays in a not-knowing position. This effect is certainly creditworthy, with his intention being to do everything possible to ensure that the recipients come to no harm. In this research it would have been so simple to firstly judge

whether the guidelines satisfied basic professional ethics, as mentioned above. Secondly, it could then have been judged as to whether the guidelines were adhered to during the participants' TPM-sessions. Smith expects of facilitators to obtain a written acknowledgment from recipients of TPM that their sessions were conducted according to those guidelines. In that way he does indeed endeavour for recipients to take part in the process. The problem is that prescriptive ethics in "its universal application would not take into account the personal and existential aspects of our experience in the therapy" (Louw 2003:72). While all those precautions may be in place, power can still impact on a recipient's basic human dignity. It follows therefore that the research question cannot be answered from a social constructionist perspective in this way.

If no prescriptive ethics are to be used, how will the research question be attended to? A further dilemma is to ethically judge a modernistic practice from a social constructionist perspective. In great measure Kotze (2002:21) shows the way when he points out that doing ethics is not an action of looking for a hiding place in normative systems but that it is "a creative act of ethicising". It means moving from the noun "ethics" to a verb "ethicising". Louw (2003:71, 73) termed ethicising a "participatory consciousness, where everybody's uniqueness, individuality, personal history, experiences and emotions are respected", while Kotze (2002:21) writes: "To live is to ethicise and to ethicise is to participate in living". It implies that the intention of this research is not to judge TPM's guidelines from an expert position in order to find out whether they guarantee an ethical practice. Kotze (2002:18) indicates that an ethical consciousness can be found in "the participation of all, including the marginalized and silenced" while the central question is, "Who benefits"? My intention, when I reflect in this research on the experiences of the participants, was to be an equal participant in the research process in which I am not an expert and am learning as much as the participants. It stimulated a process of reflective action, enriching my own experience by providing me with a better understanding of the value of TPM in people's lives. At the same time I learnt why certain participants experienced certain aspects the way they did, while better understanding the positive or negative influence of it in their lives. In this process my own way of ethicising is also being constructed.

When ethicising is seen as a participatory action it implies that ethicising took place in the TPM sessions and that this ethicising was continued in the research interviews. In this process of communicative ethics all the participants are enriched in the research's moral vision. Louw (2003:74-8) indicated a few implications that ethicising as a participatory action has. This will be discussed under heading 8.3. Before we look at these implications, I first want to attend to the aspect of spirituality and ethicising (8.2).

Bush (2005:5) points out that the emphasis has shifted from “ethics of being” to “ethics of doing”. However, Bush still works from a perspective where there is a certain ethical knowledge serving as the norm for “doing” and “being”. The “doing” has become more important to him. In this research all the participants ethicise together, co-creating the meaning of what they are doing. The meaning created in this way is essentially determined by each one’s “ethics of being”, an exceptionally important role. That is why I disagree with Bush. The “ethics of being” cannot be separated from a person’s spirituality.

In order to reflect on the abovementioned aspects, firstly it is important to reflect on the participants' experiences of the ministry process. Afterwards, I aim to reflect on how the different aspects appeared in the various narratives. I want to indicate how they experienced: (a) to focus on the emotional echo from the past; (b) to relive past memories; and (c) the process of looking for the lie.

## **8.1 Reflection on the participants’ experiences**

I am going to discuss each of these practices or components while I cite examples from the different narratives. Before I discuss the components, I want to refer to Alice's experience of this process as a whole. I think that her experience makes a unique contribution to this discourse.

### **8.1.1 Alice’s experience. (“Inner voices exchanged for God’s voice”)**

With regard to Alice, considering the presence of extensive dissociation, another way had to be followed to rediscover the original memories. TPM suggests another route in dealing with DID (Dissociative Identity Disorder) because it is so difficult for the person to connect the emotion with the memory. When dissociation occurs and the person is asked to focus on an emotion, an alter will often appear. It falls outside the scope of this study to give a detailed account of it.

In the continued search for God’s truth, the TPM process led to the “forces”, from which the alters protected her, being deconstructed while trust in Jesus Christ was being co-constructed. The facilitator modelled trust in trusting the process thereby trusting in Jesus Christ. In that way, the facilitator participated in co-constructing the alternative story of trust in Jesus Christ.

There are two aspects of trust that need to be addressed. Firstly, when Alice was asked to explain it she said: “Human trust had to first be established as an example so that I could trust someone I can see before I could dare make the leap of faith to trust God Who is so ‘radically different’ to human beings. I don’t believe that trust in God could have developed without the ‘safety net’ of the trust that was gradually built up in the therapy process”. The second aspect of trust was that

the facilitator modelled trust in Jesus Christ so that she could use his trust as “a stepping stone” and follow his example.

Where the aspects of the TPM process probably made an important contribution, is by externalising the problem. Alice came to therapy as “written off by psychologists” who labelled her as the problem. Because TPM searches for the lie in which the receiver of TPM believes, it helped Alice to externalise her problem. The focus was on the lies sought and the forces from which the alters protected her. In the process the contribution made by the alters was acknowledged, and by doing that they became allies in the deconstruction of those forces. It seems as though this aspect has already been deposited in her thought processes. She indicated that she no longer takes it personally when someone differs from her. The implication is that she no longer sees herself as the problem. It plays an important role in the transitional phase where she is constructing her new story. The voice of the Lord, however, still plays the greatest role in the deconstruction process.

Although this aspect has already been discussed, it is necessary to revisit it in order to gain a clear perspective on it. As it is Alice’s experience that God’s words are the truth, they are the only valid words that can deconstruct the lies in her life. It was an experience with God’s truth that gave birth to the new story. It explains why previous attempts to single out the “unique outcomes” or “sparkling events” using a narrative approach and attempts to lead her to build an alternative story around it, did not meet with much success. If a therapist pointed out a “sparkling event” to her, dissociation would immediately block it and she might indicate that she made up the story. There was no reality that she could be certain of. In TPM she found God’s voice to trust. To quote her:

Without God’s voice to lead me on the road ahead, there are still too many off ramps and traps. It is not a case that God has already told me everything that I am ever going to need to hear. The problem is too complicated and interwoven and the chances so great that various aspects of it may erupt in simultaneous crisis situations, that only He knows what I need to know at that specific time or how to survive a crisis in order to grow through it. It would be a total impossibility for me to think that another human being could provide me with that kind of help. I won’t even be interested in trusting in only a human voice. To complete the process of healing I will always have to rely primarily on the voice of God to co-construct my alternative story.

My conclusion, as researcher, is that a participant's experience of the process cannot be separated from the person of the facilitator or the relationship between the facilitator and the recipient. In Alice's case she had a positive experience of the facilitator, with most of the other participants having the same positive experience. In the case of Roelf (“I did not want it to work”) it is different. His nominee says that the personality clash between him and the facilitator played a

role in TPM not being successful in his case. I do not completely agree with this, seeing that Roelf later voluntarily went to see another facilitator with the same result. However, despite that, the important role that trust in the facilitator plays and the modulating role of the facilitator cannot be ignored (this discourse will be continued later in this chapter).

### **8.1.2 Looking for the emotional echo from the past**

As indicated earlier, this factor, the looking for the emotional echo from the past, was initially called “to stir the darkness” in TPM. It means that the emotion must be intensified before the person is asked to look for a memory in their past where they experienced a similar emotion. I already attended to this discourse in chapter 5 (5.2.3.1). As this was the acknowledged TPM practice at the time most of the participants received their ministry, I am going to focus on how the participants experienced it. Chaplain Muller, who made use of the technique to “stir” emotions, refined it to a fine art. He is convinced that the technique contributes to people reaching the original memories more easily and that as a consequence the lie statement is then exposed more easily. As indicated earlier, Smith no longer uses this technique, but it would seem that Chaplain Muller achieved notable success with it. It certainly worked in Michelle’s narrative. To quote her: “He knew how to get things moving. He definitely knew which buttons to push”. It helped her to expose lies in order for them to be deconstructed. The ethical aspect of this will be discussed further on in this chapter.

Yet it still seems from the research interviews that participants do not really like this part of the process. The following quotations from the research interviews witness to that effect:

- **Michelle:** “He made you feel at ease, being very open and having a good sense of humour. I did not like it when he ‘pushed’ and ‘stirred’ me and sometimes felt that I could attack him”.
- **Jacques:** “It was not pleasant when Chaplain Muller stirred the darkness”.

It is true that nobody really likes negative emotions being “stirred”. However, it is interesting to me that only four of the participants made such comments. Everyone agreed that the consequence is so positive that they see it as necessary to truly experience healing. That was also the case with Michelle and Jacques.

According to the new TPM guidelines (Smith 2007:90) it is not necessary to stir emotion. He indicates that in his experience the painful emotion which is already present, is more than enough to help the brain make the association with a memory from the past. In my own experience, the Rogerian “primary accurate empathy” works the best. I am referring to the skill

of the facilitator to reflect in such a way that the participants experience that the facilitator understands the confusion, fear, anger, etc on the same level as they experience it. Where Rogers (1967:3) says: “It is this sensitive and accurate grasp and communication of the patient’s inner world that facilitates the patient’s self-exploration”, I am of the opinion that in the TPM context it is effective in helping the participant to make the association.

There is a comparison between “stirring the darkness” and what Egan (1986::212) called “advanced empathy”, which he describes as “going beyond the expressed to the partially expressed and implied”. Applied in this context it means that the facilitator implies in her/his reflection something more negative or worse than the recipient reported, in order to elicit a more intense emotion. It implies that the facilitator has to interpret what the recipient said, and in that way leave her/his not-knowing position. When the facilitator is intent on stirring the darkness, it can easily happen that s/he is so intent on eliciting a reaction, that the facilitator loses sight of the influence thereof on the experience of the recipient. It may have a negative effect on the recipient, especially the person who then does not receive truth from God. That is what may have happened to Alice and Roelf. Alice said how long it took her to forgive the facilitator. Roelf’s concrete thinking prevented him from interpreting the facilitator’s words in the right context.

In this regard I also want to refer to the research of Watson, Goldman and Greenberg (2007:188-9) who made a comparison between good and poor outcomes in emotion-focused treatment of depression. They found that the poor outcome clients were unable to deal with their emotions effectively. In order to help them effectively, emotion-focused therapists need to be “patient and take time to develop clients’ emotional processing skills before clients can...define specific areas of change” (:188). From this I conclude that to “stir the darkness” for a recipient, who is not emotionally ready for it, may harm him/her. It confirms thus that Smith’s current viewpoint is therefore more ethically responsible, as it is a careful revisiting of the memory, without pushing the recipient in any way.

From all the narratives it seems that most of the participants experienced the “emotional echo from the past” as effective, helping them identify the memory in which the lie was contained.

### **8.1.3 Revisiting the memory where the trauma originated**

Two participants explicitly expressed their discomfort in revisiting memories from the past during the research interviews. Roelf’s problem, not seeing the necessity of going back to the past, was one of the reasons why he became so angry with Chaplain Muller. Roelf was very defensive and retorted that his parents had nothing to do with the mess he had made of his life.

From what he said in the research interview, it seems that it may be more likely that Roelf was attempting to protect his parents' images than not wishing to revisit memories. It boils down to the principle of the free will. It was his choice not to go back to past memories, whatever his reasons were.

Edward is the other one who expressed his discomfort in reliving old memories. In my experience it often happens that recipients of TPM experience the reliving of past memories so negatively, that although they received considerable healing in the first session they don't want to return for a follow-up session. Marinda initially thought TPM's practices were retraumatizing (the discourse on retraumatizing was attended to in chapter 4). This raises the question of the necessity of this practice of TPM.

It can, however, not be denied that the eighteen participants connected with emotional pain in their memories. Marinda narrated in her experience that the Lord showed her where the hurt was. She experienced that the change occurred when she went back to experience the same hurt that was in the memory. Then she continued: "The healing comes about when you can experience where God was in the situation when it occurred". In TPM, not like in other emotional flooding therapies, the aim is not the re-experiencing of the memory. Looking for the lie that has to be deconstructed, is the real issue. All the participants in this study who worked through traumatic memories experienced total relief from all the emotions involved. Marinda commenting on revisiting her trauma memories through TPM, said: "It is the only way in which I would want to be helped. It was not a pleasant process at all, being very painful. I liked the fact that I could get to know the truth. The only way to receive healing is to hear the truth from the right source".

A further question that has to be asked is if people do not perceive their healing according to the model they believe in. Marinda, having done the Elijah House Counselling course (an IHP approach), is orientated towards God's presence by that same model. She observes her surroundings according to the constructions she believes in. It makes sense to Marinda to experience it in that way and therefore it is legitimate to her.

Glen ascribed the change he experienced to the opportunity to talk about the trauma experiences of his childhood. His nominee (his spouse) said: "When the change set in it was a miracle". What Glen perhaps did not realise, is that the facilitator conducted the session according to basic TPM principles. By talking about the incident he engaged emotionally with the memory, while the facilitator led him in identifying the lie. He acknowledged that "coming into contact with God" deconstructed his erroneous cognitions embedded in the memory as his nominee explained the change.



I have already referred to Smith's viewpoint (Chapter 4) that it is the lie that causes emotional pain, not merely remembering the event. The only reason that a recipient has to re-experience the memory is to discover the lie. In primal therapy the assumption is that the re-experiencing of the pain, will bring the healing. In cognitive therapy the focus is on the cognitive restructuring of the beliefs of the recipient. TPM finds the solution in a combination of the two aspects. In TPM it's not only about a combination of the two, but most importantly about receiving God's truth, that lets the pain disappear. A number of recipients have witnessed to the fact that they now choose to re-visit memories that used to be painful, in order to especially experience God's comfort and presence. **It is about a new relationship with the past.**

The re-experiencing of the memory thus leads to the next component, namely identifying the lie.

#### **8.1.4 Identify the lie**

As I indicated earlier, Smith himself finds this practice extremely important. I have also experienced that some facilitators become impatient during this phase and then turn to other therapeutic practices, something against which Smith (Ministry Guidelines 2, 5, 18 App. C) often warns. From the research interviews there is no indication that the facilitator did not keep to the TPM practice. However, in searching around to identify the lie, the facilitator needs to continually ask questions. It may seem like he is going around in circles. Often people tell what they think, when the facilitator asks them what they feel (emotion). Then it seems as if the facilitator is asking the same question over and over again, but that is to help the people in the end to formulate the lie in their own words. If the facilitator formulates the lie, (s)he is actually leaving the "not-knowing" position and starting to interpret what the recipient is saying. It is therefore of utmost importance that facilitators be patient and guide the recipients to formulate their lies in their own words. Therefore TPM facilitators are trained to check with recipients if their formulations of the lie-statements feel true to them, before they hold them up to the Lord for His truth. A couple of participants indicated that this practice frustrated them. Two quotations from the research interviews illustrate this:

- "I did not enjoy answering the same questions over and over again".
- "I did not like it when he kept on hammering on the same issue. However, I understand that it is necessary".

Children especially may find it frustrating with questions being asked over and over again. The skilfulness of the facilitator plays a huge part and I think that TPM practices can be enhanced by developing other ways of asking questions. By sharing their experiences the participants are

contributing to this discourse of how this practice of TPM can be developed further. I reflect on it again in the last chapter.

Another benefit of using the recipient's words is that it communicates accurate empathy (Rogers 1967:3). My own experience of the way Chaplain Muller did it was that he really understood what I believed. Several of the participants expressed their appreciation for the way he presented their lies to the Lord. It made them feel accepted and not judged. From my own experience I credit Chaplain Muller's accomplishment in this regard for the way he applied this TPM practice.

I've given an overview of how the participants experienced the basic components of TPM. Their experiences are closely connected to the role of spirituality in the TPM process. The subject of "spirituality" was attended to in chapter 3. Here I only want to focus on what is relative to ethics.

## **8.2 The dance of ethics and spirituality**

There is a very close affinity between the "ethics of being" and the spirituality of a participant. Louw (2003:212) says: "The way we practice our spirituality describes our ethics". It implies that the way in which I practice my spirituality influences others. When the way in which I practice my spirituality does injustice to another in any way, it becomes an ethical problem. An example of this is illustrated by the statistics that Lebacqz and Driskill (2000:98) refer to, namely that 50% of all women in mainline churches in the USA experience "alienation" in their churches. If one group so practices their spirituality that another group becomes alienated from the Body of Christ, ethicising is violated by power. In my opinion the following metaphor describes what ethicising is: "True leaders are not those who exert power over others; the leaders are the truly strong ones who make themselves bridges and by so doing aid others to move on" (Isherwood & McEwan 2001:154). The "truly strong" are measured by the ethicising quality of their spirituality.

There is no conformity about how spirituality should be defined. Lebacqz and Driskill (2000:23) refer to the variety of definitions of "spirituality" and classify those definitions into three approaches. They are the anthropological, the theological and the historical-contextual definitions. A valid definition ought to take all three of these aspects into account. In choosing a definition, the authors recommend that the following guidelines be kept in mind:

- It is about the relation between Spirit and spirit;
- True spirituality takes discipline;
- Is accountable to the community;
- Involves the interpersonal, the intrapersonal, the structural and the environmental aspects of life.

(Lebacqz & Driskill 2000:31-3)

Without attempting to give a definition of spirituality, I want to view my spirituality as a Christian as knowledge and wisdom that were constructed in the experience of my relationship with the Trinity, my fellow human beings and I. It determines what meaning I attach to my experiences, what guides the choices I make and decides how I live. My spirituality determines my presence, my “ethics of being”. This way of being present represents my ethicising.

Let’s return to the research question: *In what way did the participants’ responses witness to an ethical practice?* It is about the way in which the ethicising took place in the TPM sessions, as well as the influence on the participants’ environments. Therefore I want to investigate the mutual effect of the spirituality of the facilitator and the recipients on the ethicising of the TPM process according to the participants' experiences. I also want to investigate the impact it had on the participants' nominees. In my mind there are four aspects of the ethicising process that have to be researched, namely:

- the influence of the TPM-guidelines on the ethicising of the TPM-session;
- .the influence of the facilitator's spirituality on the recipients;
- the influence of each recipient’s spirituality on the facilitator; as well as
- the influence of each recipient’s spirituality on their nominees.

### **8.2.1 TPM guidelines as a voice in the construction of an ethicising spirituality**

Chapter 5 highlighted the TPM guidelines (Appendix C) which state that the facilitator only facilitates the dialogue between a recipient and God. The guidelines are set up in such a way that a “not-knowing” position of the facilitator is entrenched. In this research project the facilitator is a lay counsellor. The research question comes to mind, namely: *“What is the influence of a lay facilitator on the process?” (Lay means no formal training in Theology or Psychology).*

It can be argued that it should be much easier for a lay facilitator to take the position of “not-knowing”. Chaplain Muller is trained in Christian Counselling and has completed all the advanced training in the implementation of TPM. He has considerable experience in facilitating TPM and is focused on keeping strictly to the TPM guidelines. Although he is well trained in the practices of TPM, it excludes an academic background in theology or psychology. When I initially came into contact with TPM I was informed that it required a “weekend course” to become a TPM counsellor. I feared that poorly equipped people were about to be sent out, doing more harm than good. As explained, it is in no way only a “weekend course”, a fact rightly to be

concerned about. TPM provides a very thorough training to equip facilitators for their specific role, namely the position of “not-knowing”.

Another ethical problem is highlighted by Kelsey (1973:11), namely that the medical model overshadows the “healing scene”. My opinion is that Smith's guidelines are in place to protect facilitators against laws protecting the medical model. Kelsey points out how closely bound mental and physical wellbeing are and says: “But since this is a complex matter, often requiring medical background and judgment, most people feel that it is foolish, if not downright dangerous, for lay persons like the clergy to meddle in healing”. Can it be considered ethical that someone without expert knowledge of psychology deals with issues like depression, anxiety, etc.? These aspects also connect with another discourse in this chapter, namely “sharing of power” (8.3).

Seeing that TPM is prayer ministry and the only search is for God's truth about lies that people believe, there is no room for diagnosing on medical, psychiatric, psychological or even theological levels, as one would for instance in psychopathology. TPM guidelines are structured to prevent any such diagnosis being made, ensuring that a facilitator does not cross over to professional therapy. Therefore, Kelsey's problem cannot be applied to TPM. On the other hand there is Tan (1997:236-240) who refers to various research results and states that lay counsellors can be just as effective as professional therapists. He continues that if the issues of confidentiality, competence and choice are in place, lay counsellors fulfil a very important function in the church. For Tan these three terms include the following:

- Confidentiality – lay counsellors must be aware of the legal and ethical standards;
- Competence – lay counsellors must be aware of the limits of their competence; and
- Choice – lay counsellors must be careful not to misrepresent themselves, in order that clients may make informed choices.

In my opinion the role of the TPM guidelines in the construction of an ethicising spirituality must not be ignored. If these guidelines are not used as power tools but as companions to conversation, they make a constructive contribution to the co-construction of facilitators' ethicising spiritualities. These guidelines place Jesus at the centre of the conversation. When that happens, it is inevitable that an ethicising spirituality grows from it.

The actual problem that these guidelines address is the differentiation between clergy and laity. Heitink (1993:99) shows that this differentiation was already present with Emperor Constantine in 380 AD, when the church became the state church and clergy got formal status. Its official origin was with Pope Gregory, the Great, (540-604 AD) when the clergy were separated from the

laity. In essence, this differentiating is alien to the church of Christ. Isherwood and McEwan (2001:15) point out that this classism was continued in the church through the centuries, implying that till today there are different levels of knowledge/power, labelled with such names as priest, moderator, bishop etc, as opposed to the laity. The problem with it, as Fillingham (1993:18) shows, is the power position the clergy have because of their knowledge, which makes the laity irrelevant because they do not possess the same knowledge.

De Jongh van Arkel (2000:153-4) points out how the recent focus in pastoral care moved from the clinical to the communal contextual, from “clerical hierarchy towards particular Christian communities. It goes beyond the clergy to include the caring community of clergy and laity ..”. In my opinion it is what Smith had in mind when he took TPM to “the laity”. Smith's (2007:191) goal is to empower the Church of Christ (believers or laity). To quote Smith (2000:7): “I firmly believe that unless the Church accepts the responsibility for setting the captives free, the job will never be done. There is too massive a need to assume that the professional can do it”. He drew up the guidelines from his own circumstances where there were many legal restrictions. I understand it as his way of creating a space for laity in which they can safely function as a community of care.

Guideline 3 (Appendix C) says to the recipients: “**Everything in the session should be determined by your own belief and free choice**”. In this Smith took the power/knowledge from the facilitator, leading to the sharing of power, as discussed later. By means of this guideline Smith indeed created a space for participatory ethics. It depends on the way in which it is used. Smith's approach remains typically modernistic. For example, in his weekly newsletter, “You asked Dr. Ed”, he keeps writing that if anyone does not follow the guidelines, the person no longer facilitates TPM (Smith 2008). It would then seem that he is using the guidelines as a power tool. I understand that he does it to protect TPM's unique character. When the most important question in participatory ethics is *who benefits*, it would seem that his intention is for the recipients to benefit from it. In that way, the rigid application of the guidelines can be seen as part of what Ackermann (2003:143) describes as “doing spirituality” by “a longing for justice and wholeness and a resistance to all that thwarts well-being.

Nevertheless, from whatever angle the guidelines are viewed, they play an important role in helping TPM to remain an ethicising process, even with lay people facilitating it.

Next, the influence of the facilitator's spirituality on the recipients is researched. In this research project there is only one facilitator. The reason for choosing him was explained in Chapter 1. In

this research he serves as an example of what happens when a lay facilitator, thoroughly trained in TPM, keeps to TPM guidelines.

Obviously, no general conclusions can be drawn from this. Also, the ethicising that took place in the TPM process, and which is highlighted by this research, cannot be separated from his own person and spirituality. If in the following paragraphs I refer to him too much, it is not in order to give him a central place, but rather to indicate the central role of the facilitator in ethicising in the TPM process.

### 8.2.2 Spirituality of the facilitator

The ethicising of the TPM process is determined in a major way by the spirituality of the facilitator. Louw (2003:212) puts the same question in another way: “How did this dance of ethics and spirituality feature in the therapy”? Therefore the question at hand is just *how* the spirituality of the facilitator influenced the participants’ experiences of TPM. In what way did it contribute or perhaps hinder on the road to the reconstruction of their realities?

We will now look at the participant’s experiences of how the facilitator practised his spirituality. Can it be seen as an ethicising spirituality? In terms of the metaphor of Isherwood and McEwan, did he form a bridge to help and motivate the participants to move on?

In order to fully appreciate the facilitator’s ethicising spirituality, I would like to compare it with Ackermann’s (2003:143) description of “doing spirituality” as the point of departure. She describes it as a “lived experience of relationship with God, with people and with creation, fed by a longing for justice and wholeness and a resistance to all that thwarts well-being”.

From the participants’ responses it seems clearly that a number of them experienced the facilitator's “lived experience” of a relationship with God. With regard to this, I quote two participants who experienced his spirituality as being determined by a commitment to God and his ministry.

- **Annatjie** said that what struck her about Chaplain Muller and his wife was their zeal for the cause. It had significant meaning to her that they started the session with worship. In the way he conducted the session, the way he prayed, she could discern a personal commitment to Jesus and it set her at ease.
- **Dawid** related that the way in which his facilitator guided him through his traumatic memory, and brought him to the point where he could release everything to the Lord, showed him that: “He is a person with a calling to this ministry, an anointed of the Lord”.

Several of the interviews, in which Chaplain Muller reflected on the initial interviews of the participants, show that he places great emphasis on experiencing the presence of the Lord. It confirms that the lived experience of the relationship with the Lord is of utmost importance to him. In my own opinion, that aspect shapes the facilitator's ethicising spirituality. As I also was a recipient of Chaplain Muller's ministry, I can witness that I experienced the same. The way he prays in a childlike fashion emanates an intimacy with the Lord and a respect for the recipient's relationship with the Lord. The recipient experiences that a space is created for a conversation between the recipient and the Lord.

It is also clear from the words of Agnew (2008:169) when she says: “Applied spirituality is a ‘lived’ spirituality where transcendent ideals reveal the possibilities that exist in us to live more fully the inner reality of relatedness with God and outer harmony in relationship with others”. This ‘harmony’ with others also becomes clear in a number of other quotations from participants' interviews, allowing them to speak directly about their experiences.

Dawid: “I experienced him as a trustworthy person”.  
 Ruth: “I could be honest with him”.

The facilitator communicated his caring and treated each one with empathy on their own level:

Edward: “He has the ability to communicate with you on your own level”.  
 Harold's nominee: “He meets children at their own level”.  
 Edward's wife “The acceptance I experienced from the facilitator led to great change within me”.

There is also a commitment to the principles of TPM and to only facilitate from the position of “not-knowing”:

Marinda: “He kept strictly to the principles”. “I liked the fact that he did not assert himself”.  
 Magriet: “I have great appreciation for the fact that he regulates the process according to strict guidelines. It made me feel very safe”.

Even the participant, who got angry with him and did not want to continue the facilitation process, experienced his ethicising.

Roelf : “Chaplain Muller is a pleasant and considerate person. He has lots of patience and is ‘understandable’”.(The facilitator handled him correctly but Roelf created problems). “I was the one who became.unmanageable”.  
 Magriet: “I have great respect for him. As facilitator he is a role model for me when I am facilitating”.

The abovementioned words of Magriet focus attention on the mutuality of the ethicising process. By means of his ethicising spirituality he helped co-construct her spirituality.



Only one participant's experience of the facilitator's spirituality could be described as "not ethicising" and formed a hindrance on the road to the reconstruction of her realities. The following background is necessary to understand Alice's reaction.

- **Alice:** Her experience of the facilitator was very negative since she felt she did not want sessions from someone whom she neither knew nor trusted. She found his approach too aggressive and that he expected too much of her. It took her many years to overcome the anger she felt towards him. However, it strengthened her resolve not to give in to again be labelled as "a hopeless case", and the anger she experienced helped to awaken her emotions that were dead up to that point.

Chaplain Muller used the "stir the darkness" technique. He assumed the role of her previous therapist, who described her as a hopeless case. Chaplain Muller's intention was to "stir the darkness" (her emotion) in order for her to identify the memory (echo of the past) where this emotion originated from. He motivated his practices by saying that he detected a passive style in the facilitation process. Smith (2005) no longer recommends this technique. In this case, the facilitator's action yielded therapeutic results. The problem is that, in effect, he acted from a position of power, where he positioned himself opposite her instead of next to her. This technique masked his ethicising spirituality. The negative role of power is illustrated. The moment when power enters, the opportunity for ethicising is muddled. In this case, the facilitator awarded higher priority to therapeutic results than ethicising. This discourse will be further discussed later on.

Many of those aspects were worded in the participant's responses. What many of the participants said about the facilitator's spirituality are summed up in the following quotations from Joe's research interview:

I found the way in which the facilitator ministered to me wonderful. The manner in which he listened, how he led the conversation, helped me reach the kernel. The way in which the facilitator encouraged me to place myself in Jesus' arms, something that I longed for my whole life, meant so much to me. He led the process with empathy, sympathy and tenderness, but still with authority. He has the ability to make you feel at ease and win your confidence. What meant the most to me was that the facilitator tried to protect me all the time. I experienced nothing negative and would not have had anything otherwise.

From Joe's quotation it becomes clear that the facilitator was a "bridge" so that Joe could "move on" from being someone who felt so trapped that he viewed suicide as the only solution. Other quotations also testify that the participants experienced an ethicising spirituality from their facilitator. To summarize, his ethicising spirituality included commitment to Jesus and to a ministry in the Kingdom of God, being sensitive, open and understanding, trustworthy,



respected, creating a safe environment, supportive and not being an expert. What Chaplain Muller meant by commitment to Jesus in TPM is clear in the next paragraph, where he reflects on his experience of the participants. He said: “*Not to act ethically, will be like a small child who wants to share in the conversation while his parents discuss their financial budget*”. With this example he describes the facilitator's place in a TPM session, like a child, listening to his parents' discussion, when he has no clue as to what they are talking about. His commitment to Jesus implies that he only listens because he trusts Jesus totally, knowing that He will do what is best for the recipient. I would call it a childlike faith in Jesus. With this approach he creates a space for an encounter between Jesus and a person, who chooses to be in a conversation with Jesus. More than one participant mentioned that they admire him because “no force was being used” in their TPM-sessions. TPM facilitators are taught to always respect the free will of recipients. No one may be forced into a relationship with Jesus. Through his teaching ability he enabled participants to understand the TPM process well enough for them to make an informed decision to partake.

His involvement with Gert, whose facilitation followed that of his child at Child Care, brought to the surface another aspect that Ackermann (2003:143) mentions in her description of “doing spirituality”, as she described it: “fed by a longing for justice and wholeness and a resistance to all that thwarts well-being”. In this case the child was in substitute care and by involving his parents in the TPM process, he actively took part in a process to re-unite the child with his parents. This description of the facilitator’s spirituality resonates with what Sanders (1997:298-301) describes as internalised ethical principles.

### **8.2.3 The facilitator's experience of the participants**

Chaplain Muller reacted with the following response when I asked him about the influence that TPM sessions with the participants had on his ethicising spirituality:

*One of the most important aspects of TPM is that the facilitator brings the “wounded” person before the face of our Lord Jesus. When the person is set before the person of our Lord Jesus, 80% of the TPM process is completed. To me “ethicising spirituality” is synonymous with spiritual discipline. The facilitator must realize that although the meeting is between God and the participant, the facilitator must still be there as the third person. Not to act ethically, will be like a small child who wants to share in the conversation while his parents discuss their financial budget.*

*The impact of the sessions on my own life speaks volumes. One example is the session with Joe. When Joe’s wife approached me in consequence of his threat of suicide, I was very upset because Joe is a good friend of mine. During the session I was so thankful that God firstly confirmed Joe’s position in Christ before he was confronted by evil. The way in which God confirmed Joe in such a beautiful way had*

*a tremendous impact on my own “ethicising spirituality”. After Joe’s experience with God, the confrontation with evil was minimal. I myself was furious with the evil because it humiliated God’s children, but God made the following verse very real to me again during Joe’s session: “It’s not by might nor power but by My Spirit says the Lord”. I realized again how important God is for human beings. That is why it is so crucial to discover your place in the Kingdom and your importance to Him. When you realize your value and the importance of yourself as a person, life will become a totally new challenge.*

His experience of the participants during the research process

*At first I agreed to the research process to get an idea of the impact of TPM on the lives of people. To my surprise the interviews with both the recipients and nominees had the same effect on me as a real life-changing TPM session has.*

*What was an overwhelming experience to me was that I felt God’s presence in most of the interviews. As the interviews progressed, I realised that we were busy with something “holy”. Sometimes I had the feeling that God made use of us to be His instruments while He Himself participated in the research interviews. The strangest experience for me about the whole project is that during the interviews and afterwards reading parts of this research report, I was amazed while listening to everyone, while I experienced that I had no part in their life changing moments. While I read these things and hear how I receive the credit, I become a little shy and withdrawn because I feel that my participation was actually very little. What is still an “awesome experience” is when I watched one of my own “live” TPM video recordings and experienced that God placed words in my mouth to ask a question in a certain way. Afterwards, it seemed humanly impossible. During the interview there were many times when both Rev. Crous and I shed a few tears about the amazing things that God did. God’s greatness makes me ponder: How is it possible that God calls us friends? Do we really understand the meaning of the word “Emmanuel”? How did God manage to use me without overwhelming me with His might? Why me and not someone else?*

*All of it only makes me realize that God is Who HE is. His spiritual approach is not only available to anyone receiving therapy, but is available for anyone who allows God to be God in his or her life. The effect of trauma is a permanent life impoverishing experience if help is not received, but the meeting with God will effect permanent life enrichment. Because of the research project I just want to add that my own life will never be the same again. The impact of obedience carries eternal consequences. I thank God and Rev. Crous who chose me for this research, in order to open my eyes to see what impact Jesus’ presence has on the lives of people.*

The ethicising spirituality of the participants and how it influenced the facilitator came through clearly. From all the participants’ experiences (facilitator and recipients) it seems that a mutual ethicising process took place both in the facilitation and the research process and that all parties benefited from both processes. However, the question must be asked if Roelf and Emily also benefited from the research process. The way that they presumably benefited from this process is that they were confronted with the reality of their audiences reflecting to them that their behaviour was not ethicising and had a negative impact on those around them. Perhaps this will trigger a need for further change.

There is a mutual influence between participants receiving TPM and the systems in which they function, such as their families, jobs, friends, churches, etc. If a participant re-constructs a new preferred story in which another party suffers because of it, then the spirituality of the participant, in other words her/his ethicising, must be investigated. For that reason I now explore the experiences of participants' nominees in that regard.

## **8.2.4 The impact of TPM on participants' nominees**

In one of the research interviews Chaplain Muller remarked that TPM has the ability to “transform the family”. His conclusion was that the impact that a positive life transformation effect has on a person’s life, will affect those people all around him/her. With this remark he summarized what I am exploring here. Here I am going to focus on the experiences of the nominees. Again, I am dealing with the nominees who shared spontaneously about the impact that the participant had on their lives and their environment. I also reflect to what degree nominees and other parties, which were mentioned by the nominee in the participants' audiences, experienced TPM as an ethicising practice.

### **8.2.4.1 Jacques (“Transformed from stuttering to public speaking”)**

In relation to Jacques’ **family relationships** his nominee (his brother) commented with the following:

- When Jacques had changed, his stepfather also softened after having been a hard-hearted man.
- Jacques and his sister also did not get on at all. Now he easily gives her a hug. In the past when the nominee wanted to give him a hug, he would have pushed him away. Now he allows it.
- Jacques could not tell the truth about anything and it upset his father badly. Now Jacques no longer needs to think up excuses as to why he does not want to do something, etc. He can now honestly air his feelings.
- In the past, it would have been unthinkable that Jacques and his father would have listened to a gospel CD together, but the nominee found them doing just that one night at home.
- For the nominee, it is also a relief to not be afraid that Jacques will do something that leads to a fight, or to have to lie awake and to not know where his brother is.

- Jacques could restore his relationship with his biological father shortly before his death

From my side it seems clear that Jacques' nominee experienced him in a positive way after his participation in TPM. It is interesting to know that the nominee also asked to receive TPM. It seems that the nominee no longer needs to take responsibility for his brother. The nominee says that Jacques' change had a positive influence on the family dynamic. The final remark of the nominee is important, namely that Jacques means a lot to him and that he can now respect him as a brother. That witnesses to the conclusion that in the experience of this nominee, TPM is an ethicising practice, where not only Jacques' family relationships were restored, but it appears that it helped create a whole new warm atmosphere in the family.

#### **8.2.4.2 Harold (“How God can change a person”)**

In Harold's case it is clear that his nominee (his housemother) played a huge role in the change in his life. Her positive attitude made an enormous contribution to the establishing of his new story. His housemother had a positive attitude towards TPM while she also had a strong background in it, having completed the Basic Course. The fact that she assisted the facilitator in the initial sessions was also positive since she was completely conversant (familiar) with what was happening. It enabled her to motivate Harold and assist him throughout the whole process. The same can be said of the social worker assigned to his case. In the previous interview Harold's housefather also spoke about how Harold's relationship with the other children in the home had changed. In the past his destructive behaviour had led to his taking on the role of the “scapegoat” in his house, but since his behaviour had changed so much, the other children no longer treated him this way.

From the research interview it became clear that Harold also had an important influence on the nominee. What meant a lot to her and her husband was their experience that God could change the life of someone who others had written off. Various people in Harold's life described it as a “miracle”. In that way Harold influenced many lives without realising it. In another place it was mentioned that it led to all the social workers being trained in TPM and house parents becoming familiar with it.

#### **8.2.4.3 Minah ("Cured overnight")**

Minah's nominee (her HR manager) experienced that before Minah went to TPM, other workers complained about her quick tongue but not afterwards. It was as if after TPM humaneness emitted from Minah. After TPM Minah immediately started serving others and really showing care for all around her, including her nominee. The following is an example of this behaviour.

There was no one in the office with whom the nominee could share. After receiving TPM, Minah came to her office, closed the door and gave the nominee a chance to open her heart. It seems that Minah became a comfort to the nominee.

I visited her place of work and experienced for myself her “attractive scent”, her compassionate nature, something immediately obvious to me as stranger. She displayed what the Bible in 2 Cor 2:14-16 refers to as the “fragrance of Christ” by the way in which she demonstrated God’s love in her life. It was very clear that she had a great influence on her co-workers. It made an impression on me that they viewed her as a mother figure. She became a confidant to her nominee. It seems that an ethicising practice was started through her experience in TPM, one in which Minah plays a constructive positive role in the lives of her co-workers.

#### **8.2.4.4 Michelle ("A huge breach in the wall")**

In Michelle’s story her spouse played a very important role. It is fitting to first listen to what he said. Her nominee (her spouse) related that when she went for TPM, he had already waited for her at so many psychologists’ and psychiatrists’ doors that he did not really expect any real change to take place. He thought it was a waste of time and money. He wanted to stand by her come what may and therefore was prepared to offer up anything and bring her, even though he did not really have hope. From the day he decided that she was his life partner, he viewed her as his own rib and committed himself to her, no matter what. During all those years a wall had stood between them despite everything he had tried to break down the wall. However, he realized that however hard he tried, the person on the other side of the wall also had to work at dismantling it, or it would never happen. He believed that she would one day pick up the hammer and start working from her side.

When questioned how much of the wall was still standing, he replied that there was a huge hole in the wall. Because of the hole, he knows he can break through, even if it requires more suffering and sacrifice. The wall was her defence. He realized that the safer she feels, the faster the wall will come down.

Her spouse said that he had never really experienced any change in Michelle after consulting so many psychologists. Some of them thought the problem originated with him. He had given his co-operation but no change had occurred. It did not feel that they did anything to break down the wall. He believes that it was Christ Who started tearing down the wall and the hammer He used was TPM. They were earnestly seeking truth and only found it in Christ.

He did indicate that he would have liked to have known more about the process. He felt left in the dark and believed that he could have been more actively involved.

In a way, tribute should be given to such a spouse who sticks with his partner through thick and thin. It goes without saying that such a spouse could make an enormous contribution to the thickening of his wife's alternative story. Much more can be done to equip the spouse to implement a planned contribution to the deconstruction of the "wall" and at the same time the co-construction of a new preferred story. TPM training gives no attention to caring for the participant's family. Often great changes take place and family members do not understand what is happening and may resist changes that the recipient has experienced. It is an area requiring more attention. I further reflect on this in the last chapter.

TPM, however, did help her spouse, once outside the wall around her heart, to find an opening through which he could enter. The nominee experienced it as ethicising.

#### **8.2.4.5 Beryl ("A cleansing experience")**

Beryl is a member of the nominee's cell group and the nominee has not really noticed any change in her there. The nominee believes that Beryl probably does not have a problem with her own lifestyle. That is why, when cured of the inner pain, which had been caused by the molestation, she saw it as sufficient.

In Beryl's narrative it seems to me that the nominee (a friend) still plays a very important role in the co-construction of her new story. From the research interview it seems that the nominee wants to construct a preferred story for Beryl from her own framework. In such a case, the facilitator also has a responsibility to actively deconstruct the nominee's expectations, in order to give the recipient enough room to seek God's voice for herself in terms of her own likes, needs and expectations.

Although the changes in Beryl did not occur according to the expectations of the nominee, it cannot be concluded that it was not ethicising. TPM created the space for Beryl to construct her own preferred story in her relationship with God. In that way the respect and absolute trust Beryl discovered in God, helped construct her new preferred story. If the story was constructed according to the nominee's expectations, it would not have been ethicising. That would boil down to certain human knowledge, being an interpretation of Scripture, being used prescriptively.

#### **8.2.4.6 Ruth (“You’re precious in My eyes”)**

In Ruth's narrative she immediately changed her attitude towards her siblings after TPM. They experienced the change and their responses towards her co-created a new identity for Ruth. Her nominee now experiences her as someone she can talk to with understanding. In the past she tried to force religion down other people's throats. She used to be quite racist, but her relationships with people from other races have improved. In the past the nominee could not bring home an African friend from school, but Ruth now welcomes people from other races in her house.

The way in which the nominee spoke of her sister, revealed much admiration. During the interview I became aware that there is a strong emotional bond between them. From their stories it seems that the nominee experienced great changes in Ruth which had a positive impact on her own life.

As a result of the research interviews I had the honour of being invited to Ruth's wedding. On that occasion I became aware that Ruth's presence, in other words, her ethicising, has a big impact on her whole community. Ruth is staying and working in a disadvantaged community, where she was ordained as a pastor. To me it is remarkable that Ruth's healing through TPM motivated her to get involved in the uplifting of her community. In this way TPM became a partner in an ethicising practice where a whole community could benefit from the fruits of TPM.

#### **8.2.4.7 Annatjie (“A corpse coming to life”)**

During the TPM sessions Annatjie discovered who she is in Christ. In the thickening of her story her family plays an important role – positive and negative. In the session she used the experience with God to immediately translate her landscape of action to the landscape of identity. Within her landscape of identity she discovered her true identity and her old belief system was deconstructed. She can now establish her new identity in her landscape of action, able to set her husband a firm boundary and not allow him to move back again. Even though it is a negative role, the challenge her husband was to her gave her the opportunity to establish her own identity and to deconstruct the role of submitting to abuse. In her church as well, Annatjie did not allow the male authority to abuse her. She chose to rather resign so that she can pursue her ministry.

Her children and also the nominee (her son-in-law) experience her as a different person. She now shares with them what she once only shared with her sisters. She used to treat her adult children like small children, but now she shares with them what she once only shared with adults. The

nominee also experiences that her relationship with God has changed. He experienced that Annatjie's relationship with God before TPM was based on tradition. Divorce did not exist for her. She believed that she had to stay with her husband no matter what he did. She also could not emotionally communicate with God. Now her whole being is involved, according to her nominee: "When she prays, she experiences it with her whole being".

When listening to Annatjie's narrative, it reminds me of what White and Epston (1990:24) said in another context about abuse of power in relationships. They referred to the fact that when a person remains in an abusive relationship and escape is not possible, that person appears as a "docile body". I think that is what happened to Annatjie. That is why her nominee used the description, "a corpse coming to life". I suspect that the fact that the male facilitator remained in the "not-knowing" position, and in that way deconstructed the "male power" in the therapeutic relationship, greatly helped Annatjie. In contrast to the experience of her pastor, she could experience a relationship with a spiritual leader as more egalitarian.

This narrative is about TPM fulfilling an ethicizing role. Even the negative consequences, namely a divorce, cannot here be viewed as unethical. In this case, it is not about TPM causing the divorce as much as it is about TPM ending an abusive relationship. The divorce happened because one party did not want to follow the ethical way and become part of the co-construction of a new non-abusive relationship.

The interview with the nominee, however, clearly illustrated how her encounter with TPM led to her relationship with her adult children changing to an ethicizing one, in which she acknowledges and respects their adulthood. It also revealed how she could experience being a woman in a new way, different to the submissive role ascribed to her in religious tradition. She now sees the door being opened for her to strive towards her God-given goal.

#### **8.2.4.8 Glen ("Changed from shy to cheerful")**

According to his nominee (his spouse) she experienced that his family relationships improved. She has great appreciation for the changes she has experienced. Glen started taking responsibility and is now in control. He put down his foot, is stricter but also more loving. He plays with the little one. He listens to his wife and tries to fix whatever bothers her. The nominee saw herself as the "soft" one whom everyone took advantage of. When her sister offered her a job but nothing materialized, Glen called his sister-in-law and asked her to be honest. The nominee felt good because he stood up for her rights. He is still in control and she is proud of him. She also describes how Glen's relationship with his mother-in-law has changed for the better. Also his



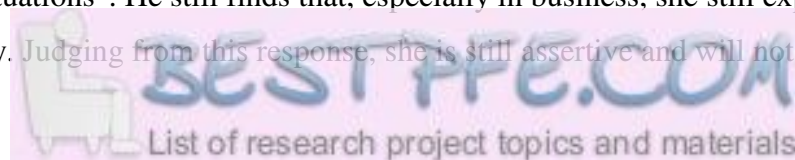
attitude towards people from other races has changed. She experienced that TPM brought about a great positive change in their marriage.

The nominee mentioned the same problem as Michelle's nominee, namely that she was not sufficiently informed about the process of facilitation and felt left in the dark regarding what was happening to her husband.

In my opinion one of the clearest indications of an ethicising practice is that any type of abuse is stopped. It also happened in this story. Glen took on the responsibility of a husband and stops others abusing his wife. He was also previously abusive towards people from other races and that also changed. Relationships within his family changed for the better. This can be taken as evidence that transformation that can be described as ethicizing took place.

#### **8.2.4.9 Marinda ("Two different people")**

Coming to the fore quite clearly in Marinda's interviews is the influence that Marinda's alternative story has on her family members. When her mind set changes, she also participates in co-constructing the alternative stories of her family members, even without her being aware of it. In Marinda's case her own assertive style robbed others of their power. This is evident from the conversation with her son. Her technique of steamrolling led to him never having to fight his own battles. The implication was that he did not take responsibility for his own life. That this over assertive style was deconstructed by Marinda's dialogue with Jesus Christ becomes clear from her son's response: "Before TPM, I would never even think of voicing my own opinion, to assert myself against her influence, but now I am free to say what is on my mind". By means of the process, Marinda started making room for others in her life. Her son related that as the result of his mother's change, he began taking responsibility for fighting his own battles, in that way accepting authorship of his own story. By Marinda's power, which she exercised over others, having been deconstructed, room was created for the other people in her life to be empowered. Marinda's alternative story can be clearly seen in that she now would rather pray for the people in debt to her than prosecute them. The question that comes to mind is whether or not, in sharp contrast to her former assertive style, she will not now be pushed down into a position of oppression by her religion. The nominee (her son) was asked how he experienced his mother's change after receiving TPM. Her son related that "she still gets angry, but at the right times and in the appropriate situations". He still finds that, especially in business, she still expects things to be done immediately. Judging from this response, she is still assertive and will not allow anyone to misuse her.



Marinda's problem-saturated story tells of a woman abusing her power in relationships as the result of fear starting from her childhood days where she started believing lies. It was clear from the interview with the nominee that because she over protected her children, they did not learn to fight their own battles. With that power deconstructed by TPM, it created a space for her son to assume responsibility for fighting his own battles. In this process Marinda learnt not to hold all power for herself, but to share it with the children in order for them to take on responsibility. This is an example of how the family benefited from Marinda's TPM, as it created space for the children's own development. In this way TPM was a partner in the co-construction of an ethical practice at home.

#### **8.2.4.10 Gert ("God has a goal for everyone")**

The change in Gert was remarkable. The nominee (his daughter) experienced that her dad's relationship with his family changed and he now enjoys being with his family. Her parents are closer and can joke with each other. Previously this was not possible. He can tell his wife that he loves her. He needed the therapy (she describes TPM as therapy). Before therapy was even over, he started changing. He enjoys his work; he gets tired but he is committed to working.

In Gert's case, his change had a big impact on his family. Gert made contact with TPM because his children were in child care. In the meantime two of the three children have been returned to their care, after the children could not even visit their parents over weekends before starting TPM. Gert's story is one of TPM attributing to empowering someone who felt totally powerless in the social and welfare structures. White and Epston's reference (1990:24) to a "docile body" (compare 8.2.4.7) also refers to Gert.

With this narrative under the magnifying glass, I become aware of how important it is that social work structures should be involved in the thickening of someone like Gert's preferred story of faith, hope and love. Gert had the advantage of a social worker also conversant with TPM and who formed part of the team contributing to the thickening of his story. Dealing with such complex circumstances, it is necessary that various parties stand together to work at the co-construction of preferred stories of faith, hope and love. TPM played an important role with regard to the transition, but within those circumstances it is also important that other disciplines are part of the co-construction process.

#### **8.2.4.11 Veronica ("A divorce would have been a mistake")**

Veronica's nominee paints a picture of a radical change. He does not call it a change in her personality, but experiences their marital relationship in a totally different light. It is clear that

the fact that her nightmares and fear-hallucinations are occurring radically less and are also less intense, is a great relief and is very important to him. Operating from his religious background, he used to view it as a sign of evil. This view has been deconstructed by TPM. For that reason he uses the language of religion to describe the change. In any case, it is a huge step for Veronica. In the past she saw herself as someone powerless against evil forces but now realises that this is not true. That is the first thing she mentions when talking about TPM.

In the interview with the nominee I received the impression that the TPM Veronica received almost meant more to him than to her. That is understandable when it is remembered that he went through a stage when he had no hope for his marriage. Veronica's experience in TPM opened new possibilities for their marriage. In my opinion it happened because TPM helped Veronica to externalize the problem. Before TPM she viewed herself as the problem, as a “nut case”. That viewpoint made her feel helpless and she lost all motivation to change it. The fact that TPM searches for a lie helped Veronica to see the lie as the problem and not herself. It empowered her to define her role in her marriage differently. She was no longer a “nut case” but someone controlled by fear. She experienced TPM as “direct help from God”, opening new possibilities in that His voice deconstructs fear.

Where the role of fear has already been greatly deconstructed, further deconstruction is still necessary of other aspects that form part of Veronica’s dominant story. Veronica has the advantage of a husband, already a co-creator in the story. With the empowerment role TPM played in opening new possibilities in their marriage, TPM can be seen as an ethicising practice with Veronica, her husband and TPM taking part in the construction of a new preferred ethicising story.

#### **8.2.4.12 Edward ("A boy who let his father down")**

Edward's relationship with his wife changed drastically after the session. Before TPM there was “verbal abuse”, telling her that she was “useless”. He also swore at her many times. He wanted to dominate her and attempted to hurt her with words. After the session he never again had the desire to dominate her. He went out of his way to show her that he trusted her and that she was not inferior to him. A drastic change also occurred in Edward's spirituality after the TPM session. He already had a relationship with the Lord before his TPM session, but it deepened and became very intimate. Immediately afterwards he was very involved with working for the kingdom of God, but has now lost interest again. Edward describes it: “It is as though my trust is no longer so complete....I tried to find out what was behind this backsliding but I could not. I no

longer attend church or pray”. With regard to his marital relationship, the nominee tells that in spite of spiritual backsliding, he still treats her with respect, and is no longer so verbally abusive.

What becomes clear from this interview is that despite the fact that the facilitator judged TPM as not so successful, according to Edward's nominee there is a total positive difference in the way he is present in the marriage. Therefore TPM contributed to an ethicising practice. The quality of their marriage improved.

#### **8.2.4.13 Emily ("Voice of a woman")**

Emily is the only participant who offered to take part in this project without being asked. What is obvious from this narrative is that there is a great discrepancy between her judgment of her progress and how others judge it. Emily is so convinced of her progress that she wanted to declare it in a research project. However, her audience still experiences her behaviour as “disturbing”.

Emily describes that within her own culture she has no opportunity to voice her opinion. She just has to obey. It is probable that her voice was also silenced in a marriage of physical and verbal abuse. For example, in her study, Shumbamhini (2005:46) comes to the conclusion that: “In the name of the Shona culture men abuse their power and silence the voices of women and children”. Although Emily belongs to a different African culture (Sepedi), there is great correlation with regard to the place of woman in both cultures. The facilitator's not-knowing approach gave her the opportunity to voice what was in her heart. The experience of making her voice heard (possibly for the first time) led to a major shift in the way she narrates her life story.

However, her nominee (her HR manager) experiences it quite differently. For example, Emily may lead a religious service at work and directly afterwards become involved in a fight. She still does not get along with her co-workers. Chaplain Muller says there is a marked change in her from one day to the next. His opinion is that perhaps some of the change can be attributed to her being correctly diagnosed by her psychiatrist as having bipolar disorder and that her condition needs to be brought under control by medication. The fact is that she was only diagnosed eighteen months before, but worked at the company for 26 years, swinging between moods. When she is on a high, she sees herself as the ultimate Christian, but when she is on a low, she condemns herself and comes for more counselling. Chaplain Muller's opinion is that she received healing on forgiveness and religious issues in TPM, where her church should have played its role. On an emotional level, he does not feel it to have been very successful or to have really touched her.

The way I perceive Emily's narrative is that she jumped at the opportunity to make her voice, which had been silenced many years before, heard. Experiencing this is probably so important to her that other aspects seem fairly unimportant. She is not aware of or sensitive to her influence on others. In the past male power silenced her voice and she may now be using her own voice to silence others. In that sense, the results of TPM in her life are not ethicising. The healing she experienced led to her becoming abusive. That is not the intended healing. (Compare the "Fourfold test for healing" as discussed in Chapter 9 (9.1). It is not ethically responsible either. Although the way in which TPM was ministered to Emily was ethicising as it freed her from male domination, TPM lead to behaviour that cannot be described as ethicising. This stresses the important responsibility of a facilitator in the follow-up of recipients. At present it seems to me that there is not sufficient training for TPM facilitators to handle this aspect. In order for TPM to be an ethicising practice, this aspect needs attention. I again agree with Smith (2005:27) that a facilitator cannot operate as a lone wolf, but has to be part of a church ministry or organization that provides supervision.

When Smith's fourfold test for healing is applied here, TPM would seem not so successful. Emily gained advantage from her encounter with TPM, but in the main, TPM was not successful when tested according to its own guidelines. Her new preferred story cannot be seen as ethicising.

At the time of doing the interviews, I could not understand why the original nominee left the interview and refused to return. In light of the above, it might have been due to the nominee feeling embarrassed in sharing her true experience of Emily.

#### **8.2.4.14 Conclusion**

In the light of all the narratives cited here, it seems that the nominees experienced TPM as an ethicising practice. It is well illustrated in Beryl's narrative. The changes in her life did not fulfil the expectations of her nominee. However, the facilitator respected Beryl's relationship with God and in that way operated in an ethicising way. Although the nominee felt disappointed, Beryl's behaviour did not harm anybody. If her behaviour does not fit in with other's expectations, it is not necessarily unethicising. The problem is that according to my experience TPM is often judged from this perspective: "If it does not fit into my picture, I discredit it". To me that is an unethicising practice. For me this is "a sparkling moment" in the TPM narrative, and is illustrated in Beryl's narrative, that TPM creates a space for a conversation with Jesus Christ, as she experiences Him, with absolute respect for her unique relationship with the Lord.

However, in Emily's case the nominee has no problem with TPM as an ethicising practice, but according to her TPM did not succeed in constructing an ethicising preferred story for Emily. Emily's case is an illustration where TPM was conducted in an ethicising way, but with unethicising results. Her nominee came to that conclusion as a result of Emily's unethicising behaviour. As I argued above, the importance of follow-up and supervision through church ministries and organizations cannot be stressed enough.

To my mind all the participants narrate their experiences with TPM with the effect that TPM can be judged as an ethicising practice. When approached from a perspective where the TPM guidelines can be seen as an important interlocutor in the TPM process, the guidelines make a valuable contribution, especially in the safekeeping of the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator, and to ensure an ethicising practice. The person as well as the spirituality of the facilitator made a major contribution to their experiences. It remains true that the quality of the relationship between facilitator and recipient is of utmost importance in any healing process. There will be no success if personal acceptance will not emerge from that relationship (Angus & McLeod 2004:370). In my opinion the whole way in which the TPM process is set up, makes it easy for facilitators to reflect acceptance to the recipients.

As the facilitator described the influence the process and the participants had on his life, I became aware of something I also experienced, namely that you as a wounded healer often receive more than you give. He experienced it as a “holy process”, which reminds me of the privilege we as human beings have, to be able to witness God's walk with a fellow human being. Therefore, the TPM process cannot be approached in any other way, but with utmost respect.

With the aforementioned I tried to indicate that all the role players were participants in establishing an ethicising practice, both in the facilitation process as well as in their ways of living. I indicated some shortcomings, but also highlighted the sparkling moments. Cultural differences and psychopathology are discourses that came up under this heading. It will be further addressed under the next heading, where I want to discuss the implications of ethicising as a participatory action.

### **8.3 Implications of ethicising as participatory action**

When ethicising is seen as a participatory action, it “implies that all who are involved, implicated or possibly affected by ethicising in any given situation become participants in the process” (Kotze 2002:21). In this negotiation for the best for all parties, Louw (2003:74-8) indicated the following implications:

- Sharing of power (8.3.1).
- Transparency (8.3.2).
- Accountability and Social responsibility (8.3.3).
- Being accountable for gender and cultural differences (8.3.4).
- Resistance (8.3.5).

TPM has deconstructed power from the facilitation process without even really intending to and I want to pay further attention to it.

### **8.3.1 Sharing of power**

Apart from the TPM guidelines there is no objective theory or code of ethics in TPM. As the guidelines protect the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator, TPM can be seen as a process where power is no longer in the hands of those who “know” and as a result the facilitator cannot exercise an abusive position over the recipient. Power is shared because all the parties involved in the session appreciate each other and respect each other as equals. There are no longer the privileged ones with all the knowledge. TPM is practiced from the knowledge that the facilitator has no idea what the problem is of the person in front of her/him. Here TPM guidelines are a valuable companion to conversation, leading a facilitator to avoid any “words of knowledge”.

Earlier in Chapter 4 (4.2.3), I indicated how close the TPM guidelines for the facilitator are to what Anderson and Goolishian (1992:26) described as the “not-knowing” position of the therapist. It is about the sharing of power. The recipient is placed in a position where s/he must listen to God and what He says about what s/he believes. Under the previous heading I also indicated how TPM creates the opportunity to deconstruct the influence of power from their “problem-saturated stories”.

Here Chaplain Muller describes his experience of shifting from an approach where a counsellor is in an absolute position of power, to an approach such as TPM where power is shared. It came up when I asked him how it came about that he who had been active in the deliverance ministry could move to this “not-knowing” position.

*As the result of my historical background regarding my own deliverance ministry, I now want to compare it with my current TPM ministry. My experience in the deliverance ministry started as the result of much exposure to people who are leaders in the field and are still active in the movement. The “Deliverer” is in control of the session and his power is equal to his authority in Christ Jesus. The degree to which he accepts that authority, determines the result of the session. From a Christian and a spiritual background, both groups still operate in the*

*spectrum of “faith”. When I decided to cross the bridge, it had to do with the end result, namely transformation. My decision was anchored in the Scriptural WORD that proved to me that what happens in TPM is the truth. The examples of healing and the direct impact of the presence of Jesus Christ as He appears in the Bible speak volumes. I experienced that people’s lives changed overnight. Whereas TPM facilitates a meeting between the recipient and God, in Deliverance ministry the minister is a mouthpiece and carries the authority of the Name of the Lord Jesus. Deliverance ministry blames the devil for emotional outbursts or sinful behaviour. In my TPM ministry I discovered that areas of psychological illnesses and the motive of repeated sin is addressed incorrectly in the deliverance ministry.*

The discourse on demonology was attended to in chapter 4 (4.8). The point I wish to make here is that when power is deconstructed in the counselling conversation, it opens the way for an ethicising practice.

When the question was asked as to how the different participants experienced it, it seems from the interviews that the facilitator allowed them to work out for themselves the meaning of what they experienced during the session. In narrative language it means that they allowed God to re-author their lives without interference from the facilitator's knowledge. This is in line with Smith's requirement that a facilitator must never interpret or guide a recipient in any way.

.Various participants (such as Jacques, Beryl, Minah, Glen, Dawid, Ruth, Marinda and others) mentioned that the way in which the facilitator listened to them and his non-judgmental attitude, created a safe space for them in which they could tell their stories and listen to God's interpretation.

The question arises if it is possible that the recipient can hear wrongly from the Lord or could interpret it wrongly. It can also be asked if the recipient cannot perhaps confuse other voices with God's voice. I reflect on these questions in the next chapter where the four fold test of healing that Smith (2007:161) suggests, is discussed and reflected upon.

From what was quoted from various narratives in 8.2.4 it would seem that the ethicising moment occurs when power is effectively deconstructed. When in the case of Annatjie the power of male authority was deconstructed, she could live out God's goal for her. When the power of their diagnoses was deconstructed in the cases of Michelle and Veronica, new possibilities arose for their spouses. When the power of state structures was deconstructed in Gert's narrative, he was empowered to construct his new preferred story. In most cases it seems that when the power of lies about inferiority was deconstructed, the relationships of participants changed in such a way that it had a definite positive influence on their nominees.

From Chaplain Muller's explanation it is clear that the deliverance ministry operates totally from a position of power. If I understand Chaplain Muller correctly, the transformational impact of Jesus Christ’s presence made the difference that convinced him to change his approach.



TPM is by definition a Christian approach where it is about an authentic encounter with Jesus Christ (Smith (2007:2). As Jesus Christ is the central conversationalist in the TPM session (Miller 2006b), the facilitator remains in a non-expert role. It reflects absolute respect for the relationship between the recipient and Jesus Christ. Any Christian pastoral therapeutic model that does not exhibit absolute respect for that relationship, in effect becomes a hindrance for the way in which God wants to work with that person.

The nouthetic approach (Adams 1972) as well as other similar approaches place emphasis on the Word. Confrontation with the Word will bring healing. On the surface that appears to be very pious. The truth is, however, that in putting it into practice, God is not in control of it, but a certain theological interpretation (Muller 1981:15) of Scripture has been socially constructed. The way in which it is implemented is with the power of a paper pope, breaking people in an authoritarian way (while God says that He will not break the bent reed) and operating from a position of playing as a power god in other people's lives. It is as though they fear that God cannot walk the road with His people in His own way. A pastor may be so intent upon protecting his own theological reference that he ends up being the instrument of that reference point instead of God's instrument. How much time is spent on opposing certain theological directions instead of understanding God's *polypoikilos* (Greek for variegation), meaning that He does not only work in one way.

I agree with Kay and Weaver (1997:118) who point out that when Jn. 17:11 asks of the church to be one as the Trinity is one, it means a unity which is also a plurality. This unity does not mean to abolish all denominations, but "rather it asks for a harmonious loving relationship while permitting, even enjoining, distinctions within the Christian community to reflect distinctions with the Godhead" (:118). It seems, perhaps mainly as the result of post-modern thinking, that denominationalism is decreasing. Roozen (2005:598) in his reflection on a nationwide survey in the USA among mainstream churches concluded that there is a "trend away from an automatic reliance on denominational resources by the clergy as well as congregations". My response to this is that it appears today that there is much more openness between denominations to collaborate for the sake of the Kingdom of God, which represents a shift in power and prescription.

My argument is not against "apology" as a science but rather against the misuse of "knowledge" as power to manipulate the lives of people. It was liberating for me to experience that TPM is not an approach that asks to what denomination people belong. Belonging to the Reformed tradition, I do not have to prevent someone from seeing a facilitator from a Pentecostal tradition because his "knowledge" is a threat because it differs from mine. In TPM I found an approach where I

can allow God to walk a unique road with an individual in a completely different way to the one that seemed right to me. It comes down to absolute trust in God that He knows exactly what to do for that person created in His own image. I am and remain only the facilitator.

The question may be asked if God cannot choose to reveal Himself in non-Christian ways. If Jesus Christ's voice is then centred in the way as it is expounded above, it may be seen as power that slips in again and consequently will then be unethicising. By defining TPM as Christian right from the start, all recipients have a choice to take part or not. According to the TPM guidelines no power may be used to force anybody to take part in TPM. It must always be the recipient's free choice. Non-Christians will be respected, but by definition I do not see it as TPM's responsibility to accommodate those people in TPM or to develop similar approaches for other religions (see my closing reflections). Referral to appropriate counselling will be the proper course.

Personally, it was a huge adjustment to become “only” a facilitator. My experience with narrative therapy greatly helped me make the shift, especially the realisation that all theology is socially constructed, as expounded in chapter 3. Even so a person still has a deep rooted belief that your way is the right way. When the process unfolding before your eyes is not what you expected, it is not so easy to remain just a facilitator. TPM taught me to trust God absolutely. Only He knows which road is the best for each person. I DO NOT KNOW, even if I may believe at a certain moment that I do. I find myself at the same point as Paul when he said: “For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things (referring to his background and theology) and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ” (Phil.3:8).

In fulfilling the requirements to be a TPM facilitator (4.2.3 in chapter 4), it was my privilege to complete all my hours with Chaplain Muller. What impressed me about him was that he handled the most difficult situations in such a calm way. As time went by, I learnt that he achieved it because he had become a master of the “not-knowing” position. It grew from an absolute trust in Jesus Christ and a submission to Him where you no longer desire to achieve anything other than what He requires. In my own healing sessions I was constantly aware that my healing was my responsibility. I had to figure out for myself what happened between me and the Lord. In this way the “power” aspect is excluded from the facilitator. In my opinion that is one of the main reasons why some pastors find it difficult to accept TPM. It is a great leap of faith to abandon a position of power for a position of no power.

If there is no dogma or prescriptive theology that guides the TPM process, it raises the question if anything goes. Certainly not! It is about a conversation with Jesus Christ and TPM operates from a position of faith that Jesus will never guide a person in an unethicising way. Jesus is thus

a participant, together with the Bible, recipient and facilitator in a participatory ethicising process. I reflected on the way Harold was facilitated in this regard in chapter 5 (5.2.2), and compared it with what Maturana and Varela called “perturbation”.

### 8.3.2 Transparency

Transparency is a very important aspect of ethicising. For Kottler (2002:85) transparency is one of the ways of saying that you, as facilitator “are present as a real, authentic person in the relationship”. Morgan (2000:124) describes transparency as “being open about why one is saying what one is saying”. She sees it as nothing happening behind the scenes with regard to the therapeutic conversation. The therapist has no hidden agenda. In TPM Smith expects recipients to be fully informed regarding TPM. He expects them to read his book, “Healing Life's Hurts”, before the first session. It gives each one the opportunity to make an informed decision when committing to the TPM-process.

Although Chaplain Muller did not require it of the participants in this study, he usually makes very sure that recipients understand the TPM process well before they proceed with it. That is why some of the participants mentioned it in their research interviews. His gift of teaching helped him to so explain the TPM process that the participants could truly make an informed consent to the process.

Ruth: “He explained the TPM process to me carefully”.

Gert: “I liked the way he explained everything”.

Edward: “He explained everything carefully and made it understandable”.

My own experience is that the better the recipient understands the process, the more easily the process flows. When the recipient is in the dark about what the facilitator is doing, distrust develops.

Pietrofesa et. al. (1978:166-7) indicate how important therapist transparency is in the counselling relationship. They say: “In essence, clients, then, see spontaneous, real, healthy individuals, and in the process of identification, also move in that direction”. Then they point out that the techniques or approach used is not as important as that the therapist's “goodwill” must be clear. When the therapist is not transparent, it imports certain tendencies into the therapeutic relationship that work negatively. On the other hand, therapists should “encourage therapist transparency in their clients by reducing the ambiguity in therapy and thus allaying any anxieties and fears about the therapeutic encounter” (:167).

In various interviews the participants referred to Chaplain Muller's openness. The following quotations from the research interviews serve to illustrate his transparency:



Michelle: “He made you feel at ease, being very open”.  
Beryl: “You just want to talk to him”.  
Ruth: “It feels like you can unburden your heart”.  
Glen: “The facilitator was open and willing to listen”.  
Jacques: “Chaplain Muller was very calm and it felt comfortable talking to him”.

In terms of what Morgan (2000:126) requires that no family member may be discussed in their absence, this cannot happen in TPM if the guidelines are adhered to. The TPM session is constructed in such a way that it is a conversation between the recipient and God, while the facilitator only reflects on what the recipient reports. The facilitator may not become involved in any conversation about a third person. An aspect that does come to the fore in the research interviews is that when family members are not aware of what happens in a session, they may be uncomfortable. Michelle and Edward's spouses referred to it in the research interviews. I suggest that more attention should be given to be more transparency regarding family members of the recipients.

I agree that transparency is of utmost importance. The difference between TPM and other therapies and counselling also shows up. As TPM is actually prayer, some of the aspects inherent in the other approaches, do not apply. TPM is only the facilitating of a prayer conversation. When the recipients are sufficiently informed of this, transparency is easy. However, transparency with regard to family members still needs further attention.

Transparency is also linked to confidentiality and accountability. Under the next heading transparency towards other facilitators is dealt with.

Another aspect with regard to transparency towards the family members is that of confidentiality. However, transparency and confidentiality create some problems. Any information shared in a session is totally confidential and may not be discussed with anyone else. It creates ethical dilemmas. In the case of Harold, memories of sexual and physical abuse by his father came to light and should by law have (Section 42 of the Child Care Act, 1983 (Act 74 of 1983) been reported. In his case he was no longer exposed to the abuser, whose whereabouts was unknown in any case. It was judged that it was not in Harold's best interest to tell his mother. In Chapter four I discussed memory. Memory retrieved in this way is not admissible in court. Although it is a legal requirement, it is seldom in the recipient's best interests to involve the authorities. It only makes sense when other vulnerable persons are still exposed to the abuser. The core ethical question remains: “Who benefits from it”? In Harold's case it is clear that it would be to his detriment and in no way ethicising to report it. This is an example of when certain ethical norms are forced on the facilitator from outside structures, it could be unethicising. In this complex society we live in, we have to make use of participatory ethics.

### 8.3.3 Accountability and social responsibility

Accountability has also to do with power differences. Even if we tried very hard to exclude any power difference in the therapeutic situation, it cannot be done. When we as therapists or facilitators believe we have achieved it, the danger is that we are unaware of the effect that it may have on others: “Such a belief would enable us to avoid the moral and ethical responsibilities that we have to those people who seek our help” (White 1995:167).

Accountability is an ethical act of taking responsibility for what we are saying and doing to those who seek our help. It implies that we must first be accountable to the one who seeks our help, but also towards the family members and significant others (all others) of that person. A wider circle also exists, namely the circle of the congregation and the wider Christian community.

#### 8.3.3.1 The Inner circle

When Michael White (1997:187) talks about accountability he says that he asks permission from the recipients to take notes. He also allows them access to the notes. In that way he holds himself accountable towards the person. Chaplain Muller operates within an organisation, where it is custom to ask for permission to make notes during a TPM session, but the notes are not ordinarily made accessible unless the person asks for them. Since it is a question of lay counselling, the requirement is that there will always be an assistant present, most often in intercession, during the facilitation. In Chaplain Muller’s case, his wife ordinarily fills that position when he facilitates women. Annatjie and Beryl referred to this in their research interviews.

- **Beryl:** “His wife assisted him and her presence also added to the relaxed atmosphere wherein the session was conducted”.
- **Annatjie:** “What struck me with regard to Chaplain Muller and his wife was their zeal for the cause. The fact that the couple worked together in ministry meant a lot to me”.

From their responses it seems that it made the participants feel safe, especially in the case of someone of the opposite gender. If a recipient prefers not to have an assistant present, this organisation requires that if someone of the opposite gender is facilitated, the session is to be videotaped. The recipient has the right to request a copy of the video. In that way the facilitator holds himself accountable to the participants.

This accountability must also include a follow-up. In Edward's case he indicated that he dearly wanted another appointment but could not get one. In that case the facilitator did not follow up. It is a practical weakness that needs further attention.

### 8.3.3.2 The Family circle

The rise of system theory and therapies within the psychological domain placed emphasis on the importance of the system and primarily the family system in which an individual lives: "Family systems are seen as having a set of mechanisms whose primary purpose is the maintenance of an acceptable behavioural balance within the family" (Prochaska 1984:330). When one person in a family changes, other members also change in order to correct the balance. Michael White (1995:161) also refers to the influence of the change on the other family members. It requires that the facilitator be accountable towards those other family members. While it is true that accountability was upheld in most of the narratives in this research project, there are also gaps.

- **Glen's spouse** said: "What was negative to me were the three days after the session when he was on his own planet. I thought that he was going to keep on ignoring his family. I would have liked it if the facilitator had called me in and informed me of what the session had been about so that I could better understand it".
- **Michelle's spouse** related: "What I would have liked done differently regarding my wife's TPM, is that I, as spouse, should have been better informed from the start. For example, I believed that hands would be laid on her and she would be instantly healed. My initial disposition would have been better if I had been better informed".
- **Edward** was very abusive towards his wife. After TPM that changed. Then he too became involved in ministry and neglected her. When she expressed her needs to him, he again experienced that he had failed, disappointed God and completely left the ministry.

The problem might be that facilitators believe that to involve family members in TPM is sufficient to prove their accountability. A further accountability might lie in what happens within the TPM sessions.

During the group reflection of Michelle and her spouse, Chaplain Muller mentioned that her congregation had referred her to him. In her case, he went to assist a TPM trainee in Michelle's congregation. He is of the opinion that the congregation or people, who refer the person, carry the responsibility to inform the family. While this is true, the facilitator still has to be accountable towards family members about what happens in the actual sessions.

For example, Michael White (1995:155-171) explains that if he works alone with a male abuser, the work must still remain accountable towards the spouse and children. He mentions that because both he and the male abuser are men, they cannot be certain that they are not simply going to construct an alternative preferred way of being that will maintain another form of abuse from a male authority position. That is why it is necessary from the very beginning to be held accountable to the spouse and children.

In a way, that is what happened in Edward's case. The facilitator was accountable towards his wife by also getting her to participate in TPM. After Edward withdrew, he also made attempts to involve the family again. What he missed, though, is that Edward could not foresee what influence his new preferred way of living (committed ministry) would have on his wife. It may be that if there had been accountability towards her from the very beginning, the story would have had a different ending. Edward's narrative highlights a gap, namely that there is also accountability towards the family in what happens after the session. When ethicising is seen as a participatory action, it implies in any case that all involved have to take part in the negotiation of what is best for all parties. In that this research also plays an important role as it give these nominees the opportunity to voice their concerns and needs in the establishing of an ethicising practice. I will reflect further on the importance of accountability towards the family of the recipient in the last chapter.

### **8.3.3.3 The circle of the TPM community (work circle or congregation)**

Ed Smith (2005:27) emphasises that a facilitator should not work as a "lone wolf". He strongly recommends that facilitation should take place within the structures of a local congregation or a work circle where, if possible, professional people are available. The motivation is that every facilitator must be held accountable to others, first to those in the same ministry and also to those in other professions (see also 8.3.3.4).

Occasioned by Ed Smith's (2005) expectation that recipients of TPM should understand the theory of TPM, FTF, the TPM organization to which the facilitator belongs, goes to the trouble of providing recipients with the basic video course. Ed Smith views it as important that recipients have firsthand knowledge of TPM and not just somebody's interpretation of it. It often happens that after receiving TPM, recipients feel the need to become involved with the ministry. In that way, many recipients are equipped to facilitate others. Nine of the participants in this study completed the basic TPM course while four of them are actively involved in the ministry. It leads to the growth of the TPM community. Those active in the ministry meet together

regularly. These meetings are ideal opportunities for facilitators to be accountable towards their peers.

It links with Michael White's (1995:168) method to employ people who had been his clients to observe and to comment on his work. Facilitators working within FTF often allow chosen members to view sessions by means of video camera, of course with the recipient's permission. In that way they make themselves accountable for what happens in a session. These also serve as training opportunities for trainee facilitators.

Another very important aspect is the accountability of the facilitator towards himself. Oordt (1997:330) refers to research where 66% of Christian psychotherapists "admitted to having worked when too distressed to be effective". Within the community great emphasis is placed on the care of the facilitators. It is not about compliance to certain ethical codes but they are "instead challenged to develop a life of integrity, deeply transformed by the Spirit and empowered by the Gospel" (Butman1997:70). In that way facilitators are equipped with an ethicising spirituality.

This community also has scope for opportunities where the accountability for the follow up of recipients can be created. Recipients are encouraged to participate in activities such as periodical retreats that are presented. In many of the research interviews it seemed that this community is crucial to the thickening of the alternative story. This community provides a wider audience for reflecting and co-constructing of meaning in therapy. Facilitating this, use is made of a facilitator with narrative training. TPM facilitators also want to be accountable towards other therapeutic approaches.

The importance of the TPM community forming a wider audience has already been discussed in Chapter 5. It can be clearly seen in the research interview with Alice.

- **Alice:** During the interviews it became clear that the organization of which she is a member, which can be called a TPM community, played an important role and will do so in future. Her trust has already widened from her therapist to the interviewer as well as Chaplain Muller. The fact that she could establish a relationship of trust with the latter, speaks for itself about the growth that has already taken place. If Alice were purely seen in the set up of a consultation room, probably not much would have become of the thickening process. Several attempts have been made in the past to involve her parents in the process, but without much success.



### **8.3.3.4 The circle of the wider community and social responsibility**

Every child of God in a ministry has an enormous responsibility towards the church of God and more importantly towards the God of the church. In the end I have to be accountable towards God in the way I laboured in His vineyard. This accountability is the personal responsibility of every facilitator. It implies a huge social responsibility with regard to the establishment of the Kingdom of God. This responsibility keeps the wider community in mind: “Such a realization can help promote a greater concern for the welfare and status of those individuals who are marginalized in society, in contrast to the world of professionalism, which tends to focus almost exclusively on the elite and powerful” (Butman 1997:69).

Most of the participants chosen for this research from Chaplain Muller’s total number of recipients, involve the marginalized of society. The mission of FTF (Family Transformation Facilitators), as a TPM community, is to provide services to the marginalized. Twelve of the participants in this research report can be seen as marginalized. This ministry has accepted social responsibility in that way.

Furthermore, apart from their accountability towards other TPM ministers, TPM facilitators also have to be accountable to other professions working in the same field, for instance psychologists, social workers etc. This research in itself is also an attempt to be accountable towards the community and especially towards the wider church community, perhaps more so towards the worldwide TPM community. It is also necessary to be accountable towards the founder of this approach as well as towards the therapeutic community as a whole. By means of this research we become accountable for what we do. The fact that Chaplain Muller allowed his ministry to be so scrutinized testifies to his willingness to be accountable and is a mark of a particularly ethicising spirituality.

### **8.3.4 Accountable for gender and cultural differences**

Initially Chaplain Muller started and established this ministry in a cosmopolitan socio-economical area where his case load included all races. As already mentioned in Chapter 4, this research report also includes different races, including an immigrant from Bulgaria. For a long time Chaplain Muller was the only experienced TPM facilitator who worked in that environment. His case load is filled with women from abusive situations. Because of their economic limitations, professional psychological services are not available to them. Referrals are not always an option. This places the question of both gender as well as cultural diversity on the table.

Accountability with regard to the gender issue is handled by always having female assistants for female recipients. In most cases the assistant is his wife White (1995:166) voices his concern that as we live within a culture of patriarchal authority, we as men may easily wrongly interpret women's experiences. Feminist writers find it important that women's experiences are seen as valid and are not judged against the backdrop of a patriarchal culture.

When referring to the responses of the participants in this category, it does not seem that any one of their experiences was dismissed as invalid. On the contrary, they found their experiences validated. In my opinion it was possible because TPM places the facilitator in the "not-knowing" position. When the conversation is handed over to God and the recipient, He does the necessary validation. In Marinda's case Chaplain Muller was not very experienced. Judging from his technique in that case, it seems that he clouded the session with issues of his own about forgiveness. Marinda had to forgive a man. The gender issue possibly played a role there.

It is interesting that in terms of the participants from other races the cultural differences played little role in the facilitation process. Emily experienced TPM as totally positive. It was her nominee and facilitator who viewed that TPM was not so successful in her case. Cultural differences may well have been present as seen from the research interviews: "Emily has problems with her cultural views, her psychologist and medication. It did not change immediately after TPM because she still insisted on consulting a sangoma and believed that she had a calling to be a witchdoctor herself. But TPM did better her spiritual life and many changes took place". The cultural difference began to play a role after the TPM session, in judging the outcome and not the facilitation. Here accountability implies that the expectancy of the wider audience, who do not take the cultural differences into account, must be deconstructed. Both Minah and Ruth found the facilitation process positive and could construct new preferred stories. In Dawid's case it would seem that cultural differences had no influence on the process.

In his article Larry Dinkins (2005:37) said TPM is:

...supracultural, because Jesus, Who understands all cultures perfectly, is a supracultural healer. He alone knows the essence of people's lies and is able to select the most appropriate way to deliver truth to them. When the presence of Christ reveals truth in a person's memory, the truth He reveals is always personally and culturally appropriate for that person.

In chapter 9 I will reflect further on the cultural issues.

### **8.3.5 Resistance**

In the process we (all the co-researchers) practised ethics, that is to say our ethicising constructed new knowledge. This knowledge developed in the dynamic interaction between all the co-

researchers. Every TPM session and research interview made a contribution. Every experience, which a participant had, contributed to the process. The way in which the facilitator became a “bridge” for the participants to move on; Alice’s experience of being labelled as a “hopeless case”, Marinda’s experience of being forced to forgive, Roelf who took everything literally – all helped create a certain knowledge. The literature about the narrative and ethic, input from my promoter as well as my own way of ethicising co-constructed a knowledge that is our own.

In actual fact, this knowledge can only be understood from the inside. It places us (all the co-researchers) in opposition with other ethical codes where professional bodies can prescribe to us by means of expert knowledge, without understanding the dynamic through which our “ethics of doing” was constructed. In this process where we developed respect and appreciation for other’s positions, we gave new meaning and developed new values from which a participatory consciousness came forth to reach a certain ethical position. This position respects another’s ethicising process but also resists every form of ethics that is abusive and prescriptive.

In our journey with Annatjie’s struggle to live out her ministry, with Joe who can proceed as God’s anointed, Dawid who is no longer bound to a prescriptive theology and Emily whose voice was heard, resistance developed against any authority that retains its power abuse and a church that tries to keep control by not allowing God’s people the room to exercise their ministry. God alone knows how to be in control without abusing authority.

I have already pointed out that one of the reasons why some church denominations find it difficult to accept TPM is because it is a too great a leap of faith for leaders to abandon a position of power and control for a position of no power that they will have to accept in TPM.

In her research Troskie (2003) described how great a role power plays in the pastor’s counselling, while the pastor is unaware of the effect of it on the recipients. Many times the power conferred on them by their theological knowledge has caused the failure of therapeutic goals, while the recipients were blamed for the problem. The acceptance of an approach like TPM, focussing on the deconstruction of any power as the result of knowledge, is so difficult because many pastors find it terrifying to abandon the safe shelter of their theological knowledge in order to accept a “not-knowing” position. When Annatjie experienced that there was no room in her church for her ministry, it could have been because her ministry was a threat to the theology behind which the pastors sheltered. Where critics of TPM voice their, sometimes venomous, attacks on the Internet, I am of the opinion that the approach that TPM requires, poses a challenge to certain theological traditions. TPM focuses on a direct conversation with Jesus Christ. In a way it resonates with Paul’s Damascus conversion. In that instant he had to let

go of his theological knowledge to participate in a direct dialogue with Jesus. The conversation deconstructed his theological conceptions.

It resonates with what transpires in TPM. Is it not what happened to Joe? Is it not exactly what happened to Annatjie as well as Marinda? When the dialogue with Jesus Christ is central, the theological traditions of the participants become irrelevant. However TPM is a Christian approach and this does not include non-christian theology. (See also my argument under my closing reflections). It indicates that the power of certain knowledge was effectively deconstructed. What remains is the absolute respect for the unique relationship that each individual has with Jesus Christ. Seen from a psychological perspective, it can be said that theology triangulated people's relationship with Jesus Christ. That would imply that I could only have a relationship with Him via certain knowledge. TPM taught me that it does not matter to Jesus with what theological perspective I approach Him. The eighteen participants in this study were all Christians, but drawn from Roman Catholic, Anglican, Reformed, Pentecostal and Charismatic Theological traditions. It made no difference to the outcome. The only influence on TPM is that certain traditions bar people from accepting or participating in the process. Chaplain Muller responded that we have to keep in mind that, although pride or arrogance, in some cases, deprive some of an experience with the Lord, most of them act out of ignorance. In our ethicising we resist the power of these theologies, not the people.

#### **8.4 Closing reflections**

In this chapter I reflected on how the participants experienced TPM practices and the impact of it as experienced by their nominees. Everyone's experience contributed to the construction of an ethicising practice. I indicated how the TPM guidelines contributed to ensuring the not-knowing position of the facilitator, seeing that this position is very important to TPM as an ethical way. In this, the spirituality of the facilitator is of utmost importance. It reminds me of what Christene Smith (1989:48) writes about authority: "... authority is not something that one possesses or the way one dominates a community of people or any individual; rather it is a quality of humaneness that is so persuasive and honest that it calls people into connection and solidarity".

If a facilitator radiates this spirituality, it will insure that all the principles of TPM are applied in an ethical way. Most participants in this research experienced that and their partaking influenced the facilitator's spirituality. The most important factor in this process is the role that the centrality of Jesus Christ, as partner in the conversation, played in creating this ethicising knowledge.

According to the experience of the participants, the implications of this participatory ethicising led to the sharing of power, where everyone had the opportunity to co-write their new preferred life story with Christ. The facilitator was transparent in that he made sure the recipient understood the process, while the participants experienced an openness that made them willing to open up. I found that the facilitator was accountable towards the participants in that an assistant was present during most of the sessions. Another aspect that needs attention is that the recipients should also have access to the process notes. I am of the opinion that where TPM trainees are trained to write down the four basic components, it may be a great help to the recipient in the thickening of the alternative story. An aspect that needs attention, arising from this research, is the facilitator's accountability towards the recipient's family. It is also an aspect that needs to be addressed in the training of facilitators. Accountability towards the broader community has been illustrated in this study.

One of the aspects I want to reflect on is the question as to which aspect is more important: change or ethicising practices in narratives where change does not occur or is minimal. I want to refer to the narratives of Alice and Beryl. In Alice's facilitation process the facilitator used the “stirring of the darkness” technique to elicit therapeutic results. It boils down to him acting from a position of power, using his knowledge against her instead of positioning himself alongside her. In that way the facilitator awarded higher priority to therapeutic results rather than ethicising. In Beryl's case he kept to an ethicising practice, without looking for therapeutic results. In Alice's case he was not aware of the long-term effect it had on her, as was referred to in this chapter. That shows the risk involved when power intrudes in an unethicising way. As I argued previously even recent research in emotional focused therapy shows that to make change a priority is not improving results. I positioned myself with participatory ethics where participation of all is a primary commitment (Kotze 2002:18). Even the proponents of the emotional focused approach see the role of the therapist (facilitator) as “to be present to the client as a fellow experiencing person by maintaining contact with his or her own felt sense and often by carrying out his or her own parallel (but private) focusing process” (Elliott et.al. 2004:181). A position of “the goal sanctifies the means” cannot be defended in any way within a participatory ethical approach. Smith's position that he experienced the same results not using the “stirring of the darkness” technique anymore, confirms that it is important for the facilitator to be present as described above by Elliott, Watson, Goldman and Greenberg. However, in Beryl's narrative we have an example where a space was created for her to listen to the voice of the Lord. That is what TPM is about and corresponds with this quote from Nouwen (1975:54):

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We cannot even change people by our convictions, stories, advice and proposals, but we can offer a space where people are encouraged to disarm themselves, to lay aside their occupations and preoccupations and to listen with attention and care to the voices speaking in their own centre.

Another important aspect I want to touch on is about listening to inner voices. In other approaches such as hypnotherapy, people also listen to inner voices. TPM, however, differs from these approaches as TPM is not only about inner voices, but specific about the Lord's voice. Any technique that humans invent in order to cause change is actually noise pollution keeping recipients from hearing the Lord's voice clearly. I previously (chapter 7) referred to Alice's comment, that she is an expert in voices, in that she has a lifetime of experience in telling the difference between "voices" and God's voice. I presume that believers from other religions also witness about hearing from God as they perceive Him. If God wants to reveal Himself in any other ways, it is not for me to judge. However, TPM for me is an approach that developed within the Christian faith, and is properly defined as a Christian approach. This is not an approach where non-christians can invite deities in which they believe. If other religions want to develop similar ways of involving their deities in their counselling, it is their right. That, however, will not be TPM.

God revealed Himself to me in Jesus Christ and as I argued in Chapter 3 and according to His own witness there is no other name through which mankind can enter into a correct relationship with God. For me there is no other God and this is the belief commitment in my theological pursuit, beyond which I am not prepared to be questioned (Van Huyssteen 1998:25). For me then, TPM is an approach where the Triune God (the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit) is invited to take part in a conversation with a recipient who is **willing** to converse with Him. I realise that this can be seen that I am forcing my views on other people which would be unethicising. If TPM is seen as the creating of a space for a conversation with the Triune God, there is no question of any force or abuse of power/knowledge. Therefore, to me TPM can be seen as an ethicising way where through the participation of all, all parties involved can benefit from it, as was illustrated by the narratives involved in this research.

The way in which Smith operates TPM is also a resistance towards professionalism in pastoral care. With TPM a space has been created for clergy and laity to play an accountable role in the pastoral care of fellow believers. However, I resist this differentiation, dividing believers along the lines of certain knowledges.

In this process we (all the co-researchers) practised ethics, that is to say our ethicising constructed new knowledge. This knowledge developed in the dynamic interaction between all the co-researchers. Every TPM session and research interview made a contribution. Every

experience, which a participant had, contributed to the process. The way in which the facilitator became a “bridge” for the participants to move on; Alice’s experience of being labelled as a “hopeless case”, Marinda’s experience of being forced to forgive, Roelf who took everything literally – all helped create a certain knowledge. The literature about the narrative and ethics, input from my promoter as well as my own way of ethicising co-constructed a knowledge that is our own

In actual fact, this knowledge can only be understood from the inside. It places us in opposition with other ethical codes where professional bodies can prescribe to us by means of expert knowledge, without understanding the dynamic through which our “ethics of doing” was constructed. In this process where we developed respect and appreciation for other’s positions, we gave new meaning and developed new values from which a participatory consciousness came forth to reach a certain ethical position. This position respects others’ ethicising processes but also resists every form of ethics that is abusive and prescriptive.

It is interesting to note that where Jesus was invited in TPM to reveal Himself to the recipient as He thought best, all participants experienced that He revealed Himself in His love and mercy and was not once prejudiced against a recipient. The fact that the focus is placed on the lie, i.e. the problem is externalised and the person is thus not seen as the problem, further causes that a door for healing possibilities is opened. Different to an approach where God is portraided as Someone that determines the size of a person’s sin and where regret and penance must primarily pre-empt healing. This basic choice in TPM and the whole structure of TPM makes it in essence ethicising.

In the next chapter I attend to the question of why TPM can be seen as a changing agent in recipients’ lives according to the participants’ experiences. I reflect on the participants’ views on why it was a changing agent in some cases and not in others.

## Chapter 9

# TPM AS A CHANGING AGENT IN THE PARTICIPANTS' LIVES

This research is about “*how*” and “*why*” *Theophostic Prayer Ministry (TPM) did, or did not, change the lives of persons who engaged in it as recipients.* In the previous two chapters I reflected on the *how* part of the research question. In this chapter I am reflecting on the *why* part of the research question.

The research questions that are relevant in this chapter are:

*Why did it work in some cases and not as well as in others?*

In order to gain a better perspective about why TPM can be viewed as an agent of change, I list the following aspects that were highlighted by the research:

- Firstly, there is the “Four-fold test of healing” that Smith uses to measure if/what healing took place. In my opinion this healing test provides important perspectives in understanding TPM as an agent of change;
- The long term effect of TPM can also make a contribution to this discourse;
- It is important to listen to the voices of the participants about why they believe TPM changed their lives or why it did not;
- I also compare the voice of literature with the voice of the participants;
- Finally, I reflect on the indications and contra-indications of TPM.

Those aspects that indicate healing, also give a clear indication about why healing took place. In order to discern genuine renewal, Smith (2007:161) suggests four questions to be asked.

### 9.1 The Four-fold test of healing

Ed Smith (2000) in the initial introductory video on TPM points out that many Christians do not really expect to be healed when they pray for it. They suffer from the four-P syndrome: **P**roblem; leading to **P**rayer, and then **P**retend that it helped and lastly **P**erform to keep up the image. The question is whether it is not just the same for TPM. Smith alleges that TPM brings genuine healing and not just “tolerable recovery” (Smith 2000). He uses the following four questions as



indications of whether genuine healing took place. I also indicate the participants' perceptions with each question.

### **9.1.1 Is the truth the person received from God during the session consistent with Biblical truth?**

I dealt with this aspect in Chapter 4 (4.5) and 5 (5.2.3). Any message that a recipient might receive that is not consistent with Biblical truth has, according to Smith, (2005:165) its origin in the person's own thoughts or of a deceiving spirit. It is necessary that the facilitator differentiates here. It does not mean, however, that the facilitator may assign his own understanding of the "truth".

In this Smith agrees with what I previously indicated, namely that a facilitator has only an interpretation of Biblical truth available and is therefore unable to decide for any other person what "truth" is. The handling of this was well illustrated when Harold could not forgive his father. The facilitator returned to that aspect by perturbing (Maturana and Varela 1987:98-100) it time and time again and continued to place it before God, but he never forced it. God knows when the person is ready for it and therefore it is fitting to keep placing it before God until that time arrives. It can serve as an example for handling aspects that are, according to the facilitator, not consistent with Biblical truth.

However, it implies according to Smith's view, that the healing process is not completed before that point is reached. This means that the facilitator's "knowing" plays a role. It again touches on the discourse of power. If it is handled in the manner it was dealt with in Harold's case, the recipient retains the responsibility to wrestle with it before God. New knowledge is constructed in the dialogue between God and the recipient. In that way the facilitator retains his/her role and does not in any way place him/herself in a position of power regarding the recipient. Although "knowing" plays a role it is not dictating the process.

Harlene Anderson (2007a) explains that the important aspect is the **way** in which the therapist brings her/his knowledge to the process.

The knowledge that each participant brings to a relationship and conversation is equally valued. Valued does not imply agreement. It means respecting, learning more, and trying to understand....Knowledge, whatever it's form – questions, comments, opinions, or suggestions [*and in this context I want to add prayer and Scripture*] – is offered as food for thought and dialogue, as a way of participating in the conversation. It is not offered with the intent of being authoritative, objective, or instructive.

(Anderson 2007a:49)

It cannot be denied that there is a certain authority attached to Scripture, but as handled in Harold's case, it depends on the authority the recipient attaches to it. If this “test” is applied in this way, it does not jeopardise the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator.

From the participants' responses it seems that all of them received truth consistent with their interpretations of Biblical truth. The only exception may be Harold, whose case has already been thoroughly discussed. Harold was too young to judge whether the truth he received was Biblical or not. Because none of the other participants experienced inconsistencies, it was not an issue during the research process.

I was the assistant during a session with another recipient (not a participant in this research) where the same problem occurred and where Chaplain Muller dealt with it in precisely the same way as he did with Harold. I also handle it in the same way when I facilitate recipients. In my own experience it is interesting that God, in His own time but consistently, brings truth that I would classify as Biblically consistent. This process has taught me to trust God absolutely and never to confuse the recipient with my own truths and my view on Biblical truth. If the facilitator remains in the not-knowing position, the implication is that the recipient must own the responsibility for what she constructs during his/her conversation with God. In my opinion this aspect, namely the taking of responsibility, is one of the main contributory factors for success experienced with TPM.

### **9.1.2 Does the person experience and demonstrate the perfect peace of Christ in the healed memory?**

According to Smith perfect peace cannot be achieved through cognitive input. It leads to the following TPM principle: **“No human being, including ourselves, is capable of talking us out of the lies we believe. We will be free only when we receive the truth from the One who is the Truth”** (Smith 2005:35). When expounding this principle, Smith argues that all attempts, however sincere, to humanly cast off the emotional bondage, will end in failure. He assumes that apart from the intervention of the Holy Spirit no one can know the truth. God is not limited in the ways He can bring truth. TPM is only one of those ways. The following makes a lot of sense to me when Smith argues further that although people can cognitively be aware that they believe a lie and can reach a cognitive truth, it will have little or no effect on the lie-based emotional pain that they experience. To my mind the whole discourse on rehabilitation programmes can be advanced by paying attention to this knowledge, given by Smith, that logical truth cannot free a person.

Smith (2005:35) refers to 2 Tim.2: 25 where it is written: “God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth”. Repentance here is equal to “mind renewal”. Smith’s understanding is that no one can experience true behavioural change without receiving “mind renewal”. He mentions various situations where people in TPM sessions could only really change their behaviour after God granted them mind renewal: “As the Lord grants ‘change of thinking’ the raging swell of pain becomes a placid calm” (Smith 2005:36). To understand Smith’s conclusion here, his argument regarding memory and pain should be kept in mind (expounded earlier in Chapters 4 and 5). Smith (2007:156) argues that it is not the memory per se that is responsible for the pain, but the belief held or interpretation of the memory that causes the pain, therefore: “Peace follows truth in the same way that pain follows lies”. The experience of peace is therefore a clear indication that true mind renewal took place.

Smith was heavily criticised for promoting experience or feelings over logic. Miller (2005:14) pointed out that Smith's view:

...can best be explained by citing the common Christian distinction between “head knowledge” and “heart knowledge”. Head knowledge is a merely conceptual understanding of Biblical truth that makes no difference in a person’s life because its profound spiritual relevance is not grasped. Heart knowledge is when the relevance of the same truth impacts the Christian’s entire being, including the experiential and emotional levels. What is understood by the heart is just as logical as what is understood by the head, only its spiritual relevance is appreciated more fully.

From the research interviews it became clear that almost all the participants witnessed to the peace they experienced. I quote from the process notes I made of the research interviews.

**Michelle:** She related how she could recall that she felt complete peace after her TPM session.

**Beryl:** “I now experience peace and calm regarding the molestation memory”.

**Joe:** “If these were hallucinations, they would not have brought me peace in every situation”.

**Dawid:** “Afterwards I felt peaceful and calm, the weight having been taken off my shoulders”.

**Gert:** “There is no longer any pain when I think of the past”.

**Veronica's spouse:** “The only thing I can say is that my wife is more at peace and that I had never seen anything like TPM”.

In my opinion these experiences of the participants are very important responses to the *why* research question. Only in Roelf's case there was no indication of peace. Even in Edward's case,

where he later no longer experienced the same peace, he still has peace in those memories where he and God co-constructed truth. The experience of peace therefore still plays an important part in the change that the participants experienced.

These experiences of the participants correspond with the words of the TPM principle that true freedom is experienced when we “*receive the truth from the One who is the Truth*”. The experience of peace gives the recipients the feeling of success. A major motivation for recipients to seek help is the experience of bad feelings, and when that changes it is obvious that they will experience that the facilitation was successful. This explains why the participants had a positive experience of TPM. From the participants' perspectives they had divine experiences that changed their emotions. It is interesting that even atheists acknowledge that “divine experiences” transform peoples lives (Claasen 2009). This reference is not about proving that there is a God or something like that, but it helps us to respond to the why question. The role of a divine experience cannot be overlooked in this discourse about why TPM helped people to change or why it did not (Further expounded at 9.2.1).

### **9.1.3 Does the person have genuine compassion and forgiveness for the one who hurt him/her?**

This aspect is one that most people often find difficult. Roos (2005:134-5), not coming from a TPM background, makes the following statement about forgiveness, namely that it is not something that you can force. Then you are fooling yourself and it is false. Roos views forgiveness as one of the last phases of the healing process, after all the feelings have been worked through, the molester has been freed and his power and his hold over the victim eliminated. To expect victims to forgive while they are still in the phases of anger, rebellion and sadness, is unrealistic. They must first have the opportunity to work through all their emotions.

Smith (2007:179) indicates that before he started with TPM, he felt compelled to lead people to forgiveness, according to the Word, whether they were ready for it or not. His intention was that if they started living from the cognitive knowledge that they had forgiven, it would gradually become their living experience. However, TPM taught him that when a person's lie-based thinking is effectively renewed, when the person experiences the release of the lies and the accompanying emotional pain, that forgiveness is almost spontaneous without him having to exert any pressure. Smith views the unwillingness to forgive as an indication that there is lie-based thinking still to be exposed and healed. Smith sees it as mind renewal. It comes down to the recipient having established a core belief through an interpretation of a certain event. What needs to be renewed is the core belief. In the narrative paradigm this is called deconstruction. It

is exactly the same process that would take place within the narrative therapy when the basis on which the assumptions (beliefs) are made, are deconstructed.

The way in which it is implemented is clearly illustrated in the narrative of Harold. As it is, this aspect makes up a very important part of the TPM process. It is evident from the research interviews that this aspect was very important to most of the participants in reconstructing their realities. Although it can be accepted that it probably played the same role in all the narratives, seen in the light of Chaplain Muller's way of working, not everyone mentioned it explicitly. It can be assumed that if the aspect played an important enough role in the change that followed, that the participants concerned would have mentioned it prominently. Therefore the role it played will only be examined in the narratives where the participants mentioned it spontaneously during the research interviews.

#### **9.1.3.1 Jacques (“Transformed from stuttering to public speaking”)**

Mention has already been made of Jacques' negative relationship with his father. The fact that he could forgive his father gave him the confidence to have a heart to heart talk with him, during which his father also asked for forgiveness for his own behaviour. It served to mend the relationship a month before his father passed away. In this case reconciliation was a consequence of the healing that took place and of the shift according to which Jacques now narrates his life story. Jacques related that he also experienced the way it was handled in his TPM process as positive.

#### **9.1.3.2 Harold (“How God can change a person”)**

In Harold's case he could not forgive before working through all the hurt. It only happened spontaneously after many other sessions. As indicated in the quoted sessions in chapter 5, the facilitator regularly prompted Harold to forgive his father but no pressure was applied. He waited until Harold was ready for it. The housemother said: “When he realized that Jesus had set him free and forgiven his father for what he did to him, he could do the same. Filling the gap, he now sees Jesus as his heavenly father. By sending him an angel, he knows he now no longer needs to hold on to the past”. From her response it is clear that forgiveness played a major role in Harold's long term healing.

### **9.1.3.3 Beryl (“A cleansing experience”)**

According to Beryl she experienced the forgiveness of the Lord intensely in the session and that formed for her the basis of her change. As a result of that Beryl, who resented her mother, as she had never protected her from her father, realized in TPM that she had never told her mother about it. Now it was possible for her to forgive her mother as well as her father and uncle. As a result of this experience with the Lord, she now experiences peace and calm regarding the molestation. She also experienced total relief from the negative influence her marriage had on her. This change was also brought about by her forgiveness of her former husband.

### **9.1.3.4 Dawid (“Freed from the shame”)**

Dawid compared his experience of TPM to what he earlier experienced in Biblical counselling. According to him the TPM process helped him to experience the forgiveness of God on a much deeper level. He does not believe that any other counselling would have been able to lead him to the point of being able to forgive others on the same level. When Dawid was asked what it was in the TPM process that helped him to forgive on such a deep level, he related that in other counselling confession is also used, but TPM was totally different. In TPM he was led through the whole process **step by step**. He believes the fact that he also used prayer and fasting in his preparation, made it possible for him to clearly hear the voice of the Holy Spirit in his session. He made mention of how he had to confess things in his past, many of which he did not remember before TPM. Even though he had not been aware of it, they had been affecting him all along. When he had to forgive, it was made easy for him when he experienced the “light” in his session. It felt like it was wiped from his memory.

### **9.1.3.5 Ruth (“You’re precious in My eyes”)**

Ruth spoke of a history of pain in her family that embittered her. The pain kept returning, year after year. In TPM she had the opportunity to forgive family members one by one and it brought wonderful healing. It happened after she heard God’s voice saying: “You’re precious in My eyes”. After the pain was completely gone, it was easy to forgive.

### **9.1.3.6 Glen (“Changed from shy to cheerful”)**

Glen hated his brother. In the session he could talk about it and reach the point where he could forgive his brother. Reading the research interviews, it seems that the fact that he could talk to

someone about it and that he could forgive are probably the aspects, according to his experience, which contributed most to the change he experienced.

### **9.1.3.7 Marinda (“Two different people”)**

Marinda’s narrative clearly illustrates the two different approaches to forgiveness. She experienced that the facilitator expected her to forgive there and then *when she was not yet ready for it*. She felt like she had to say: “I forgive,” just to get away. She did not like being forced into a corner.

Marinda became ready to forgive after God showed her in a session, regarding a similar event, that He loved that person (the perpetrator) as much as He loved her. It was difficult to hear, but since it was the truth and because she received it directly from God, she accepted it. When her daughter was molested, she took scissors to kill the perpetrator at his home. If she saw the same person now, she would ask God to forgive him. In response to the question as to whether it was merely time healing the wounds, she replied “no”. She relates that the change came as a result of her authentic experience of the Lord's voice which has enabled her to be able to bless that person now.

### **9.1.3.8 Gert (“God has a goal for everyone”)**

Gert related that TPM’s worth lay in that he realized how important it is for us to forgive as the Bible states we should. Otherwise how can God forgive us? It helped him to forgive other people. He could apologize to the people he hated. His relationships were restored. Where there once was enmity with his brother-in-law, they are now best friends. Gert made an appointment with his brother-in-law after the Lord showed him truth about him in one session. From the time he received therapy, the relationship has improved by 90%.

### **9.1.3.9 Emily (“Voice of a woman”)**

Emily experienced her TPM-sessions as a blessing. The main influence on her life was that she learnt to get in contact with the Lord. She also learnt what forgiveness is all about. She cried a lot and that helped her to experience real relief. Emily indicated that she valued TPM very highly and added: “I am a very changed person”. She learnt from TPM that forgiveness is about removing all the bad things from her heart. In Emily’s case facilitator and recipient were from different culture groups and together in conversation with Jesus they co-constructed the meaning of forgiveness that Emily found very meaningful. She reflected that the way it was explained to

her helped her to cleanse herself and forgive everyone she needed to. She previously went to sangomas to get free, but found true release from her hurt through TPM.

In a marriage where there was a lot of violence, physical as well as verbal abuse, she learnt to cope by being aggressive and not showing any emotions. The Lord revealed to her that she had to forgive her husband. When she experienced the love of the Lord, she was able to forgive him. According to her, that had the biggest impact on her life.

#### **9.1.3.10 Concluding reflections on the forgiveness discourse:**

It appears like a golden thread in all these narratives: when the mercy and love of God is experienced in one way or the other, it enables the participant to forgive. Smith's (2000:208) experience is validated: "One of the most incredible aspects of TPM that I continually witness is a person's willingness to forgive his wounder without any promptings or coercion on my part once the Lord releases him from his lies and emotional pain".

This conclusion agrees with what Garzon et.al. (2002:349) describe in their article, that more and more psychotherapists in secular therapy have realized the worth of forgiveness during the past ten years. It is now a recognized form of treatment in psychotherapy. Psychotherapists use "forgiveness therapy" and indicate how they need religious institutions to support them in this.

Worthington et.al. (2000:18) came to the conclusion in their research that time is the most important factor influencing forgiveness. Earlier research pointed out empathy as the most important, but Worthington's et.al. research does not support this. Their conclusion is: "The main conclusion from these efforts is that anything done to promote forgiveness has little impact unless substantial time is spent at helping participants think through and emotionally experience their forgiveness" (ibid.).

It is interesting that the experiences of most of the participants agree with Ed Smith's description cited above. Three of the four "one session" participants, as well as three of the others, could forgive immediately after they had had an experience with God. In all these cases the participants described that forgiveness played an important role in reconstructing their preferred life stories. Therefore it would seem that this research highlights the importance of forgiveness being experienced emotionally as in the research of Worthington et.al. (2002). Taking all the narratives of this research project into consideration, no one can dispute that the voice of the Lord played a central role in making forgiveness possible.

From this research it seems to me that according to the participants an authentic encounter with God was unanimously seen as the most important agent that enabled them to forgive. This is a



very important contribution that TPM makes to this discourse. This is not about a facilitator or therapist acting on behalf of God or being God's messenger to guide a person to forgiveness, but it is about a direct encounter with the Lord. The role of the therapist is only to create a space where the recipient can have a direct experience with the Lord. That implies that the facilitator is not the "holy one" that has to intercede for the recipient, but a fellow human being alongside the recipient who opens the door for the recipient to have direct communication with the Lord.

Taking the research of Worthington's et.al. into consideration, it does not mean that time is not important, but it is not about waiting for time to heal the wounds. However, neatly illustrated by the narratives of Marinda and Harold, it is about pacing the process according to the pace the Lord and the recipient are setting. This implies that force cannot be used. Marinda's narrative illustrated that. The first time she only forgave to satisfy her facilitator, but no real freedom was experienced. After her personal encounter with the Lord, although she did not hear what she wanted to hear, she was able to experience that freedom, brought by true forgiveness of the perpetrators. In Harold's narrative (see chapter 5) the effect of that pacing according to the Lord's pace is illustrated. The facilitator used his power to create a space where forgiveness could "happen" rather than forcing the recipient to forgive.

Therefore I can agree with Louw (1999:42) when he says that true forgiveness flows from a "discovery of God's nature". It is the confrontation with His grace that brings a deep understanding of sin and transgression. It leads to constructive confession, in turn leading to a forgiveness that "creates mutual togetherness and acceptance" (:43). It agrees with Smith's standpoint that genuine forgiveness is a test for healing.

In my own experience, when a recipient has an encounter with God's grace, forgiveness follows easily. The act of withholding forgiveness is almost always as the result of a guardian lie (in TPM terms) which is basically a defence mechanism the recipient uses to protect him/herself from pain. It is founded on interpretations, which keep the recipient's dominant story in place. Smith (2005:166) tells the story of a son who kept on forgiving his father on a cognitive level but who kept on experiencing resentment the moment he came into his father's presence. "The reason his old feelings of resentment flared was that he had not dealt with the true source of his pain, the lie-based thinking embedded in his memories" (:166). When these lies are opened to the grace of God, they are immediately deconstructed and the recipient is freed to co-construct a new preferred story. That was also Dawid's experience. Smith's (:166) opinion is that: "Forgiveness and compassion appear to be natural by-products of receiving personal release from lie-based pain".

I see forgiveness as the logical result of inner peace. It highlights the important role that forgiveness plays when discussing the *why* research question. The participants experienced that their encounter with God led them to forgiveness. It is clear that many of the participants felt the same as Emily, who stated that forgiveness “has made a big impact on my life”.

#### **9.1.4 Does the healing result in genuine transformation and life change?**

For Smith the true test of whether healing took place is only proved in a time of crisis, as the following principle states: “**In times of crises or in emotional-charged life situations, our experiential knowledge (beliefs we hold that we learned through experience) tends to override our logical truth**” (Smith 2005:36). The power of experiential knowledge lies in the emotional pain attached to the experience. When that emotion is triggered logical truth has no effect. Although I can know on a logical level that my worth is in Christ, that He accepts me as I am, once that emotion is triggered I might not, for example, be able to shake off the feelings of worthlessness and rejection. In that moment the negative feelings are experienced as the truth. True healing therefore would mean that no negative emotions are triggered when finding myself in the same circumstances.

This test can only be applied with time. Chapter 6 contains a short background on every participant and shows that the research interviews were conducted between six months and five years after the participants received TPM. Therefore, in some cases a longer time elapsed than in others. It must be taken into consideration when discussing the long-term effects of TPM on the lives of the participants. In each case, the length of elapsed time is indicated.

##### **9.1.4.1 Long term effect of TPM**

In order to get an idea of what the long term effects of TPM are in each participants’ life, I would like to give a brief overview of their current situations.

- a) **Jacques** (facilitated 4 years ago): His problem saturated story describes a young man who isolated himself as result of his stuttering. He could not hold a job; neither did he succeed in establishing any meaningful relationships with the opposite sex. He indulged in excessive drinking of alcohol and also got involved in the occult. He now maintains a totally different lifestyle. He is permanently employed and is happily married. He experiences healthy family relationships in his family of origin. He is also involved in church ministry.
- b) **Harold** (facilitated 3 years ago): Harold was legally removed from parental care as a result of his uncontrollable behaviour. In Harold’s case it is clear from the research interviews with his caregivers, as well as the fact that he could be restored to parental care, that his way of

living had been totally transformed. From the interviews it seems that the same situations that used to trigger negative reactions, no longer trigger him.

From a conversation with his mother, it seems that the relationship between Harold and his family has also completely changed. I quote from a recent e-mail from his mother (apart from changing identifying details) because it tells a tale in itself -

Harold is doing well I suppose. He does play up every now and then. He is playing soccer at the moment because it is school holidays here now....Oh and Andre (Chaplain Muller), the fireman's badge you have for Harold, do you think you could post that to us? I am sure Harold would like that. He still wants to be a fireman, but now he also wants to be a pilot!!

- c) **Alice** (facilitated 3 years ago): Psychologists and psychiatrists diagnosed her with multiple mental disorders, inter alia Dissociative Identity Disorder. Seemingly total integration of the alters has taken place. She shows growth with regard to socialization and acts with more self-confidence. She has regular contact with Chaplain Muller. She continues to receive TPM.
- d) **Minah** (facilitated 3 years ago) could not function effectively at work or at home, following the deaths of her daughter, grandson and sister in a very short period of time. She still works at the same company. Her spontaneous temperament now makes her very popular at work.
- e) **Michelle** (facilitated 2 years ago) was separated from her parents at the age of two and severely traumatised during childhood. Her family recently went through a trauma it did not faze Michelle. The family is experiencing a revival in their Christian life. Michelle still receives TPM facilitating.
- f) **Beryl** (facilitated 3 years ago) was sexually molested at a very young age. She is a mother who had to raise her kids alone. She sought help when her son was convicted for rape. Now, she is still content with the way she is coping with life. She is more independent and now lives on her own with her other son.
- g) **Joe** (facilitated 2 years ago) contemplated committing suicide at a time when he was negative and short-tempered and lost interest in his work and ministry. Joe is back at work and has recently been promoted. He has no more thoughts of suicide. He is also very active in his ministry.
- h) The **Dawid** (facilitated 4 years ago) before TPM is portrayed by his nominee as a pessimistic and very aggressive person, with a terribly short temper. At present he is doing well with his evangelical ministry in one of the poorest areas of Johannesburg.

- i) **Ruth** (facilitated 4 years ago) was very depressed at the time when she came for TPM. She reached the point where she no longer wanted to live. She was unhappy all the time and was tearful about everything. TPM motivated her to get involved in the uplifting of her community and presently she is doing excellent work in her church as ordained pastor.
- j) **Annatjie** (facilitated 5 years ago): Prior to TPM she was caught up in a very abusive marriage relationship. The trend right through her life story is that of being subjected to male authority. After her divorce, she established herself as a career woman and still runs her bakery and experiences peace and harmony.
- k) **Glen** (facilitated 4 years ago) came for facilitation because of his deceased brother. At time traits of his problem saturated story were inter alia: a short temper, being very shy, unforgiving, unable to ask for help and not talking to anyone at work, problems in marriage, etc. He still has a permanent work and lives in his own flat with his family. He experiences less anger than before.
- l) **Marinda** (facilitated 5 years ago) was involved in other types of Christian counselling and viewed TPM as retraumatizing. Her own experience with TPM changed her view she is still involved with TPM as a TPM facilitator and part of FTF, a TPM-organisation. She is involved in community projects.
- m) **Gert** (facilitated 3 years ago). (facilitated 3 years ago). When FTF reached out to Gert and his family, his children were in the children's home as a result of his drinking problems, his poor employment record as well as serious marriage problems. He now has a permanent job as a control officer at a security company. The family relations between Gert, his wife and children have been restored. Two of his children have already been restored to his care and the welfare services are presently in the process of also restoring the last one.
- n) **Magriet** (facilitated 3 years ago) due to her low self image, did not perform to her potential in the children's home. She is still a valued member of the TPM team and a comfort to many staff members, who prefer to share their personal issues with her.
- o) **Veronica** (facilitated 4 years ago) grew up in a foster family where physical abuse occurred. She was diagnosed with schizophrenia and is on a disability pension. Veronica consulted various psychiatrists and psychologists about her problem. She used to suffer from terrible nightmares and became very depressed about things that happened in the past. At night she also experienced hallucinations when she was awake. At the time when she and her husband sought advice from Chaplain Muller, they were on the brink of a divorce. Currently, the nightmares barely exist anymore. Financially and spiritually the family is prospering and

have recently moved into a semi-detached house, with a view to buying. While the marital relationship was good for some time, Veronica unfortunately had another extra marital affair that caused great stress in the marriage. The couple is currently again receiving marriage counselling.

- p) **Edward** (facilitated 5 years ago) was very abusive in his marriage relationship and was very negative and depressed when they went to see Chaplain Muller, as a result of a lot of stress experienced in his work environment. Edward still works at the bank. The family experiences life as a series of ups and downs, but the marriage relationship is still going well. Edward is currently returning to church.
- q) **Emily** (facilitated 3 years ago) consulted Chaplain Muller after an outburst with her daughter and because there was no happiness in her life. There was no church involvement at that time. She still works at the same company and although there is no real change in her relationships there, she is still very active in her church.
- r) **Roelf** (facilitated 4 years ago) was addicted to different substances that led to an irresponsible way of life. To the best of my knowledge nothing really changed. He still avoids contact with the facilitators. His family reports that many problems remain. Presently he cannot be traced and as far as I could ascertain he is on the run from the police.

From the above descriptions it seems that fifteen of the eighteen participants experienced long-term transformation. Those participants established stable lifestyles. Using Smith's terms, it would seem that the lies guiding their lives were effectively deconstructed so that they can live their new preferred stories. Three of the participants had their facilitation five years ago. Two of them continue to go from strength to strength. The other one, Edward, is thoroughly discussed later (9.2.3.3). There was a measure of backsliding but certain behaviours have changed permanently.

As my aim is not to prove how successful TPM as an approach is, but to contribute to the further development of TPM, I reflect under the next heading on the possible contributions that TPM made in those cases where long term effects were established, as well as on the challenges that TPM was confronted with in those cases where there was a lack of long term effects.

## **9.2 Why did it work in some cases and not as well in others?**

By means of this research report so far, it was previously indicated that TPM made a significant difference in seventeen of the eighteen participants' lives. TPM worked in certain cases and some can even be labelled as "dramatic". The question addressed now is: *What are the*

*participants' perceptions on the reasons for TPM working in some cases and not so well in other cases?*

Before getting to the participants' responses, I first want to reflect on Smith's contribution to this discourse.

### **9.2.1 Smith's voice in this discourse.**

Smith (2009:1) in discussing the TPM principle that “Feelings are important indicators of our true beliefs” stressed the importance of the role of our experiential knowledge (beliefs we hold that we learned through experience), which tends to override our logical truth. He refers to the example of Peter.

The story of Peter’s denial of Christ shows this principle. Before the trial Peter is “courageously” declaring that he will die for Jesus and never allow Jesus to be killed. This is Peter’s logical belief. However, later in the courtyard we see a fearful, weakened man who cannot stand up to the accusation of a girl who questions his relationship to the Lord. What he actually believes becomes evident in his emotion and behavior.

In Roman 12:2 we are told that transformation occurs as the mind is renewed. This transformation is not just in behavior but in emotion. Godly emotions such as joy and peace all flow from the heart and mind of the person who knows the truth. This is not necessarily so when a person has just memorized the verses but more so when a person experientially knows the verses to be true. When these fruits of the Spirit are not evident in our life there will be a belief contrary to these fruits evident in our thinking.

(Smith 2009:1)

As in the example of Peter above, Edward's backsliding may similarly be explained as there are still more lies to be revealed. When Veronica's son exposed her to educational demands that she could not handle, it is possible that her experiential knowledge (lies she still believed) was retriggered, and she used familiar patterns to handle it.

To me it boils down to what I have already argued in relation to forgiveness. If and when the recipient had an authentic encounter with the Lord where the lie was effectively deconstructed, long term change would follow. If not, what I gather from Smith's viewpoint, is that if there was not a long term change, it was either because the truth was only accepted on a logical level, without **experiencing** the truth, or our circumstances “tend to be a refiner’s fire exposing the impurities in our faith/belief “ (Smith 2009:1). This implies that it is not about TPM being unsuccessful, but about a process that is not finished yet. In my opinion, it is also about TPM not being a quick therapy that pretends to work in mystical ways, but rather a process that sometimes needs time to complete. It is also not about a single encounter with God, but a life in

which encounters with God become a process, in other words they become a way of life, rather than a single miracle.

The other remark by Smith (2009:1) is also valid in this context, when he said: “The person who does not want to own his feelings and lie-based thinking will not readily embrace this principle and you may be wasting your time trying to convince him or her otherwise ...” This is probably applicable to Roelf. The “sparkling moment” in TPM's approach for me, is this respect with which each individual's will is handled. Convincing is not the job of the facilitator. I agree with Smith that convincing is the Lord's part in that person's life. TPM is just about offering an opportunity for people to engage in a conversation with the Lord regarding emotional pain that they experience.

When TPM lands in the abovementioned dead end, namely “you may be wasting your time trying to convince him or her otherwise”, TPM can consider also looking at itself through other theories in order to be fed and enriched through these. In the last chapter I make specific recommendations in this regard.

## **9.2.2 The participants' voices on why TPM did work.**

The task before us is to construct a response that is valid for the participants in this research project but not necessarily in a different scenario. This response will therefore be constructed by the voices of the co-researchers in this project. They are the experts of their own experiences.

Reading through the responses, I realized that it might become monotonous to give each response individually because with little variation, the responses are basically the same. An eleven-year old boy probably summarised it best: “The change was because the Lord talked to me”. This corresponds with what I said earlier about “divine experience” and “an authentic encounter with God” in my reflection on 9.1.2 and 9.1.3.

Jacques experienced that “these changes came about as a result of Jesus pointing out the lies in his life to him and replacing them with truth. It is the experience of Jesus Christ that causes the change”. Alice sees the reason why it works as: “God knows exactly what you need and is the only One who can tell you precisely what you need to hear. That makes the greatest difference”. Jacques' nominee said: “You experience it personally. You feel, see and hear it from God Himself”. Minah described it from her cultural point of view: “It is God who spoke to me. ‘Modimo’ (God) worked through ‘Moya’ (the Holy Spirit) to effect the change in me”. It appears that all the participants agree that it was the personal experience with Jesus Christ that successfully deconstructed the lies in their lives.

Jacques compared his TPM experiences with sermons and related that all the sermons he listened to did not help him change in the same way as TPM did. It can be debated that the truth is also proclaimed during church services. Why does it not also happen in that setting? The truths that the participants heard in their TPM sessions are not dramatically different from what can be heard in sermons. Why are lies not deconstructed by sermons? When Jacques was challenged on this point, he maintained that he knew and believed that it was the way God communicated with him. His view is that while he believed in those lies, sermons from Scripture did not help, because it is on a logical level. **The difference lay in experiencing direct communication with God.**

Chaplain Muller sees the reason why TPM works as being that: “TPM filters out the dirty water so that communication with God can improve”. He used the metaphor of a darkened room. When the light is turned on, you can see doors that you were not aware of before. Then there are no longer things holding you back. His meaning is that when the lies are deconstructed, a person is able to take in truth on a much deeper level. In another interview he referred to the fact that when your spirit knows the truth, the lie has no influence anymore.

Harold’s nominee referred to working with children and offered that a part of the answer lies therein that as the facilitator does not show up with ready-made answers, the child gets the opportunity to voice his own opinion. It makes a substantial contribution to the openness with which the child accepts what is experienced during the session.

I would like to reflect on the idea that sermons do not deconstruct lies. I believe it is daring to make such a statement. That is Jacques' knowledge and true for him. This is an example of generally valid truth not being exposed. However, I do not believe that TPM and sermons should be set at odds with each other. It is possible that many people have had their lies deconstructed by means of sermons. However, in my opinion the creating of a safe space where God's voice can be experienced on an intimate and personal level by the recipient, probably plays an important role. If that is the case, a relationship of mutual respect and trust between recipients and facilitators is of paramount importance.

Although factors, like the not-knowing position of the facilitator, contribute to the safeness that is experienced in TPM, the main reason for this, according to the participants, is the experience of the Lord's voice in one way or another during the TPM session that effectively deconstructed beliefs, upon which their problem saturated stories were built. To me it seems that because the participants experienced that it was coming directly from God (a divine experience), they accepted it without questioning. Because the facilitator stayed in the not-knowing position, it created the space for each participant to experience God according to her/his own view of God.



In this way the influence of the facilitator's theology was neutralised. I will comment further on this at point 9.3.1.

What also can be inferred from the above is that it is not about keeping to certain techniques or rituals to cause the healing to come, in other words it is not TPM as an approach that brings the change or healing, but an authentic experience of the Lord's involvement in a recipient's life. The main thing is that the facilitator has to get out of the way and the recipient has to take responsibility for her/his own healing.

I trust that I have reflected now on all the views of the participants that came forward during the research interviews with reasons for the helpfulness of TPM.

### **9.2.3 The participants' voices on why TPM did not work so well in some cases.**

Here I would like to discuss the four narratives selected by Chaplain Muller as the ones in which TPM was not so successful. His criteria were that if the labour brought forth no fruit and there were no visible changes, then TPM is deemed to be not so successful. His criteria were set out in Chapter 6.

#### **9.2.3.1 Chaplain Muller**

Chaplain Muller cited four reasons why he thinks that TPM was not so successful in the selected narratives:

- a) There is no thankfulness for what God did. He referred to the ten lepers who were healed, but only one of whom returned to say thank you.
- b) Some were not really interested in the works of our Lord Jesus Christ. These people were either forced to come or were curious to find out if they could also receive according to someone else's testimony. A genuine will to change was lacking.
- c) Some people had an emotional experience during their TPM session, but there was no support structure to encourage or guide them.
- d) Some did not experience anything Godly in the TPM session.

#### **9.2.3.2 Veronica (A divorce would have been a mistake)**

Both Veronica and her spouse experienced genuine change. Nightmares and hallucinations lessened. Now they have virtually disappeared. Her sleeping pattern also improved. Even during the last group reflection



From Chaplain Muller's perspective, it is understandable why he selected her as a person for whom TPM is deemed to be not so successful. Sometimes it seems that Veronica has a lack of commitment to the work of our Lord Jesus Christ. It must contribute to the outsider's observation that not much change has taken place. In that way, it can seem that TPM brought no real change.

Other factors to be taken into account are that Veronica is a very concrete thinker. She finds it difficult to integrate certain abstract concepts. Furthermore, her "problem-saturated story" has symptoms similar to those present in disturbances such as schizophrenia and personality disorder.

Veronica gives herself very little credit for the progress she made since first receiving TPM. However, the nominee highlights the great changes that took place in her. By means of such positive comments the nominee actively contributes to the deconstruction of Veronica's dominant story, although she cannot yet acknowledge it in spite of the obvious changes. She finds it difficult to deconstruct her own "problem-saturated story" and to begin construction of a new alternative story. The following is an illustration of this.

Depression is part of her dominant story. She has learnt to cope with her circumstances by means of anger, fear and sadness. It seems as if depression had stolen her vision for the future as well as her ability to establish satisfying interpersonal relationships. However, on the other side, she indicates that her family relationships improved vastly. At one stage she saw a divorce as the only solution, but now has a meaningful marital relationship as well as better relationships with her children. It is as though depression also kept her from recognizing the progress and of letting go of the thin description of her life. It is as if she cannot correctly interpret the landscape of action from her landscape of identity. In TPM terminology it could be called clashing with what she believes about herself. This presents TPM with a challenge on how to address this problem.

The presence of nightmares and fearful hallucinations at night are the silent witnesses that her "problem-saturated story" was dictated by fear. Its origin is mostly from the harsh and unrelenting educational practices that her foster parents used. The only area where Veronica can give herself credit is with regard to her spiritual life. Seen as a big picture, TPM brought about change in her relationships. She is adamant about it that the change was caused by TPM. She and her nominee state that she tried so many different types of therapy and counselling that made very little difference. She declared: "TPM is direct help from God. God takes you to the memory and frees you from the pain contained therein". From this comment from Veronica, it seems as if she is playing TPM off against other approaches. Veronica's problem is actually very complicated and is one of the narratives where Smith's (2008f:1) recommendation is applicable,

namely that the TPM facilitator has “to take the back seat to the work being done”, and that a health professional (psychiatrist/ psychologist) has to be involved. TPM does not replace others, but has to work alongside with other health professionals (rather in the back seat).

Her nominee sketches a picture of the radical change that took place in her. He admits that there was not a personality change, but it is of great importance to him that her nightmares and hallucinations occur radically less and are also less intense. According to his faith framework, he ascribed those things to evil forces. This viewpoint was also effectively deconstructed through TPM. The nominee uses the language of faith to describe Veronica’s change. Seen from any angle, it is indeed a huge step for Veronica. She used to see herself as someone helpless in the clutches of evil, but now realizes that it is not true. That is the first thing she mentions when she talks about TPM.

The theme in Veronica’s dominant story is fear. It is evident that fear has already been greatly deconstructed in her life. However, as she remains focussed on the negative – so that there is no improvement in her anger management, she is unable to take credit for the other changes. These research interviews aimed to establish an audience so that an alternative story could be co-constructed by means of validation. Keeping in mind, as already indicated, that she is not very open to external validation, it is therefore understandable that the TPM process also proceeds very slowly. The change has taken place, but according to her it is difficult for her to make the transition. The indications are clear that many lies still remain in her thoughts. This can be understood when her childhood experiences are taken into consideration, as many lies regarding authority figures may still be in play and still need to be deconstructed. If Veronica’s total picture is investigated, however, it is evident that TPM had an influence on her healing process. In human terms a divorce seemed inevitable, but her healing turned the situation around.

Apart from the fact that Veronica should not only be dependent on TPM alone for help, in my opinion this narrative is not really one where TPM was not so successful, but one in which deconstruction has barely started. The role of fear has already been greatly deconstructed, but other aspects that are part of Veronica’s dominant story still need attention. In that process the voice of God will become clearer so that transition can take place and the alternative story can be co-constructed. Veronica has the advantage of a husband who is already a co-constructor in her preferred story. She is also a member of a congregation and the TPM community, which can both serve as audiences to validate her progress and co-construct her preferred story of faith, hope and love.

In Veronica's case the participants differ on the effect that TPM had on her life story. Veronica gave an ambiguous response, where on the one side she sees no change and on the other side contributes the change to her experience with the Lord. As set out above, I judge it as slow progress in using the landscape of action to construct a new landscape of identity. Her concrete thinking has led to a rigid cognitive style which makes it difficult for her to be open to external validation and to accept responsibility for change. This creates a challenge for TPM when working with intellectually handicapped people. I will reflect further on this in the last chapter.

Chaplain Muller acknowledged that there was change, but not sufficient to be seen as successful. Her nominee (her husband), however, is very satisfied with the change he is experiencing.

Apart from the above, I also want to take the role of psychopathology into account. I already indicated that depression probably will keep her from making choices that will enhance her preferred story.

In short, responding on the question: “Why was TPM not so successful according to Veronica's perspective”? I want to say that if her problem can be addressed from multi-level professional perspectives, sustainable change will probably follow. For instance, if her story is also dealt with from a narrative framework, and input is given from a psychiatric side, and occupational therapy and social work are utilized, TPM could be used more effectively. The goal is the same, namely a preferred story of faith, hope and love. As with Veronica, I often find in church circles an either-or attitude, meaning it's Christian counselling versus the other health professionals. This needs deconstruction. I will reflect on this further in the last chapter.

### **9.2.3.3 Edward (“A boy who let his Father down”)**

In this narrative, just after the TPM session, a radical change took place, but unfortunately backsliding followed. “Edward searched for God and discovered His love but now his desire to seek God's face daily has disappeared. He thinks that God is angry with him because he got lost in the first place. He believed that TPM freed him but also disturbed his relationship with God”. The question is why this case did not produce any long-term change.

Edward's problem-saturated story is characterised by fear, uncertainty and insecurity. Accordingly he views himself as a failure. Its origins lie in a difficult childhood. He believed that he could not build a successful career or be able to provide for his family. His experience was that he had no control over his life.

Initially great changes took place. What probably affected it was that he experienced within his session that Jesus returned control of his life to him. It can be expected that the transition would

have taken hold. He also experienced after the session that depression as well as the bitterness disappeared. Although there is backsliding, it is still evident that real and permanent change took hold. Edward cannot allow himself to make use of the positive aspects from his landscape of action to help him construct his landscape of identity.

The nominee saw the enormous change in Edward, after the TPM session. Although he is difficult again, it is not nearly as bad as it used to be. Before TPM he was a terribly jealous man, always right and never wrong. She was exposed to horrible “verbal abuse”. His words broke down her self-esteem. Many of his words still haunt her, but it has greatly improved. He no longer belittles her. It used to be only “Edward”: the only person who existed for him. These aspects that the nominee pointed out are proof that jealousy and narcissism have been effectively deconstructed by the TPM process. It would appear that as long as Edward was able to hear God’s voice deconstruction of his “problem-saturated story” as well as construction of his preferred story took place.

The nominee is adamant that the transition was brought about by Edward’s experience with Jesus Christ, when she said: “The reason why TPM works is because Jesus makes the difference. God is there and that which He reveals to you cannot merely be human reasoning”.

The question now is what TPM can learn from this narrative where long term change did not take place. Shortly after his TPM session Edward started living a totally religiously committed life to the point where his wife warned him that he was neglecting his family. The question is whether that warning triggered some of the old lies. His wife's explanation is: “He did not walk through doors that were opened to him”. That implies that the deconstruction of the “problem-saturated story” was not yet sufficiently deconstructed while the alternative story was not sufficiently constructed either. Edward set off on a run to live out his new preferred story, not giving others (including God) enough chance to co-construct his new story. Because of his perfectionism the new construction fell apart as soon as he discovered a flaw in it. There was no real opportunity for true thickening of the preferred story to take place. Now Edward allows the disappointment to dictate his relationship with God. It became clear in the interview that the voice of disappointment is so loud that he cannot hear any other voice, not even God’s.

Edward gives disappointment so much power. The transition took place when God gave him back control over his own life. Now Edward has transferred control to disappointment. In TPM terms, this led to a lack of will to change. To address this is a real challenge for TPM. In the group reflection this aspect was challenged, but it appeared that the conversation using TPM metaphors ended up in a vacuum. In such a case it might be possible that using metaphors from

another approach could help Edward escape from the vacuum, in order to take control of his life and move forward.

In summary, reflecting on the above question, about what TPM could learn from this narrative, it seems to me that as a result of the drastic change in Edward's behaviour after his TPM session, and considering his initial involvement in the TPM ministry, his own need for further healing was not recognized and attended to, neither by himself, nor by the team he was working with. I suppose that on the surface it probably appeared that he was fine. However there was insufficient deconstruction of lies. He only received TPM in one session and from the research interviews it appeared that his image of God is still based on many lies. This stresses the fact that Ed Smith also continually points out, namely that a facilitator's own healing must be a top priority in the managing of this ministry.

Another aspect that is highlighted by this narrative, which is also a challenge for TPM, is to manage the effect of the recipient's healing on his/her environment. If Edward had received guidance to not over-commit himself in the ministry, and in the process, to not neglect his wife, the result of this narrative could perhaps be different. This is a very important issue, as it is necessary to contextualise any change recipients experienced in their social environment.

#### **9.2.3.4 Emily (“Voice of a woman”)**

Emily is the only participant who volunteered to be part of the project. What is significant about this narrative is the great discrepancy between how she judges her own progress and how others view it. It again makes room for the question: “From whose point of view is help really help”. This aspect has already been discussed. I explained that the opportunity given her to make her voice heard made a significant change to her.

Here the focus is on the reasons why less success can be ascribed to this narrative than others. The main reason why her audience sees it as not so successful is because her behaviour remains “disturbing”. This behaviour can be seen in poor interpersonal relationships and poor handling of conflict. Chaplain Muller wondered whether the vast improvement Emily attributed to herself could be due to her condition, diagnosed as bipolar disorder by the psychiatrist. Chaplain Muller related that there is a big difference from one day to the next, so even on medication, she still exhibits disturbing behaviour. At a prayer meeting she can deliver a flawless sermon but be seen fighting outside the chapel door the next day. Perhaps some of the change can be attributed to being correctly diagnosed and bringing her condition under control by medication. The fact is that she was only diagnosed eighteen months ago with bipolar disorder. When she is on a high, she sees herself as the ultimate Christian; when she is on a low, she condemns herself and comes

for more counselling. In TPM she received healing on forgiveness and religious issues, where the church should have played its role. On an emotional level, he does not feel it to have been very successful or to have really touched her.

It must be kept in mind that Smith (2005:263) indicates that TPM remains prayer ministry and can only help as long as there are lies that need deconstruction. In the case of psychopathology that cannot be ascribed to lies or misinterpretations, TPM is not the relevant model. However, as Smith (ibid.) pointed out: “Whether people have a true mental disorder or not, they need to be relieved from all the lie-based thinking they also have”. TPM can therefore, despite various other problems, psychological, physical and spiritual, make a contribution to someone’s life. Healing does not necessarily have to mean a cure. In the last chapter I reflect further on this. This just proves once again that it is important “that TPM facilitators work hand in hand with the mental and medical health community” (Smith 2005:263).

When her desire to become a witchdoctor is viewed from the perspective that she wants her voice to be heard, effectively deconstructing abuse of power in her life, this desire makes sense. Seen against her cultural background it must not be interpreted negatively, especially if kept in mind how much spiritual growth has taken place.

Further guidance should be given to help her to hear God’s voice again. If the process of deconstruction of the power that silences her voice is continued, while actively working at the co-construction of a new identity, it is possible that she will bring more lies to God to be deconstructed.

In summary it can be said that insufficient deconstruction of power, Bipolar mood disorder and a lack of supplementary therapeutic approaches in her life played a role in TPM working less effectively in Emily's narrative.

#### **9.2.3.5 Roelf (“I did not want it to work”)**

It would appear that after his sessions with Chaplain Muller, Roelf abstained from alcohol for at least three months before falling back into his old habits. According to him his abstinence was caused by the fear that his wife would also be taken away from him. TPM’s standpoint is that when God deconstructs the lies, the victory will be maintenance-free. In Roelf’s narrative there was no sign of this and his recovery appeared to be built on fear. Addiction again took control over him.

Roelf testifies that he heard God’s voice in the sessions. It begs the question as to why TPM works in so many cases when the lies are deconstructed by God’s voice, but failed in Roelf’s

case. Is the noise of other voices in Roelf's life so loud that he cannot hear God's voice? Does he indeed hear God's voice but refuses to accept it? His wife's answer is: "TPM works when you are really serious about your relationship with God". No person can judge what happened in another's conversation with God. What Roelf heard did not result in change. Did TPM fail to provide a space in which Roelf could have an authentic encounter with the Lord? Did it perhaps occur because the facilitator was more intent on provoking "the darkness" and that his "knowing" influenced the process too much?

From the interviews it seems that Roelf also still shifts the blame to others. It seemed that for a moment he took responsibility for his problem ("I was the one who became unmanageable"), just to follow it up with accusations against Chaplain Muller such as: "It was because Chaplain Muller said that he would remove my wife to one place and my children to another, and that I would only see them on TV". With that statement, Chaplain Muller had tried to make him imagine a hypothetical situation so that his emotions about it could surface. As the result of Roelf's concrete thinking, he interpreted the words literally.

Perhaps that aspect was not sufficiently kept in mind during his sessions. When facilitating a recipient like Roelf, where the person is a concrete thinker, it is dangerous to use metaphors that can be misunderstood by the recipient. This posed a challenge to the facilitator to work within the reality and experience of the recipient and to ensure that the recipient correctly understood the message. TPM's task is to create a space for people's own experience of God, however concrete it may be, as long as it is authentic and real. God is surely able to communicate with each individual on his/her own level of intelligence. The facilitator just has to stay in the not-knowing position.

In my opinion, Roelf provided the main reason as to why TPM was not helpful in his case: "TPM did not work because I did not want it to work". Smith (2005) sees every person as being in the situation they are in because of their choices and what they believe. It appears that the power the subculture has over Roelf still effectively controls him. It may well be that it is a problem for him to become socially visible. These aspects need to be deconstructed before true mind renewal will take place. That is probably what Chaplain Muller meant when he said: "*Unless you can take out the street from that person you will battle with him regardless*".

The question can now be asked as to whether TPM loses the challenge with people who do not want to. Although each person's healing is his own responsibility, it is unconscionable to leave the responsibility up to the recipient alone and claim innocence. Is it not blaming that steps in when the recipient's will is regarded as the stumbling block, i.e. when someone is not healed there was something wrong with his will, not with TPM or the way in which it was applied. TPM



usually sees the “lack of will” as caused by guardian lies, or as a defence mechanism to not address the emotional pain. If the guardian lies are effectively deconstructed, the will will also be present. Smith (2005:172) suggests, as with the example of Jonah, that one prays for the Lord to send a strong wind, i.e. that the person’s circumstances will lead to the provoking of the emotional pain, in order for the person to seek help. In Roelf’s case the facilitator searched for various guardian lies, confronted him and agitated his emotions, but it did not lead to an authentic encounter with the Lord. This shows how important it is to take time to properly prepare the recipient for the TPM process.

In Roelf’s case TPM was not successful because it could not effectively deconstruct the power that addiction had over him. The voice of addiction is probably still so loud that Roelf is unable to hear any other voice. From my experience with TPM, it seems that better results can be obtained in the cases of addiction if a multi-disciplinary professional team is involved. I reflect further on this in the last chapter.

In summary it can be said that the absence of his will to succeed, misunderstanding the facilitator, addiction, influence of a sub-culture and that according to his wife, he was not serious about his relationship with the Lord, were all factors playing a role in TPM working less effectively in his narrative.

Apart from the “not so successful” narratives, the narrative of Michelle also makes a contribution to this discourse.

#### **9.2.3.6 Michelle (“A huge breach in the wall”)**

When Michelle reflects on her setback she refers to the session that preceded it. She did not want to attend that session and felt very negative about it. She did not experience anything in that session and remarked: “The lesson I learnt was that your own will plays an important part in what you experience”. It corresponds with Smith's (2007:135) point of view that God always considers the person’s will when participating in the co-construction of the preferred story. He does not construct it for the person and then hand it over as a ready-made “present”. He participates, and co-constructs the new preferred story together with the person, in that He continues to expose the lies on which the “problem-saturated story” is built and replaces them with His truth when the recipient wants it. Michelle's experience therefore, confirmed that the will of the recipient is an important factor playing a role in TPM working less effectively.

### **9.2.3.7 Summary:**

The co-researchers identified the following factors inhibiting the helpfulness of TPM:

- a) Absence of any Godly experience in the TPM session;
- b) The will to change is lacking;
- c) Not serious about their relationship with the Lord;
- d) The facilitator did not succeed in communicating on the recipient's level of comprehension;
- e) Personality problems and psychopathology;
- f) Addiction;
- g) The voice of the subculture/culture is too loud;
- h) Absence of supplementary therapeutic approaches;
- i) Insufficient deconstruction of lies;
- j) No support structure to encourage or guide the recipient.

In the closing paragraph of this chapter I want to reflect on Smith, the participants and literatures' voices in this discourse. Now I first want to introduce the voice of literature in this regard.

### **9.2.4 The voice of literature**

Here I want to allow literature to respond to the "why" question in order to explore contributions from different perspectives as to the success or lack of success of TPM in the participants' lives. On the one hand there is literature from psychological science that will get the first opportunity to speak. On the other hand there is literature from theological science and more specifically pastoral therapy.

#### **9.2.4.1 The voice of Psychology**

Chapter 3 indicated the possible influence of mainly three psychological approaches on TPM. Now I want to look at the contribution that each one can make in terms of an explanation model for therapy, in order to understand why it worked in some cases and not as well in others.

##### **a) Psychoanalysis**

Many of the critics of TPM wants to understand it from the perspective of psychoanalysis and suspect it to be a masked form of that approach. Psychoanalysis can be viewed as a “psychology of conflict” (Arlow 1979:1). Human nature is handled from a conflict perspective. There are conflicting forces in the mind, some conscious and others subconscious. The subconscious forces play a vitally important role in the therapeutic model for psychoanalysis. The focus of therapy is the healing of neurosis. That neurosis came about during childhood. Neurosis in adult life develops when the balance between the desires and the defence forces is disturbed. Arlow (1979:18) points out three typical situations where it takes place:

- i) With the acceptance of new developmental tasks the pressure from the subconscious can become too much for the ego;
- ii) Disappointment, failure, loss or serious physical illness may lead to the person looking for subconscious gratification;
- iii) A person finds her/himself in similiar circumstances to when s(he) experienced trauma during her/his childhood. The current circumstances are interpreted in terms of the childhood trauma and similar symptoms develop.

Prochaska (1984:30) pointed out that: “For Freud there was only one process that could succeed – **to make the unconscious conscious**”.[bold-mine] When we want to respond more realistically towards our environment, we must be aware that our pathological reactions to the environment may be attributed to the unconscious primary-process, meaning that we ascribe to our circumstantial events. Therapy is geared towards removing these symptoms by making the person aware of his/her resistance to letting the symptoms go. It is about the person learning that the impulse is not as dangerous as what the little child experienced. In TPM terms that will be described as an anachronistic lie (Smith 2007:47-8). In treating this, there is a huge difference between Psychoanalysis and TPM. For Psychoanalysis, the person, as adult, can now learn more constructive defence techniques.

In therapy use is made of the technique of free association. In that way people are led to thoughts, emotions, fantasies and wishes that are associated with the expression of instincts. In that process the person regresses to childhood memories and dreams. The next step is that the therapist uses the technique of “confrontation” and “clarification”. For example, the person is confronted with her hatred towards her therapist. Then the person is helped to explore the hatred in minute detail until she can make a connection with someone from her childhood.

Then follows the interpretation. The goal is to make that which is subconscious conscious. The therapist must use her empathy, intuition and knowledge to make the interpretations. If the person

accepts the interpretation and it leads to the disappearance of the symptoms, then it can be accepted that the interpretation was correct. It is followed by a process where the person becomes very aware of all their defences.

Although there are many similarities, the basic point of reference is totally different from TPM. In both cases trauma from childhood is worked through, but with totally different goals. Seen against this background the psychoanalyst could indeed ascribe success in TPM to the fact that it makes what is subconscious conscious. It does happen in TPM sessions that certain subconscious material becomes conscious, but that is not the aim. This perspective contributes to a better understanding of the process. However, although critics of TPM try to classify TPM and Psychoanalysis in the same category, Psychoanalysis and TPM approach therapy from total different angles.

#### **b) Primal therapy**

In the previous chapters I discussed the basic point of reference of Primal therapy, what is classified as emotional flooding therapy. As summary Prochaska's (1984:252) description can be quoted here:

Primal therapy is designed to liberate people from primal pain. Lifting the gates of pain, however, results in a flood of painful emotions and memories. The patients must suffer through the humiliations, indifferences and insults of childhood to the most unbearable of hurts. The process of reliving childhood hurts results in a cathartic release of pain and a curative increase in consciousness as present events are reconnected to previously repressed memories of pain.

The first phase of therapy is where the client is lead through a variety of techniques to an altered state of consciousness where memories from the first fifteen years of her/his life are experienced as though they are currently occurring. For the first couple of days clients are isolated socially and from sensory stimuli to break down their defenses. The therapist's role in the process is to help the client focus on the past and experience it as here and now. "Clients can make their own connections between present feelings and past memories once their biological and psychological blinders are removed" (Prochaska 1984:253). The next phase is that of catharsis. That is when the client connects with the primal pain, the pain that originated in the memory. At one stage the client was too young to handle the pain and as a result the brain removed the pain from the consciousness in order for the person to survive. When clients start to connect with the pain, it is often too much to discharge during one session. When the process has started, the old defence mechanisms no longer work to block the pain. It can be a very difficult time for the client. The essential thing is, however, that healing follows connection with primal pain. Within the

hypnotherapy orientations there is also an approach called “release therapy”, where hypnosis is used to allow clients to connect with primal pain.

It is true that recipients also connect with painful memories in TPM. As already indicated, the so-called primal scream did not occur in TPM. As seen from the viewpoint of primal therapy, the success of TPM may be ascribed to the fact that recipients connected with primal pain in their memories. As indicated, it can be a long process to work through all the pain. In TPM it is rare for recipients to deal with pain over such a long period of time, unless dissociation is present. Although the above explanation has merits up to a certain point, it does seem that it can not fully explain the healing that the participants experienced in TPM. As I indicated earlier, TPM theory sees the source of the pain as the interpretation of a memory and not merely what happened in the memory.

### c) **Cognitive-behavioral therapy**

In Chapter Five I expounded on the Cognitive-behavioral approach and indicated that the assumptions of TPM are very similar with what Albert Ellis constructed in his Rational emotive therapy. In summary it embraces the A-B-C-D-E paradigm:

- A – the Activating Event is a real experience,
- B – the Belief which indicates the person’s chain of thought about the event;
- C – the Consequences that indicate the emotions and behaviour that result from B;
- D – the Dispute through which the therapist challenges the client’s beliefs;
- E – the Effect when the client’s irrational beliefs are appropriately confronted.

(Masters et. al. 1987:391)

According to this approach the success of TPM can be explained by TPM beginning at A and in that situation focussing on the negative emotion C, in order to discover the memory where it occurred for the first time. In that memory the belief B is sought. The recipient is confronted with his beliefs that caused C. As soon as they are identified the dispute begins by placing them before God in prayer. The effect of it is that God confronts the irrational belief. Seen from this approach it offers an acceptable explanation as to why TPM works.

However, Smith (2000:31) says that this approach relies on the ability of the therapist to discern the faulty thinking, and therefore it relies on human logic to bring about change. Smith does not view TPM as cognitive therapy coupled with prayer. He points out that TPM is not about logical thoughts but about the experience of truth. Although it may seem from a human, psychological viewpoint that there is a big similarity between this approach and TPM as Anderson, Zuehlke, and Zuehlke (2000) argue in their book “*Christ centred therapy*”, there is in principle a huge difference.

To summarize psychology's contribution through these three orientations to this discourse, I want to refer to Smith's viewpoint (Chapter 4) that it is the lie that causes emotional pain, not merely remembering the event. The only reason that a recipient has to re-experience the memory is to discover the lie. Psychoanalysis offered an explanation for association and repressed memories. In primal therapy the belief is that the re-experiencing of the pain, will bring the healing. In cognitive therapy the focus is on cognitively restructuring the beliefs of the recipient. It is true that these aspects play a role in TPM. However, in TPM it's not only about a combination of these aspects, but about receiving God's truth, that lets the pain disappear. A number of recipients have witnessed to the fact that they now choose to re-visit memories that used to be painful, in order to especially experience God's comfort and presence.

I am aware that countless other psychotherapeutic approaches can contribute to this discourse, like EMDR and various others. I chose these three approaches because they provide explanations for the various different psychological aspects that stand out for me in TPM. I purposefully did not include the social constructionist and narrative approaches here, because I have included these approaches in the Pastoral-theological approaches.

#### **9.2.4.2 The voice of Theology**

The question under discussion here is what contribution theology makes regarding the explanation as to why TPM is or is not an agent of change in the recipients' lives? From the narratives it is clear that all but one of the participants reported TPM (especially words from God) as having a fundamental influence on their lives. Even in the cases where TPM was not deemed to be so successful with regard to the shift that the participants made, they reported TPM as having a fundamental influence on their spirituality.

In this paragraph I will, therefore, show that when explanations are sought from a prescriptive theology, the experiences of the participants do not come into their own. This is already proven in the polemick on the internet, where TPM is discredited from fundamentalistic thinking. Numerous critical questions arise from a variety of perspectives, of which the most pertinent are listed below:

- Does it illegitimately presume Christ is co-operating in the process?
- Is TPM a psycho-heresy?
- Does it function as extrabiblical revelation?
- Does it place experience and feelings over Scripture and reason?

- Is the esoteric element in TPM, which is according to Thiessen (2003: 149) heightened in the advanced training, justifiable?
- Does the individualistic tendency negate the social sin and is personal sin more important?
- Will lack of results be threatening to the faith that is central to the ministry?

These questions are mostly posed from a perspective founded on the assumption that there is only one truth that should be valid for everyone at all times. I am not going to attempt to try and respond to these questions. In my opinion Miller (2005, 2006a, 2006b), Ed Smith (2005:277-297) himself, as well as Thiessen (2003) already satisfactorily responded from a power-based theological perspective with the Bible as the norm. Although Thiessen describes “Inner Healing Prayer” from the perspective of social constructionism, he ends up judging it from the perspective of Kingdom theology.

Reading further through the critical attacks on TPM in web pages on the internet (.Bobgan 1999) it seems that the critics merely want to degrade the knowledge of the participants in TPM by their own dogmatic knowledge, without having any direct experience of TPM. Someone like Elliot Miller (2006), operating from the “knowledge is power” position was initially very sceptical. At least he went to the trouble of attending sessions facilitated by Ed Smith so that he could experience it for himself. After his experience of TPM he came to the following conclusion: “TPM per se is not compromising Christian faith with human psychology and occultism, but rather operates within the parameters of orthodox Christian theology” (Miller 2006b:1). Through this Miller, perhaps without consciously being aware of it, illustrates that criticism coming only from a dogmatic “knowledge is power” position, is not fair without listening to the voices of those concerned.

In Chapter 3 I stated my theological position. I come from a reformed theological tradition, that is “a theology about and for people” (Louw 2003:422). It is therefore natural that the heritage of this theology has a very important place for me in this discourse. However, because this theology operates from a “knowledge is power” position, it remains deficient in truly addressing the question under discussion. This theology attempts to approach these problems from the knowledge-position with a prescriptive ethic and “here is the truth” attitude.

In contrast to this I am of the opinion that one should rather understand TPM from a participatory theological perspective as post-modern theology (See Chapter 2, point 2.2.3.1). I continue with Heroldt (1998:218) that says that post-modern theology provides “a scheme in which faith can be fitted into the framework of how we actually experience the world”. From this

theological perspective, where theology and spirituality are virtually synonymous, one can better explain TPM's influence in the recipients lives. Within this perspective one can see the important aspects that O'Murchu (2004:17) points out, namely "a strong wholistic sense" and that the "experience" of each person is to be respected and nurtured, in their own right. The problem with modernistic theological approach is that "human subjectivity as part of reality....is not to be just as real as external objects". (Herholdt 1998:216). Besides, one gender, race, knowledge, culture or experience is no more important than the next. Because TPM recognizes the unique relationship between each recipient and God, it is easier to work across cultural boundaries. The variety of experiences is also validated. Most narratives in this research testify to that. In this "doing theology" it is not about who is right or wrong but about the meaning and reality created by consensus. Each participant's contribution is equally important. In the process of "doing theology" every participant is also empowered (Louw 2003:116). The experiences of real lives become the source of theology (Isherwood & McEwan 2001:94). If spirituality is understood as being the way in which I ascribe meaning to my experience with God (O'Murchu 2004:14), it corresponds with the "doing theology" as described above. Louw (2003:210) defines spirituality as follows: "Spirituality emanates from human experience and is the knowledge and wisdom created in experiences of a relationship with God, humanity and self. Spirituality reflects the meaning-making process of all of human experience and reflects the choice and attitude of how we embrace and live life".

If TPM is understood from this perspective of spirituality, I do not totally want to ignore the voice of patriarchal theology and exclude it from the discussion. At the same time, I do not want to ascribe a position of power to this from which TPM is analysed and discredited by people who have not experienced it. In this research project I gladly invite all voices to converse with the experiences of the participants in order to understand it from a non-prescriptive theological perspective. This must take place without coming to a generally prevailing explanation for the success or lack of success of TPM in the lives of the participants. I am, therefore, an advocate of a participatory approach, where room is made for the voices from a range of theological perspectives in this process to participate in this discourse about understanding why TPM is an agent for change in some cases and not in others.

Rather, I want to understand TPM from a spirituality founded on experience of an incarnate, compassionate, resurrected and living God, the Emmanuel, Who through the presence of His Holy Spirit brings healing and hope in situations that seem to be dead ends. This spirituality is contextual and enables us to make sense of life. This spirituality resists any religious practices or



dogmas that are abusive and subjugating. It implies an epistemological shift from a male dominated, dogmatic theology that is power based, with no understanding of the victims exposed to subjugating practices. The shift is towards a spirituality of life, with emphasis on how faith is lived in context. It is about how a dialogue with a living, involved God in Jesus Christ transforms people's lives, healing and empowering the context in which they live.

From this perspective of post-modern theology I want to conclude that because TPM creates a space for a conversation with God and no prescriptive dogma is involved, new narratives can be socially constructed in this conversation. In my opinion this freedom in which the recipient is allowed to construct a preferred life story in conversation with Jesus Christ, is a major factor in TPM being an agent of change in recipients' lives. This resonates with Herholdt (1998:217) in the context described:

Christians, and for that matter all people, are afforded the right to some human input that co-determines the “plan” of their lives. Many choices are possible, but in the variety of options we are guided by God as creative participant of our lives.

### **9.2.4.3 The voice of the Bible**

As already indicated, I am of the opinion that when Jacques says that the difference lies in the direct communication with God, he sums up the general opinion of the participants. With this statement as a guideline, in this search to understand what happens in TPM, I want to make the **voice of the Bible** heard.

What happens in TPM can be compared metaphorically with the events in Mk 2:1-12. In the research interviews Chaplain Muller referred to the fact that TPM means that someone is simply placed in God's presence so that God can do what He knows needs to be done. The story in the abovementioned texts is an metaphor of exactly that. In summary: people crowded together where Jesus was bringing God's word. The crowd prevented four bearers from placing a paralyzed man in Jesus's presence. To achieve this, they broke through the roof to lower the man directly at Jesus' feet. Jesus saw their faith and healed the man. Jesus told him: “My son, your sins are forgiven”. The Pharisees were upset. Jesus continued: “Why do you question these things in your hearts”? Before the entire crowd, the man stood to his feet and walked home.

The core message in this passage is that Jesus is the One Who brings healing. Four people cared so much for another that they could not be stopped from bringing him before Jesus. Having

failed to push through the door, they made use of the roof. The Palestinian house had a flat roof with an outside stairway leading to it. The flat roof, packed with earth (Taylor 1969:194) could easily be broken through without doing any real damage (Groenewald 1948:51). The deed of those men reflected their faith in Jesus to heal their friend. Jesus also acknowledged their faith. Verse 5 reads: “And when Jesus saw **their** faith, he said to the paralytic: ‘My son ...’” (bold mine). Different exegetics hold opinions about the word “their”. Earlier exegetics claimed that it was restricted to the bearers’ faith, with later exegetics including the paralyzed man. Bolkestein (1973:61) points out that stories of many healing miracles (for example Mt 8:5-13 and Mk 9:14) were made possible by the faith of other people, such as family or employers. However, the use of the plural is ample evidence that the faith of the paralyzed man is not the conclusive factor, as claimed by some dogmatic points of view. In any case, the text does not aim to confirm or disprove a dogmatic point of view. It is first of all the story of people with a steadfast faith in the healing power of Jesus Christ. These men are not interested in the diagnosis of the man. They have only one motivation – getting him to Jesus who will know what to do. In my opinion the role of the facilitator fits the description excellently.

It is interesting to note that the people who were participating in a theological discussion actually prevented the four men from presenting their friend to Jesus. Jesus’ actions revealed that he was not interested in theological points of view. He did what only God could do. He knew exactly what the man’s problem was. He was able to utter the right words there and then. The result – that the lame man walked home on his own two feet- voids any theological argument. Jesus revealed Himself as the Living God.

Today, we can get caught in the same snare as the pharisees when we attempt to define Jesus’ deeds in general prevailing dogma with our theology that is socially constructed anyway. The pharisees’ dogma prevented them from experiencing a kairos moment (see next point) with Jesus. Every healing miracle is unique.

If TPM is judged from these Scripture verses, the agreement is clear. When a facilitator is driven by the faith that Jesus knows what to do, he does not allow himself to be put off by the crowds, nor a group operating from their theology. There is one goal and that goal is placing the “paralyzed” before Jesus’ feet. An emotional cripple is often unable to think theologically clearly about soteriology. This story witnesses to the simpleness with which Jesus works with people.

From these stories, theology attempts to draw various conclusions about the connection between the forgiveness of sins and total healing, including physical healing. Ultimately, the story only tells how powerfully Jesus heals. It is a story about Jesus knowing exactly what to do for each person. When the pharisees started a theological debate about how allowable Jesus’ deed was

from the power-based knowledge they possessed, Jesus simply answered (verse 9): “Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk’”? Jesus did not allow himself to be boxed in by socially constructed theology. It is characteristic of His behaviour that He often surprises by the way He acts without regard for human knowledges of power. Rather, the stories create the impression that Jesus actively resisted the pharisees’ prescriptive theology.

I venture to say that this story has so many tangents with the stories of the participants, where the voice of God brought about healing in an unique way. From this story it becomes abundantly clear that healing takes place, not because of adherence to certain theological concepts, but only because Jesus, knowing exactly what the man needs, breaks through into his life. Analyzing this story in Scripture, the very same elements are found in the stories of the participants. When a facilitator, without interference, places a person before Jesus, change takes place only because Jesus engages with the person who is open to it. The one participant who did not experience change, very clearly stated that he did not want the process to work. From this story I want to conclude that the healing power of the Lord, is the most important factor in TPM being an agent for change in peoples’ lives. .

#### **9.2.4.4 The voice of Pastoral therapy**

The difference between pastoral therapy and psychotherapy, according to Gous (1972:6) is that pastoral therapy is directed towards cultivating spiritual maturity with psychological healing as an added advantage. Psychotherapy is directed towards cultivating psychological maturity with spiritual maturity as the secondary effect. Heitink describes the relationship between the pastorate and psychology in terms of bipolarity. It implies that there are a number of elements in common but that each also has an own character. It brought about that models in one discipline correspond with models developed in the other discipline, for example Christ centered therapy (Anderson, Zuehlke & Zuehlke 2000) as a pastoral model is founded on the reading of Cognitive behavioural therapy. In this light I am not going to duplicate the models that correspond with that discussed under the heading of psychology. Under this heading I am only going to concentrate on **narrative pastoral therapy**.

Louw (2003:206) describes the narrative approach in pastoral therapy as aimed at re-authoring a story where God is experienced as absent so that “God’s enabling presence” can be experienced. He describes how a person’s experiences of the past, by means of the meaning that s(he) attached to those memories, influence her/his present circumstances:

She had a present pain about a past experience and a fearful anticipation of the future. Understanding and experiencing God's presence is where hope that carries her into the future is co-constructed. Experiencing God's presence in a hopeless present situation describes a kairos moment where God's presence carries the perplexity of the moment.

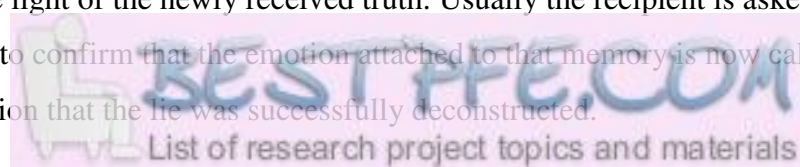
(Louw 2003:206)

This description of the narrative approach could just as well be included in the TPM manual word for word. It is what TPM stands for. With the discussion of TPM up to this point it has continually been discussed from a narrative perspective. Here the focus is on the contribution that the narrative perspective can make to better grasp why TPM is successful in some cases and less so in others.

- a) In my opinion the most important aspect contributing to the success is exactly the fact that God's voice is experienced in the TPM session, that leads to a reconstructing of the participants' realities. If conducted according to the TPM guidelines, it is not dependent on the facilitator's abilities.
- b) The second aspect accompanying it is that the meaning the individual attached to certain events is effectively deconstructed by the presence of God. It is about the kairos moment. Within it is found close connection with the narrative understanding of human existence, where existence is not understood from universal truths or facts but in terms of the personal meaning attached to certain events. In TPM it is about exposing the lie that is synonymous with "the personal meaning" under discussion. TPM has very effectively operationalised this principle in the way in which the lie is sought and exposed in order to bring it into God's presence. In my opinion the helpfulness of TPM is greatly attached to the way in which the lie is brought into God's presence. Ultimately the success or lack thereof depends on how successfully the lie is deconstructed.
- c) The "not-knowing" position of the facilitator (therapist) in this process is of the utmost importance. The importance of this has already been fully discussed in previous chapters. In my own experience in sessions as well as guiding facilitators in their training, time and time again I have found that the moment the knowledge of the facilitator figures in the session, the process is damaged and that the goals set for the session are often not accomplished. When this aspect is examined from the narrative perspective, it implies that human power (or knowledge) is used. In TPM terms it means that God is not allowed to achieve His goals. Taking the stance of "not-knowing" only happens when the facilitator has reached that point where there is an absolute faith in God that He is in complete control of every situation and

that He alone knows what is needed at that moment and what is not. This research is a confirmation of this very important principle that also appears in narrative therapy.

- d) According to seventeen of the eighteen participants the facilitator kept to that position. Even in the cases where TPM is not viewed as successful, he remained in the “not-knowing” position. The result is that the concerned participant acknowledged during the research interviews that he himself created the problem. The result of the facilitator maintaining this position is that this participant accepted responsibility for the failure of the facilitating. In two instances where he operated from a position of power it created stumbling blocks on the participants' journeys to healing. As the facilitator motivated his action, in the one instance, he intended to create movement in the therapeutic process. He achieved his goal in the session, but in light of the long term effects it had, the question of ethics must be asked. However, it provides a clear example of the effect when therapy is conducted from a power-position.
- e) Another aspect in the narrative approach is “externalizing the problem”. This means that the problem becomes a separate entity outside the person. Where TPM aims at the lie or misinterpretation that a person believes in, it often happens spontaneously that the problem is externalized. The person or the relationship is no longer the problem. The problem is the problem. This approach probably greatly contributes to recipients in TPM feeling comfortable to share their problems with their facilitators. Several participants made remarks during the research interviews that they appreciated the non-judgmental attitude of the facilitator very much. If a TPM session is conducted properly, where only the dialogue that takes place between God and the recipient is facilitated, then the facilitator never need place anyone in the position of the accused.
- f) Louw (2003:216) compared unique outcomes with the kairos moment. When participants experience the presence of God in a certain memory, they attach new meaning to that event. In that sense it is also used in TPM to contribute to the thickening of the alternative story. With the truth that the recipient receives from God, other events can be interpreted differently. What happens in the landscape of action is applied so that the landscape of identity is constructed by means of it.
- g) Normally the facilitator leads the recipient to interpret all the memories that surfaced during the session in the light of the newly received truth. Usually the recipient is asked to return to the memory and to confirm that the emotion attached to that memory is now calm. TPM sees this as an indication that the lie was successfully deconstructed.



Within the TPM methodology no specific attention is given to the construction of a new landscape of identity apart from what the Lord does in the session. As this is usually so powerful, the forming of a new identity often takes place spontaneously. Annatjie and Marinda's narratives are examples of this. In other narratives there are gaps. If follow-up with Edward had taken place immediately the long term result may have been different.

- h) The way in which the narrative approach is focussed on the widening of the audience in order to contribute to the thickening of the alternative story can be very important to further success. I have already illustrated that the way in which TPM comes to fruition in the ministry of Chaplain Muller is by making provision for the recipients to be welcomed into a TPM community in order to widen the audience so that everyone can contribute to the thickening of a preferred story of faith, hope and love.

I am of the opinion that when TPM is judged from this perspective it contributes to the understanding of success obtained and contributes to realizing the worth of this approach. I have already indicated that in the cases where TPM was not totally successful, narrative practices probably would have had a huge influence helping to improve the success rate.

### **9.3 Closing reflections**

With his "four fold test for healing" Smith created a norm against which success can be measured. Measuring the participants' experiences against this norm, valuable insights developed into why TPM can be seen as a changing agent in participants' lives. Regarding the first "test", all the participants, with Harold being the only exception, judged the message they received from the Lord as Biblically consistent. In Harold's case it appeared that he did receive truth that was Biblically consistent on that issue later on in his TPM process. To me this spells out a Divine process. I believe that God will never contradict His own Word. To me every TPM session is an Emmaus experience in the way Veltkamp (1988:14) described it, as quoted in Chapter 5. It is not about new revelations outside the Bible, but about a personalised interpretation by the Holy Spirit of what was already revealed in the Bible. For me the "sparkling moment" in this process is that the power of certain Theological knowledges is neutralised. Where certain knowledges from Theology take a back seat, the main partners in the construction of new knowledge for the participant are the Lord and the participant.

The second "test" is the experience of peace. From the research interviews it is clear that all the participants, except Roelf, who did not have experienced the Lord in his session, experienced peace after their encounter with the Lord. From a psychological perspective it was stressed in the past that only when an individual experiences real satisfaction (in this context a synonym for

peace) the individual will be able to establish emotionally -satisfactory relationships (Pietrofesa et.al. 1978:92) From a Biblical perspective this is the way the risen Lord greeted His disciples every time He revealed Himself to them: “Peace be with you” (Jn 20 and 26). This is confirmed by the participants' experiences that peace followed where there was a real encounter with the Lord.

I have mentioned that forgiveness is now valued even in psychology as an important factor in healing. Worthington et.al. (2000:4) refer to numerous studies on the dynamics of forgiveness in relationships being done in naturalistic settings. Apart from that there are also those studies that aim at promoting forgiveness. From different research interviews it is clear that forgiveness played a major role in the transformation the participants experienced. The “sparkling moment” in these experiences for me, lies in the fact, as illustrated in Harold's narrative, that when true healing, or as Smith put it, true mind renewal had taken place, that forgiveness was the spontaneous fruit thereof.

When the long term effects of TPM in the participants' lives are taken into account there appeared to be a real transformation in most of their lives. Even in those “not so successful” narratives, like Edward and Veronica, there are still long term changes that came about. From this research it appears that where there was an encounter with the Lord, transformation followed.

Apart from a few suggestions from literature about the reasons for transformation, only one reason stands out in all the participants' responses, namely a personal encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ, that partook in a co-construction process where old beliefs, on which their problem-saturated stories were built, were deconstructed and new alternative stories were constructed on the truth they received from the Lord. It seems that this approach works for all denominations that are prepared to involve themselves in this.

This research identified ten factors that inhibit the helpfulness of TPM (Summary 9.2.3). Most of these factors are about the attitude of the recipient and functioning of the facilitator. I want to reflect now on each one individually.

a) Absence of any Godly experience in the TPM session.

Within the TPM community a slogan has developed: “No Jesus, no change”. TPM is about an authentic encounter with the Lord. Without this factor TPM will not be of any help and that is exactly what came forward in this research.

b) The will to change is lacking.

The “belief and choice” principle is also confirmed in this research. This TPM principle may be seen as judging from outside. If it is kept in mind that TPM theory, handles this problem by looking for guardian lies, it is not judging the recipient. This way of doing, however, sometimes leads to an impasse, as in Roelf's narrative. As I referred to earlier in this chapter, TPM can be complemented by other approaches' knowledge to refine TPM practices in order to get around such an impasse.

c) Not serious about their relationship with the Lord.

This was the opinion of one of the nominees in this research. Although this may be the truth for her, it is my experience that many recipients are initially, when introduced to TPM, not serious about their relationship with the Lord, but when they have an authentic encounter with the Lord, that relationship changes completely.

d) The facilitator did not succeed in communicating on the recipient's level of comprehension.

This is a challenge to TPM facilitators. It is very important that facilitators check throughout the facilitation process that they are understood correctly by the recipients. This is an aspect that perhaps needs more attention in the training of facilitators.

e) Personality problems and psychopathology.

I think what Smith (2008g:1) said is sufficient in this regard, when he pointed out that personality disorders and other psychopathology may have a lie-based emotional root. TPM can resolve those lies and give peace in those areas, but will not necessarily affect the disorders. Here TPM has to work in collaboration with other approaches and professionals.

f) Addiction.

The same argument, as above, is valid here. If rehabilitation centres can incorporate TPM in their programmes, I am sure they will obtain better results. Addiction is the person's answer to emotional pain that is triggered by what that person believes about a certain memory or issue. If the lies behind those beliefs can be brought before the Lord for His perspective, new beliefs can be co-constructed. However, there are too many other factors involved with addiction for TPM to be effective on its own.

g) The voice of the subculture/ culture is too loud;

The influence of a subculture and culture is very powerful. In Roelf's case it is about a subculture's (drugs) influence that is so powerful that it prescribes to him. I understand that it was his choice, but does that mean that people in those situations cannot be helped through TPM. This also calls for a team approach.



In Emily's case the influence of her culture played a role. Although Dinkins (2005:37) described TPM as supracultural because Jesus understands all cultures perfectly, that is not true of facilitators. Although the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator helps an awful lot to create that bridge between different cultures, subtle differences may have a huge impact on the TPM process. Dinkins (2005:39) pointed out the fact that Asian recipients’ hesitancy to share feelings is perhaps more cultural than wilful. In my own experience I found for instance that the concept “lie”, means something total different to the Korean mind than to the Western mind. In translating the TPM manual into other languages much more is at stake than just the translation of the text.

h) Absence of supplementary therapeutic approaches.

Under the previous headings I showed how important it is for TPM to be supplemented by other approaches. I reflect further on this in the last chapter.

i) Insufficient deconstruction of lies.

As I stated previously, TPM is not a quick solution. It is a long term process which should develop into a lifestyle where the truth must continually be searched for in an encounter with the Lord. For this reason, the chapter in the TPM-guide (Smith 2007:181-187) that covers “Practicing TPM on yourself” is very important.

j) No support structure to encourage or guide the recipient.

In a few narratives it appeared that the recipients required additional guidance. The truth is that the local community has an important role to play. This will however not happen without assistance. Countless recipients are part of communities that are not geared to take up this responsibility. In the last chapter I recommend ways in which the facilitator can provide guidance in this aspect. Where, for example, narrative practices can be used to create further space for the development of a new journey with God.

In a nutshell, my response to this question: “ *Why Theophostic Prayer Ministry (TPM) did, or did not, change the lives of persons who engaged in it as recipients*, is that TPM creates the space for an authentic encounter with the Lord, Jesus Christ, and then transformation followed. If there was no authentic encounter there was no change.

In the last chapter I reflect on the whole research journey and possible contributions to the field of practical theology and pastoral care.

## Chapter 10

### REFLECTING ON THE RESEARCH JOURNEY

#### 10.1 Introduction

In this final chapter I want to reflect on this research journey. While approaching the task, I was overwhelmed by the question, “How can a human being write about something that is too incredible to put into words”? This whole research process taught me that in this combination of prayer and therapy you find yourself face to face with mystery which cannot be explained in human words. What an indescribable experience and what an awesome privilege to listen to eighteen stories about God’s journey with broken people!

Many of the participants came from hopeless situations. A large percentage came from poor socio-economic circumstances where therapeutic services are an almost unattainable luxury. Miracles occur before your very eyes when you are privileged to share in God’s astonishing plans for people. During that process I again discovered that when someone else allows you to look into their soul, you are indeed on holy ground and so much more when it concerns God’s relationship with that person. For example, how does one describe the privilege of being a silent witness to how God transforms a little boy’s life with hope, a life that otherwise probably would have been a dead-end street? In witnessing these processes of transformation, I too was transformed.

I realize that the language I use reflects my attitude towards TPM. I also realize that this attitude influenced the whole research process. In my recording and discussion of the research results, my use of language may give the impression that I idealize TPM as approach, even though I did not intend to give that impression. I admit that when I was first introduced to this approach, I was bedazzled by the way a lay counsellor, not knowing anything about the discourse in psychological circles of the 'not-knowing position' of a therapist in therapy, could conduct a session from that position in a way I could only dream of doing. Therefore, in this reflection it is necessary to deconstruct my own voice in this research. I do not possess the words to describe the reality of it, but only to reflect on what was socially constructed by the words of the co-researchers.

I want to be accountable for the manner in which I conducted this research project. (Did I do what I said I was going to do?) I also want to attempt to reflect on the influence that I had on the

process. (For whose benefit were the choices I made?) Thirdly, what became for me the main objective of this research, I want to reflect on the possible contribution this research makes to the further development of TPM as a ministry and the contribution it makes to research methodology in Practical Theology. I also want to reflect on the influence of the research on the participants (co-researchers) as well as how this research added to the co-construction of my own story as researcher. In the course of the research journey I, as the researcher, developed new insights into the research topic. Reflection takes place within a new context of understanding (Pieterse 1993:189).

This chapter (and also the research report) is concluded with a couple of quotations from the interviews in order for the co-researchers to have the last say.

To summarise, I therefore want to include reflections on the following subjects:

- The goal of the research (10.2.)
- The participants (10.3.)
- The ethical accountability of the practices of TPM (10.4.)
- The further development of TPM (10.5.)
- TPM in my own life (10.6.)
- Suggestions for further research (10.7.)
- The research process (10.8)
- Quotations from the participants' interviews (10.9)

## **10.2 Reflecting on the goal of the research**

Following my own experience with TPM I was curious to know whether other people had the same experiences which I had had. My experience was that of discovering a precious pearl that I wanted to show to everyone. In this case I want to show this pearl to the academic community. In chapter 1 (1.2.) I discussed Zuehlke's (2007a) research and his experience of a negative reaction to it by his peers. That gave birth to a feeling of resistance in me. With my experience of a social constructionist epistemology as my background, I judged it to be a consequence of modernistic epistemologies where certain knowledges use their power to silence other knowledges. Initially, the ultimate goal of this study was to give voice to the stories of the eighteen participants in a responsible, scientific way from an epistemology where voices would not be silenced. It motivated me to examine how this approach could be accounted for by the

theological and psychological sciences. These stories had to be judged from a specified epistemological approach to be able to make a contribution to the Practical Theology sciences, and more specifically to Pastoral Therapy. I looked at how the practices of TPM put the participants in contact with God within the power field of the reconciling mission of Jesus Christ and if they contributed to the fruit of the Spirit multiplying in their lives (Bolkestein 1964:77).

During the process a dialogue developed between the relevant literature and the eighteen stories of this research project. In this way I started a process of investigating and trying to understand the healing possibilities of TPM as an approach. I wanted to know why one participant called it miraculous, but it did not work for the next person. Also important were the short and long term effects of it in the participants' lives. I investigated the ethical accountability of the TPM practices.

During this journey it gradually became clearer that another goal became more important to me, namely that TPM may have a voice within the academic community, where it can be described from within a social constructionist epistemology. With the question, "Who benefits"? I initially considered the voices of the participants as first priority. Although their interests are no less important, as the research progressed, the interests of TPM as an approach became all the more important. When I read various comments about TPM on the internet, it seemed to me that modernistic discourses try to silence TPM's voice. With modernistic discourses I mean those discourses characterised by a belief that objective knowledge about reality can be achieved by experiments that reveal the "truth behind surface appearance" (Sarup1993:131) and dogma that assumes that the real truth can be known and can be researched by Theological sciences. In relation to TPM it means that empirical experiments had to reveal the real "truth behind surface appearance" about TPM and TPM theory. Regarding the dogma, the modernistic discourse is about defending TPM successfully or attacking it and rejecting it as heresy on the grounds of Scriptural interpretations. It follows that they cling rigidly to objective norms and truths that need to be respected by everyone (Müller 1996:54). Dr. Ed Smith, founder of TPM, does his best to obtain acceptance for TPM within these Theological science norms. Zuehlke (2007a) suggests that, by reason of similarities with accepted psychotherapeutic approaches, such as the cognitive behavioural approach, acceptance for TPM may be possible by placing it beneath this heading in psychology. I view this as hiding a light beneath a bucket. In my opinion these attempts stem from a modernistic epistemology. In that way TPM is often exposed to academics who have not personally experienced it. Some attempt to silence the voices of those who have experienced it (such as the participants in this research) by calling it "heresy" (Bobgan 1999). In the meanwhile many recipients discover a new life in Christ when they are freed from Satan's lies. For me the

ultimate goal of this research is to give TPM a legitimate place within Theology and more specifically within Pastoral Theology. It happens within an epistemology where participants, who experience TPM personally, have the space to socially construct TPM's position within Theology together with the academics. This can be done without judging it from a dogmatic viewpoint. It does not mean that anything goes, but that it is judged by ethical reflection. (For further reflection see 10.5.2).

It may be argued that Chapter 2, where I positioned the research, is quite long. However, I believe in the light of the abovementioned goals it was necessary to provide a detailed background of the historical journey of scientific thoughts and to carefully answer for my choice of the social constructionist paradigm and the situation of TPM within it. To achieve these goals in terms of research in Practical Theology, it was important to move away from a dogmatic appraisal of TPM and TPM theory to social constructionism with the inclusivity of dogma and participatory ethics.

After I had reflected on the goal of this research, it was important to reflect on the co-researchers in this project.

### **10.3 Reflecting on the participants (co-researchers)**

In Chapter 9 I reported each participant's reflection on the meaning the research had for his or her life story. Now I will reflect on the road I've walked with them. I keep in mind what Josselson (2007:539) said: "What constitutes respect and compassion in the minds of this researcher/ participant pair is the nature of the implicit contract between them". Throughout the whole process I treated what each participant shared with great respect. Every one of them also had the opportunity to read the report. If they were dissatisfied or uncomfortable with anything mentioned, I amended it. In most of the cases a bond of trust developed between the participants and me, and I respect it.

Because I respect that bond, I sometimes adopted a more formal manner in the research interviews in order to protect the participants from exposing themselves too much. Throughout, I kept in mind that research interviews are not therapy, though they may have therapeutic effects. In a few interviews, time was a factor which necessitated that I lead the conversation too much and in that way I used my power. In those cases, it is possible that valuable information may have been lost for this research.

In the case of Minah, Emily and Gert, I am sorry that they could not be present at the group reflection. I went out of my way to personally work through the research report with them and in

that way get their acknowledgement of what had been said about them and also to thank and show appreciation for their part in the knowledge that we now have.

Johnson (2007:446) pointed out that the way, in which the voices of the co-researchers in the written report of the research, is reflected, is most important. Throughout, it was a very important consideration. Initially I wanted to include the unabridged process notes of the research interviews as an appendix, but because of the length of it, it was not practically possible. I have included a summary. It is a pity, because any summary is yet another interpretation of their responses. I will keep the original process notes for three years in case any interest arises. Throughout, I attempted to reflect the interests of the participants, their experiences and their interpretations of TPM, as honestly as possible. It is for that reason that I so often used quotations from the process notes. To highlight the fact that this research project is about their interpretations of their experiences, I end this chapter with a number of verbatim quotations.

I previously pointed out (10.2) that the benefit of TPM as an approach became all the more important during the research process. I also want to prevent that the research project is dominated merely by academic curiosity (See 2.2.3.1.). Therefore I focused on identifying the language and situations important to the participants while conducting the research interviews. No research aim can be more important than the well-being of the participants. I had to continually ask myself what the effect of my questions and responses during the interviews would be on the participants. I hope that I succeeded in not doing harm to any of the participants. I am aware of one time where I crossed the line out of curiosity. It was during the group interview with Michelle. Fortunately, Chaplain Muller stepped in and answered the question, protecting Michelle's confidentiality. This is what excited me about this way of doing research. It is as if there are built in safety nets (see 2.3.5.2 on multiple reflective conversations) in the research set-up, to protect the interests of the participants. It helped me as a researcher to have conducted this research project in a way that the benefit of the participants was respected. I know that I would never again like to do research in another way. I reflect further on the research practices at point 10.8.1.

Every one of the participants also helped construct my own new story. I want to acknowledge this by providing examples related to each participant. Jacques taught me that faith is simple and you only need to take God at His word. When Harold bought me a gift with all his pocket money, I learned what it is to give. Alice taught me what perseverance is and Minah and Michelle showed me how a person effervesces when God touches them. Beryl taught me to be content with what I have. Thanks to Joe, Dawid and Ruth, the word “anointed” has new meaning to me. Annatjie and Marinda taught me to become enthusiastic about what is important to God.

Glen, Marinda and Gert taught me what forgiveness is about. Magriet taught me how to sit at Jesus' feet, while Veronica showed me what simple prayer is. From Edward I learned what congruency is, while Emily made me realise how privileged you are when you have your voice heard. Roelf made me realise with how much respect God treats our will.

There are two other co-researchers who made a special contribution to the construction of my life story, namely my promoter, Dr Dirk Kotzé, and Chaplain André Muller. Dirk challenged me to construct new thoughts from old ones. I learned that knowledge has no period but only a comma; that it is not about knowing but about being and not just being, but being ethical. André showed me how to become pliable and useful as clay in the hand of the Master Potter, Who is the actual re-constructor of any new story of faith, hope and love.

I hope that this reflection showed that I, as researcher, acted in an accountable way towards the co-researchers. Now I wish to reflect on the ethical accountability of TPM practices.

#### **10.4 “Not-knowing” and the ethical accountability of TPM practices**

In my opinion the ethical accountability of TPM practices is built on the absolute respect with which this approach handles the unique relationship that each participant has with Jesus Christ. Jesus is not only assigned the central place in therapy theoretically, but also practically. In this the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator plays a central role.

In chapter 4 (4.3.) I explained in detail why I judge that according to the TPM guidelines the TPM facilitator acts from a “not-knowing” position as Anderson and Goolishian (1992) describe it. In short, they require the following from the facilitator:

- To be on an equal footing with the recipient and to not participate from a level of privileged knowledge;
- To make no assumption about the problem or diagnosis;
- The uniqueness of the recipient's story must be preserved;

I am convinced that this “not-knowing” position of the facilitator assures that TPM can be done in an ethical way. This aspect and the ethicising spirituality of the facilitator are factors that drew me to TPM. If a facilitator has really made the TPM principles his own, in my opinion it will inevitably lead to that ethicising spirituality. One of the participants mentioned that TPM became a way of life. It was wondrous to me to have experienced, during my first session of being facilitated, the enormous respect with which the lay facilitator treated me and my conversation with the Lord. At that stage, the facilitator had no idea who I was; therefore I can accept that he

would probably facilitate all the recipients in the same way. It also seems from the research interviews that the participants experienced the same.

Therefore, I want to highlight two special “sparkling moments” regarding the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator. I experienced them personally and they also became clear in the research interviews with the participants. Firstly, from my own experience, when being facilitated while the facilitator remained within the “not-knowing” position, I was constantly aware that my healing was my own responsibility. It was between God and me.

Secondly, because no force is used, I experienced that a space was created in which I could communicate with God in my own way. Often in lay Christian or Biblical counselling the “saving of souls” dominates the conversation. I experienced nothing of the kind. Knowing that the facilitator was from a different theological tradition, I expected dogmatic issues to possibly come forward. They never came up in the conversation. I experienced total respect for my view of who God is.

The whole TPM process is put together in such a way that if the facilitator remains within the “not-knowing” position, the recipient receives what is intended for her/him in the session. In many sessions that I facilitated, I personally experienced that if I remained “not-knowing”, the session took a completely different route to what was expected. At times I even considered changing the route the session was taking, because I thought the recipient was not receiving what they needed. However, in all cases I realized later that if I had interfered, it would have robbed the recipient of their healing.

In a debate about TPM practices and “not-knowing” on the internet

([FTFprayer@yahoogroups.com](mailto:FTFprayer@yahoogroups.com)) a facilitator phrased the “not-knowing” position in such a way that I want to quote it here:

Just to let you know that my style of TPM is very very hands off. In most sessions I say as little as possible, because I ask God for the topic, I ask God for the insights, I ask God what to do if we get stuck, I ask God what to do if a demon pops up, I ask God what to do if anger is present, I ask God what to do if sadness is present, and I ask God what he wants to do at every point. In other words I do not control the session at all like Dr Ed appears to, because I don't pretend to know what I am doing.  
(Keith 2009)

In Chapter 4 I indicated that the way in which Smith operated TPM, does have an aspect of “knowing” but it serves the need to protect the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator in the process. From Keith's remark it seems that he believes Smith wants to control the process.

Although that may be true, in my understanding it only limits the facilitator. God is free to reveal the truth to the recipient at any time during the session. The facilitator is only an expert of the process but the process is put together to prevent the facilitator's knowledge about the recipient's



problem interfering with the conversation between God and the recipient. In my opinion the position that Keith achieved, can only come about when a facilitator really internalizes the TPM process, as Smith operationalised it. It comes down to what Anderson (2007a:46) refers to when she points out that the “not knowing” of the therapist “does not mean that therapist knowledge is not valued; it simply means that the therapist is not considered the expert on the client's life”.

To me the helpfulness of TPM depends on the way the facilitator succeeded in staying “not-knowing” during the facilitation process. Although I am of the opinion that Chaplain Muller, according to TPM theory, perfected the art of facilitating from a “not knowing” position, his personality, according to the participants, did indeed play a part in practically implementing TPM in an ethicising way. Therefore, the role that the facilitator’s personality plays should also be acknowledged when the ethical accountability is being judged.

The only TPM technique that I find which may not be ethically responsible in certain circumstances is when the facilitator wants to “stir the darkness” in a way in which (s)he aggravates what the recipient reported in order to intensify the recipient's emotions. Alice's narrative gave an example that applies here, where the facilitator gave his own interpretation of her experience in a way to elicit strong emotion. It boils down to him forcing his knowledge on her. According to the facilitator, he did it for therapeutic gain. His need to see results led him to desert the “not-knowing” position. That happens when results became a bigger priority than being ethical. The end never justifies the means. The moment the facilitator let his “knowing” intrude into the process, power came into play. From this research it also became clear that when the facilitator acted from a position of power, it harmed the process. If, however, this principle is employed within a framework in which the recipient shares the message and the facilitator only reflects back what he receives, in a way so that the lie the recipient believes stands out clearly, what Rogers (1967:3) calls “primary accurate empathy”, I do not find it an ethical question. If the new TPM guidelines concerning this are adhered to, it is ethically accountable.

What stands out for me in TPM and in these research narratives is that the knowledge that the participants received during their sessions is relational. It is truth constructed in their relationship with God, as the recipients experience Him. No truth is cast in stone.

Each individual will probably develop their own way of ethicising spirituality, but I believe that, if during training extensive attention is given to the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator, the core of TPM’s ethical accountability, facilitators will develop an ethicising spirituality. When personal healing is received by means of TPM, it makes it much easier to assume that position.

The requirement that would-be facilitators must first receive TPM for their own woundedness further ensures the creation of ethical accountability.

I know that the term “not-knowing” is not TPM terminology, but a term coined by Anderson and Goolishian (1992). I already reflected on the similarity between their approach and the positioning of the facilitator in TPM. In this research it was my aim to give a rich description of the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator, because in my opinion, TPM's degree of helpfulness depends on this. I believe that by describing it richly it will contribute to the further development of TPM. Now I wish to reflect on the contribution that this research may make to the further development of TPM.

## **10.5 Reflection on the further development of TPM**

There are so many precious jewels that were unearthed during this research process, healing possibilities that were opened up. I tried not to let any one of them slip through my fingers because we would be poorer in knowledge and in practice without them. Apart from reflections on the further development of TPM, I also have suggestions about further research projects. In this process of reflecting on the research's contribution it is necessary to take into account if any indications or contra-indications for TPM as the appropriate approach, became clear during the research process. Under this heading I want to reflect on the following:

Indications and contra-indications for TPM (10.5.1.);

- Helpful practices of TPM (10.5.2.);
- Developing of TPM in the field of Pastoral Theology (10.5.3.);
- Multi-professional approach (10.5.4.)
- Contribution from participatory ethics (10.5.5.)

### **10.5.1 Indications and contra-indications for TPM**

At the start of this research, as indicated in chapter 1 (1.2.2.), I wanted to explore if there are certain circumstances or problems where TPM is more appropriate than others. I identified two aspects that were initially included in the research question formulations (Section B 3).

Regarding the circumstances I posed the question as to whether the theological orientation/ church denomination plays a role in the appropriation of TPM in recipients' lives. The second aspect focused on the question of whether TPM is more appropriate with respect to certain problems.

### **10.5.1.1 The role of the theological orientation/church denomination**

In reflecting on the Pilot Study, I wrote: *At the time of his TPM experience, Jacques was a member of the RCC (Revival Christian Church). It is a charismatic church with a Pentecostal element. Where the emphasis in this approach is often focussed on the experience, it would most definitely contribute to the fact that Jacques felt at home with the way TPM was practised. Jacques also indicated that he is comfortable with the dogmatic aspects of TPM. That is why it was a tremendous reality for him to experience direct communication with Jesus through the visuals he experienced God showing to him. Therefore it is suspected that his paradigm of faith played a large part in the positive outcome that TPM had for him.*

The selection of the participants did not hinge in any way on church denomination. As indicated earlier, it transpired that the participants covered a wide spectrum of theological traditions. Working through the narratives, only one nominee of a participant had initial theological difficulties with TPM. On closer inspection it appeared that his actual problem was the way his facilitator (not Chaplain Muller) handled the TPM session where he was facilitated. It was not conducted according to TPM guidelines. At the writing of this report, the nominee no longer has a problem with the theology of TPM.

The interesting tendency that was highlighted in the narratives was that most of the objections to TPM actually came from recipients in the Pentecostal theology. Earlier, in Jacques' case, I argued that because he came from that tradition, it made it more acceptable to him. So, I am surprised at this outcome. In trying to understand this, I want to take the research of Troskie (2003) and the experience of Annatjie into account. The participants in Troskie's research were pastors from a church in the Pentecostal tradition. She found that their way of using a confessional Biblical counselling approach led them to counsel from a power position where they took up a position of power in the counselling. Annatjie experienced that her pastor put himself in a position of power from where he wanted to interpret God's voice for her, rejecting an approach where God speaks directly to a recipient. These two examples let me suspect that "power" plays a huge role in the clergy from that tradition. Therefore I assume that it will be difficult for them to assume a "not-knowing" position in counselling.

Taking the aforementioned as an example, it appears that there are objections from certain theological traditions. The research question, however, is if theological tradition plays a role in whether TPM is appropriate or not. As it is an approach where experience plays a vital role, it should actually be that it would be more appropriate in traditions where experience is very important. Taking the participants' experiences into consideration, it seems as if the

appropriateness of TPM did not hinge on their theological traditions. The explanation for this is probably that the facilitator operated from a “not-knowing” position that was theologically inclusive.

In connection with this, I want to return to Alice’s comment. Alice is a Roman Catholic, but comfortable with the viewpoints of TPM. In my opinion Alice summarizes the reasons why church denomination does not play a role:

Contrary to how people judge Catholic traditions, I experience freedom in a tradition where God is not limited by what He may or may not do. Therefore I respect the way that TPM is open to God acting in whatever way He chooses and that there is no wrong or right in a “theophostic moment” and no question of being judged.

To me this is a “sparkling moment” in TPM's narrative. Alice's remark witnesses to the effect that the facilitator was not fundamentalist or prescriptive regarding theological tradition, but respected the participants' theological traditions. From this I came to the conclusion that theological tradition is not relevant, but what does matter is the openness (the will) of the recipient to receive TPM and that the facilitator stays in the “not-knowing” position.

Another aspect that may be indicative of the appropriateness of TPM is whether TPM is more applicable to some problems than to others.

#### **10.5.1.2 The helpfulness of TPM with respect to certain problems**

When taking TPM theory into consideration, it is not surprising that TPM seems to be more helpful in cases where the problem the recipient wrestles with, is based on the negative assumptions or beliefs of the recipient that led to a problem-saturated life story. When taking the participants' narratives into consideration, TPM was particularly helpful with low self-esteem and relevant problems. A number of narratives had the element of child sexual abuse. In all those narratives TPM was helpful. It also seems that TPM is very helpful with post-traumatic stress disorder and in the area of fears and phobias based on assumptions founded on trauma. The different forms of dissociation are also grounded in traumatic circumstances, and in the cases where dissociation was present in the narratives of the participants, it also seemed that TPM was particularly helpful. In analysing those narratives, it seems that dissociation is held in place by certain assumptions that are maintained by fear. The authority that the participant ascribes to the voice of God helps to deconstruct those assumptions and construct new ones. It follows that the dissociation is then no longer needed and it helps the participant to develop a new preferred life story.

If the factors that the participants experienced as hindering TPM's helpfulness are taken into account then the following may be bigger challenges for TPM:

a) The intellectual ability of the recipient;

In this research it seemed that the intellectual ability was a stumbling block for the facilitator. However, it offers a unique challenge to TPM. God communicates with each person on their own level. The problem is that it requires special skills of the facilitator to communicate with the participant on the same level. This aspect highlights the very important role of the use of language by the facilitator in the construction process of a new preferred story. When it seems that facilitators are likely to work in areas where such participants are likely to be found, it is necessary to provide facilitators with further training and to develop special skills to equip them to work with those that are mentally differently abled. It also often requires people with a special gift to facilitate these people. In such cases, recipients need to be referred to a suitable facilitator.

b) Addiction and instances where the influence of a subculture of drug abuse is too great;

As there are a lot of similarities between addictions and the influence of a subculture of drug abuse, I will discuss both together. Further support to suggest addiction as a big challenge for TPM was found during the research process in negotiations with selected participants under the heading of "random". It seemed that some of those selected, but who refused to take part, had problems with addiction. The assumption is also that the influence of such a subculture is too powerful. Coombs, Fry and Lewis (1976:110) described the power of this subculture as follows: "Again we can see that the nature of that subculture, with its own norms and values – and the counter norms and values that arise within that structural milieu – are key factors in the perpetuation of drug abuse". The problem is that the person, who is caught up in this culture, ascribes so much power to this culture that there is no openness to hear God's voice.

The question that comes to mind is: Must this prevent us from reaching out to those people? Some of the participants are also part of similar subcultures or addicted in some way, and they received healing. If looked at more closely, it may be that those narratives where TPM was helpful also had the added element of support, for example the welfare system. The assumption is that when abovementioned situations are present, the necessary support systems must first be in place before facilitation is attempted. As I indicated in the previous chapter, it requires a multi-professional approach. I would like to reflect on this in point 10.7.

c) Personality problems and psychopathology.

TPM remains prayer ministry and can only help as long as there are lies that need deconstruction. As Ed Smith (2005:263) said: “Whether people have a true mental disorder or not, they need to be relieved from all the lie-based thinking they also have”. As I don't want to see TPM in competition with other helping disciplines, such as psychology, psychiatry, etc., it is important to approach these problems from the perspective of inclusivity within a multi-disciplinary approach. TPM is a pastoral conversation (3.4.3) that wants to contribute and focus on healing. For Michael Scanlan (1974:15) this healing refers to the seeking of health in the inner being of a person. However, Smith (2007:176) replaced the term “healing” with “mind renewal” with reference to Rom 12:2.

Because of TPM's inclusivity it may still make a valuable contribution where the problem is neurological or psychiatric. When recipients have wrestled with these problems, usually from an early age, there are many layers of lies on which they have built their lives and that is where TPM can make a contribution. An example is Emily's narrative. According to her own testimony she found TPM very helpful, although her basic problem that a psychiatrist diagnosed as being “Bipolar disorder” did not change. The same is valid for Veronica, who also witnessed that she benefited a lot from TPM, although she is still battling with her psychiatric problem.

If the focus stays on healing or mind renewal, TPM can make a contribution in all circumstances and with all emotional problems. Even where psychosomatic problems occur, TPM can also play a part, as my own narrative shows. As shared in the first chapter, there was a huge change in the severity and quantity of my headaches. TPM, thus, is a pastoral contribution and needs to be part of a multi-professional approach.

From the narratives in this research it seems as if TPM was helpful in different circumstances. My conclusion is that in every circumstance where the Lord's perspective is gained it contributes to the co-construction of a new preferred story for the recipient. Although there is perhaps no cure from the psychiatric or neurological condition, it contributes towards helping recipients to cope better in their circumstances.

In the further development of TPM it is also important to take in account which practices of TPM make it so helpful in order to develop existing practices further and also to search for new possibilities towards this aim.

### **10.5.2 Helpful practices of TPM**

Most of the participants experienced that God's voice played a huge part in the healing process that opened up new healing possibilities for them. In my opinion that is the main message from most participants of this research; that they experienced transformation after a personal

encounter with the Lord, Jesus Christ, as they perceived Him. The other aspect that stands out for me is the central position that this approach gives to Jesus Christ which leads to the facilitator being placed in a “not- knowing” position. Therefore the facilitator only needs to create a space for an encounter with the Lord, without being the messenger or interpreter of the message of the Lord. I reflected extensively on this aspect under a previous heading.

Another practice that I also deem very helpful is not part of the facilitation process itself, but concerns the training of facilitators. Facilitators are required to receive at least 10 hours facilitation by an experienced TPM facilitator in order to receive their own healing, before they start to facilitate others. In hindsight, I am convinced that receiving my own healing was the most important factor which helped me to really assume the “not-knowing” position as a facilitator. I can also recommend the practice of the organization that I am a member of, namely that a trainee is expected to assist an experienced facilitator for 20 hours. It was initially difficult for me as a professional therapist to submit to that requirement. Today, I consider it as one of the most valuable training experiences I have had. It all works together to ensure that TPM facilitators know how to “not know”.

Through most of the narratives it appeared that the four basic components of the TPM process, i.e. the presenting emotion, identifying the original memory, discerning the lie-based thinking or lie message held in the original memory and offering the exposed lie up to the Lord to receive His truth perspective, played a role in creating a space for a conversation between God and the recipient. Although these components are to be rigidly applied, it seems helpful for a lay counsellor. I know that strictly speaking this compromises the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator as there should be no predetermined way of working (Fernandez, Cortes &Tarragona 2007:133). As I argued before, I do not view this as such, because although these components are guiding the conversation, no interpretation of the recipient's problem or knowledge of the facilitator regarding the problem is allowed in the TPM process. To me this way of working helps lay facilitators to create a space for an authentic encounter with the Lord, without the interference of someone else's knowledge. Having said that I do have a problem if it is applied rigidly. Therefore, under the next heading, I want to reflect on TPM's absolutistic style.

However, according to the experience of the participants, the four basic components of the TPM process did indeed play a role in the way TPM contributed to the process of co-constructing new realities for them.

The participants also indicated that other aspects, such as the importance of a wider audience and the importance of a faith community, played a definite role in constructing new preferred stories. Neither of these aspects was covered in the training of facilitators at the stage when the research

was conducted. In several of the narratives of this research it became clear that the significant others in the participant's life had to be involved in the healing process of the participant. Two nominees also expressed their need to be part of the process, because they initially did not understand what was happening with their spouses. One of the randomly selected recipients, who was initially willing to partake in the research, could not partake in the end because her spouse refused. That all shows the need that the recipients and their families had to be part of the healing process. I reflect on this aspect again when I make suggestions for further research.

The role of the faith community, however, is addressed in the new Basic TPM manual (Smith 2007). Smith proposes that instead of a therapy model, he prefers the “Body Life model”. This model suggests that TPM be facilitated in small prayer groups where the people are relationally connected (Smith 2007:200). This is ideal for church settings. Some of the participants in this research also pointed out that the TPM community that was formed around Chaplain Muller's ministry, played an important role in the thickening of their preferred stories. Alice, for example, related that she would not have been able to cope, if it had not been for the support that she received from this group. In Michelle's narrative the lack of communication between the facilitator and her congregation led to some problems that limited her healing-process. TPM transformed Edward's life to a certain extent, but TPM offered no assistance in helping him to adapt to another lifestyle. The TPM community could have played a part.

In my opinion I have now reflected on the important helpful practices of TPM, which were identified by the participants. It is important to develop these practices further and as I indicated earlier to also develop new healing possibilities for TPM. Therefore I wish now to reflect on the contribution that this research may make to the further development of TPM within the field of Pastoral Theology (Pastoral Care and Pastoral Therapy).

### **10.5.3 Developing of TPM in the field of Pastoral Theology**

I view “pastoral theology” in the way Graham (1992:20) described it as “ministry of care”. In chapter 3 (3.4.3.) I indicated that I use this term to include all four forms of becoming pastoral, that De Jongh van Arkel (2000:161) identified namely: mutual care, pastoral care, pastoral counselling and pastoral therapy. I also addressed the problem there with the positioning of TPM as pastoral care or as pastoral therapy and proposed to see it as a pastoral conversation, because TPM is in its core the facilitation of a conversation between God and a recipient.

Although Ed Smith sees TPM as prayer and not as therapy, the way in which he operates suggests TPM is a combination of prayer and therapeutic procedures. I have already indicated its similarities to various psycho-therapeutic approaches. However, its prayer aspect brings it into



the realm of pastoral care. At the end of the research it seems to me that the term “pastoral conversation” fits the best, also because the conversation with the Lord was according to the participants the most important factor responsible for their transformation. It was God’s voice being the active participant in the dialogues that led to changes.

Under the previous heading I discussed the TPM practices that contributed to the participants' constructions of new realities for them. An authentic encounter with the Lord, the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator, the four basic components of the TPM process, the importance of a wider audience and the role of a faith community were indicated. These results show that TPM as approach cannot be ignored within pastoral theology.

As I pointed out in chapter 9, according to the narratives from this research TPM as prayer cannot stand on its own. The need for supplementary approaches in assisting TPM in the healing process of participants became evident during the research. I know that Ed Smith (2008f:1) recommended that the TPM facilitator has “to take the back seat to the work being done”, and that a health professional (psychiatrist/ psychologist) has to be involved in cases where psychopathology is involved or other therapy is needed. In Edward's narrative there is no evidence of pathology present. However, when the facilitator is also familiar with, for example some narrative practices, it could have resolved the impasse that was experienced with Edward.

It is true that the faith community has to play its part in this regard, as Chaplain Muller argued, but to me it is not ethically responsible to leave that totally to the faith community's care. To act in an ethicising way facilitators have to take up their responsibility. Therefore, I want to propose “Narrative TPM”.

I previously suggested that TPM and the narrative approach could complement each other well. Although, judging from his publications, Ed Smith did not position himself in a certain epistemology; he seems to be a fundamentalist thinker, with TPM being a prescriptive approach. Although Smith partakes in and encourages discourses about TPM, he “owns” TPM and I suppose, without intending to, he found himself in a position of power from where he has complete control over TPM. What I thus propose is that if Smith can shift from an epistemology where it is about power to a position where TPM can be further developed within an epistemology where it is about participation and social construction, it can open up new healing possibilities for TPM.

Other voices have already been heard who also plead for this “marriage” between TPM and a social constructionist approach. Thiessen (2003:201) who writes about Inner Healing Prayer (IHP) interprets IHP as “a social process of re-storying a person's life, of facilitating the

reconstruction of his or her reality. IHP is unique in both inviting God and expecting God to experientially join in the conversation with those praying and the one being prayed for". Ultimately, it is about accepting God's voice as a participant in the conversation in the re-storying of a person's life.

With TPM, the experience of God's voice brings the new reality worth celebrating. There is a big similarity between this and what post-modern writers, Isherwood and McEwan (2001:47) described as the source of "to do theology", namely the experience of women and men and their relationships with God and each other. It seems that TPM connects closely to this. In this theology it is all about spirituality, where relationships rather than rules are the reason for celebrating.

**The absolutist style of TPM** is evident from the aspect of a patriarchal theology with a power-based attitude of control that still appears in Smith's publications. I indicated earlier, however, that Smith's pre-occupation with control must be seen in light of his attempt to protect the uniqueness of this approach, the aspect being that God's voice must not be silenced through theology or human agendas. Currently, it seems that in an attempt to further develop TPM, Smith tries to satisfy all the requirements of a fundamentalist theology where there is a clear right and wrong.

In this process every new edition of the TPM manual almost presents a new TPM model. Smith (2008d: 4) states very clearly that "people are not allowed to use the name Theophostic on any training that is not actual TPM training" meaning that the "older materials" are no longer considered TPM. It sometimes leads to facilitators becoming frustrated. They were trained in a certain way and must not do things differently or they would no longer be considered TPM facilitators. Although I am very excited about Smith being open to the further development of TPM and the way in which he invites others to participate in it, the way in which some facilitators' opinions are silenced does not fit the spirit of TPM. I find this way of operating very prescriptive and controlling, thus knowing. On one hand he encourages critics to take part in debates, but on the other hand he limits TPM to the place where he is. The implication is that Smith became the master and all the other facilitators have to follow him with dog-like devotion, if they want to be TPM facilitators.

The question is if TPM has not become bigger than Smith. Wouldn't it be better for the Kingdom of God to allow TPM to take its own course, just as facilitators are taught to trust God to take the lead? It seems to me that if TPM can move away from a prescriptive theology to a participatory theology, it can contribute to the developing of TPM. If TPM were to work from the perspective

that knowledge should be socially constructed, doors may open for new healing possibilities of TPM.

In my opinion, the main problem is that, judging from TPM publications, Smith has a modernistic approach, that is to say that he believes there is “an inner truth behind surface appearance” (Sarup 1993:131). Smith presents the assumptions he makes to construct TPM theory as absolute truths, for example that experiential truth is necessary for maintenance free victory. Now he searches for objective research results to prove or disprove these assumptions. From my viewpoint there are no objective truths, as I argued in chapter 2, and therefore such an exercise seems to be futile.

If Smith would look at TPM from the perspective, where it is about social construction and participation, he would no longer have to try to satisfy all the requirements of a fundamentalist approach in order to have TPM accepted as a “valid”, acceptable theological approach. In this process Scripture does not have to be seen as a paper pope, but as God’s voice that helps with the co-construction of a new reality. The interpretation of Scripture is, however, socially constructed and it is not only certain interpretations that can be read as being God’s voice. Up to this point, Smith still does. It is a shift from dogma to participation. Then it is no longer an exclusive approach, where any difference is excluded, but an inclusive approach where differences can be accommodated through participatory ethics. TPM is currently an approach where the voice of God in the lives of recipients is respected. From this perspective all participants in TPM, both recipients and facilitators, will be equal participants in the further development of TPM.

In my opinion Smith has already moved away from a patriarchal theology, especially if it is kept in mind with what respect every recipient’s “belief and choice” are handled. This is illustrated in the session with Harold (Chapter 5). On the same subject, I would like to quote Dr Christo Naude, a narrative pastoral therapist, who after one of the research interviews said: “I notice that it is a process of mutual respect, born from a respect for God Himself and the works of His hands. What I observe is that the whole TPM process is one where another’s hurt is handled with such respect that inspires me with much confidence in the process”.

Therefore, I want to propose “Narrative TPM”. I have already suggested that TPM and the narrative approach could complement each other well. It need not be such a stretch for Smith as I also find it interesting that the way in which he is further developing TPM, has much in common with social constructionism. Examples of this are the development of his “belief and choice” principle and his view on demonization:

I have moved more away from my past thinking in 2005 even more toward the finished work of Christ and the ramifications of the judgment of the devil that

occurred at the Cross....In a summary statement I can say that I do not allow demons to talk in a session anymore, do not encourage such and hardly even acknowledge their presence since they are limited in what they can do based upon the person's own belief and choice. My focus is on the will and belief of the person.

(Smith 2007a:1)

It is interesting that in developing the abovementioned principle, Smith includes the voices of Scripture, Theology and research but also the views of TPM recipients. It seems to me that if this way of working is viewed from a social constructionist perspective that there are similarities between Smith's way of developing TPM and the social constructionist process. It, however, seems that Smith wants to stay in control of TPM and that he is not willing to let go of the control in favour of participation. Although I can understand that Smith needs to protect the "not-knowing" position of the facilitator by requiring rigid adherence to his "knowledge" (if you differ from him, you must call it something else) I am of the opinion that the interests of TPM and also God's Kingdom would be served much better if Smith could make that shift from prescription and control to risk and participation. Surely, if God can be trusted with an individual's narrative, He can also be trusted with TPM's narrative.

If TPM can make that shift, it would open the way to develop a Narrative TPM. I pointed out in chapter 9 (9.2.4.3.) how different narrative therapeutic ideas offer explanations for TPM's influence in the change participants experienced. I want to focus on two aspects. Firstly, TPM's unique way of inviting God to participate experientially in the reconstruction of the recipient's reality opens up new possibilities for narrative therapy. Second to the meeting between God and the participant, which according to this research is the most important aspect of TPM, is the "not-knowing" way in which facilitators work. As this practice descended from social constructionism and is applied in narrative therapy, TPM can gain a lot from narrative practices in the way it is operationalized.

I want to take Roelf's narrative as an example to explain how narrative practices may be ideal to create a space for a recipient's meeting with God. In Roelf's narrative, it was clear that he was not ready to receive TPM. From the research interviews it became clear that the facilitator in this research thoroughly informed the participants about the TPM process and each one had a choice to take part in it. It was also done in Roelf's case. However, it seemed that other factors, such as getting his child back, played a more motivational role than wanting to receive healing for himself. It seems as if the facilitator did not give enough attention to Roelf's story, before he entered into the TPM process. From a narrative therapeutic viewpoint it is important that TPM engages in the recipient's story and not the other way around. TPM usually starts with the presenting emotion. In the case of unmotivated recipients, that can be problematic. The facilitator should first just listen in the way Fernandez, Cortes and Tarragona (2007:133-4)

describe it: "...we allowed the clients to show us the way they wanted to participate in a conversation with us. We did this by inquiring about their expectations for the session, asked them what they wanted to talk about, giving them choices about the format of the interview..". TPM needs to be contextualised in the recipient's story. Roelf revealed a lot of resistance towards God and religion in general. Narrative practices could have helped Roelf to first deconstruct these assumptions about God and religion. To me it seems that Narrative practices can especially make a huge contribution regarding the preparation of recipients for TPM.

Narrative practices within TPM can also contribute to the development of the recipient's new story with God, especially in cases where long term objectives are required. One of the important gaps is the way in which a family ought to be involved in the re-storying of a recipient. Follow up is also a gap. When God changes a person through prayer, the change does not necessarily lead to the disappearance of all problems. It creates the need for a facilitator/therapist to accompany the recipient on the road to explore the implications and effects on his/her life, in other words, to further develop and grow the new landscape of action that comes about because of a new identity/consciousness. Although other people often see TPM in that way, it is not a sudden miraculous change that takes place, but it creates a new space for growth and change and choices for a new life. Again narrative practices can fulfil a role in the care of recipients after TPM, in the thickening of the new preferred story. This research is an exploratory study and these aspects leave room for further study.

I see this research only as a start to further study the impact of TPM as an approach in pastoral therapy that necessitates constant dialogue. The more people that can get involved in these dialogues the better. A dialogue between different approaches will benefit all the participants in the dialogue. Also, I want to extend great appreciation towards Ed Smith, who is constantly in conversation with the pastoral therapeutic community. I hope this will be a motivation for Smith to let go of the control in favour of TPM's further development. If Smith should align his style to the not-knowing style that he expects of facilitators, also in terms of the assumptions he makes (for example, that logical knowledge cannot effect true transformation) it may indeed also contribute to working together with other disciplines in a multi-professional approach. If everyone is more tentative about what they believe and does not hold to the viewpoint of knowing, there will be less polarization between the different therapeutic approaches and disciplines. Then everyone can work together to help people in need.

## **10.5.4 Multi-professional approach**

From the narratives in this research, it again underlined the importance of a multi-professional approach. In the cases of participants such as Gert and Harold, that approach was helpful to TPM, but where it was unavailable (Roelf, Veronica, Emily) TPM was less helpful. A multi-professional approach is of utmost importance. It implies that different approaches work together, although some of the other professions/disciplines/approaches might not be in support of TPM.

Sutherland (2000:272-281) describes how the different role players in the history of mental health complemented each other. The role players are: 1) the psychological social discourse, with special emphasis on the role of the conscious subconscious; 2) the psychiatric discourse, with emphasis on the function of the brain, and 3) the spiritual-theological discourse, with its emphasis on life experiences. He indicates that to this day there are hindrances in the dialogue between the different role players. For the sake of mental health it can no longer be tolerated. He points out that quantum theory led to them having “enough of a shared conceptual framework to reconstruct dialogue” (:281). He sees it as part of the role of Practical Theology “to recall the wider religious tradition to the central task of facilitating human cooperation with a God who maintains an intention and purpose for the whole of creation” (:281). In support of this quote from Sutherland, I believe that TPM can also play an important part in furthering this dialogue between the different professions to the benefit of mental health in general and recipients in particular. Therefore TPM needs to be inclusive and not exclusive, participating and not prescriptive or controlling.

Another aspect that can contribute to the further development of TPM is the role of participatory ethics.

## **10.5.5 Contribution from participatory ethics**

I think that the perspective that participatory ethics brings, is an important contribution for the further development of TPM. The problem at hand is that it is possible for the recipient not to hear the Lord clearly or to misinterpret His words. The problem is while Smith (2007:161) claims that it should be Biblically consistent, we only have interpretations according to which it can be understood. The consequence is that the facilitator's theological orientation at the end judges what the recipient received from God. I know that Smith often repeats that facilitators must not interpret what recipients receive in a session. Yet he expects the facilitator to judge whether it is Biblically consistent or not. There is thus no objective truth to use as a yardstick to

measure the recipient's experience. Therefore the last two aspects of Smith's four fold test, which show the impact it has on the life of the recipient, are perhaps more applicable. It allies closely with what social constructionism and participatory ethics bring to mind.

The problem occurs when the recipient's experience is approached dogmatically. Then the question is whether it is Biblically correct or wrong. According to social constructionism, truths are constructed with each other in relation to each other, which imply that reality differs in different social contexts. What may be considered unbiblical in one context may be considered Biblical in another. That is where participatory ethics come in: not if it is dogmatically correct or incorrect, but what the effect is on the participant as well as his/her environment. The question is: Is it ethicising? It is impossible for a facilitator to determine whether what the recipient experiences is from God or not. It is about what was constructed in the conversation between God and the recipient and whether it is ethicising. Ethicising is relational. When Harold experienced a punishing God, it might not have been a false Jesus appearing to him, as the facilitator handled the situation. It was Harold's view of God, as was taught to him. It was what he believed. When this aspect is judged from the ethical angle, the question changes from who God is, to whom the recipient interprets God is for him. In TPM the search is for the lie that causes Harold to believe that God is a punishing God, in order for Harold to discover the God of love. It also seemed from the sessions that when he experienced the God of love, he was freed. Therefore establishing the objective interpretation of Scripture is not so important. The ethical meaning or effect is more important. It brings to mind what Jesus remarked in Mt 23:23 (ESV): "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness".

Participatory ethics can help TPM to judge the authenticity of the healing that participants receive. As mentioned earlier, the last two tests, which Smith proposed to judge this, namely genuine forgiveness and compassion, as well as genuine transformation and life change, resonate with what participatory ethics proposes (Kotze 2002). This means that what happens in the research process should actually be a practice of TPM so that significant others become part of an ethical consciousness where opportunities are created for them to "edit" the transformation the recipient experiences. For instance, in Edward's narrative such a practice would have created a timely opportunity for his spouse to help him to not get over involved in his ministry.

Thiessen's view on the role TPM has to play in social ethics is also relevant here, where he pleads for Inner Healing Prayer to move away from an individualistic approach, to an approach of interdependence (Thiessen 2008:139) (See also 2.3.3.). In my opinion participatory ethics widens the scope where there is no specific norm that can be used as a yardstick, but a

participatory consciousness, “an ethical consciousness situated in the participation of all” (Kotze 2002:18).

**To summarise**, this research's aim was to contribute to the further development of TPM. From the participants' experiences it seems that denomination and theological tradition do not play a role in the helpfulness of TPM, but what is relevant is the openness (the will) of the recipient to receive TPM and if the facilitator stays in the “not-knowing” position. It also became apparent that TPM can be helpful in all circumstances, although a cure is not always effected, for instance in cases where psychiatric or neurological conditions restrict the healing process.

From these narratives it also appears that the experience of the Lord's voice or His presence is the main factor in the transformation they experienced. The other aspect that was indicated as extremely helpful (from my perspective) is the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator. I reflected extensively about this aspect throughout the thesis. To me, it seems to be the main contribution of this research in developing TPM further to emphasize the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator as the “kingpin” on which the helpfulness of TPM hinges.

Within Pastoral Theology I indicated the possibilities that will become available when Narrative TPM can be developed, as TPM invites God to take part in a conversation where, according to Thiessen (2006:221) “an experiential encounter with God....radically affects the shaping of the new story that emerges”.

The value of a multi-professional approach is also highlighted together with the need that TPM has to be an inclusive approach that emphasizes participation rather than prescription or control. Participatory ethics can also contribute in judging the authenticity of healing that emerges from TPM.

## **10.6 Reflection about TPM in my life**

At the beginning of this research report I indicated my motivation for this study and the road I have travelled with therapy. It was only through being facilitated in TPM that I experienced that a true reconstruction of my reality took place. My “problem-saturated story” was characterized by a very low self-image that was deconstructed by experiencing God’s voice in my life. I am one of the blessed people who have both visual and auditory experiences during TPM. Therefore I could understand when the participants shared their experiences. I challenged more than one of the participants that it was merely visualisation through imagination. They all reacted by testifying of a knowing that it was God. The interesting thing is that some people experienced that what they received from God was not what they expected. I also experienced that. It is indeed an Emmaus event. I have never before experienced God’s involvement in my life as such



a reality. By reflecting on these experiences I am not trying to prove if it was really God or their imaginations, as my approach is not to uncover any objective truth or to take part in dogmatic discourses. It is about building on the participants' perspectives of their experiences.

I discovered a personal God. It implies that God decided to take part in a practice where we use our imaginations. Through that experience, my old perception of God was deconstructed. Those perceptions were first formed in the covenant household where I was raised and were further defined by theological training. This heritage remains very important to me. Because of my upbringing, I was sceptical about a theology giving experience such prominence. I was very aware of the negative effect of too much emotion with regard to a relationship with God. After my first TPM session where I experienced God in that way, I opened my devotional diary at the said date. The text for that day was Job 42:5: “Until now I have heard what others said of You, but now I have seen You for myself”. That experience revealed to me another image of God to the one I had accepted up to that point. I experienced a God Who also works with my imagination, Who is involved with every minute detail of my life. Most of it I had always believed in any case, but never experienced in such a way.

Afterwards, I wanted to use TPM in therapy. Initially I thought that I could employ this “technique” to supplement the other approaches I was using. Gradually I discovered that TPM is not a therapeutic technique. I had to learn that as long as I harboured therapeutic plans, using my own wisdom, that God stood and waited for me until I abandoned all my techniques and wisdom. Only then would He become involved in the process. As I said earlier, it was a huge adjustment to become “just” a facilitator. TPM taught me to really take a “not-knowing” position. In the narrative approach I was initially confronted with this position and learnt not to allow my own perceptions to interfere with therapy. However, I still held on to my own perceptions. I now realise that I fooled myself the whole time and that my knowledge still played a role in a subtle way. When “not-knowing” is only a technique to therapists and they are still holding private hypotheses regarding recipients' narratives and problems, they are still in a position of knowledge-power. Because they are perhaps not consciously aware of it, they will perhaps also not be aware of how power still influences the therapeutic process. Before TPM, the not-knowing position was more a kind of philosophical principle to me. After TPM it became a reality to me that I really know that I do not know and that I accept not knowing. I could only reach that point after my own lies were effectively deconstructed. One of the main lies I believed was that I was not important and that I had to prove my importance by being a good therapist. This lie meant that my goal was to see results. In the past that aim used to dominate my

therapeutic attitude. I would use any technique or orientation that I judged could bring results. If it appeared that I was not successful, my low self-esteem issues took over.

In the process that my lies were deconstructed, I also developed absolute confidence in God. It is that confidence that now allows me to stand back during a therapy session. It is no longer I who has to produce. Instead, I have the overwhelming surety that God knows exactly where He is going to with a person, and that I can trust Him with it. In the past I would become anxious if nothing appeared to be happening in the session. Now I know that this anxiety was a hindrance.

The research process further transformed me. As I indicated in Chapter 2, the relationship that develops between the researcher and participants cannot be fully predicted. Some of the participants, who I met for the first time during the research interview, have become personal friends. The way in which participants shared their experiences of TPM necessarily forged a bond. I personally believe that TPM experiences can only really be understood from the inside (See also Habermas 1984:112). I mean that you understand the TPM experience of another person on a whole new level only when you have experienced TPM yourself. That is why it is impossible for me as a researcher to write a totally objective reflection. However, it means that these stories made a definite impact on the deeper level of my own personhood. It is very difficult to put the impact into words. It had a fundamental influence on the way I view people. Firstly, it helped to shed almost all prejudices. I have become so conscious of each person's unique relationship with God that I do everything in my power to create a space where God can meet each person in His own way.

My position of faith is that there is only one Triune God. That is why I am not willing to create a space where someone can meet with a god, any god, of their choice. I see TPM as an “approach for Christians” and all people willing to have a meeting with Christ. Here I just want to make my own position clear. Under the next heading I reflect further on this discourse and make suggestions with regard to further studies about it.

## **10.7 Suggestions for further research**

I already made suggestions for further research earlier in this chapter; I now want to add the following topics that according to my opinion need further research.

### 10.7.1 How important are the basic components of the Basic Theophostic process to hear God's voice in a TPM session?

I already reflected on the role of the basic components of the Basic Theophostic process in hearing God's voice in point 10.4, where I stated that this way of working protects the not-knowing position of the facilitator. The way in which the basic components are operationalized, makes it easier to train facilitators who can operate from a position of not-knowing and in that way create a space for the conversation between God and the recipient. However, the big question remains as to whether God's answer is not limited by the knowing of people. In my own experience it does not limit God in any way, as long as the facilitator realizes that he/she is only facilitating the conversation. But if facilitators adhere rigidly to the process, their knowing may hinder the conversation between God and the recipient. This area needs to be explored further.

Keith (2009) responded to the following questions in a debate on the internet (FTFprayer@yahoogroups.com), namely:

- Why does God need a lie to show the truth to a recipient?
- Why does the facilitator not ask God the following:  
Father God, person X feels rejected and helpless, please bring or show person X your Truth, instead of focusing on the primary icon which is the LIE in a Memory?

He offered an explanation that there is a neurological basis for sticking to the basic components of the TPM process (emotion, memory, lie, truth), because that is:

How the subconscious mind has programmed input stimuli and emotional responses into the neural network of the brain. In order for the input output wiring to be rewired, a different output has to be experienced for the same set of inputs, i.e. you have to go back to the same emotional/subconscious memory context where the neurons were wired in the past, to perform the rewiring.

(Keith 2009)

This view of Keith may open new possibilities in the understanding of TPM. It corresponds with some of the arguments of other psychotherapies that I reflected on in chapter 9. This also gives scope for further research. However, I want to reflect further on the question as to whether it is necessary to identify the lie before asking the Lord's truth. To me the basic components of the TPM process are only *guidelines* to conduct a TPM session. As I said before, if it is applied rigidly, then it can limit the Lord's voice. More than once I have experienced that the Lord showed His truth to a recipient before I started to identify the lie. In the abovementioned internet-debate, it seems that most of the participating facilitators experience that God is not limited by the basic TPM practices. I would like to add that as long as the facilitator stays in the

“not-knowing” position as described by Keith (See 10.4), they experience that the TPM guidelines do not restrict the Lord's voice but the facilitators in order to help the facilitator to stay “not-knowing”.

My experience, however, is that the Lord usually responds when the lie is correctly identified. This makes sense to me when I take into consideration that the process of identifying the lie, is similar to externalising the problem in narrative therapy. It is a way in which the problem is objectified and the problem becomes the problem (White 2007:9). In order to be able to correctly identify the lie, the facilitator has to be able to perceive the problem as the recipient does. This will mean that the Lord responds when the facilitator has engaged effectively in the recipient's narrative. It makes sense that the Lord won't respond if it's the facilitator's issues that are being held up for the Lord's truth.

To me, the basic TPM components are valuable guidelines to conduct a TPM session, but should never compromise the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator. However, further research is necessary to evaluate the relative importance of these components.

### **10.7.2 Is TPM also valid for other religions?**

When I reflected on TPM's influence on my life, I pointed out that TPM taught me to respect each person's unique relationship with God. I would like to be a co-worker to create space where God can meet each person in a unique way. The question is how to handle it when someone from outside the Christian religion asks a TPM facilitator for help. The questions at hand are:

Should the TPM facilitator offer TPM to a non-Christian at all; or

should (s)he offer to do the TPM process but pray to the recipient's god;

or should the facilitator respect their view and rather refer the person.

Derived from the debates on the internet ([FTFprayer@yahoogroups.com](mailto:FTFprayer@yahoogroups.com)), it seems that the above questions are acutely topical. The debate takes place between Keith (2009) and Oxley (2009), formerly Rev. Oxley and now a self-declared atheist. I wish to highlight a number of quotations from that debate. Oxley says: “I still swear by the Theophostic method, It does work...I have witnessed that with my own eyes”. He still believes that TPM works because it accommodates the religious understanding of the individual. He then says that: “It is the individual allowing their idea of god to work, rather than a god or deity actually doing a work”.

On the contrary, Keith states: “It still works because God is not a respecter of persons. He will ‘connect’ in spirit (at an emotional level, (pain + love + truth = healing) to anyone and everyone who is in an emotional context that meeting Him will make sense. They may not know it is Him

at the time, but He will clearly identify Himself if asked”. Keith goes on to tell how he facilitated many people from the Muslim and Buddhist religions. Then he says: “It is not unusual for an atheist, or a Buddhist to have a vision of Jesus in a TPM setting. I might suggest that they ask him who He is, and He will answer them”.

These two viewpoints reveal a need for further research. As I already indicated, I do not have a problem should other religions develop similar approaches. I do not want to be prescriptive to anyone, but for me from my religious point of view that I am not prepared to compromise, it won't be possible to do TPM in another religion's setting, in which I would have to pray to another god. As I have already indicated, TPM is properly defined as a Christian approach. From this position I believe that Jesus Christ must never be prescribed to recipients, but that TPM is about creating space for an encounter between a person and Jesus, with the given that the person already has a relationship with Jesus or is prepared to meet Him. I believe that further research about this can make an important contribution to better understand the role of religion in healing.

### **10.7.3 TPM and the community of faith**

I have already referred to Ruth's narrative in Chapter 8. Her TPM experience and healing led to her becoming a leader in her community, where she is now involved in social upliftment work in the community. Many of the recipients in this research also became active in facilitating TPM after receiving their own healing. I personally experienced that the inner peace TPM brought me, motivated me to share it with others. That is probably also the main motivation for this research. South Africa has many communities where people suffer from extreme poverty, with the negative influences of drugs, gangsterism and violence. Every possible means of transformation is needed. I suspect that if more people like Ruth can be influenced by TPM, because of the way in which it is practiced, communities can be fundamentally influenced and take part in this transformation. This aspect needs further research.

Another aspect regarding the faith community is the role it has to play in the care of recipients after TPM. In a few of the narratives of this research project it became clear that the community of faith or Theophostic community played a very important role. Taking into account the narratives of this research, it seems that a significant number of the participants had no support from their local congregations. It is as if the established church lacks in playing the role of supporting and helping these people in the thickening of their preferred stories. As those participants come from different denominations, it will be interesting to know if this is perhaps a

universal problem. This demands that the role of the faith community should be further researched.

#### **10.7.4 Multi-cultural demands**

I have already referred to the article by Larry Dinkins (2005:37) in which he says TPM is:

...supracultural because Jesus, Who understands all cultures perfectly, is a supracultural healer. He alone knows the essence of people's lies and is able to select the most appropriate way to deliver truth to them. When the presence of Christ reveals truth in a person's memory, the truth He reveals is always personally and culturally appropriate for that person.

Although there are elements of truth in his statement, I see it as proposing a solution that is too simplistic (TPM is supracultural) for a very complex concept. I can accept that Jesus is supracultural but it still does not make TPM or the facilitator supracultural. In my opinion this aspect needs much more thorough attention. It is true that the participants in this research experienced something of Jesus' supracultural nature. Minah experienced how God brought her truth in the idiom of her own culture. In the experiences of Ruth and David, cultural differences had no influence on the process of TPM. In Emily's case, cultural aspects created problems. In Roelf's case the subculture in which he lived, was a hindrance to the effective ministry of TPM. In South Africa it is necessary to operate not only cross-culturally but also multi-culturally. According to Bula (2000:170) the factors of multi-culturality include ethnicity, language, gender, age, religion, social/economic status, sexual orientation and different abilities. She does not include race, because it is a word loaded with prejudice. The terms ethnicity and language include the differences of race. Bula (2000:170) describes it as a process, wherein it seems that according to the measure by which you embrace your own culture you are able to also embrace another culture, rather than a state in which the integration of those aspects with your own belief systems takes place. It is about awareness and respect for others. Hays (2001:52) sees it as a lifelong process. Van der Hoven (2006:23) also indicated that a facilitator must be loyal towards the differences in the other person and must be able to embrace these factors, identifying with certain aspects in another culture. Therefore it is about more than just understanding another language. It is true that because the facilitator's chief function in TPM is prayer, it builds a bridge, making it easier but not sufficient in all cases. Van der Hoven (2006:119) explains from recent research data that for communication to be successful in a therapy session, the focus must be on the individual in their own context. As there is no uniformity in cultures, as individuals in the same culture still differ, the diversity demands a not-knowing position of the facilitator. It is of utmost importance, because it is not obvious that the recipient and facilitator will automatically understand each other because they belong to the same group.

All techniques must take the cultural background of the client into consideration. In her own research Van der Hoven (2006:246) finds that when the counsellor is not sufficiently trained in the culture of the recipient, therapy is often terminated early or is inaccessible to a certain cultural group.

In my own experience, an Afrikaans group of experienced TPM facilitators presented TPM in the Philippines. We found fundamental hindrances. One example of this was that their concept of a “lie” is totally different to the Western concept. The TPM technique of searching for the lie made no sense, especially to the Koreans. The problems did not only present during the training but also when facilitating the students. A social constructionist epistemology would be the solution. In conversations a social construction took place, valid for that training course but not necessarily for further courses. Those conversations helped us to present the course in their own idiom. Ed Smith expects the DVD series to be shown exactly as it is. It was constructed in a North American environment. We showed the DVD’s but the frustration of the students, all of them able to speak English, was evident. It is difficult to keep concentrating when the words of the speaker do not make sense in your context.

Even in South Africa when most of the students are of Western orientation and able to speak English, people do not instantly understand the concepts of the DVD course. The DVD implies that nobody can present TPM as well as Smith. I have reflected on the absolutistic style of Smith (10.5.4.) My opinion is that these examples show clearly that this style is not serving the Kingdom of God. An approach where students become part of the social construction process to “translate” the course into their own language and culture will assist in TPM finding a real meaning in that culture. It does not mean that the course should merely be translated by a professional but that it should truly be translated into that culture. Smith's viewpoint that only his DVD be used, so that everyone uses the same study material, does not make sense in this context. What does it help when it does not make sense to the students? I understand the danger of people who might proclaim their own viewpoints as TPM. The problem remains that despite Smith's rules, it still happens here in South Africa. They term it something like “prayer therapy”, but the man in the street still calls it TPM. In this way great harm is done to the concept of TPM.

The problem in my opinion is that Smith legally owns TPM and that places him in a position where the power of the legal system takes control. He wants to protect the valuable aspects of this approach, but in the end power prescribes to all involved. What I view as central to TPM, namely a not-knowing position in facilitating a conversation with God, does not agree with this. The central aspect of TPM is that God alone brings truth for each person. Social constructionism, for instance, can offer TPM the opportunity to be made at home in every culture and language. In

this process the voices of people who have first-hand knowledge of TPM will be heard in the co-construction of TPM for every denomination, culture and language group. Smith allows academics with their knowledges but perhaps does not value those with personal knowledge of TPM in the same way in the development of TPM as an approach. His openness towards other academics is very positive but what of thousands of facilitators and recipients from other cultures, having experienced TPM but having no voice in the further development of TPM? It seems to me as if holding onto the DVD series as the only training possibility may be a hindrance in growing the Kingdom of God in other cultures. I understand that in a social constructionist process the TPM presented in Korea will probably look different to that presented in the USA. But is that not how the Kingdom grows? Is God, Who enabled Ed Smith to develop this approach within the American culture, not able to use His instruments in Korea to do the same? These questions beg further research.

### **10.7.5 Inclusion of partners and significant others**

In Chapter 8 I referred to Chaplain Muller's remark that TPM has the ability to transform families. His conclusion was that the impact that a positive life transformation has on a person's life, will affect those people all around him/her. Including the partners and significant others in the TPM process seems important from the response of many of the nominees of the participants. Just as the recipient needs to be informed about the whole process, it seems that significant others must also be informed. Aspects such as the influence that the recipients' changes have on their family systems or marriage systems are very important. A marriage partner often needs just as much support when their partner struggles through the process. The role of the faith community is also essential. I also reflected on the ethical aspect regarding the spouses and families in chapter 8. The role that TPM plays in marriage therapy is also relevant. This aspect definitely needs further research.

### **10.7.6 The role of the Bible after receiving TPM**

A remark by one of the participants made me curious about the role the Bible plays in the thickening of recipients' preferred stories, as her remark mirrors my own experience. She shared:

... if you ask many of the people who received TPM, they will answer that, perhaps indirectly, many parts of Scripture are now clearer and more personal for them. In my case, God uses many of the parables in sessions to explain things to me and afterwards when I read those parables in the Bible, they can never be "impersonal" or even "incomprehensible" again.

I also experienced that after almost every TPM session where I encountered God, I gained new perspectives on certain parts of Scripture. I experienced it as a very personal bond between



Scripture and what I experienced in a session. I don't want to make any assumptions from these experiences, but it will be interesting if this can be further researched.

Introducing Section B, I used the metaphor of “weaving” to describe the research process. I hope the themes from the participants’ experiences were woven together in such a way that the pattern that was formed, highlighted the diamonds discovered in this research. To me one of the most precious diamonds is the “not-knowing” position of the facilitator. Although I aimed to describe it richly, it was not the main focus of this research. I think that this is such an important aspect in the TPM process that it deserves to be the topic of a research project. I am also of the opinion that the mentioned proposals for further research, will also contribute to still weave new patterns in a new context, contributing to develop TPM further as still a greater work of art to the glory of our Father. Now I want to reflect on the process in which this work of art was created.

## **10.8 Reflecting on the research process**

When I wish to reflect on the research process, the question comes to the fore: “Did I do what I said I was going to do?” I have already reflected on the goals of the research. Here I want to reflect on if I achieved the goal of responding satisfactorily to the research questions. Did the process make sufficient provision for the voices of all the co-researchers? Which voices were possibly silenced by the process? Lastly, I reflect on the ethical aspects of the research process.

The research question for this research was: “*How and why Theophostic prayer ministry did, or did not change the lives of persons who engaged in it as recipients?*” The motivation for this formulation is not to prove anything about TPM, but to learn from recipients of TPM with the purpose of further developing TPM. In this light, I want first to reflect on the research methodology.

### **10.8.1 Reflecting on the research methodology and method**

I hope that through this reflection on the research methodology, the implications for research in Practical Theology will also become clear. I am convinced that qualitative research was the best way to contribute to the further development of TPM, therefore TPM as a pastoral praxis was examined from a social constructionist perspective. Regarding a methodology I chose a descriptive/ interpretive methodology, where the researcher’s primary goal is “to describe and/or interpret the subjective experience of research participants” (Kvale 1996:71). This interpretation should be of a reflexive nature. I did not make any diagnosis, but it was about the participants' experiences of TPM and why they believe they gained or did not gain from TPM. In this way

those with first hand experiences of TPM had the opportunity to contribute to the further development of TPM.

In the methodology of practical theology three concepts are very important, namely *understanding, explanation and change*. The perspective of understanding is central to the hermeneutical theory of interpretation (Heitink 1993a:163). Initially the primary task of this research was the understanding of the TPM-process. The method used in this research process was to select narratives (“case studies”) and to use semi-structured research interviews to collect data. This research wanted to give eighteen participants the opportunity to share their personal experiences of TPM, in order to increase the knowledge about this pastoral praxis to the advantage of practical theology and the church of Christ as a whole.

In my opinion it seemed that the relevant epistemology, methodology and methods would be to give voice to these stories. Having already undertaken two quantitative, empirical research projects, I realised that in these projects I did the research from a position of power, looking for objective truth. The way I conducted and analysed the research data, could have harmed the participants. For instance, as there was no opportunity for them to reflect on their experience of the research, I had no idea of the influence the project had on their personal lives. Where I did give feedback, it was from a position of power where I had the knowledge.

The focus in this research project was on participation. As researcher I was also in the not-knowing position, just as is required of the facilitator in TPM. That gave the participants the opportunity to describe their experiences in their own way, and offered the opportunity to reflect on the greatness of God and testify how God used ordinary believers to bind up the wounded. I experienced that the semi-structured interviews, were ideal for this research. It gave enough space so that participants could describe their experiences in their own words, but also enough structure to guide the conversation. Structure was necessary because there was limited time available as a large number of narratives were included in this project. The structure also ensured that the same aspects of TPM were covered in all the interviews. Some of the participants were so enthusiastic about their experience of TPM, that the structure was necessary to keep the conversation focused on what was relevant to the research topic. Other participants were more reserved in the way they shared their experiences. They needed structure to enable them to reflect on certain topics. I am aware that, although only in a few cases, valuable information may have been lost to the project, where I used my power as researcher to silence their voices because of limited time. I want to apologise for that, to them and to the project.

I view the inclusion of an interview with a significant other in the participant's life as a special gain. In this way the accountability of these narratives was judged without being reductionist.

Under a previous heading I pointed out that the multiple reflective conversations helped me to conduct this research in an ethicising way. The participants had the opportunity to reflect on the influence the research had in their lives. Both participants and nominees related that they had gained through the process. Even Roelf described his experience of the research process as positive. Not one participant expressed negative feelings about the research process. Therefore, I may conclude that this approach offered the opportunity to contribute to the thickening of their stories of hope. In this, I believe that the Kingdom is served. Seen from my previous framework about research, it would have been unthinkable to expose my ministry in this way. Contrary to that, Chaplain Muller's reaction to this research approach reflected how research can be a positive experience for the researched. His reaction was: *"I want to add that my own life will never be the same again as the result of this project. The impact of obedience will bear eternal fruit. I thank God for Pastor Crous who selected me for this research, to open my eyes to see the impact that Jesus' presence makes to people's lives"*. I am convinced that a quantitative logico-empirical approach, where it is about "controlled objective observation" (Kaye 1990:29), would not have had the same impact.

Although this research's emphasis was initially about the aspect of *understanding*, the two other aspects referred to above, also received attention. Chapter 9 focused on the *explanation* aspect. If this approach is correctly implemented, *change* will inevitably follow. Responses of the participants, for example Chaplain Muller, indeed indicated that the research process had an impact on their lives and gives an indication of the change that it brought about. Although this project's focus was initially not to bring about change, as the research process developed, the further development of TPM became all the more important. As I previously indicated this stage can be regarded as the main objective of the research and therefore this research is about change. In this process, I believe that new appreciation will grow for TPM.

Another aspect that is related to the research method that is not covered under this heading is the research design. Therefore, I also want to reflect on the research design.

### **10.8.2 Reflecting on the research design**

At the beginning of the project, I had to decide whether this research had a before-test-after-test design. In that case I had to interview participants before they received TPM and again after their session/s. Hakala (2001:61) who motivated this design for her research, made me wonder if such a design would not have made the influence of TPM much clearer. According to the research question the emphasis was not on the "change" aspect, but on the "how" and the "why" of the

participants' experiences of TPM, in order to make a contribution to the further development of TPM. I chose to listen to stories of people who had first hand experience of TPM. I did not want to prove anything, but to give those participants the opportunity to contribute to the further development of TPM. As the emphasis is on their experience of how they did or did not benefit from TPM, the specific research design is not relevant. However my choice of design had some advantages.

In the first place, it opened up the possibility of researching the long term effect of TPM and secondly, it highlighted the natural and spontaneous way in which a facilitator uses TPM. The benefit of this approach is that the participants' experiences are not influenced by pre- knowledge that they are part of a research process. Neither was the facilitator aware at the time that the narratives of the participants would be included in a research project. Therefore it was not a case of him putting his best foot forward. Here it had the advantage that a part of the "lived religion inside and outside the church" (Dreyer 1998:1) could be researched as it took place in practice. To me, this is important, not to have objective results, but because pre-knowledge that one is part of a research project, will influence the way in which a participant will experience the facilitation process. The focus is on their experience and therefore the research was designed to select a wide variety of participants, in respect of age, wealth, culture, denomination, presenting problems, etc. Therefore, there were four categories. Chaplain Muller was requested to select participants for three of the categories taking the aforementioned criteria in account. I also did not only select so-called successful participants, but there was also a category where TPM was not so successful. Five narratives were randomly selected. The reason for this selection was not to generalise results, but to have a variety of experiences, as wide as possible, that could contribute to the better understanding of TPM practices and the development thereof. In this way I believe that this research highlights the practices of TPM as it happened in a certain place in time, knowing well that the knowledge derived from it is not necessarily valid for other circumstances and times.

I also had to decide if narratives should be drawn from a number of facilitators or only from the case load of one facilitator. Seeing that TPM is a relatively new approach and there were not a large number of experienced facilitators available in the area at the time, I decided that *experience* was a higher priority than *variety*. The goal of this research is, after all, to better understand the practices of TPM in order to develop TPM and as it is also not directed at making general assumptions valid for all situations, I believe it was the best decision in order to highlight the different aspects of TPM. That only one facilitator was involved, may be seen as a limitation

because more diversity could have led to an even better understanding of TPM, However, within the restrictions of my practical circumstances, this was the most plausible choice.

I chose a narrative inquiry as research design because it would give the participants a voice in the further development of TPM, as I indicated at 10.2 where I reflected on the goal of the research. I experienced during the interviews that the participants related their experiences in an authentic way. Chaplain Muller referred to his experience of the research interviews where he was involved as “standing on holy ground”. By listening to eighteen different narratives there were those unique experiences in the narratives, commonalities in some of the narratives and those experiences that were part of nearly all the narratives. Nearly all the participants had an authentic encounter with the Lord. Nevertheless, each narrative is unique in its own way. That contributed to my endeavour to describe TPM's narrative all the more richly.

When Chaplain Muller reflected on his experience of the research process he pointedly referred to the transformation he experienced. Many of the participants also witnessed to that effect. To me it was an amazing journey, as I experienced how different participants gained new insights. Several of them related that hearing others talking about their experiences had a profound influence on them. Each participant had the opportunity to edit this report. As each signed the consent form to publish this report, each participant's contribution to this project had been acknowledged. In this way their experiences were validated. By sharing their experiences they became consultants for the further development of TPM.

The inherent ethics of narrative research, that lies in the resolute honesty of the reflexivity, which clearly states the biases, aims and positioning of the researcher, also made it the appropriate design in my eyes.

Now I wish to focus on the research journey.

### **10.8.3 Reflecting on the research journey**

The research journey started with two initial research interviews that were conducted with recipients whom I already knew well prior to the start of the research project. Their willingness and feedback about their experience of the research conversations, as well as discussions with my promoter, contributed to a framework being set up to be used as a semi-structured interview for all the narratives. This semi-structured interview was socially constructed through this process.



### **10.8.3.1 Pilot study**

Still part of this social construction process, was the testing of it in the pilot study. Jacques' and Chaplain Muller's feedback was incorporated in creating the final product, in other words its meaning was negotiated between the different role players. Therefore, I want to acknowledge them as co-researchers in this project. I also know now that without their contribution I would not have been able to put together the semi-structured interview. This semi-structured interview is therefore the property of all the co-researchers.

### **10.8.3.2 Selecting the participants**

The eighteen participants were selected according to four categories –

- Where TPM was successful according to the facilitator;
- Where recipients only received one TPM session;
- Where recipients were randomly selected on a previously agreed method; and
- Where TPM was deemed not so successful according to the facilitator.

It goes without saying that Chaplain Muller played a major role in selecting the participants and in that way made an important contribution to ensure as wide a variety as possible. Regarding the “successful” group, Chaplain Muller succeeded in selecting a wide variety. In age they differ from a boy of 9 years old to a grandma. Three different language groups were represented. Their presenting problems also differ. This is also valid for the other groups. I am satisfied that the aim with this selection was reached. I am confident that this variety of experiences contributed to the rich description of TPM practices. If we had stuck to a randomly selected group, it might have been that there wouldn't have been such a variety.

It might have been better if Chaplain Muller did not identify the participants. For practical reasons it was not possible to do it in any other way. Only Chaplain Muller knew which recipients would be able to tell success stories and who would not. To be able to select the recipients according to categories, it was limited to the recipients whose circumstances he had knowledge about. It is a limitation in this research. There were probably also other “not so successful” recipients, but it was impossible to identify them. That was partly the motivation for the “randomly selected” -category. The reaction of some of the randomly selected recipients who refused to take part in the research, makes me suspect that they did not view TPM as very helpful. An example of this is that in tracing one person, it seemed that addiction still had control over the recipient's life. The research story would have been poorer if the “not so successful”

group was not included. Their narratives brought perspectives forward that made a huge contribution to the better understanding of the TPM practices. Those narratives brought limitations in the TPM practices forward that ask for further research as I previously indicated. Further research of this group may even open up more perspectives on TPM.

I included a category for “one session” because it is often the experience within therapeutic circles that when someone does not return after a first therapy session, then it was not so successful. During my initial interest in TPM, I was told that the method could bring complete healing in only one session. In some circles TPM is marketed as a “quick fix” which it is not. It is, however, interesting that all those selected for this category are narratives where TPM can be deemed as being successful. What stands out for me is that even though this might be the case, more sessions are recommended for those participants, excluding perhaps Joe. It seems to me that from the facilitator’s side one always has to plan to schedule at least one subsequent session. If the recipient does not arrive, at least the facilitator acted responsibly. Therefore I cannot agree with the viewpoint that “all are cured in one session”. It is about redefining TPM from an event to a process, a way of living. Rather it is a life long process in conversation with the Lord.

In my opinion, selecting participants according to the four categories, led this research to explore a variety of experiences of recipients that helped to describe the narrative of TPM all the more richly. The successful narratives helped to understand the process, when it is helpful for recipients. Although the “one session” category as well as the “not so successful” narratives brought some limitations to light, it also showed that TPM can be helpful in most circumstances. The “randomly selected” group gave the opportunity for all recipients of TPM, facilitated by Chaplain Muller, to be included in the research project.

### **10.8.3.3 Negotiating the journey**

The negotiating process was explained in Chapter 1. In reflecting about it, I must acknowledge Chaplain Muller’s generosity as he made time and space for this research in his very full programme. He not only went out of his way to prepare those selected for the interviews, but also made the appointments and sometimes also provided them with transport. In a couple of cases, repeated appointments had to be made because of cancellations. During that process he never became impatient and so insured that the data for this project was collected. The enthusiasm with which some participants committed themselves to the project, gave me a lot of energy and the assurance that it was worth it to continue with the project.

A factor that should be kept in mind is that as the participants were approached by Chaplain Muller to take part in the research process, they possibly felt loyalty towards him and did not want to disappoint him. It may have influenced the way in which they shared. However, I found that most of the participants shared so spontaneously, that it could not have been an important factor. A few of the participants felt at ease pointing out his mistakes. It strengthens my opinion that the influence of the factor of loyalty is small at best.

#### **10.8.3.4 Sharing the experience**

This brings me to the central point of this research journey. There were excited participants whose enthusiasm about their experiences cannot be captured in words on paper, who were filled with emotion as they related their stories. There were those who carefully prepared beforehand and shared and analyzed their experiences in a logical, responsible way. Some were initially hesitant, but managed to find the courage to tell their stories with conviction. A few refused. Some just shared about themselves in a quiet manner. I want to agree with Chaplain Muller that those conversations were holy moments. Those interviews had an impact on me.

However, this research had a disadvantage. A great many narratives were selected to obtain a reasonable distribution of experiences. Yet, it had the drawback that to keep the research financially viable and within time constraints, the length of the interviews had to be kept within a certain time frame. The semi-structured interviews had to dictate a certain direction for the conversation, and obviously also directed the interviews. Lack of time also led to some participants possibly being limited in their sharing. In those cases, my knowledge had to play the unfortunate role of limiting the voices of the participants. My manner of asking the questions probably also led to more attention being given to aspects that I considered important rather than to aspects the participants would have preferred to highlight. That makes me certain that some aspects of the participants' stories have not yet been told. But I do believe that I successfully created a space in which most participants shared their experiences openly. For some of them I think it was difficult to share and that is why I have a high appreciation for everyone who took part in this process.

#### **10.8.3.5 Documenting the research**

It has been very difficult for me to write this report, because I have only language to do it. As previously indicated, language cannot represent the reality of what happened in the research process. When writing down the knowledge co-constructed by all the co-researchers, then this knowledge really acquires meaning. While writing it down you gain respect for the ownership of



it, that it is not yours but ours. It is not knowledge from which general conclusions can be drawn. It is not knowledge that wants to prescribe, but knowledge with which we want to be accountable to an academic community and towards the church of Jesus Christ. Most of all we also want to be accountable towards all the TPM facilitators and recipients, that are presently involved in TPM and all those who will get involved in the future. It is knowledge that can contribute to the further development of TPM. It is a way of participating in the discourse of pastoral care and therapy, and practical theology.

In the process of putting all of this in writing, I was acutely aware of how easily my own voice could marginalize the voices of the participants. That is why they were invited to read through the report and make any suggestions or corrections. In that way each participant had the opportunity to make his/her voice clearly heard. Tootell (2004:57) points out that in that way a two way account is required of the research and contributions of participants are acknowledged.

With regard to the ethical aspects of this research, I allowed myself to be led through the process by the question: “Who benefits?” In this way I wanted to be accountable to all participants as well as the academic community. I believe that TPM derived the most advantage from this research, without the participants being disadvantaged. The voices of the participants are made audible by the value they attach to TPM, in direct contrast to so many voices that aim to discredit it. In most of the cases those voices belong to theorists who use their academic knowledge, theological or psychological, to discredit TPM without any firsthand knowledge of it.

What causes the most resistance in me is that people make their certain theological knowledge so absolute that all other theological viewpoints are labelled as “heresy”. Unfortunately I was once bogged down in the same paradigm. For many years in research projects, the knowledge of the recipients, whether it was in therapy or in training, was overshadowed by academic knowledge and research designs. So, in this research I tried to give the voices of the participants an equal position with all the other voices. That is why I conclude this chapter with the voices of the participants. In doing so, I am also in resistance to the current practices of the church. The so-called experts in Theology still have the power to decide when and what voice belongs to the Holy Spirit. Annatjie had to accept that her experience of Jesus was silenced because the expert pastor decided that it could not be Jesus' voice. I trust that this research will make the voices of Annatjie and all the other participants clearly heard by the academic community and the whole church of Jesus Christ.

However, I am not saying that every word of the participants is gospel. It is about people's lives being touched by TPM (positive or negative). Their voices form part of the social construction of

knowledge about TPM. TPM is further constructed by such voices. It is so futile for the church to abort every unknown form of spiritual life by means of certain dogmatic knowledge. It is precisely what I experienced with various leaders of different denominations. May the voices from this research stimulate the church to keep on deconstructing any other power other than the power of the Holy Spirit, and help the participants to remain in a constant social co-construction of new healing possibilities for God's people. In this process we must remember that with regard to the power of the Holy Spirit we must humbly acknowledge that we have only human interpretations, social constructions, which we experience as the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Here I also want to give recognition to all the participants in the project, as well as all the comments of my promoters, my peers in the pastoral and psychology fields, as well as all the numerous philosophers, theologians, psychologists and other authors whose books and articles contributed to the construction of this report. Most of all it makes me realize that I am not an expert on any topic, but that my reflection on this journey enriched my own life. I am someone still searching for the truth while realising in reality that I will always remain searching for it (Berkouwer 1989:428).

## **10.9 Quotations from the participants' interviews.**

To emphasize that this research was about the participants' voices in the further development of TPM, I want the participants to have the last say in this report. I selected quotations from their interviews to reflect their experience of TPM.

Alice (“Inner voices exchanged for God's voice”):

“That is why I have respect for the fact that TPM allows God to work as He pleases”.

Annatjie (“A corpse coming to life”):

“The foetus stood upright and I clearly heard the words: 'You are My joy.' This vision gave me an identity. This TPM image changed my life”.

Beryl (“A cleansing experience”):

“TPM did a lot ... Under TPM you tell what has to be said ... It was a cleansing experience”.

Dawid. (“Freed from the shame”):

“There was no force ... The Holy Spirit burns the rubbish out of us”.

Edward (“A boy who let his father down”):

“I've got nothing to worry about. He is my Father who protects me”.

Emily (“Voice of a woman”):

“When I had experienced the love of the Lord, I was able to forgive my husband”.

Gert (“God has a goal for everyone”):

“There is no longer any pain when I think of the past”.

Glen (“From shy to cheerful”):

“A piece of black had been taken out of me”.

Harold (11yrs old) (“How God can change a person”):

“Before, I was not kind and not nice. Now I am a nice boy”.

Jacques (“From stuttering to public speaking”):

“It is the experience of Jesus Christ that causes the change”.

Joe (“Anointed”):

“Jesus Christ helped me to look at myself in a whole new way”.

Magriet (“Fireworks”):

“I can now hear God’s voice much clearer than before”.

Marinda (“Two different people”):

“TPM is a way of life”.

Michelle (“A huge breach in the wall”):

“It changed my whole way of thinking”.

Minah (“Cured overnight”):

“Everything I experienced in the session is rooted in the Bible. I learnt to speak to God”.

Roelf (“I did not want it to work”)

“I was the one who became unmanageable”.

Ruth (“You’re precious in My eyes”):

“It is a personal experience of His presence in your life. I experienced TPM helping me to be completely honest with God”.

Veronica (“A divorce would have been a mistake”):

“TPM is direct help from God. God takes you to the memory and frees you from the pain contained therein”.

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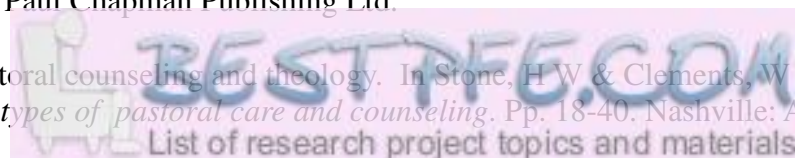
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## APPENDIX A

### HAROLD SESSION ONE

F – Chaplain Muller -the Facilitator

H - Harold

HM - Housemother

- 001 F How old are you?  
002 H Nine.  
003 F When is your birthday?  
004 H I don't know.  
005 F You don't know?  
006 H No. Every day is my birthday.  
007 F I believe from the auntie (the housemother) here that you're such a big man around the house. Is that true?  
008 H Yes, big man.  
009 F Do you have any sisters?  
010 H Only one, but I have two Children's Home sisters.  
011 F Where do you go to school? Do you go by bus?  
012 H No, they take us with the Children's Home bus.  
013 F What do you want to be when you grow up?  
014 H I'm going to be a fireman.  
015 F Why do you think we're talking to you?  
016 H I don't know.  
017 F Do you know that all of us here, including the auntie is here to help you? What should we help you with?  
018 H To pray for my mother, to get better and not be in a car accident. I want her to be safe and not land up in hospital.  
019 F Do you love your mother?  
020 H Yes.  
021 F Shall we pray for her now?  
022 H I pray for her every night, morning and every afternoon.  
023 F Close your eyes. Father God, we just want to bring Harold's mother to You and pray that You keep her safe from accidents, heal her, look after her morning, afternoon and night. We ask you to heal her body and keep her in health for Harold's sake because he loves her. I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen. Is that better?  
024 H Yes.  
025 F What are some of the things that you don't like?  
026 H I don't like it when kids are ugly to me. They hit me and swear my mother out.  
027 F Okay. How do you feel when they do that?  
028 H Upset. I want to hit them but we're not allowed to hit kids in the house. I just tell the auntie.  
029 F Tell me something that happened just the other day that wanted to make you hit them.  
030 H They swore my mother.  
031 F What did they say? Your mother is bad?  
032 H She's ugly, like a swear word.  
033 F Which one?  
034 H I don't like swearing.  
035 F Who are the ones talking about your mother?  
036 H All the kids in my house.  
037 F When last did you see your mother?  
038 H Two Saturdays ago.

039 F What did you talk about?

040 H I forgot.

041 F Was she happy to see you?

042 H Yes and I was happy to see her.

043 F The auntie told me you're a big boy and everything you tell me will be because you're a big man.

044 H I don't like it when they say those things about my mother. I want to cry because I love my other.

045 F We're also going to talk about things you don't want to talk about.

046 H I protect myself and my parents. And my second auntie, grandmother and grandfather.

047 F Are there other people you care about?

048 H Yes, but then half my family died.

049 F How did that make you feel?

050 H Upset.

051 F And when you're upset, how do you feel?

052 H I cry.

053 F Are you still all right? Are you still strong? Think back on that day when the other boys teased you. Do you remember?

054 H They teased my mother.

055 F Okay, when they teased you about your mother and you got upset, wanting to cry and hit them. Why did you want to cry?

056 H Because I love my mother very much. And my first Nenna (grandmother), she's in East London by my auntie.

057 F I want you to be strong. Close your eyes for me and make fists. Remember that day those boys teased you and upset you.

058 H They teased my mother.

059 F They didn't realize that Harold loves his mother and that she is very special to his heart. You wanted to hit them, kick and beat them. Let's ask Jesus to show us the other time when you were much smaller.

060 H When I was a baby.

061 F When you got hurt in your heart, you got upset and your heart was sore. Just remember the time you cried so much. *Lord Jesus, just take Harold by the hand and show him the first time when he was little, when his heart was sore, when people hurt him.* Just keep your eyes closed. How old were you?

062 H Two years old.

063 F What do you see?

064 H I see my mother, I see my Nenna, my auntie, uncle and my other uncle. That's all.

065 F What are they doing?

066 H They put me on the balcony where the steps are, when I was in a baby rocking chair.

067 F What are they doing?

068 H I'm alone on the balcony. I'm scared to fall off.

069 F And if you'd fall?

070 H Then I'd cry.

071 F What would happen to your little body if you'd fall?

072 H I would die. I would be dead already.

073 F And then?

074 H Then I wouldn't be here.

075 F Who would you miss the most?

076 H My whole family.

077 F See yourself on that balcony. You're all alone and two years old, okay? You look around, there is no one to help you. It's very high and you're scared. Can you feel how scared you are?

078 H Yes.

079 F Is your heart beating?

080 H My heart is pounding.

081 F You're very scared. You're going to die if you fall. Shall we see what Jesus wants to show that little boy? *Lord Jesus, can we ask You to show this little boy, all alone on the balcony, he's scared to fall and die. Can we ask You to help him out?*  
(Pause)  
What do you see?

082 H I see that I'm safe.

083 F Describe it to me. Where do you see yourself in that memory?  
084 H Not near to the steps.  
085 F Away from the steps?  
086 H Yes.  
087 F What else do you see?  
088 H That's all.  
089 F Is there anybody with you?  
090 H I'm all alone, but now I don't feel scared anymore.  
091 F What do you feel?  
092 H I feel happy.  
093 F Why?  
094 H God saved me.  
095 F Are you proud of God?  
096 H He's the only One Who can save you and keep all your sin and punish you.  
097 F In this case He saved you. Do you trust God?  
098 H Yes.  
099 F Do you love Him?  
100 H Yes.  
101 F Are you special to Him?  
102 H Yes.  
103 F Is He going to make you a fireman?  
104 H Yes.  
105 F I want you to take God's hand, okay? Take Jesus' hand. Jesus is going to take you to other memories of when you were small and they were painful. Are you willing?  
106 H No.  
107 F But if Jesus is with you and wants to also heal you where you no longer feel scared?  
108 H Yes.  
109 F Once you go with Him, all the pain disappears and you're never going to think about it again or feel unhappy. See yourself, that this is like a journey. Aren't you excited about it?  
110 H Yes.  
111 F God only wants big men like you to go with Him. *Lord Jesus, Harold is now ready that You can take him to another memory that is very painful and he is going to tell You everything? Which memory are you in?*  
112 H I don't know.  
113 F Which one do you remember?  
114 H The balcony.  
115 F Okay, another one that was very painful. Ask God to help you, say *God, give me a painful memory.*  
116 H The kids that talk about my mom.  
117 F See all the kids there, teasing you, saying things about your mom. See yourself crying, see your heart is very sore, okay?  
118 H When I came into the house, one of the boys turned my arm and it nearly broke.  
119 F Stay there. See the picture where you were crying. Do you see the picture where you wanted to hit them and was upset? See the picture. *Lord Jesus, can I ask You where all those boys are teasing Harold that You will come and fix and mend his broken heart?*  
(Long pause)  
What do you feel or see?  
120 H Now I see nothing.  
121 F Is your heart still sore?  
122 H No.  
123 F You're doing alright. Are you ready to go to the big stuff?  
124 H What is big stuff?  
125 F Very sore things that only God can help with. Ready? Tell me about your dad.  
126 H The first time he abused me.  
127 F He abused you? How old were you?  
128 H I think I was three years old.  
129 F Three years old! Okay, tell me, what did he do?  
130 H I don't know. My mum said he abused me. He hit me with a sjambok (hide covered whip).

- 131 F Where was this?
- 132 H By his house.
- 133 F Why did he hit you?
- 134 H I was naughty.
- 135 F Why do you say that?
- 136 H Because I was!
- 137 F What did you do?
- 138 H I forgot.
- 139 F Do you want to remember? Do you want to show Jesus and tell Him what happened?
- 140 H No.
- 141 F Why not?
- 142 H I don't know.
- 143 F Don't you think that Jesus loves you?
- 144 H Yes.
- 145 F That He wants to fix your heart, pain and memories? Take a deep breath, close your eyes for us. Remember that time at your dad's house when he abused you when you were a small boy of three with a sjambok. How did it feel?
- 146 H I feel bad.
- 147 F Okay. Describe it. Explain 'bad'. What do you see?
- 148 H Sore.
- 149 F How many swipes?
- 150 H One.
- 151 F *Lord Jesus, just show Harold everything, make him remember what happened that day. What do you remember?*
- 152 H I forget. I don't know.
- 153 F Just remember, tell it how you remember it, tell it like you would to the auntie. Close your eyes. Let's ask Jesus to help you. If you want to be a fireman, you have to be brave and strong. *Lord Jesus, just show Harold everything about the first time his father abused him. Show him the whole picture. Let him hear the argument, let him see everything that happened there.*
- 154 H I can't remember.
- 155 F Okay. Was it sore?
- 156 H Hmm.
- 157 F How did your heart feel?
- 158 H Upset.
- 159 F Why?
- 160 H I don't know.
- 161 F Do you want to find out? Let's ask Jesus to help you. *Lord Jesus, just take Harold by his little hand and show him why his heart was so upset. Where did he hit you?*
- 162 H On my bum.
- 163 F Inside the house or outside?
- 164 H Inside.
- 165 F In the bathroom or in your room?
- 166 H In the bathroom. I slept in my dad's room.
- 167 F Was it sore? Did you cry? What did he shout at you? What did he say when he was so upset?
- 168 H I don't know.
- 169 F Let's ask Jesus if He can help you. See yourself in the bathroom in your dad's house. *Lord Jesus, is there anything else You want to show Harold or tell us about this day when his father hit him? Can you show Harold anything else in this memory picture? What do you see? Make the auntie proud of you, and Jesus. Tell us what happened or what you heard.*
- 170 H (silent and crying) It is as if Harold went into a deep trance.
- 171 F What do you see now? What is Jesus showing you? *Lord Jesus, is there anything You want to show this special little boy at this moment?*  
(Pause)  
We are so proud of you. If you go through it now, you don't have to go through it again. Just take Jesus by the hand and let Him show you everything. Do you see that Jesus wants to help you? Harold, how do you feel now? Look at the auntie quickly.
- 172 F (Aside to HM, asking her to encourage Harold.)
- 173 HM Harold, Jesus is going to show us, tell us what is in your mind so that He can heal you of all

those memories. It's not always nice. Can we pray for you again? Keep your eyes closed.

174 F *Lord Jesus, can we ask You to come and show Harold Your love and truth for him so that we can deal with his pain? Do you see Jesus?*

175 HM What do you see? Tell us. Do you see Jesus close to you?

176 F (To HM: It must take someone very special, very strong, to stand up for his mother like that, to go through all of that. That's why I think he wants to become a fireman, to face dangers, save animals, people and children. I believe what he's going through now with his father is part of his courage. It will bring healing of bad memories, thoughts, nightmares and emotions. Jesus will take away the hurt in his heart.) Harold, would you like to have that? Look at me quickly. Do you want Jesus to take the pain? Get some tissues, wipe your face. Blow your nose. Are you feeling a little better? Cry it all out. We want you to cry, because it's tough and it takes a man to cry. Are you crying for that day they teased your mother or when your father hit you with the sjambok or something else? Do you want us to leave you alone for a couple of minutes?

177 (F leaves room. HM comes to comfort Harold.)  
(Long pause)

178 F Give me a hug. You are so brave. What did you see that upset you so much? Were you three years old also? How old were you when it was so sore? Show with your hands.

179 H (shows 3 fingers)

180 F Who hurt you when you were three years old? One finger for your father, two fingers for your mother.

181 H (shows 1 finger)

182 F Your father. Did you get hurt in your father's house?

182 H (nods)

183 F Did you get hurt in the bathroom?

184 H (shows 1 finger)

185 F Were you and your father all alone in the house?

186 H (shows 1 finger)

187 F Let's ask Jesus something else quickly. *Lord Jesus, can You help us if we're dealing with some other form of dissociation and we want to address any other personality if it is.* Harold, is there a little boy or girl inside your head to help you? Say yes or no. Do you sometimes hear voices in your head that talks to you? Adult or children?

188 H (shakes his head)

189 F Not one of them. Say it quickly then it's over. Is it your own voice? The voice of Jesus?

190 H (shakes his head)

191 F Animals?

192 H (shakes his head)

193 F The devil?

194 H (nods his head)

195 F Are you scared of it?

196 H (nods his head)

197 F Are there only one devil in your head or lots of devils?

198 H (shows 1 finger)

199 F Does this devil have a name?

200 H (shakes his head)

201 F Do you hear it when you dream? When you play outside?

202 H (nods his head)

203 F At school?

204 H (nods his head)

205 F Is it a good devil or a bad devil?

206 H (shows 2<sup>nd</sup> finger)

207 F Do you remember the time the devil came in you?

208 H (shakes his head)

209 F You can't remember? Are you scared of him?

210 H (shakes his head)

211 F Do you feel him now? Does he talk to you?

212 H (shows 1 finger for yes)

213 F Do you want me to make him quiet? Yes? *Devil, I come to you in the name of Jesus. I come against you and command you to be quiet and still. I bind you up in the name of Jesus and*

*command you not to speak to Harold. You will only address me. Do you understand? You will not speak if Jesus doesn't give you permission. Until then, you are powerless. I don't want to hear from you. You will not communicate. If you disobey orders, I will send you immediately to the feet of the Lord Jesus, or ask Him to collect you. I command you now to be still in Jesus Christ's name. Is it better?*

- 214 H (shows 1 finger for yes)
- 215 F Do you also want to tell the devil to keep quiet like that? Is he still speaking to you or is he quiet? Is he still talking?
- 216 H (nods his head)
- 217 F What is he saying?  
(Pause)  
Remember the time you were in the bathroom and your father was hitting you. Right? Did he hit you once or more than once?
- 218 H (shows 1 finger – once)
- 219 F Only once. Did he whip you over your clothes?
- 220 H (shows 1 finger for yes)
- 221 F Was your dad upset or did he swear at you also?
- 222 H (shows 2 fingers)
- 223 F Was he upset at what you did or call you names?
- 224 H (shows 1 finger)
- 225 F Was he sorry when he hit you?
- 226 H (shakes his head)
- 227 F Glad?
- 228 H (shows 1 finger for yes)
- 229 F After he hit you, did you stay in the bathroom or go out?
- 230 H (shows 2 fingers)
- 231 F Did you go play outside or go to your room?
- 232 H (shows 2 fingers)
- 233 F Did you stay alone or did he come in?
- 234 H (shows 1 finger)
- 235 F Did you stay in your room for long or for short?
- 236 H (shows 1 finger)
- 237 F Did you fall asleep or did you go to play again?
- 238 H (shows 1 finger)
- 239 F Did only one thing happen that day or did more things happen after that?
- 240 H (shows 2 fingers)
- 241 F Did he hit you again or do other stuff?
- 242 H (shows 1 finger)
- 243 F He hit you again. With the sjambok or something else?
- 244 H (shows 1 finger)
- 245 F Did you cry? Did he hit you again? Once or more than once?
- 246 H (shows 2 fingers)
- 247 F Twice? More than twice?
- 248 H (shows 2 fingers)
- 249 F Did he hit you three times or more than 5 times?
- 250 H (shows 2 fingers)
- 251 F Did he hit you with the sjambok or with his hand?
- 252 H (shows 1 finger)
- 253 F With the sjambok. Only on your bum or your back?
- 254 H (shows 2 fingers)
- 255 F Back also. Was it only sore or was it bleeding as well?
- 256 H (shows 2 fingers)
- 257 F Bleeding. What bled? Your bum or back or both?
- 258 H (shows 2 fingers)
- 259 F Both. That scar on your face from that day – was it from the sjambok or something else?
- 260 H (shows 2 fingers)
- 261 F Was the scratch an accident or did your father do it?
- 262 H (shows 2 fingers)
- 263 F Scratch or hit?



264 H (shows 2 fingers)  
265 F What did he hit you with? Hand or something else?  
266 H (shows 2 fingers)  
267 F Sjambok again. In the face with the sjambok. Was he alone or were there other people there? Was he the only one hitting you or was someone helping him? The only one?  
268 H (nods his head)  
269 F Were there other kids in the house?  
270 H (shakes his head)  
271 F Which hiding hurt the most – the one in the bathroom or the one in your room?  
272 H (shows 1 finger)  
273 F Bathroom. Were you scared or did you think you were going to die? Or both?  
274 H (shows 2 fingers)  
275 F (aside to HM in Afrikaans: You see, that is how God works. He connects the memory of the balcony with this one.) Were you scared because you're going to die alone or because your father didn't love you?  
276 H (shows 1 finger)  
277 F That day when he hit you in the face, was it in the bathroom or in your room?  
278 H (shows 1 finger)  
279 F Bathroom. Did he hit you only once or five times? Five times? You're doing verywell. Close your eyes for me quickly. Can you see a picture of Jesus? *Lord Jesus, there where Harold is getting the bad hiding from his father with the sjambok and he thinks he's going to die, he's all alone and no one can help him or loves him, bring him Your truth. Show him everything You want to tell him.* Close your eyes again. One finger means yes, five fingers mean no. *Lord Jesus, can I ask You to reveal Yourself to Harold in that bathroom where his father is abusing him and bring him truth?* Can you see Jesus?  
280 H (shows 1 finger)  
281 F Now that you see Him, are you feeling better? Are you still scared?  
282 H (shows 1 finger)  
283 F Yes? Tell me what is going to happen? Are you still a bit scared of Jesus? Yes or no?  
284 H (nods his head)  
285 F *Father God Lord, if this is not from You, we ask You to reveal any false Jesus in this memory and command him to reveal himself to Harold and to us. In the name of the true Lord Jesus Christ. Is it still Jesus or someone else?*  
286 H (shows 1 finger)  
287 F Are you scared to close your eyes? *I take full authority over you and I command you to tell me what access and right you have to still be present in this memory. Tell me in Jesus' name before I command you to go.* Tell me what the devil says. Close your eyes. Do you still see Jesus in that memory? Do you want to know if it's really God?  
288 H (shows 5 fingers)  
289 F No? You don't want to find out? You're scared of Jesus – yes or no? If I can show you my Jesus Who helps, would you like to meet this other Jesus? Yes or no?  
290 H (shows 5 fingers)  
291 F No. How would you feel – are you going to be scared if Jesus shows Himself to you?  
292 H (shows 1 finger)  
293 F Do you think a fireman would be scared?  
294 H (shows 1 finger)  
295 F Are all firemen scared of God?  
296 H (nods his head)  
297 F I want you to close your eyes. You can't? Okay. Tell me, that picture of Jesus – I think he could be wearing a mask, it's someone else with the face of Jesus. Do you want me to pull that mask off and show you who it is?  
298 H (shows 5 fingers)  
299 F Are you scared to see who's under the mask?  
300 H (shows 5 fingers)  
301 F Yes? No? Why are you scared to see who it is? Will he hurt you or will you be shocked?  
302 H Shocked?  
303 F If I pull the mask off but not show his face, would it be okay?  
304 H (shows 5 fingers)

- 305 F Do you want to keep the mask on?
- 306 H (shows 1 finger)
- 307 F *Lord God, take full command and full authority over Harold's mind in the name of Jesus. Command the devil feeding him info to go to the feet of Jesus. I command you now to leave in the name of Jesus Christ. You that are keeping his mind in torment, feeding him with answers and fear, I command you to be powerless. Father, I ask You to give Harold strength, boldness, the energy of a young man and the power to go through this ordeal. In the name of Jesus Christ. Are you better? Do you want to heal that painful memory of your father hitting you? Do you want it to go away? What we must do then is that we need to look at the man behind the mask. We must decide whether you are going to keep all the hurt and pain or give it away. Think about it and be strong. Do you want to keep the pain by keeping the mask on or let it go, by taking the mask off. Which one do you want? Pain with the mask or no pain without the mask? I'm going to give you a minute with the auntie, okay?*  
(F leaves room while HM comforts Harold.)
- 308 F Give me another hug. You're doing so well. Give me a shake. You're strong. Now I want to show you something. The auntie wears a mask. While she's got a mask on, she's saying bad things about your mother. We don't know who it is, so we have to take it off. Now remember when you were two years old and they forgot you on the balcony. Stairway?
- 309 H Balcony with stairs.
- 310 F You thought you were going to fall and die? Do you still feel like that?
- 311 H (nods his head)
- 312 F Is your dad better now or is he still bad?
- 313 H Still bad.
- 314 F Can I call him Bad Boy?
- 315 H Yes.
- 316 F Does he still stay in that house?
- 317 H No, somewhere else. I don't know where, my mother doesn't tell me because he may be in jail.
- 318 F Are you scared that he will come back and beat you up again? Will he be able to beat me up?
- 319 H No.
- 320 F Will he be able to beat God up?
- 321 H No.
- 322 F He thinks so! But he won't get that right. Did he hit you only once?
- 323 H Yes
- 324 F In your room?
- 325 H His room.
- 326 F Did you sleep in his room?
- 327 H On the floor. He slept on the bed and another girl was also there in the bed.
- 328 F Did he hit you once or many times?
- 329 H Many.
- 330 F And your face? How did you get those marks? Did you hit yourself against a door?
- 331 H At the Children's Home.
- 332 F When your father hit you in his room, he swore at you and told you to stop crying. What can we call him?
- 333 H Don't know. Abuser!
- 334 F Let's call him abuser. Was he drinking at the time? Water?
- 335 H No. beer.
- 336 F When he hit you so many times you thought you were going to die – why?
- 337 H He hit me too much.
- 338 F There was nobody to help you?
- 339 H No one to help.
- 340 F What does it feel like when there's no one to help?
- 341 H Like I'm upset, I just want to run away. My father doesn't love me. My mother and whole family does but not my father.
- 342 F This abuser is a bad boy, he can only do it to children. One day when you're a fireman, then he'll be scared of you. Your father's girlfriend, did she do something to you?
- 343 H No.
- 344 F Didn't she stop your father?
- 345 H She was making us food and all that.
- 346 F Did you like her?

347 H Yes.

348 F We're going to try and go back into this memory where you felt you were going to die. We see this person of thing with face and clothes like Jesus on. We're going to pull the mask off. Can we do that? Will you be scared again?

349 H Yes I will.

350 F Who is Jesus to you?

351 H The Real One.

352 F What do you mean?

353 H That I love Him.

354 F Why do you love Him?

355 H He's the only real One that can punish us and heal us.

356 F Why would God punish children?

357 H When we don't respect God.

358 F Who told you that God punishes children? Was it your abuser again?

359 H No, it was sister Mary at the Children's Home.

360 F Do you know that God is Jesus? Do you do exams at school? Can you count to ten?

361 H Yes.

362 F If you've got 10 cents and I've got 1 cent, who's got the most? God loves you 10 cents more and will only punish you 1%. What does that say? Does He love more or punish more?

363 H He loves me. But He can punish you if you don't obey or respect Him.

364 F How does He punish you? What does He do?

365 H Makes you get sick, get the flu and all that stuff. Tummy ache.

366 F Are you ready to go and see that man in the mask? This Jesus you were scared off? Harold, that voice that speaks to you in your head, who is that again?

367 H Satan.

368 F Only one Satan or many?

369 H One.

370 F What does he tell you? What does he say?

371 H I must do naughty stuff.

372 F How does he tell you? Does he swear?

373 H I must steal and all that naughty stuff.

374 F Are you still scared of him?

375 H No, I'm not because I've got God in my heart.

376 F (aside to HM in Afrikaans: The logical part, the frontal part of the brain is very brave. When we come to the subconscious, the emotion, we'll see if it still is.) Let's go back to the memory in the bathroom.

377 H I don't want to!

378 F Do you know what will happen? It'll be gone forever. See, the auntie and myself are very proud of you. You're not just a little boy. I'm going to take you back to when you were three years old and went to visit your father. Close your eyes.

379 H I don't want to!

380 F Be brave – we're nearly finished with this one.

381 H I don't want to do the top one.

382 F This time I want you to speak to me like you are now. Be brave. Deal? See your father in the toilet, shouting at you, grabbing sjambok and hit you with it. Focus now. See the pain of that three year old boy, crying. He swore at you, you cried and went to his room. In his room, he came in and told you to keep quiet, stop crying like a baby. He hit you again, so many times that you thought you were going to die. Remember the times when your bum was sore. Do you remember?

383 H I'm cold now. (HM puts blanket around him)

384 F Are you brave?

385 H (nods his head)

386 F Say: yes, sir.

387 H Yes, sir!

388 F At your father's house, think deeply of what happened.

389 H I'm going to fall asleep.

390 F We'll wake you. I don't want you to smile, focus. Remember that word. Tell me about your father.

391 H I don't know what to say.

392 F I'll ask the questions. Tell me: do you think your father loves you?

393 H No. He hits me too much.

394 F Why does he hit you?

395 H I don't know.

396 F Do you think you're special to your father?

397 H No.

398 F Do you think he hates you?

399 H Yes.

400 F Why does he hate you?

401 H Because he hits me and I am naughty.

402 F You believe because you're naughty, he hates you. Do you think your father would like to hit you ten times?

403 H Yes.

404 F Would he hit you till you bleed all over?

405 H Yes.

406 F Do you think your father want to kill you?

407 H Yes and he nearly did.

408 F Why does he hate you so much? Do you think if you were another little boy he'd do it to you?

409 H Yes.

410 F Would he do it to all boys?

411 H Yes.

412 F In which areas did he hit you? Back and bum? Did you enjoy it?

413 H Yes.

414 F Did you enjoy it?

415 H No.

416 F Was it painful?

417 H Yes.

418 F Sit still. Concentrate. Focus. Ready? Close your eyes for me. Think of everything that happened that day when your father beat you. What did you do wrong before he started beating you?

419 H I don't know.

420 F Just listen to the way he's shouting at you – because of what?

421 H I was naughty.

422 F What did you do naughty?

423 H Jump on the bed, come out of my room when I mustn't.

424 F What did he say to you? What did he shout at you?

425 H He only hit me.

426 F Look at your father's face when he was hitting you. Was he angry?

427 H Yes.

428 F Upset?

429 H Yes.

430 F Taking out all that punishment on you?

431 H Yes.

432 F You feel you're going to die?

433 H Yes.

434 F You feel alone?

435 H Yes.

436 F Your mummy is not there?

437 H Yes.

438 F No one can help you?

439 H Yes,

440 F Sit still and listen. While he's hitting you and you're saying to yourself that you're going to die, your father is killing you, what does Jesus say? Let's see what Jesus wants to tell us. *Lord Jesus, can we ask You to reveal to Harold Your truth about what happened and how he's feeling in that memory?* Tell me if you can see Jesus. Can you?

441 H (speaking in voice of 3yr old) He's healing the people.

442 F Where are you while He's healing the people?

443 H I don't know.

444 F In the bathroom?

445 H No.  
 446 F In your room?  
 447 H No.  
 448 F Where are you?  
 449 H Outside.  
 450 F Are you far from Jesus?  
 451 H No, not far.  
 452 F Can you see Him clearly?  
 453 H Yes.  
 454 F Look at Him and say when He's looking back at you. Is He friendly?  
 455 H Yes.  
 456 F Is He happy to see you?  
 457 H Yes.  
 458 F Can you go to Him or is He coming to you?  
 459 H He's coming to me.  
 460 F Tell us everything you see.  
 461 H He's healing me.  
 462 F With what?  
 463 H With His power. He's giving me food.  
 464 F What else?  
 465 H Water. And giving me bread, fish, vegetables.  
 466 F Why is He giving you all those things?  
 467 H I don't know.  
 468 F Ask Him.  
 470 H Because I'm hungry and thirsty.  
 471 F What else is He doing?  
 472 H That's all.  
 473 F Is He next to You?  
 474 H Yes.  
 475 F Standing or sitting?  
 476 H Sitting on a rock.  
 477 F Is Jesus standing or sitting?  
 478 H Sitting next to me.  
 479 F Is He talking to you?  
 480 H Yes.  
 481 F How does it make you feel?  
 482 H Happy.  
 483 F What is Jesus saying?  
 484 H I don't know.  
 485 F Let's ask Him. *Lord Jesus, I ask You to make everything quiet around him and tell him whatever You want to tell him.*  
 486 H He's telling me... I don't know.  
 487 F Ask Him to tell you again.  
 488 H He's telling me He's going to heal my whole family.  
 489 F Do you love Jesus?  
 490 H Yes.  
 491 F Ask Jesus what happened to that other false Jesus with the mask?  
 492 H He said it wasn't the real one.  
 493 F Where is that one?  
 494 H He took the mask off him.  
 495 F Ask Jesus how does He feel to have Satan in your head?  
 496 H He took Satan out of my head.  
 497 F Did you want to keep him?  
 498 H No, he's a stupid devil.  
 499 F Ask Jesus if He wants you to forgive your father.  
 500 H He says he doesn't.  
 501 F Listen carefully. Ask Him nicely and wait for it. *Lord Jesus, do You want Harold to forgive his father's abuse with the 3rd task.*

502 H He says I mustn't.  
503 F Okay. Let's go back there. Is Jesus doing anything for you?  
504 H Yes.  
505 F What is He doing?  
506 H I don't know.  
507 F Just look at Him.  
508 H He's doing nothing, just sitting. He's talking to me.  
509 F What are you two looking at?  
510 H I'm looking at all the fruit.  
511 F What will happen if you eat it all?  
512 H I will get a stomach ache. But I am not allowed to eat from the one fruit tree.  
513 F How do you feel at this moment?  
514 H Better.  
515 F What is better? Explain 'better'? Do you still feel that you are going to die?  
516 H No.  
517 F Do you feel alone?  
518 H No.  
519 F Who is going to help you?  
520 H God.  
521 F What is His name?  
522 H The Real God.  
523 F Are you still scared of your father?  
524 H No.  
525 F Are you still scared of the sjambok?  
526 H No.  
527 F And the bathroom?  
528 H No.  
529 F Toilet?  
530 H No.  
531 F Your father's bedroom?  
532 H No.  
533 F Why aren't you scared?  
534 H When I'm big and a fireman, I'm going to throw him off the fire tower.  
535 F Ask Jesus if He wants you to do that.  
536 H He says what he did to me I must do back to him.  
537 F *Father God, we ask You that You will unmask and expose any false Jesus in Harold's memory.  
In Your Son's name.*  
538 H Can I open my eyes now?  
539 F Okay. First tell me what you see now.  
540 H I see nothing now.  
541 F Okay, you can open your eyes.

## **APPENDIX B1**

### **The Theophostic Prayer Ministry (TPM): An Exploration of its practices and healing possibilities**

#### **INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS**

Thank you for your interest in this project about the influence of TPM on people's lives. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, I thank you. If you decide not to take part, there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind.

#### **THE AIM OF THE PROJECT**

This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for a Doctorate in Practical Theology – with specialisation in Pastoral Therapy. The aims of the project are to:

- a) explore the practices of TPM and their relationship with different Theological, Pastoral-therapeutic and Psychotherapeutic discourses;
- b) explore the healing possibilities obtained through TPM by giving voice to the stories of healing of those participants that had a positive experience with TPM, and to explore the understandings of these participants for this; how TPM helped people to get solutions for their problems and contributed to the change in their dominant life stories from problem saturated stories to new, preferred stories of faith, hope and love;
- c) explore the reasons why some participants did not experience change in their lives after their encounter with TPM or why some had negative experiences with TPM, and to explore the understandings of these participants for this.
- d) explore what the participants found helpful and what were perhaps harmful or created more problems.

#### **Participants needed for the study**

Sixteen people who received TPM from Chaplain Andre Muller will be included in this project, to tell their stories, how they experienced the process of healing through TPM.

#### **What will be required of participants**

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to give consent for the information obtained during the interviews to be used in this research project. If you decide to take part in the project you will be:

- a) interviewed individually by the researcher.
- b) requested to nominate one of the following: a family member, friend or colleague
- c) requested to read the summary of the abovementioned interviews as you will get the opportunity to comment or change anything in that summary that relates to you or your family.
- d) expected to attend a group discussion that will include yourself, your nominee, the

faciliator, the assistant faciliator and the researcher. This discussion will be a multiple reflective conversation on the effect of TPM on your life. This will include a discussion on the abovementioned summaries.

- e) expected to read a report by the researcher on the abovementioned interviews and as to make use of the opportunity to comment or change anything related to you or your family.

Although the interviews and discussions will be in either Afrikaans or English, the report will be written in English. Therefore all the summaries as well as other correspondence will be in English. At your request, it can be translated into Afrikaans. Then you will be requested to give permission that this report may be used in the research project.

### **Free participation**

You are free to withdraw from the research project at any time without any consequences to you.

### **Confidentiality**

The information obtained during this process will be discussed with my promotor and will be used in this project. With your consent the interviews as well as group discussion will be video taped. These videos will not be viewed by any other party except the researcher and promotor. Should you choose not to have the sessions videotaped, notes will be taken during the interviews and discussions. All the information (summaries, reports and video tapes) collected during this project will be securely stored in a locked filing cabinet and will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project.

Private data identifying you will not be reported. No identifiable information will be released and if a need develops that certain information have to be released in favour of the research project, your written consent will be obtained. Pseudonyms will be used where you will have the opportunity to choose your own pseudonym.

### **Results of the study**

After you have reviewed the final report, the results of this project may be published. You are most welcome to request a copy of the results, should you wish.

### **Questions of participants**

Should you have any questions of concerns regarding the project either now or in future, please

feel free to contact me: Kobus Crous

tel: 011 869 9305 or 014 736 3374

cel: 083 965 8531

or my promotor Prof. Dirk Kotze

at the Institute for Therapeutic Development tel: 012 460 6704

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Department of Practical Theology, Unisa and the Institute for Therapeutic Development.



## APPENDIX B2

### **The Theophostic Prayer Ministry (TPM): An Exploration of its practices and healing possibilities**

#### **CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROJECT**

I have read the Information Sheet concerning the project and I understand what the project is all about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary.
2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage.
3. I agree that the interviews and group discussions may be videotaped.
4. I am aware of what will happen to my personal information (including tape recordings) at the conclusions of the project but that any raw data the project depend on, will be retained for three years.
5. I will receive no payment or compensation for participating in the study.
6. All personal information supplied by me will remain confidential throughout the project. I prefer the following name (either own name or pseudonym) be used in the research report or any other publication resulting from the project. Name:.....
7. I am aware that the promotor, Prof. Kotze will read the material.

I am willing to participate in this research project.

-----  
(Signature of participant)

-----  
Date

-----  
(Name of participant in capital letters)

-----  
(Signature of witness)

## APPENDIX B3

### **The Theophostic Prayer Ministry (TPM): An Exploration of its practices and healing possibilities**

#### **CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS REGARDING THE FINAL REPORT**

I have read the report on the research project. I have had the opportunity to correct or bring about changes, make suggestions or delete information I do not want to be used in the report. I am satisfied that my understanding of my experience of TPM has been adequately reflected in the final report. I agree that the report may be used and published.

-----  
(Signature of participant)

-----  
Date

-----  
(Name of participant in capital letters)

-----  
(Signature of witness)

## **Appendix C**

### **Theophostic Prayer Ministry Session Guidelines**

**If the ministry session does not follow these guidelines then what is occurring is NOT Theophostic Prayer.**

- 1. Theophostic Prayer Ministry (TPM) is basically prayer and not traditional counseling (giving advice, diagnosing, providing insight, giving direction, proving steps of action, the facilitator solving the person's problems, etc.). Therefore a TPM facilitator should never offer this type of counsel, but rather intercede with you to God. A TPM facilitator should encourage you to discover, while depending on the Holy Spirit, the lies you believe that are at the source of the emotional pain in your life.**
- 2. A TPM facilitator should not take on the responsibility at any level to resolve your problems, issues or pain in your life, but should encourage you to own your emotional pain, take responsibility for your own thinking, not blame other people or circumstances for your emotional reactions and move forward toward God's resolution, which is found in truth.**
- 3. A TPM facilitator should never pressure you to go to any particular memory, or to do anything that you do not choose to do. It must be left up to you to make all the decisions about how far you will move toward your pain, whether you will embrace the pain, identify the lies you believe and whether you will offer up the lie-based thinking you discover to the Lord for His truth. You should be given complete freedom to stop the process anytime you choose to do so. Everything in the session should be determined by your own belief and free choice.**
- 4. Any information you share during the ministry session should be held in utmost confidentiality. A TPM facilitator should not share any information without first obtaining permission from you.**
- 5. A TPM facilitator should avoid all forms of guided imagery and/or directed visualization and seek to allow you to have a genuine mind renewal experience, prayerfully directed by the Holy Spirit, while avoiding making any additional input.**

**6. A TPM facilitator should not make ANY suggestions as to what he or she thinks your memory content may contain. The facilitator should avoid making suggestions as to what he or she assumes your lie-based thinking may be and thus allow you to make this discovery yourself.**

**7. A TPM facilitator should only ask questions that are reflective of the actual memory content or other pertinent information that you alone have surfaced and avoid all questions or comments that are leading or reflect his or her opinions or assumptions.**

**8. A TPM facilitator should not attempt to interpret or give explanation to ANY information, visual or other inner mind reality that you report. Rather, he or she should encourage you to listen and receive understanding from the Holy Spirit and come to your own understanding.**

**9. A TPM facilitator should not interpret your dreams or visions you may experience outside the ministry session, but rather will only encourage you to identify and embrace any negative emotion that may surface as a result of having these experiences and seek to identify any lie-based thinking that may be related to such emotion.**

**10. A TPM facilitator should withhold judgment as to whether the content of your memory is true or false since he or she has no way of knowing what is true or not in the context of a ministry session. The facilitator should allow you to come to your own conclusions in your own time concerning the validity of the content of your memories. He or she may help you in validating your memory information to the degree that he or she is able but only if this is what you desire.**

**11. Should the TPM facilitator personally have some visual picture appear in his mind that he believes is related to your memory, he will not report this to you lest ideas not your own be implanted into your thinking. Should your experience cause the TPM facilitator to see images or pictures, he will not share these with you at any time.**

**12. A TPM facilitator should not supply you with what he or she may think God wants you to know during the ministry session, and should not hinder the ministry process by inputting his or her own personal assumptions, insight, thinking or that, which provides**

you with knowledge you did not surface on your own. The goal of the ministry is that you have a genuine encounter with the Spirit of Christ. The facilitator should reserve his or her sharing knowledge, teaching, giving insight, etc. for the time following the prayer ministry session. The facilitator should *never at any time* give his or her opinion or thinking about any aspect of the content or assumed content of your memory.

13. A TPM facilitator can ask the Holy Spirit to give you the courage and the grace to let go of your mental defenses, go where you need to go in a memory, and thus remember what you are willing to remember and have the capacity to embrace. The facilitator can ask the Holy Spirit to give you the wisdom to identify the lies you believe that are contained in these memories. However, he or she should not ask Jesus to take you anywhere in your memories or ask Him to tell you the lies you are believing since your moving forward is an act of your free will which the Lord chooses not to violate. All of this will become known to you when you make the decision to identify what you feel and believe. The Lord will not violate your will in this manner.

14. A TPM facilitator should be careful to discover and call attention to any aspect of "truth" or visual you might receive during a ministry session that does not appear to be authentic and/or Biblically consistent. Should this happen, the facilitator should encourage you to evaluate what you have reported with what the Bible says to see what is true or not and where the false information may have originated.

15. A TPM facilitator should not make any diagnosis or suggestive opinion of what he or she may think your problem or emotional mental condition may be unless he or she is a trained and qualified professional, skilled in making such diagnosis. Even if a facilitator is a qualified mental health professional, making a medical or mental diagnosis is still not a part of what is understood to be TPM.

16. A TPM facilitator should be careful not to go beyond his training, expertise or abilities in ministry. The facilitator should seek to network with others who are more equipped and work under their supervision, if possible. Should he enter a place that is beyond his knowledge and understanding, he should seek to defer to others more equipped. At the same time, it is acknowledged that as a member of the Body of Christ every Christian is called to minister, pray and encourage any person who is downtrodden, emotionally wounded or in need of an encounter with the Lord. Therefore, every Christian should be

**willing to pray with any person and encourage anyone no matter the complexity of the situation, but at the same time stay within the limits of his understanding and expertise.**

**17 A TPM facilitator should seek to minister under spiritual authority and in a community of like-minded ministers who use these principles, and be accountable to them and them to him or her. Every true believer in Christ is a member of Christ's Body working in concert with others through Christ who is the central focus of this ministry. A TPM facilitator should not be acting as a "lone wolf" doing ministry.**

**18. A TPM facilitator should avoid changing, augmenting or repackaging the Theophostic Principles and seek to apply the principles as they have been taught in as pure a form as possible to avoid misrepresenting this ministry and confusing the Body of Christ. Should he or she choose to do otherwise, such facilitator should clearly state to those with whom he or she offers ministry that he or she is NOT doing Theophostic Prayer Ministry. This will better assure that will not be misled as to what is genuine Theophostic Prayer Ministry and what is not.**

## APPENDIX D1

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- a) How did it happen that you started with TPM?
- b) *How do you judge TPM and do you think that it had an influence in your life?*
- c) *How did you experience your facilitator and how do you think his personality contributed to the healing you received? What did you like? What did you not like?*
- d) *What do you think of TPM's theology, in other words things like TPM's view of sin, of God, of salvation etc.?*
- e) *How does the 'Jacques before TPM' differ from the 'Jacques after TPM' with regards to the following:*

|                    | before TPM | P | N | after TPM | P | N |
|--------------------|------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|
| A. Personality     |            |   |   |           |   | ♥ |
| B. Thought process |            |   |   |           |   |   |
| C. Emotions        |            |   |   |           |   |   |
| D. Behavior        |            |   |   |           |   |   |
| E. Relationships   |            |   |   |           |   |   |
| F. Spiritual       |            |   |   |           |   |   |



♥ P = Participant; N = Nominee

- f) *According to you, what role did TPM play in these changes?*
- g) *What do you think is the greatest value that TPM had for you personally?*
- h) *Did you experience anything negative about TPM? What could have been done differently?*
- i) *Who would you nominate to tell us of these changes?*

## **Appendix D2**

### **PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES OF TPM: EIGHTEEN NARRATIVES.**

*How does the PARTICIPANT before TPM differ from the PARTICIPANT after TPM ?*

This is a brief summary in table form of what the participants (in alphabetical order) shared about the changes they experienced in the way they narrate their lives after their encounters with the Lord during their TPM sessions. During the interviews they were requested to rate these changes on a ten point scale. Their nominees also rated the changes according to how they perceived the changes in the participants' lives.

The information is given as follows in the table:

- Column 1: The different areas of human functioning.  
 Column 2 How the participants experienced their functioning in that area before TPM.  
 Column 3 How the participants experienced their functioning in that area after TPM.  
 Column 4 The participants' ratings of the amount of change experienced on a ten point scale.  
 Column 5 The nominees' ratings of the amount of change experienced on a ten point scale.  
 The only exception is Edward, where an additional rating is given of the long term effect.

|          | <b>Before TPM</b> | <b>after TPM</b> |   |   |
|----------|-------------------|------------------|---|---|
| Annatjie |                   |                  | P | N |



|                      |   |  |    |    |
|----------------------|---|--|----|----|
| A. Personality       | Reserved  | Outspoken.                                       | 6  | 8  |
|                      | Cold towards people   | Wants to be involved with people                 | 10 | 7  |
|                      | Low self esteem   | Aware of own worth in Christ                     | 10 | 10 |
|                      | Not own identity  | Found own identity                               | 10 | 9  |
| B. Thought processes | Restricted in ministry  | Includes Jew en Gentile                          | 10 | 10 |
|                      | Lies blocked new thoughts                                     | Constant renewing through the Spirit             |    |    |
|                      | Upfront and direct outside the marriage                       | Quiet and soft, thinks before speaking           | 6  |    |
|                      | Self centred  | God centred                                      | 6  | 7  |
| C. Emotions          | Flat emotions like an ECG of a heart that had stopped beating | Gradually came into contact with emotions        |    |    |
|                      | Completely dissociated from emotions                          | Crying about things she did not cry about before | 10 | 10 |
|                      |   | Experiences intense emotions                     |    |    |
| D. Behaviour         | No interest in the aesthetic                                  | Interested in the world around her               | 6  | 8  |
|                      | Narrow interest in the spiritual                              |  |    |    |
|                      | Withdrawn   |  |    |    |
|                      | Had to be in control and could not receive from others        | Everyone has their own responsibility            | 8  | 8  |
| E. Relationships     | All men failed her in their priesthood                        | She is preparing herself for marriage            |    | 9  |
|                      | No communication with children                                | Open communication                               |    | 9  |
|                      | Family and colleagues   | No change  |    |    |
|                      | Church refused to accept TPM                                  | Resigned from church                             |    |    |
|                      | Formal relationship with God                                  | Intimate with God                                | 10 | 10 |
|                      |   | Found constant method for self-examination       | 9  |    |
| Alice                | <b>Before TPM</b>   | <b>after TPM</b>                                 | P  | N  |
| A. Personality       | Centrelessness  | More integrated                                  | 5  | ?  |
|                      | Perfectionist   | More laid back                                   | 8  | 8  |
|                      | Low self esteem   | Better confidence                                | 5  | 8  |
|                      | People pleaser  | Stronger in own identity                         | 8  | 8  |
| B. Thought processes | Fragmented thoughts   | More coherent                                    | 4  | 4  |
|                      | Illogical thoughts + conclusions                              | Improvement                                      | 6  | 6  |
|                      | Paranoia  | Improvement                                      | 7  | 7  |
| C. Emotions          | Unstable (Roller coaster)                                     | Slight improvement                               | 3  | 3  |
|                      | Anger   | do   | 3  | 3  |
|                      | Anxiety   | do   | 4  | 4  |
|                      | Can not show emotions   | Comfortable to show emotion                      | 6  | 8  |
| D. Behaviour         | Impulsiveness   | Improvement                                      | 7  | ?  |
|                      | Compulsion  | Improvement                                      | 6  | ?  |
|                      | Avoided conflict at all cost                                  | Still uncomfortable                              | 5  | 8  |
| E. Relationships     | Fear of rejection   | Still a problem                                  | 3  | 3  |
|                      | Inability to make connection with people                      | Comfortable with people                          | 5  | 7  |
| F. Spiritual         | Fear of judgment  | Good improvement                                 | 8  | ?  |
|                      | God is distant/ unreal  | Very real  | 9  | ?  |

|                      |                            |                            |   |   |
|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|---|
| Beryl                | <b>Before TPM</b>          | <b>after TPM</b>           | P | N |
| A. Personality       | Aggressive type of person. | Can stand back             | 8 | 5 |
|                      |                            |                            |   |   |
| B. Thought processes | Negative thoughts          | Same                       | 0 | 0 |
|                      | Low self esteem            | Better                     | ? | 3 |
| C. Emotions          | Didn't show any emotions   | Show emotions more easily. | 9 | 6 |

|                  |  |                                      |   |   |
|------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| D. Behaviour     | Did not cry in any circumstances   | Cries appropriately                  | 9 | 6 |
|                  | Had no patience  | Can walk away or laugh at it.        | 4 | 2 |
|                  | Quick to anger   | Can count to ten.                    | 6 | 0 |
| E. Relationships | Could not forget what ex-husband did.<br>No change i.e. Children/friends | Experienced total release.           | 8 | 7 |
| F. Spiritual     | Guilt feelings<br>Always walked with God.                                | Released from the curse<br>No change | ? | ? |

| Dawid                | <b>Before TPM</b>   | <b>after TPM</b>   | P                    | N                |
|----------------------|---|--|----------------------|------------------|
| A. Personality       | Quiet. Would not speak his mind.<br>Aggressive<br>Pessimistic                   | Straightforward<br>Calm<br>Optimistic  | 8<br>10<br>9         | 8<br>5<br>9      |
| B. Thought processes | Fleshly thinking<br>Bad dreams<br>Won't get a wife<br>I am nothing/ useless     | Spiritual thinking<br>No bad dreams<br>God determines destiny<br>I am unique | 9<br>10<br>10<br>8/9 | ?<br>?<br>?<br>? |
| C. Emotions          | Uncontrolled<br>Quick tempered<br>Miserable                                     | Controlled<br>Calm<br>Friendly   | 8<br>7<br>9          | ?<br>?<br>?      |
| D. Behaviour         | Always pretending and covering<br>Denied the truth<br>Hurting words             | Truth – feeling safe<br>Apologizes<br>Words of encouragement                 | 7<br>8<br>4          | ?<br>?<br>?      |
| E. Relationships     | Friends – could not trust others<br>Family problems                             | No enemies<br>Forgive them   | 5<br>8               | ?<br>?           |
| F. Spiritual         | Fleshly<br>Experienced nothing in prayer life<br>Laziness in studying the Bible | Spiritual<br>Powerful prayer<br>Spends time with God                         | 10<br>8<br>5/6       | ?<br>?<br>8/9    |

| Edward               | <b>Before TPM</b>  | <b>Direct after TPM</b>  | P                           | N                     | Present shift                           | P                           | N                     |
|----------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Personality       | Aggressive<br>Short tempered<br>Felt like a failure  | Much calmer<br><br>Feelings stopped                                      | 6<br><br>8                  | 8<br><br>8            | Temper has returned<br><br>Sometimes    | 0<br><br>4/3                | 5<br><br>4            |
| B. Thought processes | Did not think before acting<br>Reacted immediately   | Thinks first<br>In control   | 6                           | 3                     | Says what he wants to say               | 6                           |                       |
| C. Emotions          | Unhappy<br>Stressed<br>Disappointed<br>Bitter (depression)<br>Unsure<br>Scared of life<br>Insecure | Enjoys life<br><br>Jesus gives success<br><br>Looked forward to tomorrow | 5<br><br>5<br>9<br>7/6<br>7 | 2<br>5<br>5<br>7<br>8 | Sees no way out                         | 2<br><br>0<br>6<br>5<br>6/5 | 2<br>4<br>5<br>1<br>0 |
| D. Behaviour         | Broke things<br>Cocky  | Gentle   | 3                           | 4<br>2                |   | 4/5                         | 5<br>7                |
| E. Relationships     | General<br>Found wife domineering<br>“verbal abuse”  | Had understanding<br>Not at all<br>Showed insight                        | 2<br>1                      | 0<br>0                | Say what I think<br>Temper has returned | 4/5                         | 4<br>2                |
| F. Spiritual         | Lukewarm relationship  | Intimate relationship  | 8                           | ?                     | Avoids relationship                     | ?                           |                       |

| Emily                | <b>Before TPM</b>         | <b>after TPM</b>                                      | P | N   |
|----------------------|---------------------------|---|---|-----|
| A. Personality       | Not humble                | Humble  | 7 | 0   |
|                      | Not loving                | Loving  | 8 | 0   |
|                      | Dead inside               | Alive   | 8 | ?   |
| B. Thought processes | Forgot a lot              | Good memory   | ? | ?   |
| C. Emotions          | Grumpiness                | Friendliness  | 8 | 6   |
|                      | Anger                     | Calm  | 8 | 0   |
|                      |                           |   | 9 | ?   |
| D. Behaviour         | Shouted at everyone       | Patient   | 8 | 0   |
|                      | Did not smile             | Smiling   | 5 | 4   |
| E. Relationships     | Bad relationships at work | Satisfying relationships both at work and with family | 9 | 5.5 |
|                      | No family life            |   | 9 | ?   |

| Gert                 | <b>Before TPM</b>               | <b>after TPM</b>                 | P  | N |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----|---|
| A. Personality       | Ran down wife                   | Respects her                     | 9  | 8 |
| B. Thought processes | Thought of suicide              | No longer suicidal               | 10 | ? |
|                      | Did not know how to manage life | Able to handle life              | ?  | 8 |
| C. Emotions          | People thought me useless       | People think better of me        | 10 | 8 |
|                      | Sulky, could not take a joke    | Can laugh                        | 10 | 8 |
| D. Behaviour         | Did not work                    | Works every day                  | 10 | ? |
|                      | Misused alcohol                 | No longer drinks                 | 9  | 8 |
|                      | Ate little                      | Eats better                      | 10 | 9 |
| E. Relationships     | People misused him              | He stands his ground             | 10 | 8 |
|                      | No communication with wife      | Can now communicate              | 9  | 8 |
|                      | Arguments with wife             | Spend time doing things together | 10 | ? |
|                      | Poor relationship with boss     | Improved relationship with boss  | ?  | 7 |
| F. Spiritual         | Not interested in church        | Closer to God                    | 9  | ? |

| Glen                 | <b>Before TPM</b>   | <b>after TPM</b>   | P                                    | N                                     |
|----------------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A. Personality       | Short tempered<br>Very shy<br>Self conscious  | Bit better<br>More outgoing<br>Much better   | 2<br>4<br>7                          | 3<br>5<br>7                           |
| B. Thought processes | Felt like a 'nothing'<br>Could not ask for help   | Feels like a person<br>Can express needs more easily   | 6<br>9                               | 8<br>6                                |
| C. Emotions          | Depressed<br>Fear and Rage<br>Very anxious<br>Could not express love  | Feels free<br>Calm<br>More at ease<br>Can express it   | 9<br>7<br>6<br>6                     | 4<br>?<br>6<br>4                      |
| D. Behaviour         | Withdrew from groups  | Socializes more easily   | ?                                    | 6                                     |
| E. Relationships     | Hated father<br>Marriage- did not share feelings<br>Can not forgive brother<br>Did not talk to brother-in-law<br>Did not talk to mother-in-law<br>Uncomfortable with wife<br>Did not talk to children<br>Talked to no one at work | No longer keeps a grudge<br>Shares them now<br>Understanding towards him<br>Best friends<br>Better relationship<br>Much closer<br>Much closer<br>Gets along better with people | 9<br>6<br>6<br>6<br>9<br>6<br>7<br>? | 8<br>8<br>OK<br>5<br>9<br>8<br>5<br>? |
| F. Spiritual         | Could not go to church easily as the result of fear of people   | Can trust God  | ?                                    | ?                                     |

| Jacques              | <b>Before TPM</b>   | <b>after TPM</b>  | P | N |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| A. Personality       | 1. No self confidence<br>2. Negative self image   | 1. Good self confidence<br>2. Now believes in himself   |   |   |
| B. Thought processes | 1. Negative (suicidal thoughts)   | 1. Positive thoughts  |   |   |
| C. Emotions          | 1. Quick tempered<br>2. Lonely ('nobody cared')   | 1. Calm and at peace<br>2. Others do care   |   |   |
| D. Behaviour         | 1. Frequented the wrong places<br>2. Drinking problem<br>3. Stuttered<br>4. Always had to 'perform' to get attention<br>5. Lack of communication  | 1. No longer a problem<br>2. No longer a problem<br>3. No longer a problem<br>4. No longer necessary<br>5. Able to communicate easily                             |   |   |
| E. Relationships     | 1. Non existent relationship with father<br>2. Negative relationship with stepfather<br>3. Positive relationship with mother<br>4. Positive relationship with brother<br>5. Negative relationships with Black people<br>6. Relationship with God was 'OK' | 1. Relationship was restored<br>2. Relationship more positive<br>3. Unchanged<br>4. Unchanged<br>5. Relationships more positive<br>6. Close relationship with God |   |   |

| Joe                  | Before TPM  | after TPM   | P                     | N                     |
|----------------------|---|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Personality       | Withdrawn<br>Moody  | Communication much easier<br>Not so moody anymore   | 3<br>8                | 6<br>8                |
| B. Thought processes | Thought of himself as a “loser”<br>Did not know whether he could cut it as a pastor<br>Suicidal thoughts  | Experiences himself a winner<br>Knows now that it is his calling<br>Completely disappeared  | 5<br>6<br>8           | 6<br>8<br>9           |
| C. Emotions          | Teary<br>Short tempered<br>Isolated   | Able to laugh/tells jokes<br>Only on the road<br>Does not want to be alone  | 6<br>5<br>?           | 5<br>5<br>7           |
| D. Behaviour         | Insomnia<br>Lack of appetite<br>Anti social   | Sleeps easily<br>Normal appetite<br>Socializes easily   | 4<br>6<br>6           | 5<br>6<br>7           |
| E. Relationships     | Mother-in-law irritated him<br>Did not want anything to do with wife.<br>No playing with or talking to children.<br>Not interested in their sport<br>Withdrawn from church and did not do home visits | Loves her<br>Feelings have returned. Cannot wait to get home.<br>A part of their lives again<br>Interested<br>Interested in doing home visits | 6<br>6<br>8<br>7<br>8 | 6<br>2<br>2<br>9<br>7 |
| F. Spiritual         | Stopped praying<br>No intimacy  | Normal prayer life<br>Experiences intimacy  | 9<br>10               |                       |

| Magriet              | Before TPM   | after TPM  | P             | N              |
|----------------------|--|--|---------------|----------------|
| A. Personality       | Low self esteem  | More confidence  | 6             | 8              |
| B. Thought processes | I was not worth much<br>It was terrible to be alone                      | No longer thinks that way<br>At peace with being alone   | 8<br>10       | 8<br>9         |
| C. Emotions          | Sadness<br>Fear<br>Powerlessness with regard to Children’s Home children | Calmness<br>Confidence<br>No longer triggered by them  | 10<br>10<br>8 | 9<br>10<br>8   |
| D. Behaviour         | Victim of circumstances<br>No control                                    | Assertive<br>Well in control   | 9<br>10       | 9<br>9         |
| E. Relationships     | Ex spouse: was always victim   | He can no longer exploit her   | 9             | ?              |
| F. Spiritual         | Good relationship with God   | God is such a reality, she is amazed and expectant<br>More intimacy<br>Can now fully trust Him | 10<br>9<br>10 | 10<br>10<br>10 |

| Marinda              | <b>Before TPM</b>  | <b>after TPM</b>  | P                                | N                  |
|----------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| A. Personality       | Grating  | More gentle   | 10                               | 9                  |
| B. Thought processes | Took things at face value<br>Imperative to be right        | Investigates things<br>Will now listen and think about it   | 10<br>10                         | 10<br>12           |
| C. Emotions          | Anger<br>Helplessness<br>Anxiety<br>Bitterness             | Calm  | 9<br>2<br>13<br>20 <sup>11</sup> | 10<br><br>15<br>10 |
| D. Behaviour         | Wanted to please<br>Acted out immediately<br>Perfectionist | Does what matters<br>Prays before acting<br>Tries to do the right thing but allows herself to make mistakes | 8<br>19<br>9                     | 7<br>12<br>15      |
| F. Spiritual         | Experienced God indirectly                                 | God is 'real'   | 9                                | 6                  |

| Michelle             | <b>Before TPM</b>  | <b>after TPM</b>   | P                          | N                          |
|----------------------|--|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| A. Personality       | Depressed<br>Pessimistic<br>Searching<br>Loner   | More bubbly<br>Optimistic<br>Going forward<br>People person                                  | 6<br>9<br>9<br>6           | 9<br>4<br>9<br>8           |
| B. Thought processes | Was not good enough<br>Did not think   | Has assets<br>Deep thinker   | 9<br>7                     | ?<br>7                     |
| C. Emotions          | Unloved<br>Angry<br>Stressed<br>Not worthy<br>Abandonment<br>Lost  | Loved<br>Bit of anger<br>Relieved<br>Worthy<br>Home<br>Found hope and trust                  | 9<br>5<br>9<br>6<br>9<br>8 | ?<br>8<br>?<br>9<br>?<br>? |
| D. Behaviour         | Insecure<br>Hated a lot<br>Accepted things as they were<br>Scared of the dark<br>Did not trust anybody   | Confident<br>Open loving person<br>Go-getter<br>At peace in the dark<br>Able to trust others | 7<br>?<br>?<br>?<br>?      | 9<br>?<br>?<br>?<br>?      |
| E. Relationships     | Work: always wore a mask<br>Children: unhappy mom<br>Husband: strenuous relationship – could not show emotion<br>Friends: didn't allow herself laughter<br>Hated Coloured and Black people | Shows emotions<br>A crazy mom (happy)<br>Shows emotion<br><br>Contagious laugh<br>No hate    | 4<br>1<br>5<br>?<br>?<br>? | ?<br>?<br>?<br>?<br>?<br>? |
| F. Spiritual         | Relationship with the Lord   | Intimate relationship  | 2                          | ?                          |

<sup>11</sup> Although I drew their attention to the fact that it is a ten point scale, they insisted on using their own rating.

| Minah                | <b>Before TPM</b>   | <b>after TPM</b>  | P | N |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| A. Personality       | 1. Low frustration toleration. Shouted at everyone.<br>2. Major depression  | 1. Calm and collected<br>2. Cheerful  |   |   |
| B. Thought processes | 1. Negative (suicidal thoughts)<br>2. Could not think straight  | 1. Positive thoughts<br>2. A clear mind   |   |   |
| C. Emotions          | 1. Sadness<br>2. Pessimistic  | 1. Calm and at peace<br>2. Optimistic   |   |   |
| D. Behaviour         | 1. Insomnia (could not sleep)<br>2. No appetite<br>3. Cried every day   | 1. Sleeps like a child, one who's tired after playing<br>2. Enjoys food<br>3. Laughter is part of her again         |   |   |
| E. Relationships     | 1. She hid herself away when people came to visit<br>2. Good relationships with family<br>3. Husband left for another woman | 1. She now talks a great deal ('too much')<br>2. Good relationships with other people<br>3. Is content to be single |   |   |

| Ruth                 | <b>Before TPM</b>  | <b>after TPM</b>   | P                      | N                    |
|----------------------|--|--|------------------------|----------------------|
| A. Personality       | Did not believe in self<br>Inferiority complex<br>Short tempered   | Positive self image<br>Aware of own worth<br>Calm  | 6<br>7<br>8            | 8/9<br>10<br>8       |
| B. Thought processes | 'Had to'<br>Couldn't get things right<br>Negative thoughts about others<br>Sees herself as fat                             | 'Want to'<br>Is able to do all things<br>Sees their positive points<br>No longer thinks so                         | 10<br>8<br>10<br>10    | 10<br>10<br>10<br>10 |
| C. Emotions          | Reserved<br>Cried for weeks<br>Depressed<br>Stressed   | No longer<br>Acceptance<br>Less depressed<br>Less stressed   | 10<br>8<br>2<br>4      | 10<br>10<br>6<br>6   |
| D. Behaviour         | Lied a lot<br>Can't forgive<br>Difficult to get along with –<br>Difficult to please<br>Gossiper<br>Fantasized about sexual | Truth comes more easily<br>Forgives more easily<br>Better<br>Better<br>No longer<br>No longer                      | 8<br>10<br>6<br>6<br>6 | 8<br>10<br>10<br>8   |
| E. Relationships     |  | Could forgive X and other woman for affair<br>Repaired relationship with in-laws<br>Much less conflict with family | 6<br>8                 | 10                   |
| F. Spiritual         | Tried to be a good person<br>Believed God didn't really listen<br>God was distant  | Honest with God<br>God cares<br>Can trust God  | 10                     | 10                   |



| Veronica             | Before TPM            | after TPM | P | N |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|---|---|
| A. Personality       | Got worked up         |           | 5 | 5 |
| B. Thought processes | Negative thoughts     |           | 3 | 3 |
| C. Emotions          | Anger                 |           | 6 | 3 |
|                      | Fear                  |           | 5 | 5 |
|                      | Sadness               |           | 2 | 4 |
| D. Behaviour         | Impatient             |           | 2 | 6 |
|                      | Nightmares            |           | 4 | 5 |
|                      | Hallucinations        |           | 3 | 5 |
| E. Relationships     | With Carel            |           | 3 | 2 |
|                      | With the children     |           | 4 | 3 |
|                      | Family                |           | 2 | 1 |
|                      | Friends               |           | 0 | 0 |
| F. Spiritual         | Attends church        |           | 0 | 0 |
|                      | Active at home cell   |           |   |   |
|                      | Regularly reads Bible |           |   |   |

ROELF “I did not want it to work”

Unfortunately, Roelf did not allow me to complete a table about the change he experienced. Here is a brief summary of what he shared in the interview.

*How does the ‘Roelf before TPM’ differ from the ‘Roelf’ after TPM’:*

In answer to the question of how his thought processes changed, Roelf said that it upset him greatly when he was asked about his parents’ role in his life. He felt that it had nothing to do with his facilitator. He felt that what he had done with his own life had nothing to do with his parents. He was the one who messed up, not his parents. He was very unhappy about the questions that Chaplain Muller asked him. He felt that none of his thoughts were changed after the TPM session.

However, he did experience his behaviour being influenced during that session. Afterwards he abstained from alcohol and hemp for about three months. His wife was very unhappy about the fact that he started drinking again. He feels that it was his wife’s prayers that helped him stay sober for those three months. When questioned on this statement, he answered: “It was because Chaplain Muller said that he would remove my wife to one place and my children to another, and that I would only see them on TV. It made me stay sober for three months.” He wanted to prove that he could do it on his own.

During that time he also accompanied his wife to church. After their pastor paid them a visit, on express request from his wife, he banned the dealers from his house. The change was due to his wife, who supported him.

After that session he also decided to change friends. God is now his only friend.

He also experiences less anger and finds it easier to get along with people. However, he adds that he was afraid that if the people, in the suburb where he stays, saw that he had become a church-going Christian, that they would exploit him. “They will then take me as their slave.” He did not feel up to it.

