A Narrative Inquiry into Contemplative Leadership:
Concepts, Characteristics, Challenges, Opportunities

Cui Ying Gao

M.A. in Spirituality
M.A. in Leadership and Pastoral Care

A Dissertation Submitted to Dublin City University in
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of PhD

Supervisors:

Dr. John Murray and Dr. Margaret Benefiel

School of Theology, Philosophy, and Music

Dublin City University

January 2018

Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of PhD is entirely my own work, and that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Signed: _____ (Candidate)

ID No.: 14113864

Date: _____

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my late father, and my eldest sister who passed away when I began this research. Their ability to lead with love has been an inspiration for me.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Title: **A Narrative Inquiry into Contemplative Leadership: Concepts, Characteristics, Challenges, Opportunities**

Author: Cui Ying Gao

Abstract

This research explores the link between the practice of contemplation and its influence on leadership. It investigates how the interiority of the leader can shape the style and quality of leadership practice. This research has as its ultimate goal the provision of a deeper understanding of contemplative leadership, its concepts, characteristics, challenges, and opportunities; and it shows how contemplative leadership can be realistically lived and demonstrated in an organisational setting.

The literature includes an overview of the historical development of leadership theories, an exploration of the history and development of the Christian contemplative tradition, and a review of the principal assumptions of contemplative leadership.

The qualitative research methodology used was that of narrative inquiry by way of in-depth, semi-structured interviewing. The interview participants were a purposively chosen, information rich, non-probability group. Sixteen leaders who have a contemplative orientation to their life and work participated in the in-depth interviews.

The study finds that to be a more authentic and effective leader, a major task is nurturing a disciplined contemplative life through developing an intimate relationship with God. The findings also provide an insight into the multifaceted reality of contemplative leadership including its concepts, characteristics, challenges, and opportunities. Further findings are described under the following themes: contemplation is transformative; contemplation and leadership are complementary; contemplative leadership can promote a good organizational culture. A new model of contemplative leadership is also presented with the hope of providing the language and a theoretical and practical framework necessary to inform and guide prospective leaders and future leadership development.

Introduction

Context of Study

Leadership has become a major concern in all forms of organizations – business, education, health care, military, religious, government and non-government. Training programs, books and journals dedicated to leadership have increased beyond most people's expectations (Doohan, 2007, 1). In the year 2010 alone, more than 2,000 books on leadership were published (Goffee and Jones, 2011, 79). Most scholars in the field have focused on what they see as major issues that make leadership more authentic and effective and to this end have investigated every imaginable concept from vision to creativity, from strategy to courage, from credibility to total quality management. Doohan states, "We have been bombarded with techniques, strategies, and insights on visioning, team building, collaboration, negotiation, leading cross-functional team, managing corporate culture, and empowerment" (Doohan, 2007, 1)

Leadership theory and research have been through an evolutionary process over the last 100 years. Early research focused on leadership types, traits, personal attributes, behaviours that promote productivity and effectiveness in traditional leadership models (Bryman, 1992, 198). The work of Bass (1985) and Burns (1978) made a shift from the traditional models to new-genre leadership theories, which emphasized "charismatic leader behaviour, visionary, inspiring, ideological and moral values, as well as transformational leadership" (Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber, 2009, 428). Among the new-genre theories, "charismatic and transformational leadership have turned out to be the most frequently researched theories over the past twenty years" (Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber, 2009, 428). Scholars have researched how leaders raise followers' aspirations and activate their higher–order values such as altruism and love, so that followers identify with the leader's mission and vision, and work to perform beyond simple transactions to increase effectiveness and better organizational outcomes (Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber, 2009, 428). More recent research has examined the contextual variables that facilitate the relationship of charismatic/transformational leadership with motivation and performance at the individual, team, and organizational levels (Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber, 2009, 429). The most

recent leadership literature has focused on the following: authentic leadership, cognitive leadership, ethical leadership, transformational leadership, complexity leadership, distributed leadership, leader-member exchange theory, followership and leadership, substitutes for leadership, servant leadership, spirituality and leadership, global leadership and organizational effectiveness, cross-cultural leadership, and e-leadership (Avolio, 2009, 422-441). Such a variety of topics show that leadership research is evolving and is in search of a more authentic and integrated approach.

Purpose of Study

There is another trend in leadership study that has received increased attention from researchers and practitioners alike, which highlights the spiritual dimension of a leader. Such authors as Deal and Bolman speak of "leading with soul" (1995), Eggert addresses "contemplative leadership" (1998), Fry writes about "toward a theory of spiritual leadership" (2003), Doohan talks about "spiritual leadership" (2007), Benefiel looks at "the soul of a leader" (2008), Fry and Kriger researches "toward a theory of being centred leadership" (2009), and Fry and Niesiewicz investigate "maximizing the triple bottom line through spiritual leadership" (2013). All these authors emphasize the significance of spirituality in relation to leadership. Why such a development? Perhaps it's because we are facing a leadership crisis and are in need of more authentic and ethical leaders. We have witnessed the damage done by selfish, power-hungry, authoritarian leaders, regardless of where their leadership was exercised. Many leaders can be chosen for the wrong reasons. "They are very charismatic, but lack character. They are stylish, but lack substance. They are high profiled, but lack integrity" (Marques, Dhiman, and Biberman, 2011, 3). We are beginning to understand that the heart of leadership is not only about what we do but who we are:

> The heart of leadership is not discovered in new skills - although they will be needed, nor in a paradigm of dealing with others - although they will result, nor in the acquisition of new techniques of collaboration, team building, and consensus discernment - although they will all be required. Rather, the heart of leadership is a changed attitude toward others, a conversion, and a new way of looking at the world (Doohan, 2007, 12).

Leadership in this new millennium needs "a change of heart, *a discovery of one's inner self and values*, a renewal, a conversion" (Doohan, 2007, 15-16). The question that is posed now is: what will help leaders experience this change or conversion of heart? It has been suggested (Eggert, 1989) that the contemplative traditions might offer us some wisdom and insight in this regard. Contemplation, understood as the intimate encounter with God, makes it possible for us to experience and embrace a change of consciousness, to know the inner healing and integrity of being that allows us to be formed after the fashion of Christ. "Contemplation is not only an act of presence; it is a sacrament of awareness and vision. It is the venue for each person's change of consciousness. By emptying ourselves we take the risk of seeing ourselves, the world, and the Holy One through God's eyes" (Keller, 2008, 133). The principal fruit of contemplation is personal transformation. Therefore, exploring a contemplatively oriented leadership approach, which nourishes and fosters the development of the inner life and awareness of leaders, in conjunction with developed leadership qualities and skills, is what is sought. In this work, a Christian perspective is taken, which is open to the insights of other perspectives and seeks dialogue and cooperation with them.

Key Questions

The central research question asks: What is contemplative leadership, in terms of its concepts, characteristics, opportunities and challenges? How may a contemplatively grounded leadership approach facilitate both the further development of a leader and influence the culture of organizations? In essence, this research hopes to develop a conceptual framework of contemplative leadership that builds on previous leadership models in order to take our understanding and vision of leadership to the next level.

Outline of Study

A. Literature Review

To investigate the research question, an interdisciplinary approach has been chosen that will review the literature on leadership, the Christian contemplative tradition, and contemplative leadership. Chapter one will trace the development of leadership from having-centred leadership to doing-centred leadership, and will include an

analysis of vision-centred leadership, moral-centred leadership, spirit-centred leadership and being-centred leadership in order to show the direction in which leadership studies are progressing. The development of leadership studies points to a deeper appreciation of the interiority of the leader in which the centrality of self, the personal growth, and ongoing transformation of the leader are seen as key elements of leadership excellence.

In chapter two, the wisdom literature of the Christian tradition is explored. This chapter will consider four major sections: a brief historical overview of Christian mysticism, the mystical path, the contemplative journey, and the relationship between contemplation and action. This will provide an overview and guide to the interiority process that is required of a leader through considering the writings and experiences of some Christian contemplatives, especially St. Teresa of Avila, Evelyn Underhill and Thomas Merton.

In chapter three, the literature will review contemplative leadership, its underlying philosophy and assumptions, and also offer an exemplar of contemplative leadership through investigating Lyne Sedgmore's personal spirituality and leadership practice. By demonstrating the natural affinity and collaborative relationship between contemplation and leadership this research will establish a working definition of contemplative leadership, and also provide an overview of how contemplative leadership works in practice.

B. Research Design

The research design and methodology will be outlined in chapter four. A qualitative research methodology, using narrative inquiry by way of in-depth interviewing, is used to explore the research questions. This chapter will describe what qualitative research is, why narrative inquiry is used, and explain what semi-structured interviews are and why this was chosen. This will be followed by a section explaining the sampling procedure used for this research. The sample group chosen for this research is based on non-probability, purposive sampling. Sixteen interviewees were deliberately selected from those who have a contemplative and leadership background. A significant effort was made to ensure a satisfactory gender balance was achieved; eight males and eight females participated in the interview

process. An interview guide was developed based on the literature and was tested through a pilot study to clarify and help formulate the questions for the in-depth interviews. Fifteen interviews were recorded and later transcribed and one interviewee answered the questions in a written format because of hearing problems. The ethical considerations, limitations and parameters of the research, and pilot study are also described in detail.

C. Presentation of Findings, Discussion and Conclusion of the Research

The data gathered from the in-depth interviews were transcribed, analysed and presented in chapter five. Seven major themes and thirty-four subthemes generated from the data analysis will be introduced in this chapter. In chapter six, these themes and findings will be discussed in dialogue with the literature review in chapters one to three. A model of contemplative leadership will be presented in this chapter. Chapter seven is the concluding chapter. This chapter will begin with a brief summary of the research, and is followed by conclusions, critical evaluation, significance, limitations, and recommendations for the future of leadership development and research.

Chapter 1 Exploring the Development of Leadership Theories

1.1 Introduction

Leadership is a complex human phenomenon. It is influenced by many variables such as the personality of the leader, followers, context, gender, culture and many other factors. As mentioned in the introduction, leadership theory and research has undergone a significant evolutionary process over the last 100 years. This topic has been examined and probed from every conceivable angle; new books and research continue to be published every year. For the purposes of this research it is necessary to review the literature on leadership so as to have a comprehensive understanding of the scope and sequence of its development. Nevertheless, this is by no means an exhaustive, chronological literature review, but rather it covers some significant leadership theories which are categorized under certain headings by their similarities and reflections of levels of being. This chapter will explore in particular the following leadership theories: having-centred leadership, doing-centred leadership, vision-centred leadership, moral-centred leadership, spirit-centred leadership, and will conclude with being-centred leadership.

1.2 Having-centred Leadership Theories

In the middle of the 19th century, people began to think more scientifically and systematically about what constitutes a good leader. Out of this quest emerged the concept of 'having-centred' leadership. This developed from the belief that leaders possess special qualities and personality traits that differentiate them from others and sets them apart as great men (Northouse, 2004, 4). This developed into two perspectives: The Great Man theory and Trait theory.

The great man theory was developed by Carlyle in 1841, who believed that a natural leader is endowed with unique qualities that set him apart and capture the imagination of the masses. This was further reinforced by William James in 1880, who thought that the history of the world is the history of great men (Bass, 1990, 37).

If great leaders are endowed with exceptional qualities that differentiate them from ordinary people, it should be possible to identify these qualities. Thus, early studies on leadership concentrated on what qualities great leaders have that make them different from others. This gave rise to the trait theories of leadership. Throughout the 20th century, many traits were identified by researchers, of them five major traits emerged: intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability (Northouse, 2004, 19). It was believed that these inherent characteristics are what make people effective leaders. This led to the emergence of having-centred leadership theories.

This having-centred approach has its strengths and weaknesses. One of its strengths is that they identified the specific traits that great leaders need. However, it was soon recognized that one of the major weaknesses of this approach was failing to take other requirements of leadership into account, such as the situation. "People who possess certain traits that make them leaders in one situation may not be leaders in another situation" (Northouse, 2004, 23). With this realization, researchers began to delve deeper into what constitutes truly effective leadership. They began to consider variables such as the situation, leader behaviour, and context. This thinking gives rise to, and developed into a new theory, that of 'doing-centred' leadership.

1.3 Doing-centred Leadership Theories

The Doing-centred leadership approach, rather than merely identifying the personal traits of an effective leader, sought to uncover what leaders <u>do</u> to make them effective. The Doing-centred leadership theory developed into behavioural theories, contingency theories and situational theories to help leaders understand what to do and how to act in order to be effective. Consequently, the behavioural approach (Northouse, 2004, 65) primarily studied the actions of leaders toward followers in various contexts. Different patterns of behaviour are observed and categorized (Bolden et al., 2003, 6). Researchers argued that leadership is composed of essentially two general kinds of behaviours: task behaviours and relationship behaviours. "The key to being an effective leader often rests on how the leader balances these two behaviours" (Northouse, 2004, 75). Many research

studies have been undertaken into the behavioural approach, of significance are the early studies done by the Ohio State University, and the University of Michigan. The studies by Blake and Mouton are strongly representative of a later development of this approach (Northouse, 2004, 66).

This line of research into task orientation and people consideration was further expanded by Robert Blake and Jane Mouton in 1964. They developed a model, illustrated by the well-known leadership grid (Northouse, 2004, 69), which identified five major leadership styles by plotting scores from each of the two intersecting axes representing concern for product/task and concern for people. Blake and Mouton's findings show that effective leaders score high on both task and relationship behaviours (Seyranian, 2012, 1). However, some researchers criticized this saying that it may be effective in some situations but not in all. In fact, "the full range of research findings provides only limited support for a universal high-high style (Yukl, 1994). Certain situations may require a different leadership style; some may be complex and require high-task behaviour, and others may be simple and require supportive behaviour" (Northouse, 2013, 86). As a result of this, researchers included another dimension by emphasizing the potentially critical role of the situational context in linking leadership behaviours to effective outcomes. This approach became the foundation of the contingency theory of leadership (Seyranian, 2012, 1).

The most widely recognized approach is Fielder's contingency theory, which was developed in the 1960's. It argues that a leader's effectiveness depends on how well the leader's style fits the context. Within the framework of contingency theory, leadership styles are described as task oriented or relationship oriented. Effective leadership is contingent on matching a leader's style to the right setting (Northouse, 2004, 109). In response to this understanding, a situational theory was developed by Hersey and Blanchard in 1969. This theory proposed that leadership effectiveness depends on the leader's ability to adapt his or her behaviour to the demands of the situation, to the demands of a subordinate's level of maturity. "This theory builds on the earlier Ohio and Michigan studies and extends Blake and Mouton's work in emphasizing a combination of task and relation behaviours,

but here task and relation behaviours are called directing and supporting" (Syranian, 2012, 3). By combining directive and supportive behaviours, four leadership styles can be established: *directing* (high directive and low supportive), *coaching* (high directive and high supportive), *supporting* (high supportive and low directive), and *delegating* (low supportive and low directive) (Northouse, 2004, 88). To be effective, the leader needs to continually evaluate and adapt his or her behaviour to each follower's task maturity (i.e. ability and psychological maturity) and willingness to compete the task at hand (Syranian, 2012, 3-4).

In summary, the behavioural contingency approaches to leadership focus on determining the appropriate fit between a leader's behaviour and the organizational context. It takes into account how leadership behaviour, follower characteristics, and situational elements influence one another. It seeks to find out what the best leadership behaviour is in a given context and emphasizes the doing aspect of leadership. Doing-centred leadership theories have been the focus of study for about twenty years until the emergence of vision-centred leadership theories.

1.4. Vision-centred Leadership Theories

Since the early 1980's, leadership studies began to investigate the transforming aspect of leadership. This school of thought believed that leadership also involves creating a vision and/or values that facilitate the social construction of a common positive understanding of organizational reality. This vision is meant to motivate and energize organizational members to increase organizational commitment and performance (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1676). Examples of vision/value-centred leadership theories include charismatic leadership and transformational leadership.

1.4.1 Charismatic Leadership

The idea of charismatic leadership has its origin in the thinking of German sociologist Max Weber, who applied the term charismatic to leaders. Charisma for Weber is "a special personality characteristic that gives a person superhuman or exceptional powers and is reserved for a few, is of divine origin, and results in the

person being treated as a leader" (Northouse, 2004, 171). In 1976, House first published a theory of charismatic leadership. He hypothesizes that leaders who are charismatic are differentiated from others by some combination of the following personal characteristics: dominance, self-confidence, need for influence, and a strong conviction in the moral righteousness of his or her beliefs. He maintained that charismatic leaders employ these characteristics through goal articulation, role modelling, personal image building, demonstrations of confidence and high expectations for followers, and motive arousal behaviours (House, 1976, 28). Later this theory was modified and extended by Conger (1989), then by House and Shamir (1993), and Conger and Kanungo (1988, 1998). The key behaviours of a charismatic leader for House and Shamir included "articulating an appealing vision, emphasizing ideological aspects of the work, communicating high performance expectations, expressing confidence that subordinates can attain, showing self-confidence, modelling exemplary behaviour, and emphasizing collective identity" (Yukl, 1999, 293). Conger and Kanungo proposed a model of charismatic leadership that consists of three essential behavioural components: sensitivity to the environmental context, formulating goals and articulating an innovative vision, and demonstrating means to achieve the vision (Conger and Kanungo, 1998, 50-56). They understood leadership "as a process that involves moving organizational members from an existing present state toward some future state. This dynamic might be described as a movement away from the status quo toward the achievement of desired longer-term goals" (Conger and Kanungo, 1998, 49).

1.4.2 Transformational Leadership

At about the same time as House's theory of charismatic leadership was published in 1976, Burns published a book about transformational leadership titled *leadership* (1978). He conceptualized leadership as either transactional or transformational. Transactional leaders are those who lead through social exchange, for example, jobs for votes, financial rewards for productivity. Transformational leaders, on the other hand, are those who stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity (Bass and Riggio, 2006, 3). Such leaders raise followers from the transactional level to the next level of social exchange. They

inspire them to commit to a shared vision and the common goals of an organization or department, challenge them to be innovative problem solvers, and develop followers' leadership capacity via coaching, mentoring, and provision of both challenge and support (Bass and Riggio, 2006, 4).

The theory of transformational leadership was further expanded later by Bass (1985), by Bennis and Nanus (1985), Tichy and DeVanna (1986, 1990), Bass and Avolio (1994). As the name implies, transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms individuals. In this process, the leader engages with others, creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality, and tries to help followers reach their full potential (Northouse, 2004, 169-170).

Transformational leadership has four components, namely idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration.

Idealized influence: Transformational leaders provide idealized influence through exhibiting the kind of behaviour that is widely admired in society. They act as role models, demonstrate high standards of ethical and moral behaviour, and are willing to take risks and engage in self-sacrifice to pursue goals that are not self-centred. Such behaviour creates respect for, and trust in, the leader. (Bass and Riggio, 2006, 6; Zhu, Newman, Miao and Hooke, 2013, 95).

Intellectual stimulation: Transformational leaders stimulate and encourage followers to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways (Bass and Riggio, 2006, 7). They nurture and develop followers' independence and encourage them to ask questions, think deeply about their jobs, and figure out better ways of executing their prescribed tasks (Zhu, Newman, Miao and Hooke, 2013, 95). Transformational leaders "don't criticize mistakes but instead solicit solutions from followers" (Johnson, 2012, 192).

Inspirational motivation: Transformational leaders are able to provide followers with a sense of meaning and purpose that will generate extra, goal-directed energy for the organization. They do this by creating and articulating a new vision, mobilizing commitment to that vision, setting clear and plausible strategies for attaining the vision, communicating these clearly and precisely, and generating optimism and enthusiasm among followers that, with realistic effort, these goals can be achieved, and the vision attained (Zhu, Newman, Miao and Hooke, 2013, 96).

Individualized consideration: Transformational leaders pay attention to each individual follower's needs and show appreciation and genuine care for their well-being. Leaders do this by keeping communication lines open, acting as coaches or mentors when appropriate, providing new learning opportunities, listening attentively to their concerns and needs and pro-actively taking steps to address these, and delegating tasks as a means of developing followers (Bass and Riggio, 2006, 7; Zhu, Newman, Miao and Hooke, 2013, 96).

It has been noted that although transformational leadership and charismatic leadership are distinct, they overlap in both theory and practice. One of the similarities is that both emphasize the visionary component of leadership. To be effective, leaders need to be able to see the future direction of the organization, create and articulate a vision and find ways to achieve it. Accordingly, transformational leadership and charismatic leadership can be identified as vision-centred. Unfortunately, some charismatic and transformational leaders, like Hitler, Mao and others, did more harm than good because they lacked a good sense of moral or ethical convictions. This highlights one of the major pitfalls for charismatic and transformational leadership and led to the development of a moral-centred component to effective leadership.

1.5 Moral-centred Leadership Theories

By the dawn of the third millennium, people became aware of the many cases of corporate scandals in business: the criminally greedy CEOs, the boards that did little more than rubber-stamp executive whims, the companies willing to trade customers' lives for profits, and the tragedy of corrupt and partisan political

leaders (Fry and Wittington, 2005, 184). Many people have suffered far too much bad leadership and realized that "self-interest unchecked by moral reasoning and obligation results in a destructive greed" (Fry and Wittington, 2005, 184). This greed not only destroys the lives of leaders themselves who are driven to ethical compromise, but also impacts thousands of innocent individuals, families, communities and society at large (Fry and Wittington, 2005, 184). People have become aware of the need to examine the moral underpinnings of the market place and the moral status of the corporate leaders. Bill George said, "In the past two decades, far too many leaders have been selected more for charisma than character, for style over substance, and for image rather than integrity. If charisma, style and image are the selection criteria, why are we surprised when leaders turn out to lack character, substance and integrity?" (George, 2014, 2). Some pioneering researchers in leadership began to call for "a new standard of integrity and public accountability" (Fry and Wittington, 2005, 184). This call for a moral-based perspective on leadership that emphasizes character integrity, high standards of morality, ethical behaviour, self-awareness and self-regulation became the rationale for the emergence of a moral-centred leadership that is expressed and advocated through the introduction of authentic leadership, ethical leadership and mindful leadership theory.

1.5.1 Authentic Leadership

Although the notion of authenticity has been around since antiquity (it is historically rooted in Greek Philosophy), it was in 2003, with the publication of Bill George's first book *Authentic leadership: Rediscovering the secrets to creating lasting value,* and the publication of Luthans and Avolio's article Authentic Leadership: A Positive Developmental Approach, that the concept of authentic leadership gained more attention among researchers and practitioners. It was a genuine response to social upheaval and the recognition that people need trustworthy leaders. The concept of Authentic Leadership was intended to provide a challenging, enlightened, and convincing alternative for leaders who tend to operate out of profit and self-interest rather than people and ethics; it proposes that "authenticity and integrity shape great leadership" (Bennis in George and Sims, 2007, xv).

1.5.1.1 Bill George's Understanding of Authentic Leadership

Bill George and colleagues interviewed 125 business leaders who were considered to be both authentic and successful. Their understanding of authentic leadership is based on those in-depth interviews and George's own experience as a corporate executive. According to George and Sims, authentic leaders are genuine people who are true to themselves and to what they believe. They are trustworthy and capable of developing genuine relationships with others. Because people trust them, they are able to motivate others to high levels of performance. George and colleagues identified five basic characteristics of authentic leadership: purpose, values, heart, relationships, and self-discipline (George and Sims, 2007, xxxi).

Pursuing Purpose with Passion

Authentic leaders have a real sense of purpose. They are inspired and intrinsically motivated by their goals. They know what they are about and where they are going; and are passionate individuals who have a deep-seated interest in what they are doing and are truly committed to their work (Northouse, 2013, 258).

Practicing Solid Values

These leaders are defined by their personal values that are shaped by life experiences, personal beliefs, and developed through study, reflection, and consultation. Their behaviour toward others is based on these values. In George's own words, they know their "True North". Integrity is the one value required of every authentic leader. "If you do not have integrity, no one will trust you, nor should they" (George and Sims, 2007, xxxii). Actions should be consistent with the values you profess.

Leading with Heart

These people lead with their hearts as well as their heads. Leading with heart means "having passion for your work, compassion for the people you serve, empathy for the people you work with, and the courage to make difficult decisions" (George and Sims, 2007, xxxiii).

Establishing Connected Relationships

They have the ability to develop enduring relationships which is an essential characteristic of authentic leaders. Good personal relationships encourage greater commitment to work and loyalty to the organization (George and Sims, 2007, xxxiii).

Demonstrating Self-discipline

These leaders demonstrate a high level of self-discipline in order to produce results. "They set high standards for themselves and expect the same from others. This requires accepting full responsibility for outcomes and holding others accountable for their performance" (George and Sims, 2007, xxxiii). Self-discipline is reflected in their personal lives as well, because without this it is impossible to sustain self-discipline at work (George and Sims, 2007, xxxiii).

1.5.1.2 Further Development of Authentic Leadership

A theory of authentic leadership has continued to develop. Some scholars have created a theoretical framework to outline a more refined construct of authentic leadership. Avolio and colleagues, Cooper and colleagues, Shamir and Eilam, Ilies and colleagues have made a huge contribution to this attempt with their own unique perspectives. Because of the limited space, only the latest theory will be discussed here.

In 2008, Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing and Peterson modified Luthans and Avolio's initial definition of authentic leadership to advance a more refined definition to reflect the underlying dimensions of the construct posited by Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al. (2005) and Ilies et al. (2005). They define authentic leadership as

> a pattern of leader behaviour that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development (Walumbwa and colleagues, 2008, 94).

This redefinition highlights four major constructs that advance the understanding of authentic leadership:

Self-awareness refers to the understanding of oneself, including one's core values, identity, emotions, motives, goals, and the way one makes sense of the world, and comes to grip with who one really is at the deepest level. It includes being aware of one's strength and weakness, and their impact on others. When leaders know themselves, and have a clear sense of who they are and what they stand for, they have a strong anchor for their decisions and actions (Walumbwa and colleagues, 2008, 95; Northouse, 2013, 264).

Internalized Moral Perspective refers to being guided by internal moral standards and values versus group, organizational and societal pressures. These internal moral standards are used to self-regulate one's behaviour, this is expressed in decision making and behaviour that is consistent with these internalized values (Walumbwa and colleagues, 2008, 95-96). Their actions are consistent with their expressed beliefs and morals (Northouse, 2013, 264).

Balanced Processing refers to objectively analysing relevant data and avoiding being distorted by ego, exaggeration, emotion, and ignorance before making a decision. It also means avoiding favouritism and remaining unbiased. It includes being open to different opinions and soliciting viewpoints from those who disagree with you and fully considering their opinions before taking actions (Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber, 2009, 424; Reynolds, 2013, 23).

Relational Transparency refers to presenting one's authentic self through openly sharing information and feelings as appropriate (i.e., avoiding inappropriate displays of emotions). It is about communicating openly and being real in relationships with others (Avolio, Walumbwa and Weber, 2009, 424; Northouse, 2013, 264).

These studies are further confirmed by empirical research done by Walumbwa and colleagues (2008). They provided initial evidence using a multisampling strategy involving Chinese and U.S participants to determine the construct's validity (Walumbwa and Colleagues, 2008, 91-121). Their research shows that the four components described above are reliable (Avolio, Walumbwa and Weber, 2009, 424).

In summary, the pursuit of authentic leadership is a response to leadership failures in the public and private sectors. It gives an answer to demands for genuine, trustworthy leadership and advocates a transparent, morally grounded and accountable leadership that offers hope to people who long for better leaders. The theoretical approach, drawing from the field of leadership, positive organizational scholarship, and ethics, has identified four major components of authentic leadership: self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency. But it was also discovered that authentic leadership is influenced by the moral or ethical reasoning of a leader (Northouse, 2013, 282-283). This moral aspect of leadership became the rationale for the development of the ethical leadership theory.

1.5.2 Ethical Leadership

Interest in leadership ethics began in the late twentieth century, particularly because of the many scandals in corporate organizations and the political realm. "The misery caused by unethical leaders drives home an important point: Ethics is at the heart of leadership" (Johnson, 2012, xviii). People realized that leaders have the ethical responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. Concurrently, there was a recognition of the need to establish an ethical climate for the benefit of organizations and society. Writings on leadership ethics began to appear in 1996. A set of working papers written by a small group of scholars was collected by W.K. Kellogg. These scholars examined how the introduction of the ethical dimension to leadership theory and practice could be used to build a more caring and just society (Northouse, 2013, 423).

1.5.2.1 Characteristics of Ethical Leadership

Brown and Trevino recognized the value of the research done by Den Hartog, Kirkpatrick, Kouzes and Posner, and several others, whose research proved that leader's personal traits, such as integrity, honesty and trustworthiness are closely related with perceived leadership effectiveness. Another discovery by researchers was in the area of cognitive trust. This explored the exercise of care in work, being professional, dependable, and how these contribute to effective styles of leadership (Brown and Trevino, 2006, 596).

Building on this work, Trevino and colleagues conducted exploratory research designed to further understand ethical leadership. They identified a number of characteristics: "Ethical leaders were thought to be honest and trustworthy. Beyond that, ethical leaders were seen as fair and principled decision-makers who care about people and the broader society, and who behave ethically in their personal and professional lives" (Brown and Trevino, 2006, 597). These characteristics were labelled as the 'moral person aspect' of ethical leadership, representing the leader's personal traits, character, and altruistic motivation. In addition, Johnson identified four virtues of ethical leadership: courage, prudence, optimism and integrity (Johnson, 2012, 80). Theses virtues are woven into the inner life, and shape the way leaders see and behave. Being virtuous, makes them sensitive to ethical issues and encourages them to act morally (Johnson, 2012, 80).

Trevino and colleagues also discovered what they called the 'moral manager dimension'. "This aspect of ethical leadership represents the leader's proactive efforts to influence followers' ethical and unethical behaviour" (Brown and Trevino, 2006, 597). Moral managers make ethics an explicit part of their leadership agenda. They communicate clearly to followers the ethics and values they uphold by visibly and intentionally role-modelling ethical behaviour and by using rewards and discipline to hold followers accountable for ethical conduct (Brown and Trevino, 2006, 597). "Such explicit behaviour helps the ethical leader to make ethics a leadership message that gets followers' attention by standing out

as socially salient against an organizational backdrop that is often ethically neutral at best" (Treviño et al., 2000, 2003; Brown and Trevino, 2006, 597).

1.5.2.2 Definition of Ethical Leadership

Brown and colleagues defined ethical leadership as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision-making" (Brown and colleagues, 2005, 120). They also developed a ten-item instrument to measure perceptions of ethical leadership, the Ethical Leadership Scale (Brown and Trevino, 2006, 597). They then conducted multiple construct validation studies, finding that:

> Supervisory ethical leadership was positively associated with, yet empirically distinct from leader consideration, interactional fairness, leader honesty, as well as the idealized influence dimension of transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 2000). Ethical leadership is also positively related to affective trust in the leader and negatively related to abusive supervision, but it is unrelated to either rater demographics or perceived demographic similarity between leader and subordinate. Perhaps most importantly, subordinates' perceptions of ethical leadership predict satisfaction with the leader, perceived leader effectiveness, willingness to exert extra effort on the job, and willingness to report problems to management (Brown and Trevino, 2006, 597).

Brown and colleagues suggest that ethical leaders are characterized as honest, caring, and principled individuals who make fair and balanced decisions. They communicate with their followers about ethics, set clear ethical standards and use rewards and punishments to make sure those standards are followed. Most importantly, ethical leaders do not just talk a good game - they walk the talk, and are proactive role models for ethical conduct (Brown and Trevino, 2006, 597).

1.5.2.3 Orientations of Ethical Leadership

Based on the works mentioned above, Eisenbeiss took an interdisciplinary integrative approach to ethical leadership and, drawing on ancient and modern Western and Eastern moral philosophies and world religions, identified four ethical principles he believed to be the central to ethical leadership. "These orientations reflect a cross-disciplinary and intercultural view of the normative foundation of ethical leadership and consider both the leadership components of

setting goals and influencing others" (Eisenbeiss, 2012, 794). The four central orientations of ethical leadership are as follows:

Humane orientation means to treat others with dignity and respect, and to see them as ends not as means. It is expressed by the leader's recognition of the rights of others, and by compassion and concern for the well-being of people (Eisenbeiss, 2012, 795). This mirrors the fundamental ethical principle of respect for the dignity and human rights of people and expressions compassion, charity, and altruism. These reflect the thinking of different philosophers and world religions (Eisenbeiss, 2012, 795).

Justice Orientation refers to making fair and consistent decisions and not discriminating against others (Eisenbeiss, 2012, 796). Leventhal and colleagues suggest that for a leader to be perceived as fair, "procedures have to be applied consistently regarding people and time, to be non-biased by any third party's interest, and to include gathering and employing accurate information" (Eisenbeiss, 2012, 796). Justice orientation is "expressed by leaders' consistent decision making, respect for diversity, and non-discriminatory treatment of others with regard to sexual differences, nationality, religion, political beliefs, economic or social status" (Eisenbeiss, 2012, 796).

Responsibility and Sustainability Orientation refers to "leaders' long-term views on success and their concern for the welfare of society and the environment" (Eisenbeiss, 2012, 797). It is reflected in a leader's sense of responsibility to the surroundings, including the larger society and the environment (Kolshoven, 2011, 53). It is often expressed by acting beyond self-interest, and focusing on organizational performance and decision-making that will have a good impact on the larger society and the natural environment; they take into consideration the interests and needs of future generations (Kolshoven, 2011, 53; Eisenbeiss, 2012, 797).

Moderation Orientation refers to "temperance and humility and balanced leader behaviour" (Eisenbeiss, 2012, 796). This is demonstrated by self-control of emotions, personal desires, expressed in humility, and wise attempts to find a

balance between organizational objectives and stakeholder interests. For example, finding balance between financial profit and socially responsible investment, between short-term and long-term objectives, between organizational and team interests (Eisenbeiss, 2012, 796).

Ethical leadership emphasizes that what we need is organizational leaders with character and good moral behaviour, who are honest, trustworthy, fair, principled decision-makers who care about people, the larger society and the environment. Although several scholars have done empirical research in the area of ethical leadership, and discovered its characteristics and orientations, ethical leadership is still in its early stages of development and open to future research.

1.5.3 Mindful Leadership

How do we facilitate leaders to become authentic, moral, and ethical leaders? In recent years the practice of mindfulness has gained currency as a means for developing self-awareness and is a valuable tool to help people face the demands, difficulties and stresses of leadership. "Mindfulness enables leaders to be fully present, aware of themselves and their impact on other people, and sensitive to their reactions to stressful situations" (George, 2014, Mindful Leadership: Compassion, Contemplation and Meditation Develop Effective Leaders). Although mindfulness is an ancient concept from the Buddhist tradition, "it can be taught and practiced without religious beliefs, and is applicable to the challenges of modern-day life" (Gonzalez, 2012, 13).

1.5.3.1 Defining Mindfulness

Jon Kabat-Zinn, director of the Stress Reduction Clinic, and the Centre for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society, states that "Mindfulness is awareness, cultivated by paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally" (Kabat-Zinn, 2012, 1). It recognizes things for what they really are. "Mindfulness is achieved by regulating one's attention – focusing attention on one's thoughts and emotions" (Garms, 2013, Practicing Mindful Leadership). The co-director of the Mindful Awareness Research Centre, Dan Siegel refers to mindfulness practice as "good brain hygiene" that is as important to our health as brushing our teeth (Garms, 2013,

Practicing Mindful Leadership). Gonzalez insists that "mindfulness meditation trains the mind to be in the present moment without distractions, and to concentrate on whatever you choose, for as long as you choose" (Gonzalez, 2012, 14). In mindfulness meditation, what the practitioners are trying to do is strengthen and cultivate their mind's capabilities, just as we train our bodies in physical exercises (Marturano, 2013, Simple Daily Tips for Mindfulness at Work).

1.5.3.2 Mindful Leadership

A few pioneers have written books on mindful leadership and some websites promote mindful leadership training programs. Their purpose is to help leaders to "cultivate self-awareness and compassion by combining western understanding of leadership with eastern wisdom about the mind, developed from practices that have been used for thousands of years" (George, 2014, Mindful Leadership: Compassion, Contemplation and Meditation Develop Effective Leaders). The main idea of mindful leadership is, with the practice of mindfulness meditation, to help a leader be aware and present and thus becomes more efficient and effective in work and life.

1.5.3.3 Nine Skills for Mindful Leadership

In her book, *Mindful Leadership: The 9 Ways to Self-awareness, Transforming yourself and Inspiring others*, Gonzalez proposes "that mindfulness is not a technique, it's a skill - one that you can learn" (Gonzalez, 2012, 9). She has researched nine skills to help a leader reach a greater self-awareness, transformation and inspiration. These nine approaches are as follows:

Be Present: Gonzalez suggests, "Being present is the starting point of being a mindful leader. Essentially, this means being in the present moment regardless of circumstances" (Gonzalez, 2012, 93). "Being present is the greatest gift you can give another person. When you are right here right now, you see things for what they really are" (Gonzalez, 2012, 94). Being present can be shown in mindful listening and mindful speech, which are valuable skills to develop and cultivate as a leader. Mindful listening and mindful speaking are very powerful ways to communicate, reduce or eliminate misunderstandings (Gonzalez, 2012, 98).

Be Aware: Being aware has many layers, but it begins with self-awareness. This means being aware of one's thoughts and feelings moment by moment, so that a leader won't be blindsided or hijacked by his/her prejudice or emotions; it also means being conscious of one's strength and hindrances, aware of how different people and situation affect oneself and visa verse, even how one interacts with his or her surrounding environment: family, team, organization, community, and the planet in general (Gonzalez, 2012, 107). Awareness enables a leader to "maintain sound judgment and make better decisions because moment by moment you'll see what is arising within you" (Gonzalez, 2012, 108).

Be Calm: The ability to be calm regardless of circumstances is invaluable. "This serves to reassure others that a difficult situation is manageable and under control. This allows employees to face challenges from the perspective of problem solving rather than from a place of stress and anxiety" (Gonzalez, 2012, 118). By meditating regularly, the brain rewires itself toward greater calmness. With breathing practice and relaxation skills a person can be trained to relax the body and to be calm throughout the day. Many benefits will result from having a relaxed body and a calm mind.

Be Focused: The untrained mind has considerable difficulty in concentrating on anything for a couple of minutes at a time. However, with mindfulness practice, the mind can be trained to concentrate on whatever one wishes, for as long as one desires. This makes a leader highly effective and efficient. And with training and practice a leader can stay focused, whether under stress or in the presence of multiple opportunities or distractions (Gonzalez, 2012, 127-128).

Be Clear: Being clear allows a leader to make better decisions. It is essential to be clear about one's personal purpose, motives, intentions, thoughts and emotions, the company's vision and strategic direction, and one's expectations for oneself and others. Basically, being clear is closely linked to being aware of what is going on within a person and the surrounding world (Gonzalez, 2012, 133).

Be Equanimeous: This refers to "accepting what is arising in your sensory experience without resisting or distorting it" (Gonzalez, 2012, 143). This allows a person to identify the emotion, noticing where it resides, and how it may be shifting. By being aware in this manner, a leader is in greater control, and in a better position to respond in the most appropriate way (Gonzalez, 2012, 142-143).

Be Positive: According to Gonzalez, "Being positive is an integral part of being a mindful leader. Positivity is multifaceted and includes having a can-do attitude, being of service, and being grateful. It involves being a positive force in your life, your family, your organization, your community, indeed, wherever you have the opportunity to make a difference" (Gonzalez, 2012, 152). A can-do attitude is vital in solving problems or seeking opportunities. Leaders with a can-do attitude know that nothing that is worth doing is impossible. They are optimistic and see possibilities in all challenges. They are inspirational and provide a positive force for their own life and those around them (Gonzalez, 2012, 154-155).

Be Compassionate: True compassion is deep caring without attachment. This involves caring deeply about the other person, but not for the benefit of one's ego. This reflects true compassion and real wisdom. "Compassion acknowledges that everyone and everything is connected. The entire world functions as a system. Whether we are talking about systems theory in mathematics, biology, ecology, the human body, a family, or an organization, everything impacts everything else" (Gonzalez, 2012, 166). For a mindful leader, the ability to experience and express compassion is critical to create a genuine and good relationship with self, family, organization, community, and the larger world (Gonalez, 2012, 170-173).

Be Impeccable: The final aspect of being a mindful leader is being impeccable in one's words and deeds. Impeccability includes having integrity, being honest, and being courageous. Being impeccable includes the appropriate use of power,

not its misuse. It is power used with care and humility. This will engender trust, and trust is vital between a leader and his/her followers (Gonzalez, 2012, 174-175). Spending ten minutes during a busy day "to stop, sit down and be still" (Carroll, 2008, 6) can be beneficial in cultivating the ability to be present, aware, calm, equanimeous, focused, clear, positive, compassionate, and impeccable. The objective of mindfulness practice is not to become skilled at formal meditation for its own sake, but for it to become a way of living, a being-mindful-in-action, so that a leader is open to the vast reservoir of wisdom inside, and open to new possibilities.

1.6 Spirit-Centred Leadership Theories

With the emphasis on the authenticity and ethical aspect of a leader, people began to ask what can facilitate and promote these qualities in a leader. Some scholars argue that the inner life and the well-being of a leader are as important as organizational outcomes, leadership skills and techniques. As West-Burnham states:

> For a host of culture and historical reasons we have tended to neglect the inner lives of leaders. It has always been seen as 'too personal' to make public but, I would argue, we continue to neglect it at our peril. The sustainability, resilience, effectiveness and well-being of leaders are directly related to the health of the 'inner-self'. Personal authenticity, moral confidence and professional courage are direct indicators of personal wholeness (West-Burnham, 2009, 82).

Quoting Jaffe and his colleagues, Doohan acknowledges that, in contemporary organizations, many have lost their way, lost touch with a most precious human gift – our spirit (Doohan, 2007, 12). Other authors have also rediscovered the importance of the spiritual dimension to leadership. These books stress the increasingly common conviction that the heart of leadership lies in the inner core, in the human spirit of a leader. Thus, spirit-centred leadership theories began to emerge. They emphasize that spiritual values should be manifested in leadership. Examples of spirit-centred leadership theories include servant leadership and spiritual leadership.

1.6.1 Servant leadership

The concept of servant leader is not new. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus said to his disciples, "But whoever would be great among you must be your servant and whoever would be great among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve…" (Mark, Chapter 10, 43-45). Jesus not only taught that a leader should be a servant, but manifested this by washing the feet of his disciples at the last supper (John, Chapter 13). Similarly, an Indian scholar in the 4th Century B.C wrote, "The king (leader) is a paid servant and enjoys the resources of the state together with the people (Rangarajan, 1992)" (Mittal and Dorfman, 2012, 555). As we can see, the notion of a servant leader has been around for a long time. However, it was in the 1970's that Robert Greenleaf coined the phrase 'servant leadership' and brought this unique approach to the forefront of leadership studies (Greenleaf, 1998, xix).

1.6.1.1 Defining Servant Leadership

Since the emergence of Greenleaf's essays on servant leadership, scholars have been working on defining and refining its construct. Unfortunately, there is no consensus among scholars about a precise definition and theoretical framework of servant leadership (Mittal and Dorfman, 2012, 556). Nevertheless, the most famous and well-known quote is found in Greenleaf's seminal work *The Servant as Leader*, first published in 1970:

> The servant-leader is servant first… It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead…The best test, and difficult to administer is this: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit, or at least not further be harmed? (Greenleaf, 1970, 15).

In this definition, Greenleaf emphasizes the importance of service. To lead is to serve, and serving others is the foremost priority. He positions "going beyond one's self-interests" as a core characteristic of servant leadership. "Although mentioned in other leadership theories, it has never been given the central position as it has in servant leadership theory" (Dierendonck, 2011, 1230). Besides the

emphasis on serving, Greenleaf also advocates that a servant leader has a social responsibility to care about those less privileged and strives to remove inequality and injustice wherever they exist (Northouse, 2013, 221).

1.6.1.2 Measurement of Servant Leadership

Servant leadership remained a set of loosely defined characteristics and prescriptive principles until the dawn of 21st century, when researchers began to examine the underpinnings of servant leadership in an effort to build a more sophisticated theoretical framework. Laub (1999), Dennis and Bocarnea (2005), Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), Wong and Davey (2007), Liden and colleagues (2008), Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santora (2008), Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) have done empirical research to measure the core dimensions of the servant leadership process. Unfortunately, the findings are varied and lack agreement. Although scholars are not in agreement regarding the primary attributes of servant leadership, these studies provide a necessary foundation for the development of a refined model.

1.6.1.3 A Model of Servant Leadership

Based on the original model devised by Liden, Wayne, Zhao, and Henderson (2008), Liden, Panaccio, Hu, and Meuser further developed a servant leadership model that includes three main components: antecedent conditions, servant leader behaviours, and leadership outcomes (Figure 1.1). This model further elaborates the phenomenon of servant leadership and provides a framework for understanding its scope and complexities (Northouse, 2013, 225).

Antecedent Conditions

As shown on the left side of figure1.1, some existing conditions have a substantial impact on servant leadership, for example, context and culture, leader attributes, and follower receptivity.

Figure 1.1 Model of Servant Leadership

Antecedent Conditions	Servant Leadership Behaviours	Outcomes
↓	↓	↓
Context and Culture	●Conceptualizing	Follower Performance
Leader Attributes	●Emotional Healing	Organizational Performance
Follower Receptivity	●Putting Follower First	Societal Impact
	●Helping Followers Grow and Succeed	
	●Behaving Ethically	
	●Empowering	
	●Creating Value for the Community	
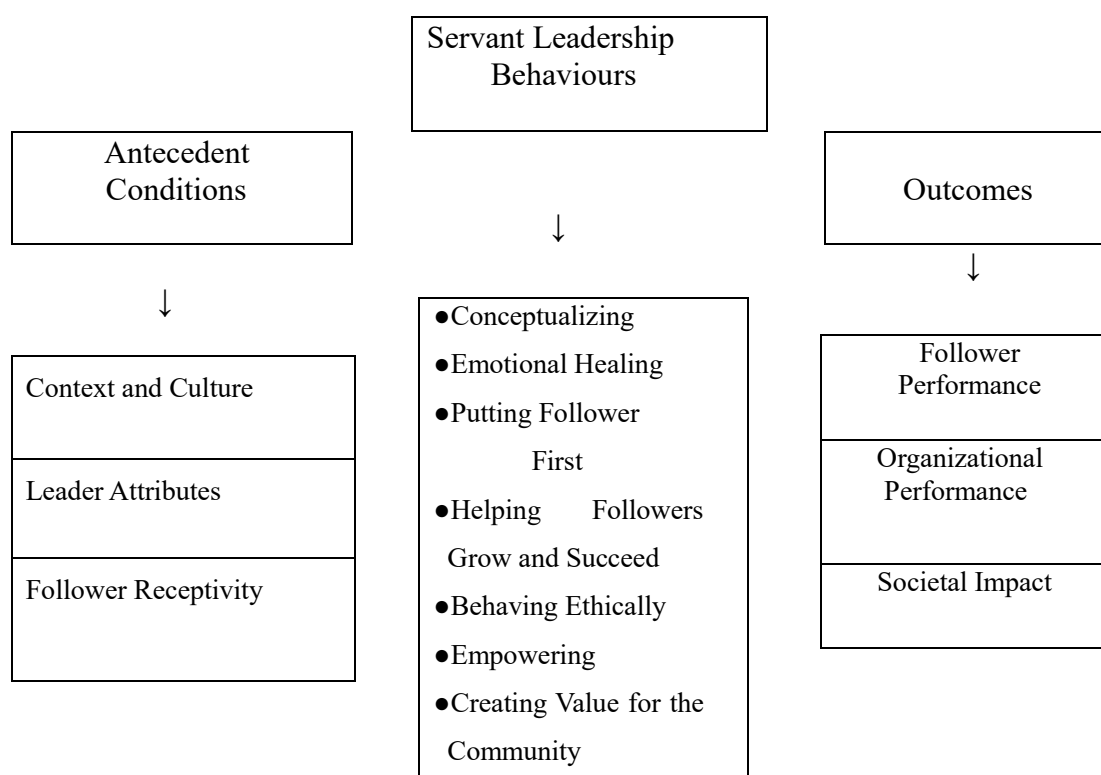
Adapted from Northouse, 2013. 225.

Context and Culture*:* Northouse is of the opinion that, "Servant leadership does not happen in a vacuum but occurs within a given organizational context and a particular culture" (Northouse, 2013, 226). These organizational and cultural backgrounds affect the way servant leadership is exercised in reality. For example, in the health care and hospitality industry, where service and care is their most important value, servant leadership is more likely to occur. Researchers have confirmed and found that servant leadership is positively correlated to employee organizational citizenship behaviour (i.e. followers' actions that go beyond the basic requirements of their duties and help the overall functioning of the organization) (Wu and colleagues, 2013, 388-389). While in a military setting, where the norms differ, servant leadership may be performed differently or maybe it is impossible to practice servant leadership at all.

Cultural background is another significant factor. According to Dierendonck, in cultures that are characterized by a strong humane orientation, which encourages and values justice/fairness, altruism, friendship, generosity, kindness and caring for others, leaders display higher attention to empowerment, interpersonal acceptance, and stewardship; these are essential characteristics of a servant leader (Dierndonck, 2011, 1245-1246). Dierendonck also found that in cultures with high 'power distance', one is expected to be more obedient to authority figures like parents, elders, and leaders. And organizations tend to be more centralized. In such cultures, large differences in power are expected and accepted. On the contrary, in cultures with low power distance, decision-making is more decentralized, with less emphasis on formal respect and positional difference. In this kind of cultural context, developing servant leadership is more likely because the relationship between leader and follower is based on a more equal footing.

Leader Attributes: Leaders are unique individuals with different qualities and dispositions who bring their personality traits, motivations and ideas to leadership situations. All of these factors will influence the leadership process. Dierendonck, Ng, Koh, and Goh have done empirical research which suggests that people who have a desire to lead, with an aspiration to serve, are more likely to demonstrate servant leadership behaviours (Dierendonck, 2011, 1244). Other factors such as self-determination, moral cognitive development, cognitive complexity and emotional intelligence will positively contribute to servant leadership (Dierendonck, 2011, 1245).

Follower Receptivity: An employee's desire for a servant leadership style is another influential antecedent condition. Research shows that some employees do not want to work with servant leaders. They regard servant leadership as micromanagement and report that they do not want leaders to be too familiar or be directly involved in promoting their personal and professional development (Liden, Wayne and others, 2008). Nevertheless, Meuser, Liden, Wayne and Henderson's research shows that when servant leadership is matched with employees who are amenable to this type of leadership, it has a positive impact on performance and organizational behaviour. It seems that for some employees,

servant leadership has a positive effect, and, for others, it could never be endorsed (Northouse, 2013, 226-227). The receptivity of followers plays a significant role in the effectiveness of servant leadership.

Servant Leader Behaviours

In their research, Liden, Panaccio, Hu, and Meuser have found the following seven leader behaviours are central to servant leadership: conceptualizing, emotional healing, putting followers first, helping followers grow and succeed, behaving ethically, empowering and creating value for the community. (As shown in the middle column of figure 1.1)

Conceptualizing: This term refers to the leader's ability to understand the organization thoroughly - its mission, goals, and complexities. This capacity allows the leader to examine a problem from all angles and address the issue creatively in accordance with the primary goals of the organization (Northouse, 2013, 227).

Emotional Healing: Emotional healing refers to being sensitive to the psychological needs and well-being of others. This involves noticing others' problems and difficulties, being willing to take time to address them, support them, and provide them with help and encouragement (Northouse, 2013, 229).

Putting Followers First: Service is the core of servant leadership, and its most important function is to place followers' interests first. This means making followers' concerns a priority, putting followers' interests and success ahead of his/her own (Northouse, 2013, 228).

Helping Followers Grow and Succeed: This means recognizing followers' potential and helping them become self-actualized; and facilitate their self-fulfilment. It includes making followers' career development a priority and providing opportunities and supports for their ongoing development. It also involves being aware of followers' professional or personal goals and helping to accomplish those aspirations (Northouse, 2013, 228).

Behaving Ethically: This means holding to strong ethical principles and acting accordingly. Servant leaders do not compromise their ethical standards in order to achieve success, profits or short-term gains. Instead, they are honest, trustworthy, just, and good role models for ethical conduct. They take into account the common good and the environment in their decision-makings.

Empowering: Empowering refers to leaders who share power with followers by allowing them to assume control, they give them the freedom to be independent, to make their own decisions, and encourage self-sufficiency. Empowerment builds followers' confidence in their own ability and creativity. It gives them the opportunity to develop their potential.

Creating Value for the Community: Servant leaders do not only focus on the development of their own organizations; but are also concerned for the larger community. They link the purposes of their organizations with the broader interests of the community. They consciously and intentionally support the larger community. Very often they are involved in local activities and encourage followers to take part in community services (Northouse, 2013, 229).

Outcomes

Besides the study of antecedent conditions and servant leadership behaviours, Liden and colleagues also examined the potential outcomes of servant leadership in their research. As can be seen in the right column of figure 1.1, the outcomes of servant leadership are: follower performance and growth, organizational performance, and societal impact (Northouse, 2013, 230).

Follower Performance and Growth: Most servant leadership behaviours emphasis putting followers' interests, growth, and self-actualization first. As a result, it is possible for followers to realize their full capability, reach a greater human potential and have a sense of fulfilment. Research also suggested that when followers were open to this type of leadership, the outcomes were positive; they became more effective at doing their assigned work and accomplishing their jobs.

Organizational Performance: Some scholars suggest that servant leadership has an influence on organizational performance. Several studies have found a positive relationship between servant leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour (Ehrhart, 2004; Liden and colleagues, 2008; Walumbwa and colleagues, 2010). Furthermore, Hu and Liden have found that servant leadership enhances team effectiveness by increasing the members' shared confidence that they could do better as a team; and servant leadership positively influence team potency by developing group process and clarity (Hu and Liden, 2011; Northouse, 2013, 231).

Societal Impact: In the servant leadership model, there is an underlying philosophical position, originally set forth by Greenleaf, that leaders should be altruistic and benevolent (Northouse, 2013, 233), which means putting followers first, listening to them, and helping them to grow. As a result, followers learn to serve one another; their organizations are healthier, and this ultimately benefits society. This culture of care extends to those in need, and has a positive impact on social change and human flourishing. For example, under the influence of Mother Teresa's servant leadership, more than five thousand members who belong to the Missionaries of Charity, in one hundred and thirty-nine countries, are committed to serving the poor. This has made an extraordinary impact on society throughout the world.

1.6.1.4 Spiritual Values of Servant Leadership

The fundamental orientation of servant leadership is placing others before self. In the development of servant leadership theory, many other characteristics have been identified, such as: serving and developing people, agape love, altruistic calling, humility, selflessness, integrity and authenticity, behaving ethically, forgiveness, empowerment and stewardship. These manifest the inner qualities of a person and reflect spiritual values, reflecting an integral expression of the inner life and spirituality of a mature person. For this reason, servant leadership has been identified among spirit-centred leadership theories.

1.6.2 Spiritual leadership

At the beginning of the 21st century, scholars and practitioners realized that there is more to business and organizational life than the financial bottom line, and mere material success, they began to emphasis the spiritual dimension to organizational life. Benefiel argues:

> We believe that today's organizations are impoverished spiritually and that many of their most important problems are due to this impoverishment…The fact that spirituality has been avoided for so long in the field of organizational science as a serious topic for empirical and systematic study is damming evidence of the spiritual impoverishment of academia as well. We believe that organizational science can no longer avoid analysing, understanding, and treating organizations as spiritual entities. We not only believe that organizations must become more spiritual if they are to serve the ethical needs of their stakeholders, but we also have important evidence to support our beliefs (Benefiel, 2005, 723-724).

In the field of educational leadership too, scholars have discovered that we have focused on mastering the externals for so long. However, there is a strikingly different story emerging, though far less pervasive: "It's what we might call the inside story—the inner world of individual leaders. This story is about heart and consciousness and spirituality" (Thompson, 2008, 152).

In recent times, such consciousness is growing and bringing spirituality to the workplace is becoming increasingly important. People are looking for a more holistic leadership style that integrates the four fundamental areas that define the essence of human existence – the body, mind, heart and spirit (Fry, 2003, 694). Fry argues that "previous leadership theories have focused in varying degrees on one or more aspects of the physical, mental, or emotional elements of human interaction in organizations and neglected the spiritual component" (Fry, 2003, 694). Many scholars like Moxley (1999), Fairholm (1997, 1998, 2001), Kouzes and Posner (1988, 1993, 2003), to name but a few, argue that spiritual leadership forms the backbone of a well-integrated organization (Benefiel, 2005, 724).

1.6.2.1 Definition of Spiritual Leadership

Spiritual leadership is an emerging paradigm within the broader context of leadership studies. Thomson describes spiritual leadership as, "...a state of mind or consciousness that enables one to perceive deeper levels of experience, meaning, values, and purpose than can be perceived from a strictly material

vantage point. Spiritual leadership, then, is leading from those deeper levels" (Thompson, 2008, 152).

1.6.2.2 Spiritual Leadership Model

Figure 1.2 shows the model of organizational spiritual leadership. It was developed by Fry and colleagues. There are two essential processes to spiritual leadership: a) creating a vision in which leaders and followers experience a sense of calling so that their lives have meaning and make a difference in other people's lives and in the world; b) establishing an organizational culture, even a social culture, based on the values of altruistic love whereby leaders and followers create a sense of membership, feel understood and appreciated, and express genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 5).

Figure1. 2 The Organizational Spiritual Leadership Model
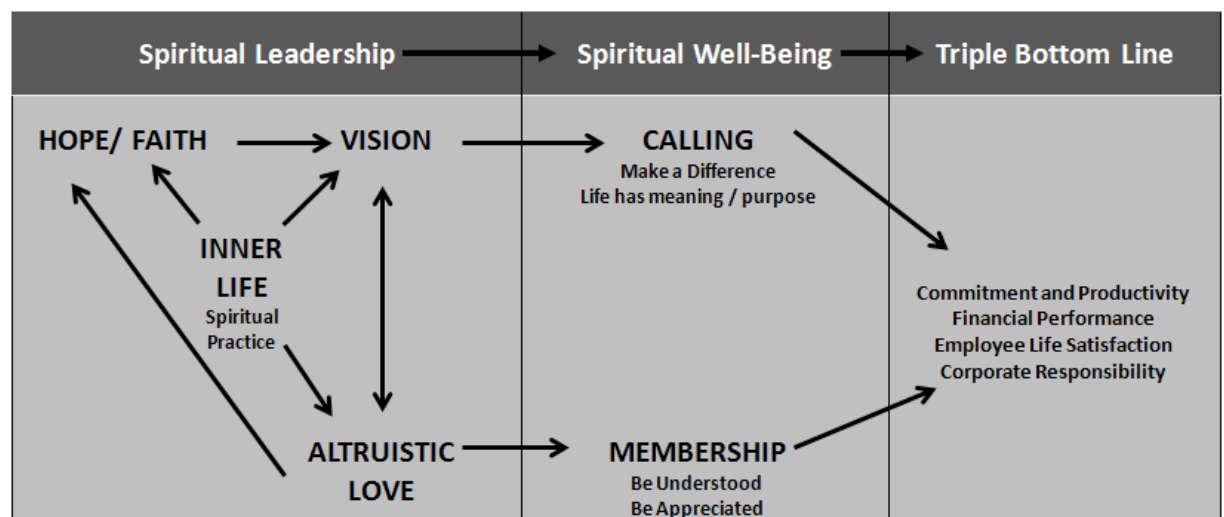
International Institute for Spiritual Leadership

For the first time in leadership theories, the inner life of a leader is identified as the source of leadership. Now inner-life practices, and the development of hope and faith in a transcendent vision of reality, of self, people and the organization, offer a compelling vision of spiritual well-being, of deeper meaning-making, and finding one's life has a deeper meaning and purpose through the exercise of spiritual leadership (Fry and Nicsiewicz, 2013, 5).

1.6.2.3 Components of Spiritual Leadership Model

Fry and colleagues have done research for more than twelve years to test the components of spiritual leadership in order to understand the true nature of how and why the model of spiritual leadership works to maximize the Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet, and Profit. They have identified four basic components to support this claim: inner life, spiritual leadership, spiritual well-being, and personal and organizational outcomes (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 41).

Inner Life

Most leaders recognize there is a spiritual dimension to their leadership and the life of their employees. These spiritual needs are not left at the door when they arrive at work and therefore need to be appreciated in the workplace. "The nourishment of the inner life can produce a more meaningful and productive outer life that can lead to beneficial individual and organizational outcomes. Because of this, organizations should nurture the inner life of their workers and create an organizational environment that facilitates inner life development and expression for all who choose to do so" (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 59).

At the heart of inner life is our longing for an intimate relationship with a power greater than ourselves (God, Allah, or Buddha…) which becomes the source of meaning, values, support, and the invitation to service. Such inner life is reflected at two levels: personal level and organizational level. The personal level recognizes that individual leaders must look after their own inner life in such spiritual practices as meditation, prayer, yoga, journaling, and working in nature. At the organizational level, it means that organizations provide a space/room for inner silence and reflection that help employees be more self-aware and conscious of their own spiritual development (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 59).

Spiritual Leadership

Spiritual leadership is then allowed to emerge from the interaction of hope/faith, vision, and altruistic love. "Hope/faith is the source for the conviction that the vision, either personal or organisational, will be fulfilled. Hope is a desire with

expectation to fulfilment. Faith adds certainty to hope" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 20).

Having a clear, convincing vision is vital for organizational spiritual leadership, because it can energize workers, give added meaning to their work, garner commitment, and establish a standard of excellence (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 94). The vision that is expressed in spiritual leadership has the potential to appeal to and mobilize people by reflecting high ideals, and, with hope and faith, motivate change (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 94).

Although love is the most important value in all major spiritual and religious teachings, the words love and leadership are rarely linked (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 91). Nevertheless, it is the most significant element of leadership. Altruistic love, expressed in spiritual leadership, is defined as "a sense of wholeness, harmony, and well-being produced through care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others" (Fry, 2003, 712). Spiritual leadership incorporates the following essential values: integrity/honesty, trust/loyalty, humility, courage, patience, meekness, endurance, kindness, empathy, compassion, forgiveness, acceptance, gratitude, excellence, and fun (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 128). When spiritual leaders live these values they truly care for the well-being of their workers; and tend to be consistent in their words and deeds. The demonstration of altruistic love may not only have a positive influence on leader-follower relationship, organizational culture, ethical system, but also have a great impact on customers, the community, and other key stakeholders (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 96).

Spiritual Well-being

The experience of spiritual well-being promotes and caters to the universal human need for significance and belonging, for meaning and community, for calling and membership. Companies have begun to acknowledge that promoting spiritual well-being is essential for overall employee well-being. This inner conviction that one's life and work have significance way beyond the self can be the means of

providing "…a foundation for both meaningful human activity and utilizing one's individual and unique abilities" (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 140).

At its best, work can provide a sense of social connection, belonging, and community, generate a sense of being understood and appreciated. Belonging to a larger, caring community can help employees feel they are important, that they have value, and that they matter. At its heart, such membership connects employees at work so that they experience deep communion with others (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 149). Research has provided evidence that developing good-quality relationships with others is central to optimal living. "Healthy interpersonal and social functioning correlates with positive human health and psychological and spiritual well-being, whereas disconnection leads to despair and despondency. A sense of community plays a crucial role in increasing resilience, happiness, and well-being" (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 145).

Spiritual well-being cannot happen "when a company focuses on its monetary goals, but instead occurs through spiritual leadership that first establishes a healthy workplace culture grounded in altruistic values and hope/faith in a vision of service to key stakeholders" (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 153). Research has shown that "when members of an organization have a sense of belonging and a commitment to a common purpose, the organization is more successful in meeting or exceeding key stakeholder expectations and achieving sustainable financial performance – the Triple Bottom Line" (Fry and Niesiewicz, 2013, 153). The combined experiences of calling and membership are at the heart of the experience of spiritual well-being, which, in turn, is the source of personal commitment and productivity, positive human health, psychological well-being and life satisfaction.

Personal and Organizational Outcomes

Fry and colleagues have developed a Spiritual Leadership Business Model (figure 1.3) as key to maximizing the Triple Bottom Line. They have worked with companies such as the Body Shop, Timberline, Procter & Gamble, Starbucks, just to name a few, and discovered that organizations which demonstrate the qualities of spiritual leadership positively influence employees' well-being and the Triple

Bottom Line - people, planet and profit (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 46-47).

Figure 1.3 Spiritual Leadership Business Model
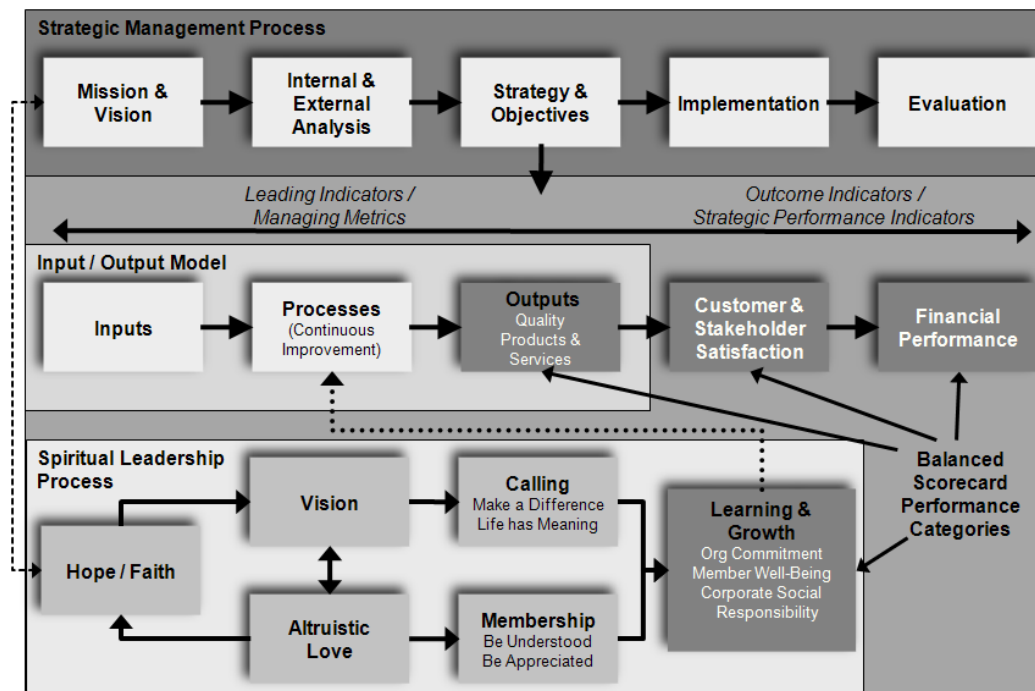
Source: International Institute for spiritual Leadership

Mainstream medical research during the past twenty years also supports the opinion that spirituality has a positive impact on maintaining health: "Individuals in work groups that experience high levels of spiritual well-being have higher levels of positive human health, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction" (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 47). More specifically, "they have a higher regard for themselves and their histories, good-quality relationships with others, a sense that life is purposeful and meaningful, the capacity to effectively manage their surrounding world, the ability to follow inner convictions, and a sense of continuing growth and self-realization" (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 47).

Organizations that are led by a spiritual leadership model are dedicated to being socially responsible and attending to the sustainability of our planet. They recognize that "we operate in an interdependent global environment in which all living beings depend on one another and on their natural environment" (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 9). They respect the interconnectedness and interdependence of

all living things and act as stewards and embrace "the co-creative and synergistic nature of business as living and learning systems" (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 242). They cultivate awareness throughout their business ecosystem and care about the environment.

The motivation process in spiritual leadership that is based on vision, altruistic love, and hope/faith results in an increase in a sense of spiritual well-being and ultimately increases a) organizational commitment because people will become attached and loyal and want to stay in organizations based on the values of altruistic love; b) people who have hope/faith in the organization's vision will "do what it takes" in pursuit of the vision to continuously improve and be more productive. In other words, "a high degree of spiritual well-being as a driver of organizational commitment and productivity ultimately drives the level of quality products and service. This, then, leads to high levels of customer satisfaction and, ultimately, growth in sales and profits" (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 48). Promoting productivity and organizational performance excellence does not mutually exclude the well-being of people, planet and profit.

Fry and colleagues have done great work in formulating theories of spiritual leadership. However, Benefiel argues that they did not sufficiently engage with the 'spiritual' component of 'spiritual leadership' (Benefiel, 2005, 727).

1.6.2.4 Benefiel's Contribution to Spiritual Leadership

Benefiel proposes a conceptual framework which addresses the spiritual aspect of leadership study. She affirms that Sanders et al (2002), Fairholm (1997, 1998, 2001), and Fry have done important work on formulating theories of spiritual leadership but they haven't done sufficient analysis on the 'spiritual' aspect of 'spiritual leadership':

> These pioneers are doing significant work in defining and conceptualizing spiritual leadership. Their strengths lie in the area of the "leadership" aspect of "spiritual leadership". All three survey the scholarly literature on leadership, grasp well its developments and current trends, and clearly situate their work in the stream of leadership research. The limitations of these studies, on the other hand, lie in their articulation of the "spiritual" aspect of "spiritual leadership" (Benefiel, 2005, 726).

To address this inadequacy, Benefiel uses the work of Helminiak, who builds on Lonergan, to further advance the theory of spiritual leadership. Helminiak claims that contemporary social science focus on 'what is'; however, there is also a place for the social sciences to be concerned with 'what could be', i.e. with how humans are at their best (Benefiel, 2005, 730-731). The contribution by Helminiak allows debate around the question - 'at its best'. In other words, it provides scope for the discussion of the interconnection between a leaders' personal transformation and organizational transformation. Building on Helminiak's theory, and drawing on the understanding of spiritual development from the field of spirituality, Benefiel developed a conceptual framework for spiritual leadership and organizational transformation. In her book *The Soul of a Leader*, Benefiel explores the individual leader's spiritual transformation and also provides a deeper understanding of how this can inspire and guide organizational transformation (Benefiel, 2008, 143-167).

A) The Individual Leader's Spiritual Transformation
The Three Ways
Benefiel uses the classic Christian formulation of the *three ways* to describe the process of spiritual transformation. They are the purgative, illuminative, and the unitive ways which "describe the journey of the spiritual sojourner from an initial spiritual awakening through many ups and downs all the way to union with God" (Benefiel, 2008, 142). The concept of journey may seem like a linear progression; but in reality, "even the most advanced sojourners will occasionally find themselves back in the first stage, and that no one attains union with God permanently in this life" (Benefiel, 2008, 142). Consequently, it is better to understand the spiritual growth as a spiral rather than linear progression.

The Purgative Way
The individual leader's spiritual transformation begins with an awareness of spiritual reality. In this period, the seeker discovers that "…one experiences the bounty of God's gifts and learns to seek God for the gifts God bestows… and that following a spiritual path brings an added dimension to life" (Benefiel, 2008, 143). Therefore, in this early stage of relationship with God, the person enjoys prayer and the sweetness and consolation it brings. The person also discovers his/her own

shortcomings such as ordinary addictions and attachments and, with God's help, makes an effort toward letting go of them. This introduces the purgative dimension to relationship with the Divine.

1st Dark Night

After some time, a person will "discover that the abundant gifts they have been receiving from God dry up. This brings confusion, as they miss the closeness to God and the answers to prayer that they grew accustomed to experiencing" (Benefiel, 2008, 143). At this point, they experience dryness and frustration. Spiritual writers refer to this period as the 'first dark night' or the 'dark night of the senses', because the person cannot feel the sweetness, consolation and closeness of God when His gifts seem to disappear. Some give up on the spiritual journey at this point; while others persevere, and move into the illuminative way (Benefiel, 2008, 143).

The Illuminative Way

At this stage, people learn that their spiritual journey is about their own transformation rather than receiving gifts from God. Instead of doing all the talking and telling God what they want in prayer, they learn to listen more and let God shape their thinking and values: "This is the stage of good works and the flowering of the virtues. In this stage, sojourners find it easier to persevere through tribulations, not giving in to discouragement as readily as they did before. Liberty and love characterize the illuminative way: liberty from old attachments and love toward all" (Benefiel, 2008, 143-144). Eventually, the spiritual seeker who continues on the illuminative way may enter the 'second dark night', a 'dark night of the soul' (Benefiel, 2008, 144).

2nd Dark Night

Here, the familiar approaches to prayer no longer work, and God seems to have disappeared. "Even when the person lets go of his old form of prayer and opens himself to listen for something new, there doesn't seem to be any new path opening to God. It is at this time that he learns to desire God for God's self, not only for what God can give him" (Benefiel, 2008, 144). Although it feels like God

has abandoned him/her; in fact, God is working in hidden ways. In time, the dark night of the soul yields to the unitive way (Benefiel, 2008, 144).

The Unitive Way

In the unitive phase, "the hidden work that occurred during the dark night is revealed, and the soul experiences union with God" (Benefiel, 2008, 144). At this juncture, the person has totally fallen-in-love with the mysterious, incomprehensible God; he/she is grasped by an other-worldly love and is completely transformed into a being-in-love (Walter, 1986, 31). At this stage, the person is able to fully let go of one's ego, is able to surrender one's illusion of absolute autonomy, and commit oneself to a higher good and more powerful call (Benefiel, 2008, 144-145).

Benefiel, speaking of the unitive stages suggests that "most believers glimpse this place and live in it briefly, then slip back into a more ego-centred place. Over time, as they continue to walk the spiritual path, they can learn to live more and more fully in this place of letting go" (Benefiel, 2008, 145). Benefiel provides this understanding of spiritual transformation to help us imagine what leaders, who live predominantly in this spiritual, moral, ethical stage, look like. She proposes that, just like individuals, organizations can undergo a similar process of transformation. Benefiel presents 'Tom's of Maine', a health food store that was established by Tom and Kate, as an illustrative example of this three-fold path for organizational transformation.

B) Organizational Transformation

The Purgative Way

During its formative years, the company advocated an approach to business that was value-based and endeavoured to integrate ethical and moral values to promote the welfare and interests of people, planet and profit. They pursued this even in times of difficulty and challenge. Benefiel explains:

> By adhering to their spiritual principles, Tom and Kate overcame the initial challenge of developing products on a shoestring budget and finding employees appropriate for their atypical business…they boasted a strong workforce, a successful product (Tom's of Maine toothpaste), and a loyal customer base. Morale was high, they were giving back to the community, and they were financially successful. In just ten years, the business had grown from a dream in Tom and

Kate's hearts to a $1.5 million company. Tom and Kate knew that the gifts that can be realized by following a spiritual path (Benefiel, 2008, 148).

During this period, the founders recognized that the gift of business success can be realized by following an ethical path by providing superior quality products, good customer service, care for the environment, while respecting and being concerned for the well-being of the employees. This stage can be compared to the purgative experience that organizations can have.

1st Dark Night – An organizational comparison

After years of moving forward smoothly and successfully, the company began to expand beyond the health food stores to include selling toothpaste to supermarkets and drugstore chains. With the help of marketing and finance experts, "…they made the transition from a small entrepreneurial business to a midsized company, aggressively competing with large corporations for market share" (Benefiel, 2008, 148-149). About six years later, Tom's of Maine hit a wall. "Conflicts kept arising with the company's marketing and finance experts. They argue that non-natural, better-tasting ingredients would help the toothpaste sell better in the new markets. They argued for less costly, non-recyclable packaging" (Benefiel, 2008, 149). This period reflects the organizational experience of the first dark night. "The old way wasn't working anymore" and "Spiritual principles and business success no longer seemed to go together" (Benefiel, 2008, 149). They are at a crossroad. Where to turn? They could give up on the spiritual, ethical path, and just concentrate on short-term gains. Fortunately, Tom and Kate did not give up, they chose to deepen spiritually, and gradually lead the company to the illuminative way.

The Illuminative Way- an organizational comparison

Tom sought advice from a trusted spiritual advisor with one question in mind, "what is God calling us to do? Should I stop doing business and go to divinity school to study theology and then go to ministry?" After talking and discerning with the spiritual advisor, Tom decided to continue as CEO of the business while also attending Harvard Divinity School two days a week. There, "Tom found nourishment for his own soul, and he also learned to perceive and understand the soul of the business. He reclaimed the spiritual principles upon which he and Kate

had found the business, understanding that putting spiritual values first was the only way he could be true to himself" (Benefiel, 2008, 150). He was reenergized and rediscovered the original vision. He also learned how to articulate and develop the company's soul, and put the business back on course, on the value-based course that he and Kate cherished at the very beginning (Benefiel, 2008, 150). Paradoxically, when Tom stopped pursuing business success as his primary goal, the business flourished. Tom and Kate had helped the company make a transition to the illuminative way, in which "spiritual principles are put first and chosen for their own sake, rather than for the material gain they provide" (Benefiel, 2008, 151).

In order to deepen the company's spiritual principles and invite the company's leadership to understand their journey into the illuminative way, Tom invited his Harvard Divinity School professor to lead a retreat for the leadership team, hoping that they could be exposed to the same understanding he had been exposed to, so that they could have the same vision. This was no easy process and they encountered difficulties and serious challenges during the retreat. Fortunately, a breakthrough occurred when someone put together apparently opposing views and articulated the belief "We believe that the company can be financially successful, environmentally sensitive, and socially responsible" (Benefiel, 2008, 151). The leadership team had realized that profit, people, and planet could be partners; they were committed to building a value-based company. The next step was to bring all employees on board. "Tom and Kate gathered the entire company in a large tent on the company's ground, seeking everyone's input on a newly drafted statement of beliefs and a mission statement, both developed from lists drafted at the leadership retreat" (Benefiel, 2008, 152). Though it was not easy, nearly everyone participated, and, in the end, a statement of beliefs and a mission statement, that reflects the values of the company, were formulated.

The next step was implementing the mission statement. This was no easy task. The mission implementation took place in three stages. First, Tom asked a board member who is specialized in organizational development to facilitate a whole company gathering. The employees enjoyed the day together, had fun, got to

know each other better, and reflected on the mission. They were asked to think about how well Tom's of Maine was living out the part of its mission that focused on employee's well-being. They generated a list of suggestions. Tom committed to listening and immediately took action on the items that could be addressed without delay. The second issue for mission implementation involved Tom's level of participation. Some felt intimidated by the presence of the boss. Knowing this, Tom resigned from the mission implementation committee. Employees felt freed from their feelings of intimidation and fear: "fear that the mission would mean a bigger burden on them" (Benefiel, 2008, 155-156). Learning about these fears, Tom listened more attentively and responded readily to employees' concerns. As a third stage in its mission implementation, the company began holding regular celebrations such as births, retirements, birthdays, and anniversaries. During these events, manufacturing machines would stop for an hour while people throughout the company gathered for food and conversation. "These simple community-building gatherings helped employees get to know one another as individuals, and helped humanize their day-to-day interactions at work. They felt respected and valued as people" (Benefiel, 2008, 156).

By the end of the year after formulating the mission statement and statement of beliefs, the mission seemed to have firmly taken hold within the company. The following years saw the company moving ever more deeply into living out the values, although with a lot of challenges and struggles. For instance, one of the challenges was about a new product:

> In their commitment to all-natural ingredients, the product development team had formulated the company's honeysuckle deodorant, adding lichen (a natural odor-fighting ingredient) and replacing propylene glycol (a petroleum product) with a vegetable-based glycerin. The new formulation was approved in pilot testing, and it went out to customers. Within two month, angry calls and letters were pouring in. While half of the customers were pleased with the new product, half complained that the new formula stopped working for them halfway through the day. Increasing the lichen content didn't help. Stores carrying the product, and the Tom's customer service department, were overwhelmed fielding the avalanche of complaints (Benefiel, 2008, 156-157).

The company faced a moral dilemma: profits versus values. It transpired that if they genuinely wanted to listen to the complaints it would entail a product recall which would cost $400,000, and that meant giving up 30 percent of projected profits for the year. Ultimately, "the leadership team agreed to slow growth and reduce pre-planned marketing investments in order to absorb the loss, and Tom authorized the recall" (Benefiel, 2008, 157). Once more, they had chosen to put values first. "In the long run, the company's loss proved to be gain, resulting in increased customer loyalty and a company reputation for integrity" (Benefiel, 2008, 157). For Tom's of Maine, "the years from 1989 to 1996 had proved to be years of deepening in the illuminative way and at the same time growing as a business. The company had made the transition to the second part of the journey and continued to experience ongoing transformation over the years" (Benefiel, 2008, 159).

2nd *Dark Night - An organizational comparison*

In 1996, Tom's of Maine entered a process similar to the dark night of the soul. Although the company had made a steady recovery from the $400,000 product recall they struggled financially. This "spurred managers once again to question Tom and Kate's focus on values. Internal politics intensified" (Benefiel, 2008, 159). Tom spent most of his time on the road, trying to recapture the $2 million in sales lost in the deodorant fiasco. Additionally, the company's best-selling product, its baking soda toothpaste, was successfully imitated by competitors, further endangering sales. Moreover, after twenty-five years of growth, the company had stagnated. It now needed a different kind of leadership. In the meantime, "No new products had been produced. The fifteen-person product development team, consisting of one scientist, one marketing expert, and several R&D experts, kept cancelling itself out" (Benefiel, 2008, 160). The team was characterized as "more politics than products" (Benefiel, 2008, 160) after no one in Tom's family was interested in taking the company to the next level. In considering the different relevant factors, Tom and Kate decided to explore selling the company" (Benefiel, 2008, 160). They talked to prospective buyers saying, "they would sell the company only if: (1) the company remained in

Maine, (2) all Tom's of Maine's employees were kept on, (3) the commitment to natural ingredients continued, and (4) animal testing continued to be eschewed" (Benefiel, 2008, 161). Unfortunately, what buyers wanted was the brand and its best-selling products, but none would commit to keeping the company in Maine or adhering to the company's values. Tom and Kate realized, "If the company moved, most employees would lose their jobs... if they sold the company, only the brand would remain. The company would become a mere shell of what it had been" (Benefiel, 2008, 161). They considered all the possibilities and could see no way out. "Tom and Kate as leaders and the company itself had entered a dark night of the soul" (Benefiel, 2008, 161).

The Unitive Way - an organizational comparison

The process of seeking a buyer had clarified to Tom and Kate what was most important to them. In the end, their values won out over profit. They decided not to sell because "If it meant the company would lose its values, then selling the company wasn't worth it to them. Their values were the greatest good" (Benefiel, 2008, 161). With this clarification of values came new energy. Tom took an alternative approach to product development. He formed the three-person team, composed of a 'champion', a 'scientist' and a market researcher to create new products, and replace the fifteen-person product development team. "The new approach proved stunningly successful. In less than eighteen-months … they were able to double the number of company products" (Benefiel, 2008, 162). Tom and Kate formed more teams; within two years, the number of products had gone from 27 to 117, a 300 percent increase. The company that had been suffering now experienced new birth. Tom and Kate also found Tom O'Brien, who had excellent experience running a division of a major corporation, to partner with them. Since then, the two Toms have worked together successfully and brought the company from the dark night to the dawn. Tom, Kate, and the company had journeyed to the unitive way.

Similar with an individual leader's spiritual journey, organizations can experience development through the three stages of transformation with its intervening dark night cycles coming around again and again. This organizational transformation

model, which parallels and reflects the spiritual development of a leader, offers a unique contribution to the study of spiritual leadership in action.

It was inevitable that this movement towards a deeper understanding of the consequences of spiritual leadership would lead to further synthesis and development. The research by Fry and Kriger is a step in this direction and introduces the concept of being-centred leadership.

1.7 Being-Centred Leadership Theory

In 2009 Fry and Kriger published an article titled Towards a Theory of Being-Centred Leadership: Multiple Levels of Being as Context for Effective Leadership, and investigated leadership as a state of being. Based on the understanding of multiple levels of being that exists in the six spiritual traditions of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism. All six religious traditions view human persons as evolving through different stages of being and knowing, although each uses differing terminology (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1670). The theory of multiple levels of being was advanced by Wilber (2000a, 2000b), who, drawing on developmental psychology, anthropology, and philosophy, argued that human consciousness is found to develop in a series of stages: "Consciousness in this view is marked by the subordination of lower-order system to progressively more subtle, higher-order systems, where a higher level of being becomes salient as an individual's overall being evolves" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1670).

Building on the understanding of the six religious traditions, and the theory of Wilber, Fry and Kriger developed the concept of being-centred leadership. It proposes five levels of being and begins with level V which relates to the knowledge gained through the sensible/physical world. The concept continues with the understanding that human beings progress toward level IV through images and imagination. Level III addresses the Soul as the integrated inner, personal experience of a person. In level II the Spirit is explored as the transcendent and universally connected self. Level I - non-dual being - is the highest level of being and reflects the integration of all previous levels. "Such a system can be described as 'holonic'. A holonic system is one in which each level

as a whole is embedded in a higher level of the system, creating a nested system of wholes (Wilber, 2000b).

"In a holonic ontological system each successive level of existence is a stage through which individuals are hypothesized to pass through on their way to progressively more subtle (and more complete) levels of being" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1672). From this perspective "Each higher level of being transcends and includes each of the lower levels of being. Moreover, each lower level can be activated, or reactivated, as an individual developmentally progresses and then, as often happens, falls back to a lower level as the situation and response changes" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1672). The level of being a leader occupies has significant influence on the understanding and style of leadership. Fry and Kriger explain:

> When at a particular level of being, a person will tend to experience psychological states that are appropriate to that level. In addition, his or her feelings, motivations, ethics, values, learning system, and personal theories-in-use as to how leadership should be practiced are all hypothesized to become more appropriate to that level of being. Hence, the level of being becomes a context for appropriateness of response and engagement by leaders (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1672).

From this insight Fry and Kriger propose that "each level of being and awareness has different implications and criteria for effective leadership" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1669).

1.7.1 Level V: Leadership in the Physical and Sensory World

Level V relates to being in the physical and sensory world. "At this stage of development, one's perspective is established and knowledge is gained within the physical, observable world of sense experiences. The dominant experience of being is rooted in ego and perpetuates the notion of a separate individual" (Nolan, 2012, 51). The focus of level V is on worldly affairs, such as personal needs, gains and successes, and the satisfaction of the ego. "This level of being, the sensible/physical world, is the level of reality where most of the theory and research on leadership has been conducted" (Fry & Kriger, 2007, 7). The having-centred leadership theories and doing-centred leadership theories discussed earlier in this chapter are examples of level V, since at this level leadership primarily exists in the physical and sensory world. They all focus on effectiveness, results,

and success. Having-centred leadership theories endeavour to find out what kind of personality traits make effective leaders; and doing-centred leadership theories undertake to find out what leaders should do to make them effective.

1.7.2 Level IV: Leadership at the Level of Images and Imagination

Level IV is characterized by images and imagination. Reality on this level is personally and socially constructed through "vision, values, and images" (Fry and Kriger, 2007, 9). In other words, "the subjective experience is what develops awareness and knowledge for an individual and for groups" (Nolan, 2012, 52). "Out of this level arises legitimacy and appropriateness of a leader's vision, as well as the ethical and cultural values that individuals and groups should embrace" (Fry & Kriger, 2009, 1675). Leadership theories that correspond to level IV include charismatic and transformational leadership that use "images and imagination, primarily through vision and values, to create agreement on a socially constructed reality that motivates followers to achieve higher levels of organizational commitment and performance" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1675). Although this vision "gives followers a sense of meaning and purpose that goes beyond their own self-interests for the good of the group or organization" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1676), there is concern that transformational leadership concentrates "exclusively on top leaders" (Jackson and Parry, 2008, 31). If this criticism is true, then "is it fair to presume that the acceptable level of expression for top leaders is expected at the fourth lowest level of Being-Centred Leadership? This assumption may leave room for growth, but delivers frightening commentary that the cultural norm of top-tier leadership is set at an "early" stage of progression" (Nolan, 2012, 53).

Figure 1.4 Theories of Leadership by Levels of Being

Levels of being	Type of leadership theory	Criteria for effectiveness	Relevant works
I The Non-dual (The world of Absolute Mystery)	●Non-dual	Unconditional love Absence of separation between 'self' and 'others'	Wilber (2000a) Kriger & Seng (2005)
II The World of the Spirit	●Spiritual ●Servant	Service to relevant others Are all stakeholders satisfied and taken into account?	Duschon & Plowman (2005); Fry (2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2008); Benefiel (2005) Greenleaf (1977); Liden et al. (2008)
III The world of the Soul	●Conscious/mindful ●Authentic ●Ethical	Does it feel right within the 'heart'? Moral consciousness	Benefiel (2005); Osbourne (1970); Tolle (1999, 2005); Wilber (2004)
IV The World of Creative Images and Imagination	●Charismatic ●Transformational	Value congruence: fit with values and images	Bass (1995); Kanungo & Mendonca (1996) Avolio et al. (2004) Avolio & Gardner (2005) rown (2007); Brown & Trevino (2006); Bass & Steidlmeier (1999); Price (2003)
V The Physical World	●Trait, Behavior Contingency Theories	Profit ROI, ROA Sales growth	Bass(1990);Kirkpatrick & Locke (1991); House (1996); Uhl-Bien et al. (2007)

Adapted from Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1674.

1.7.3 Level III: Leadership from the Soul

The third level concerns soul and "matters of the heart" (Nolan, 2012, 54). Fry and Kriger cite Almaas saying that the soul is the locus "where all of our experiences are integrated into a whole and functions as the vessel that literally contains our inner personal world" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1677). The term soul refers to "the individual self, including all of its elements and dimensions" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1677). The self is then defined as that which tends towards enhancing the individual's overall well-being, including both a spiritual aspect as well as the more conventional levels of experience (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1677). Quoting Tolle, Fry and Kriger describe the experience from the worldview of the soul stating:

> To be conscious at Level III involves the capacity to be aware from moment to moment of our experience, whether thoughts, feelings, body sensations or of the mind itself (Tolle, 1999). Without an understanding of the soul as the locus of felt experience, a person's thinking will tend to focus on the past or on the future, creating a hindrance to being in the present. The individual will then often become

trapped in ego-centred experience, where there is an 'experiencer' separated from what is 'experienced' (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1678).

Awareness at this level "is essential for leaders to be in touch with subtle feelings and intuitions that can result in better understanding of the overall context as well as the needs of followers" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1678). Current theories on moral-centred leadership that include authentic, ethical, and conscious leadership correspond with the world of soul at level III. Authentic leadership emphasizes being true to oneself, gaining self-awareness and self-regulation, behaving consistently with one's values and internalized moral standards, building trusting and transparent relationships, and leading from the heart. These are the experiences of the self, and expressions of the soul. Ethical leadership also operates at the soul level because ethical leaders are honest, trustworthy, caring, humane, and principled individuals who make fair and balanced decisions. (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1679).

Fry and Kriger propose that a leader operating at the level of soul is significantly more present and less influenced by negative emotional states, is less egocentric, more other-centred, compassionate and aware of the difficulties facing followers than leaders at Levels IV and V (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1680).

1.7.4 Level II: Leadership from the Level of Spirit

The second level of being involves the world of spirit and self-transcendence (Nolan, 2012, 56). The spirit is said to be the intangible, life-affirming force that is present in all human beings; it is the aspect of one's being that gives rise to the possibility of self-transcendence and deepening connectedness with all things in the universe (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1680). "Deepening awareness of the Spirit often involves cultivation of inner practices such as contemplation, prayer and meditation, which serve to refine individual and social identity so as to include the 'other' (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1680). Leadership at level II reflects spiritual values like trust, integrity, honesty, humility, love, compassion, forgiveness, kindness, and service. Current theories that foster spiritual values are the spirit-centred leadership theories, which include servant and spiritual leadership.

Servant leadership, which holds that the primary purpose of organizations and business, should create a positive impact on its employees and relevant communities; "As leaders become more attuned to and encourage basic spiritual values, they serve not only organizational members but also the larger society" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1681). Servant leaders take on leadership roles with a strong desire to serve first, rather than for status and self-interest. They inspire others to discover their inner spirit, help them to grow and succeed. They are others-centred and exhibit a high level of ethical behaviour. The results of servant leadership are assumed to include followers' growth, ongoing organizational healing, and the creation of value for both external and internal communities (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1681-1682).

Another theory related to level II is that of spiritual leadership, which is about the inner world of individual leaders; it's about the heart and spirituality of leaders. Spiritual leadership tries to bring the whole self, including spiritual resources, to bear on the tangible problems that leaders must face in a complicated world (Thompson, 2008, 152). Spiritual leadership theory uses an intrinsic motivation model which incorporates vision, hope, faith, altruistic love, theories of workplace spirituality, and spiritual well-being in order to create organisational vision, enhance employee well-being, and foster corporate social responsibility and organisational performance (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1682). The point is made that a leader operating at the level of spirit experiences greater positive psychological and spiritual well-being, empowers and intrinsically motivate followers, and manifests the virtue of altruistic love in serving others, to a significantly greater extent than leaders at levels III, IV, and V (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1682).

1.7.5 Level I: Leadership at the Non-Dual level.
The non-dual level is the highest, and most inclusive level, in which one aspires to a Transcendent Unity that is beyond all dualities and sense of otherness. "The non-dual thus embraces both pure being as well as pure emptiness. Logically, this level of being appears to involve a contradiction. However, all of the world's spiritual traditions refer in one way or another to this level of being that is so

inclusive it includes both pure emptiness and pure fullness or plenitude" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1683). Consequently, level I is "the integration of all of the previous levels of being into an Absolute Oneness, which is beyond all distinctions, including the distinction between transcendence and worldly immanence" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1683).

This non-dual oneness lies at the heart of all of the major religious and spiritual traditions (Kriger and Seng, 2005, 795). This indicates the central theme that "the goal of living in this world is to know the Absolute, through the transcendence of all opposites, and to realize Self-actualization" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1683). A leader operating at this level is aware of an infinite range of possibilities and responds to each situation as it arises within a unique context and configuration of forces in the moment (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1683). Level I leaders tend to know the Absolute through the transcendence of all opposites. "To be at the level of the non-dual involves abiding in a state of 'feeling-realization', which is a natural state of non-separation with Being" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1685). Tolle articulates the experience of being at this non-dual stage as a felt knowing because by its nature it cannot be understood fully by the discursive mind. He maintains:

> The beginning of freedom is the realization that you are not the possessing entity – the thinker. Knowing this enables you to observe the entity. The moment you start watching the thinker, a higher level of consciousness becomes activated. You then begin to realize that there is a vast realm of intelligence beyond thought, that thought is only a tiny aspect of intelligence. You also realize that all the things that really matter – beauty, love, creativity, joy, inner peace – arise from beyond the mind (Tolle, 1999, 18).

The essence of level I being is a felt realization that "God is everything and everything is God" (Osborne, 1970; Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1684), and it engenders an invitation to become one with God and the whole universe. Fry and Kriger regard Matthew 5: 39-40 as a graphic expression of Level I non-dual leadership: "But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well". In such a non-dual level, the leader not only embraces the apparent 'other', but advocates going still further: "If you are forced to go one mile, go with him two miles" (Matthew, 5: 41) (Fry and Kriger,

2009, 1684). Examples of Level I leaders "would be Jesus, the Buddha or Krishna, respectively from the Christian, Buddhist and Hindu traditions" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1684). It is likely that some of the mystics and contemplatives in Church history also lived at level I from time to time. "There are some examples of recently living individuals who are likely Level I leaders. However, few, if any, reside or work within organizational contexts. Thus, Level I leadership is a stage of being that is more to be aspired to rather than a current reality within organizational settings" (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1684). No current leadership theory can be identified as corresponding to a level I, non-dual state of being. Therefore, the non-dual level of being and awareness is to be aspired to, and realized, usually via much inner work. It provides a vision of what leadership can become at the highest level (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1865).

Fry and Kriger also suggest that a leader's level of being and awareness has implications for his or her leadership (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1669). They hypothesize that a leader operating at level I, the non-dual stage, a) manifests unconditional regard for the other as oneself; b) intuits the needs of the group more quickly, and c) fosters equality and makes less of a distinction between leader and follower, to a greater extent than leaders at level II, III, IV and V (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1685). To put it in simple and popular terms, level I leaders will be more integrated and whole, and are at oneness with the Transcendent and the cosmos. This kind of leader is what we need, someone who "has discovered in himself the voice of the Spirit and has rediscovered his fellow men (sic) with compassion" (Nouwen, 1994, 43).

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has presented an overview of the historical development of leadership theories. Even though this chapter could not pretend to be an exhaustive literature review, it has made a strong case that leadership study is moving from "leadership based on having and doing, to leadership that rests on and evolves out of being" (Kriger and Seng, 2005, 788). Correspondingly, Pava, Kriger and Seng argue, "Leadership is not primarily having the right traits, competencies, and behaviours for the situation, but a question of acting out of and being in touch with the source of meaning that the leadership is drawing its

inspiration from and directing individuals in the community towards (Pava, 2003)" (Kriger and Seng, 2005, 788). It seems that the more leadership is studied and researched, the more it discovers that the essence of leadership lies in the heart, core-being, and human spirit of leaders.

Now the question is: how can leaders progress to level I? Normally, it needs not to take thirty years in prison, like in the case of Nelson Mandela who was forced to be a contemplative because of his imprisonment. But it does require liberation from imprisonment to external expectations, demands, preoccupations, and our own impediments and attachments. Prayer and contemplation is a trustworthy pathway leading to such freedom (Granberg-Michaelson, 2004, 176). We can learn a great deal from the wisdom traditions of the East and the West. Because of the scope and limitation of this research, we cannot cover both eastern and western wisdom traditions. Chapter Two will explore the Christian contemplative tradition, and see what can be learned from the writings of ancient and contemporary writers about contemplation; how it becomes the source of inner and outer transformation, and how a contemplative attitude and a contemplative way of living can form leaders toward a non-duel level of being and doing.

Chapter 2 The Christian Contemplative Tradition

2.1 Introduction

Contemporary leadership studies are tending toward a deeper understanding and appreciation of the inner life of the person of the leader. Since the self of the leader has become pivotal to the quality and effectiveness of leadership, an exploration of the inner life of the person will be researched according to the Christian contemplative tradition. At its heart, the contemplative tradition is about the perception, development, and growth of the self-concept of the person in relationship with God and others. An exploration of the history and development of the Christian contemplative and mystical tradition will chart how this facilitates the inner journey towards union with God and right relationship with others. To understand the movement from an ego-centred self to a transcendent self, we will explore Teresa of Avila's *Interior Castle* to demonstrate an inner journey from a Christian perspective and its implications for relationship with others and the world. The connection between contemplation and social action will be explored with the help of Evelyn Underhill and Thomas Merton to provide an understanding of the reality of an everyday mysticism and practical contemplation in support of leadership from a Christian perspective.

2.2 A Brief Historical Account of Christian Mysticism

The authors and texts that have been chosen in this brief historical overview of Christian mysticism are meant to illustrate the fact that, from a Christian perspective, we can trace mystical experience from its Jewish origins in the Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament through the different periods up to the present. This points to the fact that people throughout the centuries have had intimate and mystical experiences of God which has imbued them with knowledge and wisdom, and the desire to imitate God through a life of service. Bernard McGinn understands mysticism as "those elements in Christian belief and practice that concern the preparation for, the consciousness of, and the effects attendant upon a heightened awareness of God's immediate and transforming presence" (McGinn, 2005, 19). Despite the variety of experiences, practices, and theories of spirituality, the foundational, unchanging and distinctive reality of God is the essence of mystical experience. The different mystics help to trace both the

continuity of the same mystical experience of God and the evolution of our understanding of mysticism in both its personal experience and outward expression, in contemplation and action. Each of the mystics illustrate this same yet unique experience of God and, although there are many mystics, those chosen reflect God at work in history and indicate the potency of contemplation to transform a person and impact their environment. As such, this is a good foundation for understanding the contemplative dimension of contemplative leadership.

2.2.1 Mysticism in the Old Testament

Christian mysticism was very much influenced by the Jewish faith tradition and Greek thought, especially its contemplative ideal taught by ancient philosophers. Although the word "mysticism" is not found in the Hebrew Bible, the reality is there. The Old Testament is full of records about God's "mighty deeds", or what God did for his people Israel, and how this people responded to his initiative. In other words, the salvific historical events in the Old Testament revealed the reality of the divine-human interaction (Egan, 1984, 17). For example, the Eden story indicates that Adam and Eve enjoyed an intimate presence of God. "Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, and other patriarchs of the Old testament experienced God's intimate call, had their faith tested, wrestled with God, were blessed by him, spoke to him as a personal friend, were often afraid and speechless in his presence, were visibly transformed by their encounters with him" (Egan, 1984, 18). Both Moses and Jacob claimed face-to-face encounters with God (Gn32:30; Ex 33:11, 23). The same can be said of the prophets. For example, Elijah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, and Amos were called in a most intimate way to be God's spokesmen. "Often, visions and ecstatic encounters grounded their calling. God's words burning in their hearts rendered them both powerless to speak it and incapable of holding it in" (Egan, 1984, 18). Their felt knowledge of God resulted in their unshakable trust in God's faithfulness, tenderness, compassion, love, and moved them to address the social, political, economic questions of their day. They were actually contemplatives in action (Egan, 1984, 18-19). The patriarchs and prophets are "paradigms of those who experienced God as Holy, as the

tremendous and fascinating mystery. Although absolutely transcendent, wholly other, and darkness itself, God was nonetheless intimately near and the very light of their live" (Egan, 1984, 19). For them, "to be united with this living, vital God was the end and goal of all living" (Egan, 1984, 19).

2.2.2 Mysticism in the New Testament

The New Testament attests that, "Jesus Christ is the foundation of all Christian mysticism. Because of the permanent union of a human nature with the divine Person of the Word, Jesus Christ possessed not only a divine knowledge, but also an immediate, direct, and unique human knowledge of the Father, of himself as the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Egan, 1991, 5). In the New Testament, Jesus spoke of his intimate, full, personal filial loving knowledge of his Father. He used the word "Abba" to address to God, an intimate word means "beloved Father, or Daddy"; he claimed that "no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him (Mt 11: 27); He knew that he had come from the Father (Jn 7:29) and would return to him (Jn 8:14); He was conscious of his oneness with the Father: he heard his Father's word (Jn 8:26), knew his will (Jn 5:30), and saw him working (Jn 5:19). So intimate was Jesus' relationship with his Father that the Father showed him everything he did (Jn 5:20). In short, Jesus knew the Father in the fully biblical sense of the word: experiential loving knowledge (Egan, 1991, 5-6). John's Gospel describes the Holy Spirit as the "Counsellor" who will continue and complete Jesus' ministry. To John, the Holy Spirit is Jesus' spirit, the Spirit of truth (Jn 14:17). Jesus claimed that only in and through his redemptive death would the Holy Spirit be definitively given (Jn 7:39); "Jesus was intimately aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit, God in us, loving Immanence. Therefore, Jesus' mystical consciousness is essentially Trinitarian. He knew himself to be uniquely Son because of his relationship to his Father and to the Spirit of their love" (Egan, 1991, 7).

Jesus' disciples also underwent their own mystical purgation, illumination, and transformation through witnessing his ministry, passion, death and resurrection. On Pentecost, when the disciples experientially received Jesus' Spirit, their mystical transformation deepened so that "From then on, with the Spirit's own power, they could and would preach about what God in Christ had done for his people" (Egan, 1991, 9).

The Pauline writings in the New Testament also witnessed the mystical encounter of Paul with the risen Lord on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:19; 22:3-16; 26: 12-18; Gal 1:12). This event transformed the Christian-hating Saul into Paul who became an ardent apostle for the rest of his life. Paul preached a Gospel that "came through a revelation of Jesus Christ" and was ecstatically taken up into "third heaven" and "heard things that cannot be told" (2Cor 12:2) (Egan, 1991, 10). Paul was so radically transformed by his experience of the living Christ that he understood and felt it was no longer he who lived, but Christ living in him (Gal 2:20).

To sum up, the reality of Christian mysticism can be found in the Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament. According to McGinn, the later Christian contemplatives have found their favourite resources in the New Testament, especially the Johannine and Pauline writings, just as are the Psalms and the Song of Songs from the Old Testament (McGinn, 1991, 69).

2.2.3 Mystical Elements in the Greek Fathers

The Greek Fathers of the early Church, such as Clement of Alexandria (150-215 CE), Origen (185-254CE), and Gregory of Nyssa (330-395CE) sought to understand and explain mystical experience by borrowing from the Neoplatonists the term *theoria* which originally meant "the intellectual vision of truth that the Greek philosophers regarded as the supreme activity of the human person" (Keating, 2001, 39). They used this technical Greek term, but incorporated the meaning of the Hebrew word *da'ath*, which meant "the experiential knowledge that comes through love" (Keating, 2001, 39). It was with this expanded

understanding that *theoria* was later translated into the Latin word *contemplatio*, which was then translated into the English word contemplation, and handed down to us by Christian tradition. The Greek Fathers, especially Origen, explained the Scriptures from a contemplative perspective. As Origen said in introducing the story of Rebecca: "The words which have been read are mystical; they are to be explained in allegorical mysteries" (*Hom, on Gen*. 10.1). Origen's exegesis was mystical, "because he sought out the deepest meaning of Scripture with all the tools at his disposal" (Egan, 1991, 19). He insisted that "Scripture's literal sense must flower into its mystical one" (Egan, 1991, 19). Origen conceived the mystical life as "the full flowering of and the explicit realization of Christ's union with the soul effected through baptism" (Egan, 1991, 20). Origen's greatest contribution to the Christian contemplative tradition is his view of the mystical life as successive stages of purgation, illumination, and unification. The language of contemplation dominated Origen's descriptions of the goal of the mystical journey (McGinn, 1991, 128). Origen understood contemplation as "both knowing God and being known by God; it is union with God and the vision by which the image of God, that we are, is reformed" (Egan, 1991, 20). Origen argued that "by contemplation, one becomes divinized" – a favourite theme of the Greek Fathers (Egan, 1991, 20).

2.2.4 The Monastic Movement and Mysticism

In the third and fourth centuries, thousands of men and women went to the deserts of Egypt and Syria to escape Roman persecution. Many more followed to escape the secularization of post-Constantine Christianity to "achieve the contemplation of God in purity of heart" (King, 2004, 40). The God who found them in the desert formed many of them into contemplatives; "Some became what are now known as desert fathers and mothers, and their teachings were practiced and passed to others as a living tradition of Christian contemplation" (Frenette, 2008, 10). They developed a desert spirituality based on the thought of Clement and Origen, who saw the vision of God as the goal and end of human life (King, 2004, 37). Their wisdom, life and practice unfolded over the course of several generations and eventually it became a living witness to the contemplative dimension of the

Gospel; "This witness later became the inspiration for the monastic contemplative life of Christianity in both western and eastern Europe" (Frenette, 2008, 11).

An influential figure of the monastic tradition is **Benedict of Nursia** (480 – 550), who is regarded as the Founder of the Benedictine Monasteries, even though he did not establish a Benedictine Order as such. "He wrote a rule for his monastery at Monte Cassino in Italy… but later it became the rule of choice for monasteries of Europe from the ninth century onwards" (Theisen, 1995, 79). Most contemplative orders' daily life is spent in "prayer and work". Monks and nuns worked to support their communities and provided religious and social services to local populations. They also spent long hours in prayer. "Prayer in the Benedictine monasteries included liturgical prayer: primarily the daily offices and the Mass. It also included private prayer. The rule instructed monks to practice *Lectio Divina* for at least two hours a day and longer on Sunday when the monks were not expected to work" (Order of St Benedict).

The core of Benedict's rule revolved around obedience and humility. These two virtues are fundamentally relational and pivotal for relationship with God and others. Benedict began the rule, in the prologue, by saying: "Hear and heed, my son, the master's teaching and bow the ear of your heart. Willingly take to yourself the loving father's advice and fulfil it in what you do. Thus, by laborious obedience will you return to him…" (Benedict, 2012, 1). The emphasis on obedience provides an important perspective on Benedict's orientation to prayer. Being grounded in humility, which establishes a mindful attitude towards God, obedience becomes a listening that is receptive to the presence of God in all things, and in all dimensions of one's life. This is what inspires conversion of mind and heart, "Along with regular *lectio* Saint Benedict prescribes prayer of the Divine Office as the other chief spiritual practice of the monastic life. Like *Lectio*, prayer of the hours presupposes continuous obedience, or openness, to the presence of God, who is said to be everywhere" (Tomlinson, 2016, 98). The life of faith is understood as allowing divine encounter to take place through the obedience that happens in opening up to God and letting go. Such obedience becomes truly transformational when it becomes mutual obedience. Benedict devoted chapter 71 of the rule to explain the necessity of mutual obedience: "The good thing that

obedience is shall be shown by all not only to the abbot, but also let the brothers similarly obey each other mutually, knowing it is by this way of obedience that they will go to God." (Benedict, 2012, 98). By this he highlighted that mutual obedience means abandoning one's self-will through which one shows that concrete relationship with God is based upon the way one lives with those in community. Kodell, a member of the Order of Saint Benedict, explains as follows:

> Benedictine obedience is not fulfilled simply by obeying the commands of the abbot or other superior. A monk in Benedict's monastery is not completely obedient unless he goes beyond that, for mutual obedience is not mainly about overt commands or requests. It is about responding to the needs of the other before they are spoken, even looking for ways to respond whether or not they are spoken. In other words, mutual obedience is about sensitivity and availability to my brother or sister, whatever need he or she has, including readiness to tolerate deficiencies (Kodell, 2013, 410).

Competing in obedience to one another is a concrete way of expressing faith, hope and love in God and the other; it requires a deep listening, a listening that is at the heart of the daily spiritual practices of prayer, work, *lectio Divina* and a reflection of the reality of the Incarnation at the core of the Christian message.

2.2.5 Early Church Fathers

Christian contemplation and mysticism flourished in the monastic environment where, in the silence of their isolation, the monks and nuns could hear the "still small voice" of God (1 Kings 19:12). As a result of the monastic movement, many contemplative orders were established, and many great mystics emerged in the Christian contemplative tradition.

Augustine of Hippo (354 - 430), whose thought shaped the spiritual world of the next millennium in Western Europe, wrote a rule for a community of contemplative monks in North Africa in about 400CE. His autobiography *Confessions,* his great works *City of God, The Trinity,* and other significant *Homilies* and *Commentaries*, "touched on many fundamental religious issues, of which mysticism is but one" (McGinn, 1991, 231). Augustine's main contribution to Christian mysticism is shown in the following:

> First, his account of the soul's ascension to contemplative and ecstatic experience of the divine presence; second, the ground for the possibility of this experience in the nature of the human person as the image of the triune God; and third, the necessary role of Christ and the church in attaining this experience (McGinn, 1991, 231).

Augustine's *Confessions* is often regarded as the first ever spiritual autobiography. It explains the idea that "mystical journey is an interior journey into one's soul, mind, or self" (Nelstrop, Magill and Onishi, 2009, 67). His famous quote "you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you (God)" sums up the ultimate longing of the human heart for God (Augustine, 1991, 3; primary text of the Fathers of the Church can be found in The *Fathers of the Church* Series published by the Catholic University of America Press). This is also the motivation behind our spiritual journey. Augustine believes that the human being is made in the image and likeness of God (Augustine, 1982, 86), and his "exploration of the *imago trinitatis* in the human soul lays bare the ontological basis for that knowing and loving which leads to vision" (McGinn, 1991, 248). The essential task of our human journey is the restoration of the image of God in human being through the grace of Christ and the ministry of the church: "Christ alone makes it possible for us to become what we were meant to be – fully realized images of the Trinity through our bond with the God-man" (McGinn, 1991, 251); and "…the Christian faith is a spiritual therapy designed to help restore the image of God in us so that we can more fully share in the experience of the divine presence in this life" (McGinn, 1991, 245). Augustine's writings also show that It is only by way of love of neighbour that we can love God, and that therefore love alone provides access to the vision of God, both in this life and the next (Augustine, 2017, chapter 26, verses 48-51).

The most influential person in the mystical tradition of both Eastern Orthodox and Western Roman Catholic is **Pseudo-Denys** (also known as Pseudo-Dionysius, Dionysius the Areopagite), a fascinating figure, whose identity is shrouded in mystery. Yet, even though he chose a pseudonym, there are clues to who Pseudo-Denys was. It is assumed that he was a Syrian monk from the early sixth century (Nelstrop, Magill and Onishi, 2009, 43). His writings – *Celestial Hierarchy, Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, Divine Names,* and especially *Mystical Theology,* has been most influential in the Christian contemplative tradition. His works, originally in Greek, were translated into Latin in the ninth century and became widely available and known in the West.

In *Mystical Theology* Pseudo-Denys writes about kataphatic (affirmative) and apophatic (negative) theology. He opens his treatise with a prayer to the Triune God, "Supernal Triad, Deity above all essence, knowledge and goodness; Guide of Christians to Divine Wisdom; direct our path to the ultimate summit of Thy Mystical Lore…" (Dionysius the Areopagite, 1965, 9). In this prayer, we see a balance between kataphatic and apophatic language. On the one hand, we know by faith that God is triune and that he gives us grace and help in the journey of life; on the other hand, God is the mystery of mysteries beyond anything we can know (Johnston, 1996, 37). Kataphatic theology focus on what we can affirm about God; while apophatic theology focuses on the radical failure of all speech and thought in God's presence (Egan, 1991, 96). Denys addresses the most challenging question of how God can be reached by human beings. For him, the mystical, loving knowledge of God can be attained through contemplation and communion (Egan, 1991, 96). In *Mystical Theology,* he advises his disciple Timothy how to enter the silence, the void, the nothingness, and the emptiness, "…dear Timothy, in the diligent exercise of mystical contemplation, leave behind the senses and the operations of the intellect, and all things sensible and intellectual, and all things in the world of being and non-being" (Dionysius the Areopagite, 1965, 9). Johnston comments on this quotation saying, "here is a message of total renunciation. Timothy is to give up all thinking, all reasoning, all sensing. He does so to enter the ecstatic darkness beyond all being" (Johnston, 1996, 37). For Pseudo-Denys, "apophatic theology's emptiness does prepare the person for 'mystical theology' wherein God's loving self-communication and presence are experienced in an ecstasy of pure love through which one goes beyond all things and out of oneself - in a way beyond analogies, beyond super eminent negations, beyond knowing, and beyond unknowing" (Egan, 1991, 95). Pseudo-Denys points out, "by the unceasing and absolute renunciation of thyself and of all things thou mayest be borne on high, through pure and entire self-abnegation, into the superessential Radiance of the Divine Darkness" (Dionysius the Areopagite, 1965, 9).

Pseudo-Denys is in the tradition of the great Christian fathers who emphasized life's goal as ascending for full union with God (Dionysius the Areopagite, 1965, 17-18). He teaches a unification with God through emptiness and self-transcendence. For him, "the self is united to God who transcends the soul and all else, and becomes God while remaining itself. Thus, Dionysian divinization is one of differentiated unity – of two becoming one, while remaining two – of genuinely becoming the other, while remaining oneself, of becoming God by participation" (Egan, 1991, 95).

Thus, early Christian contemplatives, such as John Cassian (360-435), Gregory the Great (540-604), Augustine, and Pseudo-Denys "provided a solid foundation of respected and authoritative works that promoted monasticism, asceticism, contemplation and mysticism. Following the Desert Fathers, they assumed that mysticism was the ultimate aim of Christians in this earthly life and a foretaste of the vision of God that would come in heaven" (Fanning, 2001, 80; primary text of the Fathers of the Church can be found in the Fathers of the Church Series published by the Catholic University of America Press). They had a critical influence on the later mystics who lived during the period usually referred to in the West as the Middle Ages. After the formative period of early Christianity, the Western Church experienced the Dark Ages (7th – 10th century), from which we know little of the mystical life until it was renewed in the twelfth century (King, 2004, 59).

2.2.6 The Middle Ages
By the eleventh century medieval Europe was growing increasingly populous and wealthy; laxity in monastic discipline threatened the contemplative tradition. In response, new movements emerged which stressed the ideals reminiscent of the desert Fathers. "The reformers advocated lives of stricter asceticism, forsaking all worldly goods and comforts and escaping to deserted places where they could devote themselves to contemplation" (Fanning, 2001, 80). By the end of the eleventh century there were a number of these new ascetical movements, the most successful of which was the Cistercian order of monks. The most famous and influential of all Cistercians was **Bernard of Clairvaux** (1090-1153).

Bernard was "a Cistercian monk, theologian, scholar, mystic, charismatic speaker, and tireless traveller who wrote, preached, and dispensed wisdom and warnings to kings, popes, and nobles alike" (Harpur, 2005, 61). Bernard is one of the first examples of the "new mysticism" of the later Middle Ages in his emphasis on the experience of God (Fanning, 2001, 81). In his Sermons on the *Song of Songs*, Bernard explained his own mystical experience:

> I tell you that the Word has come to me…and that he has come more than once. Yet however often he has come, I have never been aware of the moment of his coming…You ask then how I knew he was present…when the Bridegroom, the Word, came to me he never made any sign that he was coming; there was no sound of his voice, no glimpse of his face, no footfall. There was no movement of his by which I could know his coming; none of my senses showed me that he had flooded the depths of my being. Only by the warmth of my heart, as I said before, did I know that he was there…But when the Word has left me, and all these things become dim and weak and cold, as though you had taken the fire from under a boiling pot, I know that he has gone. Then my soul cannot help being sorrowful until he returns, and my heart grows warm within me, and I know he is there (Bernard of Clairvaux, 1987, 221).

Bernard affirmed the understanding and knowledge that comes from experience as "the context of the ascent of the soul to God and was convinced that the profoundest and most significant truths come from and are validated by mystical experience. With others in the Christian contemplative tradition, he taught that love is itself a knowing" (Egan, 1991, 167) and emphasized the supreme place of love, which is founded on humility. In his short but influential treatise on *Loving God*, he outlined humanity's progressive journey from self-love to spiritual love:

> When one sees that he is not self-sufficient, he begins to seek and to love the God he needs for himself through faith. Then he loves God in the second degree – not for God's sake, but for his own. But when, on the basis of his own need, such a person begins to adore and pay attention to God – thinking, reading, praying, obeying – God slowly and gradually becomes known in the form of acquaintance and so grows sweet. In this way, having tasted that the Lord is sweet (Ps 33.9), the soul passes to the third stage in order to love God no longer for her own sake but for God's sake. It will surely be in this stage for a long time. I don't know if anyone perfectly attains the fourth stage in this life – that in which someone loves himself only for God's sake. If anyone has experienced it, speak up! It seems impossible to me (Harpur, 2005, 63).

Bernard was well known for his deep mystical devotion to the humanity of Jesus Christ. He wrote, "Jesus is to me honey in the mouth, music in the ear, a song in the heart" (Bernard, 1971, 110). For him, wisdom is to be found in meditating on

the truths of Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection, and they are the source of perfect righteousness, of the fullness of knowledge, of the most efficacious graces, of abundant merits (Egan, 1991, 168).

Like his predecessors, Bernard composed no single work on mysticism, but it nevertheless dominated his works, especially his 86 sermons on the Song of Songs (Fanning, 2001, 82). His sermons allegorically interpret the *Song of Songs* and summarize his mystical insights. He views the relationship between the Divine Word and the individual soul as a spiritual marriage between the heavenly Bridegroom and the human bride. For him, the soul's Bridegroom will reveal himself "only to the one who is proved to be a worthy bride by intense devotion, vehement desire and the sweetest affection." (Bernard, 1971, 135-136). What the Bride really desires and asks for is "to be filled with the grace of this threefold knowledge of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, filled to the utmost capacity of mortal flesh…Furthermore, this revelation, which is made through the Holy Spirit, not only conveys the light of knowledge but also lights the fire of love…" (Bernard, 1971, 47-48). Bernard is convinced that contemplation is a foretaste of heaven and a knowing that vivifies the mystical senses. He also viewed it as a type of ecstatic dying to the world which prepares the way for an apophatic, imageless contemplation of God (Egan, 1991, 170). In sermon 52, he wrote:

> This kind of ecstasy, in my opinion, is alone or principally called contemplation. Not to be gripped during life by material desires is a mark of human virtue; but to gaze without the use of bodily likenesses is the sign of angelic purity. Each, however, is a divine gift, each is a going out of oneself, each a transcending of self, but in one, one goes much farther than in the other (Bernard, 1979, 54).

It was also his strongly held view that the active and contemplative lives are complementary – through contemplation the soul becomes zealous in its desire to serve God and people (Harpur, 2005, 62). He lived an active and contemplative life, so that by the time of his death, he had established over 150 Cistercian monasteries, campaigned for church reform, acted to end the papal schism that began in 1130, and preached against heretics in southern France. (Fanning, 2001, 81).

Another influential medieval figure is **Bonaventure** (1221-1274), whom with Bernard of Clairvaux, has been called the *doctor seraphicus* and the *doctor*

mellifluous. They are regarded as the two premier mystical teachers of the medieval west (McGinn, 1998, 87). Bonaventure was very much attracted to Francis of Assisi, a radical follower of Jesus Christ, a mystic who had a visionary experience, and the first person in Christian history who received the stigmata, and was also the founder of the Franciscan Order. Bonaventure joined the Franciscan Order and later was elected General. He wrote a number of spiritual books, sermons, and two biographies of St. Francis (Bonaventure, 1978, 7-8). He played a very good leadership role in the conflict between the Franciscans who desired a strict imitation of St. Francis, and the Franciscans who saw the need for more adaptation, he managed to shape those ideals into institutional forms that have existed to the present day (Bonaventure, 1978, 6-7). He is often and rightly called the second founder of the Order and the primary architect of Franciscan spirituality. His mystical teachings are found in various works, especially *The Soul's Journey into God.* In the prologue, Bonaventure says that thirty-three years after Francis' death, he himself climbed the same mountain to experience peace and reflect on various ways by which the soul ascents into God. He then witnessed the same vision that Francis had seen, namely the six-winged seraph with the figure of Christ's crucified body (Bonaventure, 1978, 54). He understands the six wings of the seraph in the vision as a symbol of the six stages of the soul's ascent into God through the burning love of the crucified Jesus. For him, the spiritual quest is a six–stage movement from the external and transient world to the interior realm of our souls to what is eternal and most spiritual. In the first two stages, we are led to behold God in all creation. "…all the creatures of the sense world lead the mind of the contemplative and wise man to the eternal God. For these creatures are shadows, echoes and pictures of that first, most powerful, most wise and most perfect Principle… They are vestiges, representatives, spectacles proposed to us and signs divinely given so that we can see God…" (Bonaventure, 1978, 75-76). From the world outside, we pass into the next two stages - the interior of our souls, where the souls' three powers of memory, intellect and will are an image of the Triune God. Here, the soul, bearing the image of God, is able to contemplate God through his image stamped upon our natural powers (Bonaventure, 1978, 79-80). After having learned the way of God through contemplating the world, the awareness of the truth of God is gained through and in our own minds (Bonaventure, 1978, 79-86). However, few of us are able to see God within

ourselves "because of our fallen condition: suffering, distraction, and desires prevent any progress" (Harpur, 2005, 78). Our only hope lies in Christ, the God-man, who is the gateway and door to ecstatic mystical contemplation. For Bonaventure, the mystical Christ is the greatest coincident of opposites, that is, "the first and the last, the highest and the lowest, the circumference and the centre, the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, the caused, and the cause, the Creator and the creature" (Bonaventure, 1978, 108-109). The last two stages of the ascent occur when our minds turn to what is eternal, most spiritual and above us. Through and in the divine light of eternal truth, our mind reaches the point where it contemplates the first and Supreme principle of being (Bonaventure, 1978, 114-115). There is a seventh stage, when the mind leaves itself and the world of senses behind and passes over, through Christ, into an ecstatic state of mystical union. "But if you wish to know how these things come about, ask grace not instruction, desire not understanding, the groaning of prayer not diligent reading, the spouse not the teacher, God not man, darkness not clarity, not light but the fire that totally inflames and carries us into God by ecstatic unctions and burning affections" (Bonaventure, 1978, 115).

During the fourteenth and fifteenth century, England witnessed a flowering of mysticism. The most outstanding, best-known contemplatives are Richard Rolle, the anonymous author of the *Cloud of Unknowing*, Walter Hilton, and Julian of Norwich. Because of the limitation of space, we will only discuss **The Cloud of Unknowing** here. Just who the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* was remains a mystery. Those who have debated the issue believe he was a monk, probably a Carthusian priest. He wrote a number of other works including a translation of the *Mystica Theologia* of Pseudo-Dionysius, whose *apophatic* theology is much in evidence in *The Cloud of Unknowing*. "From his various writings, it can be inferred that the author was an experienced contemplative as well as a confident and original thinker who possessed a keen satirical wit" (Harpur, 2005, 124). The anonymous author "teaches a highly introspective form of mysticism that turns a person's inner eye not to finding God in all things but to finding God in the depths of the 'mirror' of darkness, that is, the soul emptied of everything except naked love. He is an outstanding example of the Christian *apophatic* mystical tradition which stresses that only love, not knowledge, can fully comprehend God" (Egan,

1991, 366). For him, "love is mysticism's business" (Egan, 1991, 366).

The central theme of *The Cloud of Unknowing* is the practice and rewards of contemplative prayer, and an explanation of what the author means by the cloud of unknowing. In explaining how the work of contemplation should be done, it states:

> Lift up your heart to God with a humble impulse of love; and have himself as your aim, not any of his goods. Take care that you avoid thinking of anything but himself, so that there is nothing for your reason or your will to work on, except himself. Do all that in you lies to forget all the creatures that God ever made, and their works, so that neither your thought nor your desire be directed or extended to any of them, neither in general nor in particular. Let them alone and pay no attention to them. This is the work of the soul that pleases God most…For when you first begin to undertake it, all that you find is a darkness, a sort of cloud of unknowing; you cannot tell what it is, except that you experience in your will a simple reaching out to God (*The Cloud of Unknowing*, 1981, 119-120).

To illustrate the darkness and cloud the contemplative might experience, the author says, "When I say 'darkness', I mean a privation of knowing, just as whatever you do not know or have forgotten is dark to you, because you do not see it with your spiritual eyes. For this reason, that which is between you and your God is termed, not a cloud of the air, but a cloud of unknowing" (*The Cloud of Unknowing*, 1981, 128).

To progress the author suggests that the contemplative must abandon every created thing, not only material things but also spiritual thoughts:

> ….in this exercise it is of little or no profit to think of the kindness or the worthiness of God, or of our Lady or the saints or angels in heaven, or even of the joys of heaven; that is to say, with a special concentration upon them, as though you wished by that concentration to feed and increase your purpose. I believe that it would in no wise be so in this case and in this exercise, for though it is good to think of the kindness of God and to love him and to praise him for that, yet it is far better to think upon his simple being and to love him and praise him for himself (*The Cloud of Unknowing*, 1981, 129-130).

If you want to gather all your desire into one simple word, the author suggests that the shorter the better, "take just a little word, of one syllable rather than of two; for the shorter it is the better it is in agreement with this exercise of the spirit. Such a one is the word 'God' or the word 'love'. Choose which one you prefer, or any other according to your liking – the word of one syllable that you like best" (*The Cloud of Unknowing*, 1981, 134). With this word, "you are to strike down every

kind of thought under the cloud of forgetting" (*The Cloud of Unknowing*, 1981, 134). More importantly, the author points out that "the essence of this exercise is nothing else but a simple and direct reaching out to God for himself", or love God "for himself above all creatures" (*The Cloud of Unknowing*, 1981, 169).

Speaking about the reward of contemplative practice, Egan comments that:

> your whole personality will be transformed, your countenance will radiate an inner beauty, and for as long as you feel it, nothing will sadden you…Your words will be few, but so fruitful and full of fire that little you say will hold a world of wisdom… Your silence will be peaceful, your speech helpful, and your prayer secret in the depths of your being. Your self-esteem will be natural and unspoiled by conceit, your way with others gentle, and your laughter merry as you delight in everything with the joy of a child (Egan, 1991, 372).

2.2.7 Spanish Mystics of the 16th Century

 An important development in Spanish spirituality took place in the sixteenth century, a time of great change, exploration, and conflict. (For critical accounts of the general historical context of the 16th century, with particular reference to Spain, see de Las Casas,1992; Castro, 2007 [reviewed in Rubiés, 2007]; Tarver, 2017; Rivera, 1992.) A new form of spirituality, called *Devotio Moderna*, had its origins earlier in Italy and the Rhineland. It was "an intense and creatively imaginative mode of reaching out to God … [which] tended to introspection" (MacCulloch, 2009, 566). This was one element forming the context for Spanish mysticism. Another element was the emerging humanism which found expression within the arts and scholarship, within medicine and science. There was a new fascination with, and appreciation of, the human that was celebrated in poetry, painting, politics and literature. In this context, mystics of a very high order, notably, Ignatius of Loyola and Teresa of Avilla emerged to shed great light on human union with God (Woods, 2006, 180).

Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) lived during the era of kings and queens, nobles and lords, knights and chivalry. He was drenched in the secular values of his time wanting to be great and glorious (Conroy, 1993, 4) He began his "worldly" career as a courtier, a gentleman, and a soldier (Egan, 1987, 18). His life was turned around, however, after a profound religious conversion which happened during the time of recovery from a leg injury at his home in Loyola. "One night, as he lay sleepless, he clearly saw the likeness of our Lady with the holy Child Jesus,

and because of this vision he enjoyed an excess of consolation for a remarkably long time" (Ignatius of Loyola, 1991, 16). Ignatius knew this vision came from God because of its lasting effects. This vision transformed Ignatius decisively and permanently, as would his many other future visions recorded in his autobiography *A Pilgrim's Journey*. One of his great contributions was his well-known *Spiritual Exercise*s which have greatly influenced spirituality from the 16th century until the present. While living as a hermit at Manresa, and receiving spiritual guidance at the monastery at Montserrat, he experienced mystical insights. The basic framework for the *Spiritual Exercises* was established at this time; it would be refined later as he engaged in the spiritual direction of others. "In addition to his seven hours of prayer, he is helping other souls who came there to see him about spiritual matters, and the rest of the day he gave to thinking about the things of God that he had read or meditated on that day." (Ignatius of Loyola, 1991, 34).

The *Spiritual Exercises* (Ignatius, 2011) are a series of practical guidelines that offer advice on how to direct individual retreatants. Much of the advice refers to the structure and content of the five prayer periods per day, and spiritual discernment. The specific contribution of the *Exercises*, which lasts over a period of four weeks, is to encounter God in all aspects of life; the life and death of Jesus is presented as the fundamental pattern for the Christian life; that God, revealing himself in the healing Christ, becomes the source of liberation and hope; and, finally, the *Exercises* are about deepening one's desire for God. This process is meant to foster the integration of contemplation and action, and inspire the desire for an active sharing in God's mission to the world (Sheldrake, 2013, 127). At the heart of this process is spiritual discernment. Ignatian discernment seeks to discover the will of God (Endean, 2009, 154), which is about deciding how to act socially in a responsible manner. Such discernment is communal in nature rather than a merely individual decision-making process. Such discernment is needed when faced with our often-contradictory desires. Since desire shapes our decisions, the discernment process enables a person to be aware of the full range of desires that we experience. Being aware of our desires allows for an honest and moral

way of choosing. The Rules for Discernment continue to be widely known and used in supporting the journey towards contemplation and action.

Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) is one of the most remarkable Spanish mystics of the Golden Age. She was able to "combine the practice of the most profound mystical prayer with a dynamic involvement in the world, seen particularly in her reform of her own Carmelite order and the foundation of seventeen new convents" (Harpur, 2005, 154). She is another good example of a contemplative in action. Besides her active involvement in the reform and establishing new foundations for the Carmelite order, Teresa was also a spiritual and mystical writer. Her works include *The Book of Her Life, The Way of Perfection, The Foundations, The Interior Castle* and a number of poems and letters. In the second section of *The Book of Her Life*, Teresa offers a magnificent insight on mental prayer. She compares the life of prayer to watering a garden:

> It seems to me the garden can be watered in four ways. You may draw water from a well (which is for us a lot of work). Or you may get it by means of a water wheel and aqueducts in such a way that it is obtained by turning the crank of the water wheel. (…the method involves less work than the other, and you get more water). Or it may flow from a river or a stream. (The garden is watered much better by this means because the ground is more fully soaked, and there is no need to water so frequently – and much less work for the gardener). Or the water may be provided by a great deal of rain. (For the Lord waters the garden without any work on our part – and this way is incomparably better than all the other mentioned) (Teresa of Avila, 1976, 81).

Similarly, the beginner in prayer has to make great efforts and endure many difficulties, but these eventually diminish until the Lord freely bestows the greatest gifts on the soul (King, 2004, 152).

Teresa's great contribution to mysticism is her account of an insider's guide to contemplation, to the journey of the soul from the outside world to its innermost depths and union with God (Harpur, 2005, 154). In her masterpiece, *The Interior Castle*, Teresa depicts the stages of the soul's inner spiritual quest for divine union in terms of a journey through seven sets of rooms located within a castle made of crystal or diamond. "The soul's destination is the innermost room, where it will find ultimate union with God" (Harpur, 2005, 157). This castle is entered by way of prayer and meditation (Egan, 1991, 438). For Teresa, "mental prayer …is

nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us" (Teresa of Avila, 1976, 67).

From the castle's outer courtyard, the soul passes through the castle gate, representing prayer and meditation, to the first three sets of rooms, where it learns the importance of virtues such as humility, prayer, and perseverance. It then moves on to the fourth lot of rooms, where it begins to learn the prayer of recollection and of quiet. The fifth rooms concern the prayer of union and spiritual betrothal. At this point, Teresa introduces the memorable image of the soul as a silkworm that eats mulberry leaves until, when it is fully grown, it spins a silk cocoon from which it emerges as a white butterfly. Similarly, the soul feeds on outer nourishment provided by the church, such as sermons, confessions, and holy books, until it, too, becomes fully grown. It then begins to spin its cocoon – that is, Christ – in which it can hide itself. And just as the silkworm has to die to become a butterfly, so the soul must die to its attachment to the world and emerge transformed by its proximity to God. In the sixth set of rooms, the soul, seeking to progress from betrothal to marriage, has to undergo further physical and spiritual suffering. But when it finally arrives at the seventh rooms it experiences union with God and receives a wondrous vision of the Trinity. The very last room – the centre of the soul itself – is the locus of the spiritual marriage between the soul and God (Harpur, 2005, 157-158).

Spiritual marriage and the union that is experienced, according to Teresa, "is like rain falling into a river, when the river's water is impossible to distinguish from the rain; or it is like a stream entering the sea or a room in which light pours in through two large windows – it enters in different places but it all becomes one" (Harpur, 2005, 158). Teresa's understanding of the inner spiritual journey will be looked at in detail in section 2.4 of this thesis.

If the sixteenth century can be described as the age of Spanish mysticism, the seventeenth century belongs to the mystics of France. For example, Francis de Sales (1567-1622), Marie of the Incarnation (1599-1672) and Brother Lawrence (1614-1691). By the beginning of the eighteenth century, mysticism was equated

with the condemned heresy of Quietism by secular and ecclesiastical officials in France. As a result of the suppression of mysticism in Spain and France, the nineteenth century was not favourable to mysticism among Catholics, but the twentieth century sees a revival of mysticism in Europe.

2.2.8 The Twentieth Century Revival of Mysticism

In France, **Elizabeth of the Trinity** (1880-1906) was hearing God's voice in the depth of her heart at a young age (Elizabeth of the Trinity, 10). For Elizabeth, God is truly everywhere, "All nature seems so full of God to me: the wind blowing in the tall trees, the little birds singing, the beautiful blue sky, everything speaks to me of Him" (Elizabeth of the Trinity, 1995, 210). To her way of thinking, this same experience of living constantly in the presence of God, of being filled with God, could be found by everyone, not just a cloistered Carmelite as herself. She encouraged her correspondents that they, too, could attain it (Fanning, 2001, 203). She wrote to her friend Francoise, "Ah, if you only knew [Jesus] a little as your Sabeth does! He fascinates, He sweeps you away; under his gaze the horizon becomes so beautiful, so vast, so luminous" (Elizabeth of the Trinity, 1995, 56). She suggested to Francoise that even though she was not in the cloister, she could still create her own interior Carmel: "You must build a little cell within your soul as I do. Remember that God is there and enter it from time to time" (Elizabeth of the Trinity, 1995, 52).

In Poland, the mystical life of Sister **Faustina Kowalska** (1905-1938) showed she lived almost constantly in the presence of God and experienced spiritual espousal (Fanning, 2001, 204). In her diary, she revealed her almost constant contact and communication with the divine: "My spirit communicates with God without any word being spoken. I am aware that He is living in me and I in Him" (Kowalska, 1987, 237). She also frequently recognized the presence of the Holy Trinity within her. Her constant theme is feeling completely engrossed in the presence of God, encompassed by the presence of God, drowned in God, "extraordinarily fused with God" (Kowalska, 1987, 76). She struggled to describe the ineffable, writing "No one will understand what I experience in that splendid

palace of my soul where I abide constantly with my Beloved. No exterior thing hinders my union with God" (Kowalska, 1987, 245). She commented that in one moment of union with God, "I learn more than during long hours of intellectual inquiry and meditation. These are sudden lights which permit me to know things as God sees them, regarding matters of both the interior and the exterior world" (Kowalska, 1987, 295). Like so many other contemplatives, Faustina "…sees God in everything, finds Him everywhere, and knows how to find Him in even the most hidden things" (Kowalska, 1987, 83). She wrote, "I have never sought God in some far-off place, but within myself. It is in the depths of my own being that I commune with my God." (Kowalska, 1987, 468).

If the life of Faustina Kowalska is comparable to the contemplatives of the thirteenth or fourteenth century, the experience of the French Jesuit priest **Pierre Teilhard de Chardin** (1881-1955) is possible only in the twentieth century. He was a distinguished scientist, palaeontologist, world traveller, poet, visionary and a mystic (Egan, 1991, 557). His scientific writings fill ten volumes. He made repeated trips to China, and served as the geologist on the team that discovered Peking Man. From an early age, Teilhard had been fascinated with nature and matter, or "what 'shone' at the heart of Matter" (Teilhard de Chardin, 1979, 17). He sought God in science and evolution. To him, science itself was mysticism, because "the scientist's quest, however positivistic he may claim it to be, is coloured or haloed – or rather is invincibly animated, fundamentally by a mystical hope" (Teilhard de Chardin, 1968, 24-27). During World War I, he wrote, "my taste for the earth is strange, and, at first sight, most anti-Christian…I certainly experience a passion for the world, and a passion for God" (Teilhard de Chardin, 1965, 165). Teilhard was certainly no mountain-top mystic, for even in the midst of the war, he found God: "more than ever I believe that life is beautiful in the grimmest circumstances – when you look around God is always there" (Teilhard de Chardin, 1965, 56). In one of his letters to his cousin when he was called to military duty during the War, he wrote "I have an almost physical sensation of God catching me up and clasping me more closely…it is unbelievably good to bury oneself deep in God" (Teilhard de Chardin, 1965, 207-209). His scientific-

mystical ideas are reflected in his many writings that were only published after his death (Egan, 1991, 558). The key insight of his cosmic mystical vision was the concept of evolution, which he saw as a world evolving ever more spiritually towards divinization, towards the Omega Point when all creation will be united in God (Harpur, 2005, 205). Out of his reverence for "holy matter" (Teilhard, 1960, 106), he confronted the classic contrast between matter and spirit, for he felt that he could touch God in the world of matter. He had a holistic vision of the world. For him, "Purity does not lie in separation from, but in a deeper penetration of the universe". In the end, "God was shining forth from the world of matter whose waves were carrying up to him the world of spirit" (Teilhard de Chardin, 1965, 68). In *Christ in the World of Matter*, he described three mystical experiences of a priest, but almost certainly it was Teilhard himself. For example, on one occasion, when he was contemplating, a picture of the sacred heart of Jesus appeared to be transformed, with Jesus Christ being surrounded by "a vibrant atmosphere" and indeed "the entire universe was vibrant!". He found himself gazing into the eyes of Christ:

> The pupils of Christ's eyes, which had become abysses of fiery, fascinating life, suddenly beheld rising up from the depths of those same eyes what seemed like a cloud, blurring and bending all that variety I have been describing to you. Little by little an extraordinary expression, of great intensity, spread over the diverse shades of meaning which the eyes revealed, first of all permeating them and then finally absorbing them all…And I stood dumbfounded" (Teilhard de Chardin, 1965, 46).

In addition to the reappearance of Catholic contemplatives in the twentieth century, the early years of the century also witnessed a rise of mystical writers, such as William Ralph Inge, William James, and Baron Friedrich von Hugel. However, the person who has done more to popularize the study of mysticism is **Evelyn Underhill** (1875-1841), a married woman with a rich literary background, for "in thirty-nine years she produced forty books, editions, and collections, and more than three hundred and fifty articles, essays, and reviews" (Greene, 1991, 37). Equally amazing is her list of "firsts":

> She was the first woman to lecture in theology at an Oxford college, the first woman to lecture Anglican clergy, and one of the first woman to be included in Church of England commissions. These accomplishments, along with her work as a retreat leader, made Evelyn Underhill a prominent figure in her day (Johnson, 1998, 109).

She had a powerful experience that convinced her of the truth of Roman Catholicism in February 1907. That experience encouraged her to work on and publish a masterpiece on *Mysticism* in 1911. This work "reflected her own theocentric and neo-platonic spiritual state and in which she relied on her own mystical experiences for an understanding of the mystics of the past" (Fanning, 2001, 210). She also reported that during the next twenty years she had "what seemed to be vivid experiences of God" (Underhill, 1944, 79). In the years before the First World War, she published *The Mystic Way* (1913), "a vigorous presentation of her belief that Jesus was the greatest of mystics and that earlier Christianity was essentially a mystical religion". This was followed by *Practical Mysticism* (1914), an encouragement to all to embrace contemplation" (Fanning, 2001, 210). In October 1922 Underhill had one of her most profound experiences when a voice spoke, "one short thing" to her; unfortunately, she provided no further details (Underhill, 1993, 122). The effect of this experience was astounding for it "Sort of nailed me to the floor for half an hour, which went in a flash. I felt definitely called-out and settled, once for all" (Underhill, 1993, 122). Later, recalling this experience, she wrote, "Thou has shown thyself to me, O Christ" (Underhill, 1944, 41). Furthermore, Underhill's personal notebooks of the mid-1920s are filled with reference to "her constant awareness of being in the presence of God, of being plunged into an ocean of love and of a golden glow that forced its way into her prayer" (Fanning, 2001, 211), and "within this glow of God one sees Jesus" (Underhill, 1944, 57). She died of poor health in 1941, and was remembered as a contemplative.

In the same year that Evelyn Underhill died, the American Trappist Monastery in Kentucky, welcomed a new postulant, **Thomas Merton** (1915-1968), who in many ways continued Underhill's work as an acclaimed promoter of mysticism, contemplation, and prayer. As a member of a contemplative order, Merton gained international recognition as both a contemplative and a writer on mysticism. During his lifetime, Merton had a number of epiphanies that affected him profoundly. The first occurred while he was visiting Rome when he was eighteen:

> One night, in his *pensione* room, he suddenly felt the presence of his dead father "as vivid and as real and as startling as if he had touched my arm or spoken to me". In that moment, he saw into the darkness of his own soul and was filled with revulsion and an intense desire to be liberated from his "misery and corruption".

For the first time in his life he prayed to God with his whole being. The experience later seemed to him to be "a grace, and a great grace" (Harpur, 2005, 210-211).

The second experience happened in 1940 during a visit to Cuba:

One Sunday, while attending Mass in Havana, he heard a group of children at the front of the church cry out the creed in joyful unison and was struck by a sudden awareness of God's presence: "It was a light that was so bright that it had no relation to any visible light and so profound and so intimate that it seemed like a neutralization of every lesser experience". He was sure he had received a divine illumination, and the first articulate thought he had was, "Heaven is right here in front of me: Heaven, Heaven!" (Harpur, 2005, 211).

Merton believed that this "light" is open to anybody, and contemplation is not something that only monks and other religious should practice. All Christians, whether they are teachers, nurses… single or married, all are called to deepen their inner lives, to become "fused into one spirit with Christ in the furnace of contemplation, then they benefit others with the fruits of their spirituality" (Harpur, 2005, 211). Merton left a legacy of fifty books, over 4000 letters, and a thousand pages of poetry that extol mysticism and contemplation as an answer to the aridity of religion and the means towards social transformation.

For Merton, contemplation is a type of spiritual vision that sees "without seeing", and knows "without knowing" (Harpur, 2005, 211). Contemplation involves dying to our old way of living and uniting our minds and wills with God "in an act of pure love that brings us into obscure contact with him as he really is". Through union with God by love, the soul receives the "hidden" or "secret" knowledge of God (Harpur, 2005, 212). Hence, "contemplation is a sudden gift of awareness, an awakening to the Real within all that is real. A vivid awareness of infinite Being at the roots of our own limited being. An awareness of our contingent reality as received, as a present from God, as a free gift of love" (Merton, 1961, 3). To Merton, "Fundamental to the practice of contemplation is the destruction of the false self and the emergence of the true self, which participates in God through Christ" (Harpur, 2005, 212). Harpur interprets Merton's concept of the false self as:

The false self is the "I", or the ego, which deals with the outside world, with everyday life, and with which the individual usually identifies himself or herself to the exclusion of the true self. It is my "I" that dominates my life: insofar as I do things – wanting, loving, hating, eating, resting, thinking, and so on – it is my "I" that is in control, experiencing, evaluating, comparing. But in doing so the "I" is

strengthened, dominating the personality, leaving no room for the true self, the real spiritual centre, to develop and for contemplation to blossom: "As long as there is an "I" that is the definite subject of a contemplative experience…we remain in the realm of multiplicity, activity, incompleteness, stirring and desire" (Harpur, 2005, 212).

For Merton, the false self is the empirical, exterior-superficial self, which always fears uncertainty and the abyss. On the other hand, the true self is "the interior, hidden, real self" (Sheldrake, 2010, 128), which anchors itself only in God. In fact, this "transcendental self" identifies perfectly with God in love and freedom but is metaphysically distinct from God. Because the true self seems the very enemy of the false self, the quest for authenticity requires a great battle; and this struggle for God is at the same time a struggle simply to be one's genuine self (Egan, 1991, 575).

Merton insists that contemplation and the active life are complementary: "activities must be infused with the spiritual energy received in contemplation. Equally, contemplation must be nourished by the right kinds of activities, that is, those that fulfil God's will" (Harpur, 2005, 212-213). He himself was not a "by-stander" to the social problems of his age, but "addressed the pressing social issues of his day: civil rights, social justice, poverty, urban and international violence, nuclear disarmament, ecumenism, and the East-West religious dialogue" (Egan, 1991, 574).

2.2.9. Karl Rahner's Everyday Mysticism

Karl Rahner (1904-1984) is a significant theologian, and mystic, of the 20th century. His profound reflections on mysticism "are so much in accord with the earliest usage of the term *mystical* in the Fathers of the Church" (Downey, 1993, 687). Central to Rahner's thinking is the view that:

> …at the core of every person's deepest experience, what haunts every human heart, is a God whose mystery, light, and love have embraced the total person. God works in every person's life as the One to whom everyone must freely say his or her inmost yes or no. We may deny this, ignore it, or repress it, but deep down we know that God is in love with us and that we are all, at least secretly, in love with each other" (Egan, 1991, 599).

Thus, Rahner understands the human person "as a mystic in the world, as an ecstatic being created to surrender freely and lovingly to the holy mystery that

gives its own self to all and embraces all" (Egan, 1991, 599). As Rahner states:

> In human beings…there is something like an anonymous, unthematic, perhaps repressed, basic experience of being orientated to God, which is constitutive of man in his concrete makeup (of nature and grace), which can be repressed but not destroyed, which is 'mystical' or (if you prefer a more cautious terminology) has its climax what the older teachers called infused contemplation (Rahner, 1970, 125).

To Rahner, there are three kinds of mysticism. One is what he calls "everyday mysticism" (Downey, 1993, 688); another is the more intensive realizations of what we normally call "religious experience"; the other he calls a "purely nonconceptual experience of transcendence without imagery" (Downey, 1993, 688). In his writings on *The Mysticism of Everyday Life*, Rahner regards actual life experiences of the Spirit as mysticism of daily life. He gives a long list of examples to illustrate his point:

> Here is someone who discovers that he can forgive though he receives no reward for it, and silent forgiveness from the other side is taken as self-evident. Here is someone who tries to love God although no response of love seems to come from God's silent inconceivability… Here is someone who does his duty where it can apparently only be done with the terrible feeling that he is denying himself and doing something ludicrous, which no one will thank him for. Here is a person who is really good to someone from whom no echo of understanding and thankfulness of having been selfless, noble, and so on. Here is someone who is silent although he could defend himself, although he is unjustly treated; who keeps silent without feeling that his silence is his sovereign unimpeachability (Rahner, 1983, 81).

In these occasions, Rahner argues:

> …there is God and his liberating grace. There we find what we Christians call the Holy Spirit of God. Then we experience something which is inescapable (even when suppressed) in life and which is offered to our freedom with the question whether we want to accept it or whether we want to shut ourselves up in a hell of freedom by trying to barricade ourselves against it. There is the mysticism of everyday life, the discovery of God in all things; there is the sober intoxication of the Spirit, of which the Fathers and the liturgy speaks, which we cannot reject or despise because it is real (Rahner, 1983, 84).

Besides the mysticism of everyday life which is at times "the unthematic and unreflective experience of being orientated to God", there are "more intensive realizations which force this experience of transcendence more clearly on the reflective consciousness as well" (Downey, 1993, 688), for instance, when an individual has a powerful religious experience. William James describes such an experience, "the night, and almost the very spot on the hilltop, where my soul opened out, as it were, into the Infinite and there was a rushing together of the two

worlds, the inner and the outer… I stood alone with Him who had made me, and ...felt the perfect unision of my spirit with Him" (Downey, 1993, 688).

There might even occur what Rahner called the "purely nonconceptual experience of transcendence without imagery", an experience of the type that John of the Cross describes in his classic texts *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* (Downey, 1993, 688). This kind of experience is described by Harvey Egan as "unusually pure and intense psychological experiences of our graced orientation to the God of love" (Downey, 1993, 688), and would be regarded as mystical union by many of the medieval mystics.

For Rahner, "God is the incomprehensible mystery that embraces everything" (Egan, 1991, 602). God self-communicates to us through the whole of creation and the incarnation so that "the experience of God forms the ambience, the undertow, or the basal spiritual metabolism, of daily life" (Egan, 1991, 600). Because of God's universal self-communication, anyone who lives moderately, selflessly, honestly, courageously, and in silent service to others experiences the mysticism of daily life (Egan, 1991, 600). Rahner is of the opinion that, "the Christian of the future will be a mystic or will not exist at all" (Rahner, 1981, 149). He speaks of the fact that God, and the experience of God, are, through grace, inescapably present in the human person, that God's own self really is operative within us and meant to be experienced. For this reason, he believed that being initiated into Christianity is likewise an initiation into a mystical way of being. Mystical experience is not supposed to be unique, or unusual and for the few, but rather a sign and manifestation of who and what we are meant to be as ordinary Christian men and women. For this reason the presence of God's own self is understood as a constituent part of being fully human and fully alive (Endean, 2009, 33-34, 46).

In summary, the above contemplatives and writers are only a few examples among one hundred mystics recorded in Christian history. These "treasures of the Christian mystical heritage continue to surprise us, as previously unknown mystics are being brought to our attention" (King, 2004, 246). This brief historical overview of mystics and mysticism shows an enduring and richly significant

contemplative tradition that has lasted throughout the two thousand years of Christianity. This great variety of contemplatives lived in different cultures and historical circumstances, but their fascinating narratives are still as rich and colourful as they are inspiring and energizing. Although the history of Christian mystics is extraordinarily rich with many interesting personalities from all walks of life, they all witnessed that "at the core of every person's deepest experience, is a God whose mystery, light, and love have embraced the total person" (Egan, 1991, 599). They show that an intimate relationship with God is possible, that the mystical path to God is through contemplation, and the result of contemplation is love.

2.3 The Mystical Path: Contemplative Prayer

Nash states, "Mysticism is a spirituality of love. Mystics seek God in the inner reaches of the self, hoping for glimpses of, and eventual union with, the Divine. Their vehicle is prayer: not petitionary or inter-cessionary prayer, or even praise or thanksgiving, though those may play ancillary roles. The prayer of the mystics is contemplative prayer" (Nash, 2011, 18). Contemplation is a form of prayer distinct from vocal prayer and, strictly speaking, different from meditation, which is a form of mental prayer based on discursive reasoning (Downey, 1993, 209). Contemplative prayer "is the laying aside of thoughts. It is the opening of mind and heart – our whole being – to God, the ultimate reality, beyond thoughts, words, and emotions. We open our awareness to God, who we know by faith is within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than choosing, closer than consciousness itself" (Downey, 1993, 138-139).

2.3.1 Contemplation Defined

Contemplation is defined by William McNamara as "a long, loving look at the real" (Larkin, 2012, 105). Saint Francis de Sales describes it as "a loving, simple and permanent attentiveness of the mind to divine things" (Johnston, 2004, 24). Gregory the Great understands contemplation as "resting in God". In this resting, the mind and heart are not so much seeking God as 'tasting' what they have been seeking (Keating, 2001, 39). All of the above descriptions illustrate something of the experience of contemplation: the attentiveness, silence, stillness, resting, taste, tranquillity, interior peace, and loving presence that are constituent elements of

contemplation. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, "Contemplation is a gaze of faith, fixed on Jesus. 'I look at him and he looks at me'... Jesus' gaze purifies our hearts; the encounter illumines the eyes of our heart and teaches us to see everything through His eyes and with his compassion for all humanity" (CCC 2715). This is a vivid portrait of the intimate, dynamic interaction which takes place in the silence of contemplative prayer. In this prayer, we are more focused and attuned to the mysteries of the life of Jesus Christ, and we love him more and want to put on his mind and heart and be transformed by him. Contemplation is not so much an intellectual idea as it is a felt knowledge about one's intimate relationship with the Holy Trinity who dwells within the one praying as well as in the external world (Ward, 2008, 234).

2.3.2 Forms of Contemplative Practice

There are various forms of contemplative practice which facilitate the development of contemplative prayer. For example: *lectio Divina* and centring prayer. *Lectio Divina* has fed the spirituality of contemplatives through the centuries. Paintner and Wynkoop describe it as "a slow, contemplative praying of the scriptures, which leads us to union with God. It is an invitation to listen deeply for God's voice in scripture and then to allow what we hear to shape our way of being in the world" (Paintner and Wynkoop, 2008, 1). There are four steps in this method of prayer:

1 *Lectio* is a careful study of the scriptures in which the person's whole attention is engaged;
2 *meditatio* is an action of the mind probing the Scriptures and seeking with reason's help to know the truth hidden therein;
3 *oratio* is the intent turning of the heart to God asking him to rid us of evil and obtain for us what is good;
4 *contemplatio* is the devout lifting of the mind to God in such a way that it transcends itself and comes to taste the joys of an everlasting sweetness (Downey, 1993, 211-212).

Another popular form of contemplative practice is centring prayer, or the John Main Christian meditation. Many people have benefited from practicing it on a regular basis. By saying a mantra or repeating a word quietly, "centring prayer facilitates the movement from more active modes of prayer - verbal, mental or affective prayer - into a receptive prayer of resting in God" (Centring Prayer). It furthers the development of a contemplative spirit by quieting our faculties to

cooperate with the gift of God's presence.

Besides *Lectio Divina* and centring prayer, other forms of practice like the Lord's Prayer, praying with icons and images, praying with music, poetry, clay, art-making, and journaling, will also facilitate growth in contemplative awareness. All these practices foster stillness, self-emptying, openness, receptivity and cooperation with God, and each, in their own way, prepares us to receive the gift of God's presence. Johnston lists some of the methods which facilitate contemplative prayer:

> Some sit before a crucifix or an icon in one-pointed meditation. Others sit and breathe as they look at the tabernacle. Others practice mindfulness, awareness of God in their surroundings. Others recite the mantra to the rhythm of their own breath. Others influenced by Zen or yoga or vipassana open their minds and hearts to the presence of God in the universe. Others just talk to God… Assuredly these ways of prayer cannot immediately be called mystical. But they are gateways to mysticism. They all lead to silence and to the wordless state that St. Teresa calls the prayer of quiet to the higher mansions (Johnston, 1995, 134).

Through disciplined contemplative practice, we may experience oneness with God and come to recognize that God so intimately dwells within us that nothing can separate us from God. As one grows into greater consciousness of what already dwells within, we become conscious of what dwells within every person.

2.3.3 Contemplation and Contemplative Practice

When we enter into contemplative prayer "we move into a process of unknowing. We let go of our dependent thoughts, words, and images" (Paintner, 2008, 57); we are wordless, still and simply with God (Paintner, 2008, 56). Contemplation, in the strict sense, "is first and foremost a gift. We can create space for contemplation in our lives but ultimately the ability to move into a loving state of being and stillness is a gift from the One who is the source of all love" (Paintner, 2008, 57). William Johnston confirms the same idea when he claims:

> It does not come through the senses, even though it overflows on the senses. In the words of St. John of the Cross, God communicates himself "by pure spirit". Human effort is of little importance. Contemplatives, sometimes quite unexpectedly, become conscious of a mysterious and loving presence in themselves and in the whole universe. They have entered a new state of consciousness characterized by what they call the "sense of presence". If asked to describe or define God they may answer, "For me, God is presence." … When contemplatives become aware of this all-embracing presence, they may say with amazement and gratitude, "I did not cause this, nor do I deserve it. It is pure gift." Ignatius of Loyola called it "consolation without previous cause." He saw that there is no sensible cause for

this state of consciousness that opens us to infinite presence and leads us to see God in all things. Such a state of consciousness just happens (Johnston, 2000, 92-93).

This state of contemplation is a form of mystical union with God, a union characterized by the fact that it is God, and God alone, who manifests himself (*The Catholic Encyclopaedia*). Under the influence of God, which assumes the free cooperation of the human will, the intellect receives special insights into things of the spirit, and the affections are extraordinarily animated with divine love (Hardon, 1980, 129).

Contemplation, like love, is a pure gift. There is nothing we can do to bring forth its flowering, but there are important skills and practices, without which it will be unlikely to flower (Laird, 2008, 54). While God is always self-giving, "there is much we can do to open ourselves to receiving his favours" (Teresa, 2003, 126). This receptivity is what contemplative practice cultivates. After seasons of practice "We see everything, including ourselves, with greater consciousness and love" (Paintner and Wynkoop, 2008, 62). As Downey states, "Contemplative prayer is a process of interior transformation, a relationship initiated by God and leading, if we consent, to divine union. Our way of seeing reality changes in this process. A restructuring of consciousness takes place that empowers us to perceive, relate to, and respond with increasing sensitivity to the divine presence and action in, through, and beyond everything that exists" (Downey, 1993, 139). Thus, contemplative prayer is an interior journey that involves a process of growth through personal transformation.

2.4 The Contemplative Journey: An Interior Journey

2.4.1 Teresa of Avila's Interior Castle

Teresa of Avila writes of the contemplative journey as "an interior movement within her soul, which is an interior castle that she has to penetrate" (Nelstrop, Magill and Onoshi, 2009, 76). In *the Interior Castle*, she gives a very good description of her prayer experiences which involved a series of transformations culminating in spiritual union with Christ. Using an image of a crystal castle, Teresa describes a soul's journey from the outer regions of a castle to its delightful centre where God lives. The journey involves passing through six dwelling places

or mansions before arriving at the seventh dwelling place, which is the ultimate goal of this journey (Welch, 1982, 2). The Interior Castle represents Teresa's view of a human soul, and her vision of what potential lies in them. In the picture of a beautiful fascinating castle, she describes her life as a process toward God, the rooms in the castle representing stages of spiritual development (Zell, 1997, 717).

The journey to God is also a journey to the true self. As Welch explains, "It is an inward journey to God which is, at the same time, a movement into self-knowledge. Union with God at the centre involves the fullest possession of one's life …Teresa is a sensitive observer of human interiority and her subtle descriptions of inner experiences provide a topography of human development, which is at the same time religious conversion" (Welch, 1982, 2,3). For her, prayer and meditation is the gate to this spiritual castle:

> As far as I can understand, the gate by which to enter this castle is prayer and meditation. I do not allude more to mental than to vocal prayer, for if it is prayer at all, the mind must take part in it. If a person neither considers to Whom he is addressing himself, what he asks, nor what he is who ventures to speak to God, although his lips may utter many words, I do not call it prayer (Teresa of Avila, 1921, 19).

While prayer is the door to the castle, it is also the activity which allows one to be drawn to God at the centre (Welch, 1982, 16). Prayer develops gradually, in pace with the growth of the person. In the first three dwelling places prayer is characterized as active meditation in which the person, with God's grace, initiates the effort and sustains it through a controlled use of imagination, memory, thought and prayerful expression. In the last three dwelling places, prayer is considered as infused contemplation, in which prayer begins with God and ends in the person. Here the person enjoys spiritual delight without any human effort. The middle dwelling place, the fourth mansion, is the place of transition, in which prayer becomes less and less discursive or controlled through human effort. The individual becomes passive in prayer, and is characterized by a degree of recollection which Teresa calls the prayer of quiet (Welch, 1982, 18, 63, 64).

2.4.2 The Inward Journey
It has been said that "Prayer is the supreme meaning and value of human existence, since it is the inner life that animates the exterior, the journey within that is the

journey into reality" (Larkin, 402). This inner journey "has a rhythm of advances and rest, a pulse of its own. At each stage the terrain is different, and so too, then, are the experience of the traveller. The different stages of the journey evoke a variety of responses…Arrival at the destination is not quick nor is it easy. This journey is accompanied by insecurities and difficulties, and require a good amount of strength and courage" (Welch, 1982, 97). This can be seen in the movement through Teresa's inner castle. This movement has two phases. Using contemporary language, these two phases correspond to Jung's idea of individuation process. Welch summarizes the two phases:

> The first phase involves the first three dwelling places. The second phase begins in the fourth dwelling place and continues through the remaining three dwelling places. The first three dwelling places are characterized by outer preoccupations, while the last three dwelling places have a definite inner orientation. The first phase is active and controlling. The second phase is receptive and letting-go. The fourth dwelling place marks the transition from outer to inner and signals the deep interior work of the individuation process (Welch, 1982, 97).

According to Welch, "in the outer journey of the first phase a person is continuing to develop, and the ego is being strengthened" (Welch, 1982, 97-98). Looking at the early stages this becomes apparent.

2.4.3 The First Dwelling Place

People in the first dwelling place, though they are still very much involved in the world, have at least entered the outer rooms, it is a beginning:

> They are still very worldly, yet have some desire to do right, and at times, though rarely, commend themselves to God's care. They think about their souls every now and then; although very busy, they pray a few times a month, with minds generally filled with a thousand other matters, for where their treasure is, there is their heart also. Still, occasionally they cast aside these cares; it is a great boon for them to realize to some extent the state of their souls, and to see that they will never reach the gate by the road they are following (Teresa of Avila, 1921, 19).

People in the first rooms are still absorbed in the worldly things and engulfed in their pleasures, prestige, pride, pretences and vanities. In Welch's words, "these people are still identified with their persona. The preoccupations are a natural outcome of expansion into the world as the ego-consciousness develops from the unconscious" (Welch, 1982, 99). Because they are so occupied with business affairs they lack reflection, and self-knowledge.

2.4.4 The Second Dwelling Place

The second dwelling place provides a more demanding situation for the traveller. Teresa writes, "In some way these souls suffer a great deal more than those in the first mansions, although not in such danger, as they begin to understand their peril and there are great hopes of their entering farther into the castle" (Teresa of Avila, 1921, 26). Thus, "the second dwelling place calls for a steadier commitment to prayer. The individual has travelled closer to the centre of the castle and the attraction from the centre is now perceived as a personal call from God" (Welch, 1982, 99). The call from God could be mediated through different means: "God here speaks to souls through words uttered by pious people, by sermons or good books, and in many other such ways. Sometimes He calls souls by means of sickness or troubles, or by some truth He teaches them during prayer, for tepid as they may be in seeking Him, yet God holds them very dear" (Teresa of Avila, 1921, 27). Whatever the means, the individual is invited to make a personal response to the call of the inward journey. But this is not an easy process, since the ego and the self are at war:

> …the ego, in the course of its normal development in the first phase of the individuation process, establishes itself as the centre of consciousness but assumes that it is the centre of the entire psyche. Since the unconscious is, by definition, that which is unknown to consciousness, the ego, has no knowledge of a deeper and wider self which is the true centre of the psyche. The individual has worked hard in the first half of life to gain an identity, a foothold in the world. Specific attitudes and functions are developed and appropriate masks are worn. But just when the picture seems complete, new pieces of data begin to arrive from the self and the picture starts to become fragmented. During the inward journey, the ego has to move off centre stage so that the self may come to the fore. It is a painful process (Welch, 1982, 100).

Teresa offers advice about this stage: "…the habit of recollection is not to be gained by force of arms, but with calmness …and…consult persons experienced in such matters" (Teresa, 1921, 29).

2.4.5 The Third Dwelling Place

People in the third mansion have been given a great favour in having passed through the first difficulties. Teresa believes that there are many such people in the world: "they are very desirous not to offend His Majesty even by venial sins, they love penance and spend hours in meditation, they employ their time well, exercise themselves in works of charity to their neighbours, are well-ordered in

their conversation and dress, and those who own a household govern it well. This is certainly to be desired" (Teresa of Avila, 1921, 32). But, their problem lies at the point of ego-control. As Welch argues, "On the one hand, a person in the third dwelling place now has a regular prayer life and is leading a practically model, adult Christianity. On the other hand, ego-consciousness has gained an even firmer hold over the personality, and even this admirable religious life has become part of a persona" (Welch, 1982, 101). They have engaged so long in the practice of virtue they think that they can teach others, and they are still very much in control; surprises and unacceptable challenges are minimized (Welch, 1982, 101).

However, after a while on this plateau, a disquiet begins to undermine the certainties; they experience a dryness in prayer; small problems and defeats are magnified by their too-tender sensitivities; they are fearful of losing control, but they cannot help themselves (Welch, 1982, 101). Although people in this third dwelling place are leading good lives, they have not actually allowed themselves to be decentred. A firm base has been established in consciousness, but now it is time for a serious inward journey which means a letting-go of the tight hold on ego-consciousness in order to learn more about the self. Teresa encourages abandoning this hold: "If humility is lacking, we will remain here our whole life – and with a thousand afflictions and miseries. For since we will not have abandoned ourselves, this state will be very laborious and burdensome" (Welch, 1982, 102).

The best thing to do, according to Teresa, is to leave the third dwelling place and continue the journey to the centre of the castle. Staying where they are will only make matters worse. Teresa is speaking from her own experience since she herself spent eighteen years in a similar condition (Welch, 1982, 102).

2.4.6 The Fourth Dwelling Place
The fourth dwelling place marks a clear transition on the journey. The traveller senses a general drawing inward, and the exterior things seem to be losing their hold. This interiorizing is a gradual process as ego-consciousness learns to listen to the true self (Welch, 1982, 102). Initially, "the prayer at this stage of the journey remains an active prayer of meditation but it becomes characterized by a rapid

absorption in God which Teresa names the prayer of recollection. It is a centring prayer but the normal vocal and mental prayer may accompany it" (Welch, 1982, 102), and the soul should endeavour, without force or disturbance, to keep free from wandering thoughts (Teresa of Avila, 1921, 49). "This prayer of recollection appears to be a mixture of conscious activity and, at the same time, a letting-go when the centre calls. It is an introductory prayer to the deeper prayer of the fourth dwelling place, the prayer of quiet" (Welch, 1982, 102-103). In the prayer of quiet, "ego activity is minimal. Teresa encourages letting the intellect go. There is an outer and inner stillness with a loving openness to God. It is a time of healing contact with depths of the self, and the absorption in God brings peace to the soul" (Welch, 1982, 103). This prayer of quiet is "an introduction to an even deeper prayer, the contemplative prayer of union beginning in the fifth dwelling place" (Welch, 1982, 103).

In the fourth dwelling place, the traveller has begun the inner journey in earnest. The individual's persona-identification has cracked, and ego-consciousness no longer has control of the psyche (Welch, 1982, 104). But this initial entry into the depth brings one face-to-face with the neglected aspects of our unconscious: "the first figure met on the journey is usually our shadows, a term used by Jung for the neglected, negative side of our personality". Teresa used the image of serpents and devils for the shadow side of our psyche (Welch, 1982, 111), but

> In general, the shadow dwells in the personal unconscious and represents that aspect of personality which an individual is ashamed of, or will not recognize because it is unacceptable to the conscious personality. It clashes with the conscious identity of a person. The shadow represents the past, the primitive and inferior parts of the self which have not been given the chance to dwell in the light. Desire and emotions are found in the shadow, and since the unconscious has a kind of autonomy, these emotions can have a possessive quality (Welch, 1982, 120).

If unrecognized and unchanneled, the negative energy in the shadow becomes destructive. However, if it is admitted, accepted and befriended, it could be transformed into a positive source of energy. That's why Welch maintains that "the shadow contains not only negative elements and destructive possibilities, but also potential for greater growth and development of the personality. Jung found that the shadow is ninety percent gold" (Welch, 1982, 120). Teresa, in her own way, recognizes the reality of confronting a fragmented inner world:

It seems to me that all the contempt and trials one can endure in life cannot be compared to these interior battles. Any disquiet and war can be suffered if we find peace where we live, as I have already said. But that we desire to rest from the thousand trials there are in the world and that the Lord wants to prepare us for tranquillity and that within ourselves lies the obstacle to such rest and tranquillity cannot fail to be very painful and almost unbearable (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 72).

Teresa believes that the intensity of the inner struggle is due to the fact that we do not really know ourselves. The journey through the castle is a journey into our own reality. She stresses that we have to come to know ourselves, and ignorance of the self is the real source of conflict (Teresa of Avila, 1921, 41-42). While, self-knowledge is a painful process, humility is the key to it. As Teresa attests, "Let humility be always at work, like the bee at the honeycomb, or all will be lost" (Teresa of Avila, 1921, 22). As the ego-consciousness enters the darkness of the unconscious, a new consciousness develops, and then a healing and a transformational process can begin in the fifth dwelling place.

2.4.7 The Fifth Dwelling Place

In the fifth dwelling place, the silkworm-cocoon-butterfly image is used to symbolize the healing and transformation which is experienced in union with God (Welch, 1982, 136). Teresa describes this personal transformation as turning from a silkworm, to cocoon, and into a butterfly (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 91-93). "The fifth dwelling place represents the beginning union which then intensifies and deepens in the experiences of the last two dwelling places" (Welch, 1982, 137). The union happens as "the soul becomes on fire and dissolves much of the ego's familiar landscape" (Myss, 2007, 267), and, to use Teresa's words, when one takes away one's "self-love and self-will" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 93), one lets go of one's ego-control and lets God be God. The final release of the ego's hold is like a silkworm breaking out of its confining cocoon and lifting into flight as a beautiful butterfly (Myss, 2007, 267). This mystical experience in the fifth dwelling place is enabled and expressed by a state of consciousness that Teresa calls the prayer of union. The following is how Teresa explains this state of union:

There is no better proof for recognizing whether our prayer has reached union or not. Don't think this union is some kind of dreamy state like the one I mentioned before. I say "dreamy state" because it seems that the soul is as though asleep; yet neither does it really think it is asleep nor does it feel awake. There is no need here to use any technique to suspend the mind since all the faculties are asleep in this state – and truly asleep – to the things of the world and to ourselves. As a matter of fact, during the time that the union lasts the soul is left as though without its senses,

for it has no power to think even if it wants to. In loving, if it does love, it doesn't understand how or what it is it loves or what it would want. In sum, it is like one who in every respect has died to the world so as to live more completely in God (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 86).

In this prayer of union, God is so joined and united with the essence of the soul that "the soul is left with such wonderful blessings because God works within it without anyone's disturbing Him, not even ourselves. What will He not give, who is so fond of giving and who can give all that He wants?" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 87-88). During the time of this union, the soul "neither sees, nor hears, nor understands, because the union is always short and seems to the soul even much shorter than it probably is" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 89). But the impact of this experience is enormous that "even if years go by without God's granting that favour again, the soul can neither forget nor doubt that it was in God and God was in it" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 89). Teresa warns us not to force our way into this state of mystical union since "we have no part at all to play in bringing it about no matter how much effort we put forth, but it is God who does so" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 90). However, "Freeing oneself for a relationship with God produces a container for transformation. The relationship is the container, the cocoon, which allows for deep contact between the soul and God. The union with God in the inner depths is experienced as a liberation, and the butterfly-soul emerges" (Welch, 1982, 139). The effects of such union are extraordinary:

> When the soul is, in this prayer, truly dead to the world, a little white butterfly comes forth. O greatness of God! How transformed the soul is when it comes out of this prayer after having been placed within the greatness of God and so closely joined with Him for a little while – in my opinion the union never lasts for as much as a half hour. Truly, I tell you that the soul doesn't recognize itself. Look at the difference there is between an ugly worm and a little white butterfly; that's what the difference is here (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 93).

Nevertheless, to be transformed into a beautiful butterfly is not an easy process. The cocoon is a stage of alienation and darkness, necessary but difficult. Yet, the cocoon is also a container of transformation and new life. St. John of the Cross calls this cocoon time "the dark night of the soul" (Welch, 1982, 144). It involves dying, dying to our old worldviews, values, identity, the ego and self-will. Teresa makes it clear that union in the fifth dwelling place is basically a conformity to God's will. It is "keeping our wills fixed only on that which is God's will" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 98). This union with God's will is what Teresa has desired all her

life: "It is the union I ask the Lord for always and the one that is clearest and safest" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 99). This union of our will with God's will "is the result of the inflow of God's love in one's life. The manifestation of this union is a life lived in love of God and love of neighbour" (Welch, 1982, 140). Union is thus expressed in life as well as in prayer, especially in the practice of charity.

2.4.8 The Sixth Dwelling Place

According to Welch, the cocoon phase of the butterfly story would relate to the experiences in the fourth, fifth, and sixth dwelling places. "These dwelling places describe the effect of the encounter of the large polarity seeking union in the castle, the polarity which is the soul and God. And nowhere is the bittersweet struggle more intense than in the sixth dwelling place" (Welch, 1982, 145). Teresa describes this bittersweet struggle as a delightful pain:

> It feels that it is wounded in the most delightful way, but it doesn't learn how or by whom it was wounded. It knows clearly that the wound is something precious, and it would never want to be cured. It complains to its Spouse with words of love, even outwardly, without being able to do otherwise. It knows that He is present, but He doesn't want to reveal the manner in which He allows Himself to be enjoyed. And the pain is great, although delightful and sweet. And even if the soul does not want this wound, the wound cannot be avoided. But the soul, in fact, would never want to be deprived of this pain. The wound satisfies it much more than the delightful and painless absorption of the prayer of quiet (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 115-116).

Teresa shares her experience in the sixth dwelling place in paradoxical terms. It is an action of love on God's part, which is both painful and delightful. Psychologically, the rupture of a relationship between the ego and the self can lead to the re-establishment of a true relationship between the two. In this movement, the ego begins to approach the centre of the psyche, the self. It enters holy ground and is quickly aware that it has left its own environment. A period of confusion, disturbance, and disorientation ensues until adjustment and a new way of being is attained. This often happens during a time of crisis. The resolution of life crises requires a letting-go and a receptivity. Welch points out that "When the normal controls over life have disappeared, an individual is opened to the possibility of deep learning. The crisis becomes a religious experience when an invitation from God is discerned at the basis of the crisis. A person of faith believes that God is a supporting, challenging presence in this experience. A letting-go is required so that God can bring about something new in the person's life" (Welch,

1982, 160). In this process, the ego slowly adjusts to a new and nourishing relationship with the self. The experience of alienation and the dark night gives way to the dawn of the emerging self, a cocoon turns into a butterfly, and transformation has taken place. This experience was so powerful for Teresa that it disrupts her inner and outer environment. "O God help me", she writes, "What interior and exterior trials the soul suffers before entering the seventh dwelling place!" (Welch, 1982, 147, 150-151).

The experience of union, in the sixth dwelling place, Teresa describes as spiritual betrothal, not as abiding as it will be in the seventh dwelling place which is the time of spiritual marriage. In the betrothal stage, Teresa experienced sufferings as well as intimate encounters with her beloved, such as locution, rapture or ecstasy, and visions. These experiences are not central to union with God, and not what one should aim for, but they are manifestations of the transformation taking place (Welch, 1982, 146-147). She calls ecstasy or rapture "the flight of the spirit". In these experiences, the presence and love of God causes rejoicing and jubilation, and more is learned in an instant than years of study could produce. In particular, three things are impressed upon the person: "knowledge of the grandeur of God…; self-knowledge and humility…; the third, little esteem of earthly things…" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 117). The result of these experiences "is an increased desire to be one with God" (Welch, 1982, 149). This desire leads to a mixture of wishes: to die and leave this exile; to retreat into the desert; fleeing people who might be the occasion of offending God; and most importantly, the God-filled joy makes one embrace the world, yearning to enter more fully into the world in service of God" (Welch, 1982, 149).

2.4.9 The Seventh Dwelling Place

The seventh dwelling place explores the state of union between human and divine. Teresa uses the concept of marriage as her best hope for expressing "the close, personal relationship between a man and a woman in marriage is some indication of the nature of the prayer experience in this last dwelling place" (Welch, 1982, 178). Although this union of the soul with God began in the fifth dwelling place, it now takes on a different quality. "In the fifth dwelling place, the union was sporadic, intermittent. In the sixth dwelling place, it was ecstatic. Now, in the

seventh dwelling place, the union is a peaceful, perpetual condition which Teresa locates at the very centre of the soul. This condition is undisturbed by outer events, nor does it manifest itself in any outward manner" (Welch, 1982, 179).

According to Teresa, when God is pleased to grant the soul this divine marriage, He first brings it into His own dwelling place, which is this seventh, and the Lord joins the soul to Himself, and desires the soul to see and understand, although in a strange way, something of the favour He grants it:

> When the soul is brought into that dwelling place, the Most Blessed Trinity, all three Persons, through an intellectual vision, is revealed to it through a certain representation of the truth. First there comes an enkindling in the spirit in the manner of a cloud of magnificent splendour; and these Persons are distinct, and through an admirable knowledge the soul understands as a most profound truth that all three Persons are one substance and one power and one knowledge and one God alone. It knows in such a way that what we hold by faith, it understands, we can say, through sight – although the sight is not with the bodily eyes nor with the eyes of the soul, because we are not dealing with an imaginative vision. Here all three Persons communicate themselves to it, speak to it, and explains those words of the Lord in the Gospel: that He and the Father and the Holy Spirit will come to dwell with the soul that loves Him and keeps His commandments (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 175).

"How different is hearing and believing these words from understanding their truth in this way", Teresa proclaims, "Each day this soul becomes more amazed, for these Persons never seem to leave it anymore, but it clearly beholds, in the way that was mentioned, that they are within it. In the extreme interior, in some place very deep within itself, the nature of which it doesn't know how to explain, because of a lack of learning, it perceives this divine company" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 175). The experience of the indwelling of the Trinity does not interrupt the life demands of the individual. On the contrary, "the soul is much more occupied than before with everything pertaining to the service of God, and once its duties are over it remains with that enjoyable company" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 175). Within this experience of oneness with God in the seventh dwelling place, Teresa identifies Christ as the spouse in her experience of this spiritual marriage. The humanity of Christ was shown to her in a vision when, after receiving Communion, the Lord appeared to her in the form of shinning splendour, beauty, and majesty, and told her that "now it was time that she considers as her own what belonged to Him and He would take care of what was hers…" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 177). The experience was so unexpected and unimagined that it disturbed and

frightened her. She says, "…there is the greatest difference between the previous visions and those of this dwelling place. Between the spiritual betrothal and the spiritual marriage, the difference is as great as that which exists between two who are betrothed and between two who can no longer be separated" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 178). Teresa further explains that, in the spiritual betrothal, the union

> is like the joining of two wax candles to such an extent that the flame coming from them is but one, or that the wick, the flame, and the wax are all one. But afterward one candle can be easily separated from the other and there are two candles…In the spiritual marriage, the union is like what we have when rain falls from the sky into a river or fount; all is water, for the rain that fell from heaven cannot be divided or separated from the water of the river… (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 179).

Such is the experience of oneness with God at the centre. The experience of spiritual marriage is overwhelming, and the effects are wonderful. Welch summarizes the following six effects based on Teresa's writing:

> First, it engenders forgetfulness of self. The soul does not worry about honour, heaven, or life. She literally trusts that God will look after her, if she looks after what is His. Second, the soul experiences a great desire to suffer. But the desire is not a compulsion, and if the suffering does not happen she is not upset. The soul "doesn't kill itself as it used to". Third, the soul experiences a deep interior joy when persecuted, and even has compassion for the persecutor. Fourth, she desires to serve God by benefiting souls. She is not anxious to die and be with God, as formerly was the case. She wishes to live if God will be praised through her efforts. Fifth, the soul has a great detachment from everything. She desires either to be alone, or to be doing something which benefits others. Sixth, in this state she almost never experiences dryness in prayer or inner disturbances as in other dwelling places. "The soul is almost always quiet". Even the ecstatic experiences practically cease. "Only once in a while are they experienced and then without those transports and that flight of the spirit. They happen very rarely and almost never in public as they very often did before" (Welch, 1982, 182).

These effects give evidence of a personality that has grown beyond imagination as a result of the union. "The isolated ego of the first dwelling place now gives way to the mystery of the centre. The journey through the castle has resulted in a oneness with God and the emergence of the self. Rather than absorbing the human personality, the union with God has differentiated that personality and given it fullness of life. The inward presence of God has been a guarantee of personhood, not a threat to it" (Welch, 1982, 182-183). According to Welch, the symbol of marriage has layers of references, refers not only to the wedding of the human and divine, but also to the union of the polarity of the masculine and feminine, and the integration of the conscious and unconscious poles of personality (Welch, 1982, 183).

Teresa's experience and description of the interior castle, the inner journey, or the contemplative life, is in fact, a movement into the reality of one's true interiority and fullness of being, it is "a transformative process that supports self-transcendence" (Ruffing, 2001, 12). As the person encounters the shadow, explores the unknown, empties the ego, and purifies selfishness, the journey reveals that God is at the centre of life, illuminating how the self is so intimately related to the Divine. As life is more and more centred on and united with God, the self is experienced in its true completeness, realizes the true meaning of its existence, and understands that we are all one in God's creative love. This intimate encounter and union with God in contemplative prayer makes it possible for the individual to experience and embrace a change of consciousness, a conversion of the heart and mind, and an inner healing of the soul that allows a person to be formed after the fashion of Christ himself (Keller, 2008, 154).

Union with God at the centre creates a unique view of the world, others and the self. The contemplative is often offered a "radically alternative vision of created reality, including human existence" (Sheldrake, 2010, 87). They see the world "with different, more compassionate, more understanding, more humane eyes, God-like eyes" (Finnegan, 2007, 271) and realise our essential unity and oneness in God. Contemplation includes not only our own inner experience and personal transformation; it always entails directly perceiving and responding to the needs of the world around us (Finnegan, 2007, 271). True contemplation always leads to action, to the blossoming of love of God and neighbour. As Teresa writes, "This is the reason for prayer, my daughters, the purpose of this spiritual marriage: the birth always of good works, good works" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 190). The process of interiority results always in outer action, in universal love.

2.5 Contemplation and Social Action

Contemplation leads to a movement away from the false self and from false images of God toward a true self in a living intimacy and identification with God. The encounter with God, purified of selfishness, is what has been described in the Christian tradition as "union". But this union is not an end in itself. Union "leads to a deeper identification with the person of Jesus who moves out of himself in

kenotic love. So, the mystical journey leads a person through union, which now becomes a new point of departure, to a renewed practice of everyday discipleship and social engagement" (Sheldrake, 2010, 103). In the teachings of the great mystics, contemplation has always been directly related to social action. In the following section, we will explore Teresa of Avila, Evelyn Underhill, and Thomas Merton's teachings on the relationship between contemplation and action.

2.5.1 Teresa of Avila: Martha and Mary are One

In *the Interior Castle,* after describing the mystical union in the inner most centre, Teresa points out clearly that the aim of contemplative prayer is always the birth of good works. In the seventh mansion God has "fortified, enlarged, and made the soul capable" (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 187) of birthing good works. Teresa uses the story of Martha and Mary in the Gospel to symbolize the active and contemplative lives, and for her, Martha and Mary are one:

> Believe me, Martha and Mary must join together in order to show hospitality to the Lord and have Him always present and not host Him badly by failing to give Him something to eat. How would Mary, always seated at His feet, provide Him with food if her sister did not help her? His food is that in every way possible we draw souls that they may be saved and praise Him always (Teresa of Avila, 1979, 192).

The contemplative thus lives a unity of contemplation and action, for "Martha and Mary never fail to work almost together when the soul is in this state. For in the active – and seemingly exterior – work the soul is working interiorly. And when the active works rise from this interior root, they become lovely and very fragrant flowers" (Teresa of Avila, 1980, 257). It gives the impression that, for Teresa, the unity of contemplation and action is the fruit of union with God. We might be tempted to think that few contemplatives will experience this. However, according to Rakoczy, "Teresa states clearly many times that the goal of prayer is loving service, doing good works, growing in virtue. Although we observe these fruits "at the end" of the journey, they are to be anticipated all along the way. The whole journey of faith and prayer is to be animated by loving service, thus a concrete demonstration of the unity of love of God and love of neighbour" (Rakoczy, 2006, 87). This intimate encounter with God in contemplation provides Teresa with the energy, knowledge, courage and enthusiasm to undertake religious reform, which is, at the same time, a social reform.

The Carmelite Order which Teresa first joined had become relaxed in its rules, asceticism and poverty as time went by. In sixteenth-century Spain, these convent rules slackened to the point of enabling wealthy women to live luxuriously and even to have slaves in the convent. On the contrary, women without financial support from their families often went hungry (Slade, 2001, 99). This is the historical background in which Teresa started her reform. She established sixteen monasteries, "twelve for women and four for men, under primitive rule enforcing strict enclosure and discipline" (Slade, 2001, 99). Their dress is simple, "a coarse wool habit and straw sandals" (Slade, 2001, 99). They became known as the Discalced Carmelites.

Why is Teresa's religious reform also considered social reform? In reality, her foundations advanced the social goals of increasing women's autonomy and assimilating *conversos* to Spanish society. "Teresa understood social injustice quite clearly when she ran away from home; what she lacked was the power to resist it. She describes her mystical experience as providing not primarily analysis of the world's defects, but the resources to correct them" (Slade, 2001, 94). Her foundations, she argues, will make the eternal order visible in this world. According to Slade, "here she invokes the spectre of eternal damnation for the sin of misogyny: 'How differently will we understand this ignorance on the day when the truth about all things shall be understood. And how many fathers and mothers will be seen going to hell because they had sons and also how many will be seen in heaven because of their daughters' (Foundations, 20.3)" (Slade, 2001, 98). Teresa has seen families consider girls inferior to boys and sometimes unworthy of nurture and love. Her writing in *Foundations* describe sad stories of the ladies Teresa actually knew. "Teresa de Layz disappointed her parents at birth by becoming their fifth daughter. When she was three days old, they neglected her for an entire day, 'as though she mattered little to them' (*Foundations*, 20.4)" (Slade, 2001, 101). Beareiz de Chaves got little affections from her parents while her brothers were alive: "Although she had had older brothers, they had all died and she, the less loved by her parents, was left" (*Foundations* 26.7). "Having reluctantly raised these girls, parents wished to exploit their exchange value in marriage. They arranged early marriages with the men they thought best able to enhance the family fortune, severely punishing any refusal or attempt to escape"

(Slade, 2001, 101). When Beatriz de Chavez "reached the marriageable age, though she was still but a girl, her parents came to an agreement on whom she should marry" (Foundations 26.7). For her resistance, Beatriz nearly died: "they gave her so many whippings, inflicted on her so many punishments, even to the point of wanting to hang her, for they were choking her, that it was fortunate they didn't kill her" (Foundations 26.8). Teresa's convents offered not only a refuge for these women, but also for the *conversos.*

As the name *converso* indicates, these Jews had converted to Christianity, often by force or out of fear. In Teresa's time, they were persecuted because of resentment of their success, and growing racism. Although Teresa's foundations also attracted people from Christian families, her choice of locations, mainly urban and commercial, suggests that she drew from the large *converso* populations (Bilinkoff, 1989, 146-147). "After 1566, when the parent Carmelites joined most other orders in requiring purity of blood, *conversos* would have found the Discalced monasteries among very few open to them" (Slade, 2001, 100). Teresa took the divine perspective by including them in her monasteries and accepting their financial support. This is confirmed in the record of Teresa's *Foundations*,

A divine locution resolved her doubts about letting two wealthy brothers, Martin and Alonso Alvarez Ramirez, raise money for the Toledo foundation, "since that family was not from the nobility, although the family was very good, regardless of its social status" (in other words, they were *conversos*): "He (Christ) told me that lineage and social status mattered not at all in the judgement of God" (*Foundations*, 15.15-16). Because He also told her that "estates, inheritances, riches" have no significance in eternity, Teresa did not require dowries (Slade, 2001, 98).

Teresa's criteria for accepting applicants was based on their piety and suitability for the religious life, not on social status. The controversy over the foundation in Toledo, where she encountered opposition because *conversos* contributed a lot to financial and logistical support, reveals that "Teresa's order served *conversos* not only by giving havens and occupations to individuals, but also by affording their families the social prestige and religious consolation that derived from endowing

religious institutions" (Bilinkoff, 1989, 147). Obviously, Teresa's foundations served not only a religious reform but also presented a challenge to the social and economic order of her day.

2.5.2 Evelyn Underhill: A Practical Mysticism

Another famous woman Evelyn Underhill, whose life and work were outlined above, regards social action as the manifestation of contemplation. For her, "the mystical way has been a progress, a growth, in love" (Underhill, 1961, 415) and the proper end of love is union. It means that "this experience of union is lived in the world and is demonstrated in the lives of mystics by great fruitfulness and creativity. Union with God gives the mystic authority, conviction, serenity, and joy as one experiences living in God…and that this transcendental experience is practical and enhances the life of others through the power of the love of God" (Rokoczy, 2006, 105). Underhill, quoting her favourite mystic, Jan Van Ruysbroeck, agrees that "the truly illuminated man flows out in universal charity toward heaven and upon earth" (Underhill, 1992, 62). The aim of mystical experience is life in its wholeness, through which one looks "with eyes of love toward the world" (Underhill, 1986, 109). Mystical experience is not an end in itself, but rather impels a person to creative acts, to be "a living, ardent tool with which the Supreme Artist works" (Underhill, 1986, 182). From this perspective, "Mystics are artists, and the medium of their work is human life in its richness and complexity" (Rakoczy, 2006, 106). They are healers of "the disharmony between the actual and the real" (Underhill, 1986, 185). Underhill uses the examples of Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Siena, Joan of Arc, Teresa of Avila, George Fox, and Florence Nightingale as persons who were able to unite mysticism and action. In her book, *Practical Mysticism*, she stresses "the practical nature of the spiritual life, emphasizing that it is part of every person's daily life and that without it one is not a complete person. The function of a practical mysticism is to increase the efficiency, wisdom, and steadfastness of persons that 'will help them to enter, more completely than ever before, into the life of the group to which they belong' (Underhill, 1986, 15)" (Rakoczy, 2006, 106). The effects of mysticism are twofold: transformation of the person and action in the world. "Contemplation and action are *one*, giving a new intensity 'wherewith to handle the world of things, and remake it, or at least some little bit of it' (Underhill,

1986, 180)" (Rakoczy, 2006, 106).

Underhill was not only interested in contemplation, but also actively involved in social action. In the light of the great tragedy of World War I she advocated and supported pacifism:

> By 1932 she was supporting European disarmament and in 1936 she became a member of the Peace Pledge Union and the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship. Her patriotism was now expressed as a commitment to pacifism and most of the writing that she did in the final years of her life concerned the Christian's response to war. This was a new approach and a significant development in her constant theme of the human person's relationship with God and with each other (Rokoczy, 2006, 112).

Underhill made a pacifist commitment and encouraged other Christians to do so because she thought that pacifism in the face of violence is the proper way to express the love of God. She elaborated this concept when she wrote:

> The doctrine of non-resistance is after all merely a special application of the great doctrine of universal charity…It is a courageous affirmation of Love, Joy, and Peace as ultimate characters of the real world of the spirit; a refusal to capitulate to the world's sin and acquiesce in the standards of a fallen race (Underhill, 1988, 205-206).

Underhill criticised the attitude of the Church in its response to World War II. She maintained that the mission of the Church is to be in the world to save the world:

> The whole of human life is her province, because Christianity is not a religion of escape but a religion of incarnation; not standing alongside human life, but working in and through it. So, she is bound to make a choice and declare herself on the great issues of that life, and carry through her choice into action, however great the cost (Underhill, 1940).

Pacifism, for her, can only be sustained by a supernatural faith that understands "love is the ultimate reality and must prevail" (Underhill, 1989, 288). "She wanted every Anglican who believed that Christianity had a commitment to peace to join the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship. Her pacifism had an eschatological vision, for the pacifist was the forerunner and precursor of a world to come" (Rakoczy, 2006, 113).

2.5.3 Thomas Merton: Contemplation and Social Action

As Merton matured in his own understanding of life, and probably influenced by the universal call to holiness issued by Vatican II, he shook off the sharp dichotomy between the sacred and the profane, and moved toward the more

egalitarian view that contemplation is the goal of life for all and therefore must be attainable by all (Downey, 1993, 213). He also led the way in overcoming the pseudo-problem of a supposed conflict between contemplation and action. A well-known story is the epiphany he had in March 1958 as he was standing in the middle of a shopping district in Louisville. Seeing the many people coming out of the stores, he was overwhelmed by a realization that "I loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another, even though we were total strangers. It was like waking from a dream of separateness, of spurious self-isolation in a special world, the world of renunciation and supposed holiness. The whole illusion of a separate holy existence is a dream" (Merton, 1968, 156).

Paradoxically, "this experience, which was profoundly contemplative, took place not in the monastery but on a street corner in a busy city" (Downey, 1993, 214). Merton gradually came to see the responsibility of contemplatives for understanding the signs of the times and to respond to historical needs out of a contemplative perspective. "In contemplation, Merton discovered God, and in God he discovered people inseparable from God and from one another…What resolved the supposed conflict between contemplation and action for Merton was his awareness of his unity in God with all peoples. It is to this awareness that contemplation inevitably leads" (Downey, 1993, 214). In this deep experience of nondualism, Merton finds that just as we cannot separate God from all creation, so we cannot separate contemplation from concern for, and engagement in, the needs and problems of our times. "A true experience of contemplation exposes the supposed dichotomy between contemplation and action for the pseudo-problem that it is" (Downey, 1993, 214). This powerful experience led him to embrace God in the whole world, and motivated the development of his social voice.

Merton, a contemplative, began to write on war, peace, and nonviolence in the early 1960s, a time of heightened world tensions between the Soviet Union and the West; it was a time when the whole world was under the threat of a nuclear

war during the Cuban Missile Crisis (Rakoczy, 2006, 124). Merton wrote about social issues for *The Catholic Workers*, "the Pacifist newspaper founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in the early 1930s. Here his views found a happy home" (Rakoczy, 2006, 126). Beside this, he published an article in a journal, *Commonweal,* in 1962 to call "for disarmament and for the resumption of moral sense and genuine public responsibility" (Rakoczy, 2006, 126). Merton wrote:

> We have to make ourselves heard. Christians have a grave responsibility to protest clearly and forcibly against trends that lead inevitably to crimes which the Church deplores and condemns. Ambiguity, hesitation and compromise are no longer permissible. War must be abolished. A world government must be established. We have still time to do something about it, but the time is rapidly running out (Merton, 1995, 47).

He condemned nuclear war and felt that the possession of nuclear weapons could possibly bring the world to the brink of global suicide, he thought of this situation as "a moral evil second only to the crucifixion" (Merton, 1995, 46).

Merton also "spoke clearly and with fervour of the Christian's moral duty to seek peace, pursue it, act for it, and pray for it" (Rakoczy, 2006, 128). He thought of peace as living the truth. In 1957, he wrote of his responsibility "to be peacemaker in the world, an apostle, to bring people to truth, to make my whole life a true and effective witness to God's truth" (Merton, 1996, 149). This call is not only for him but also for every Christian (Matt 5:9). Our vocation is to struggle in the world of violence to establish His peace in our hearts and in society itself (Merton, 1995, 39-40). For Merton, the first duty of a peacemaker is "to work for the total abolition of war…for the survival of the human race itself depends on it" (Merton, 1995, 12-13). To be a peacemaker is not an easy task, "for peace demands the most heroic labour and the most difficult sacrifice. It demands greater heroism than war. It demands greater fidelity to the truth and a much more perfect purity of conscience" (Merton, 1980, 113). Peace is to be preached at all times (Rakoczy, 2006, 129).

Merton's quest for peace "was not only strong in condemning policies and views that he saw as incompatible with the gospel, but he also urged a nonviolent resistance to war, a practical, nonviolence" (Rakoczy, 2006, 129). He called "all

sane and conscientious men everywhere in the world to lay down their weapons and their tools and starve and be shot rather than cooperate in the war effort" (Merton, 1995, 46). His commitment to nonviolence is based on the conviction that "love and mercy are the most powerful forces on earth" and "every Christian is bound by his baptismal vocation to see, as far as he can, with God's grace, to make those forces effective in his life, to the point where they dominate all his actions" (Rakoczy, 2006, 129). Thus, Christian nonviolence is an expression of faith and not a "tactic" for getting things done (Rakozcy, 2006, 130). Principles of nonviolence include openness, communication, and dialogue. Merton asked, "whether we are willing to learn something from the 'enemy', even some new truth" (Rakozcy, 2006, 130). Nonviolence demands much humility, self-control, and an end to a fanatic self-righteousness of persons for their causes.

From the example of Thomas Merton, we see again the intrinsic unity between religious experience and commitment to social justice and peace. Perhaps Merton's understanding of the connection between contemplation and action is most clearly and succinctly expressed in the following quotation:

> Contemplation cannot construct a new world by itself… But without contemplation we cannot understand the significance of the world in which we must act… And finally, without contemplation, without the intimate silent, secret pursuit of truth through love, our action loses itself in the world and becomes dangerous (quoted by Sheldrake, 2010, 137).

In summary, contemplation and action are intimately related, they are integral to human life and transformation in all its manifestations. Human beings need contemplation in order to be compassionately involve in social action:

> Human beings are not able to find true compassion, or to create structures of deep transformation, without entering contemplatively into Jesus' own compassion. Only contemplative-mystical practice, allied to social action, is capable of bringing about the change of heart necessary for a lasting solidarity and social transformation – particularly a solidarity capable of embracing the oppressor as well as the oppressed. Thus, according to Galilea, social engagement must be accompanied by a process of interior transformation and liberation from self-seeking (Sheldrake, 2010, 99-100).

The encounter with God in contemplation leads one to identify with the person of Jesus who moves out of himself in unconditional love:

> A person who has been sent down by God from these heights is full of truth and rich in all the virtues…He will therefore always flow forth to all who need him, for the living spring of the Holy Spirit is so rich that it can never be drained dry…He therefore leads a common life, for he is equally ready for contemplation or for action and is perfect in both (Sheldrake, 2010, 111).

Thus, contemplation and action are the two feet of love: love of God and love of neighbour, and we need these two feet to walk.

2.6 Conclusion

The literature on Christian contemplation throughout the last two thousand years has influenced so many contemplatives across times and cultures; and they in turn have contributed to its richness, vitality and reliability. The wisdom of this tradition continuously inspires people. At the heart of the contemplative tradition is the belief that every human being is ontologically predisposed to have an intimate relationship with the Transcendent, and invited to find fulfilment in the Divine. Divinization is the goal of human life, "Our vocation is to become fully and authentically human. Our calling is to manifest the image of God in the way we live" (Keller, 2008, 130). Sanctity and being one's true self are the two sides of the same coin. This searching of the true self takes time; it is a process of dynamic spiritual and personal transformation (Keller, 2008, 130). The contemplative path is a journey to one's innermost being, and equally a journey into the heart of humanity where God dwells:

> I have discovered that the wisdom of contemplative silence holds my feet to the fire, relentlessly pointing to my transformation, to *my* need to change, instead of demanding that others change first. In all the major world religious traditions, contemplation and meditation primarily point to the letting-go of the small self, the ego self, the false self. The principal focus of such spiritual practice is the diminishment of self-inflation and self-preoccupations, the surrender of the fixation with "what I want out of life" or "what I want from God" (Langille 2008, 61).

Love is the business of contemplation, and contemplative prayer is the gateway that leads to God and the activity that is motivated by love. Contemplation is "always as a social rather than purely personal, interior reality" (Sheldrake, 2010,

118). The great contemplatives have consistently understood and reiterated this. They have demonstrated to us what it is to be fully human – to love God and neighbour. They testify that true mystical experiences deepen compassion and give energy to the individual. Love produces likeness; as people experience themselves being empathetically held in the heart of God, so they too hold their own selves and others more empathetically and live in the world with a kindness and compassion (Flanagan, 2014, 80).

The aim of this research is to explore contemplative leadership. Chapter One investigated the developing literature in Leadership Studies which points to a deeper appreciation of the interiority of the leader, and the transformation that needs to take place in a leader in order to develop a non-dual way of being and leading that will guide and enhance the quality and operation of leadership. This chapter has drawn on the wisdom of the Christian contemplative tradition to understand the inner journey, the personal and spiritual transformation that balances being and doing, the intimacy with God which unifies and integrates, the one reality of love that is contemplation in action. All of this was presented in order to further understand and investigate the relationship between leadership and contemplation.

The next chapter will look to exemplars of contemplative leadership, of contemplation and action, and its theoretical and practical contribution to the study of contemplative leadership.

Chapter 3 Contemplative Leadership

3.1 Introduction

The combination of contemplation and leadership may sound incompatible to many, yet their apparent contradiction is resolved by contemplative leaders who are able to hold the creative tension between these two apparently diverse realities and in doing so address the leadership crisis posed by contemporary leadership studies. Beatrice Bruteau in *The Grand Option* writes, "Many people say that it is difficult to practice contemplation in our secularized society. But our society is 'secularized' precisely because contemplation is not adequately practiced (Drey, 2011, 344-345). This chapter will investigate the natural affinity and reciprocal relationship between contemplation and leadership; it will explore the underlying philosophy and assumptions; present a working definition of contemplative leadership, and provide an exemplar of contemplative leadership in practice.

3.2 Basic Assumptions of Contemplative Leadership

To understand the innate mutuality between contemplation and leadership it is important to acknowledge the underlying assumptions that make contemplative leadership a reality and something to aspire to. This process will help explain a) how the leader's inner self influences the way he/she thinks, perceives, values, behaves, and relates as a leader, and b) how the understanding of God, self, life, human nature, relationships, and the world influence the expression of contemplative leadership.

3.2.1 Assumption 1: Leadership Comes from within

The first assumption considers the inner self of the leader. Leadership today requires a broad range of competencies, skills and qualities, but "the most important leadership tool is first and foremost the leader's self" (Drey, 2011, 343). This is founded on the belief that the power to do good comes from being good. What we do is deeply and permanently influenced by who and what we are (Song, 2014, 63). There is nothing new about this understanding. In the 6th century BC, the Chinese philosopher Laozi claimed that "the way to do is to be" (Laozi, saying 47). Thus, the inner life and personal transformation of the leader is crucial to the

quality of being and doing. Daily we see the disconnect between the self and the doing of leadership in the scandals of corrupt leaders, the many violent conflicts and inhumanities in the world; we see the consequences of misguided power, ruthless selfishness, and unacknowledged egoism at work. "All political and financial power-struggles have their collateral damage – the innocent and vulnerable trampled or ignored in the process of individual or group supremacy. Leadership, of course, needs a form of power. But the quest for power over others easily becomes a dangerous and insidious temptation, especially when it becomes divorced from the moral authority that effective leaders require" (Freeman, 2014, 2). The relationship between leadership, interiority, and the development of values has already been established and is made clear again from the argument put forth by Peter Song who says:

> Our world is in great need of a transformation of consciousness. Our world is ravaged by ethnic conflict, violence, and terrorism. Our natural environment is being desecrated. There is much human suffering arising from poverty, extreme income disparity, and severe unemployment. The global economy is in a sorry state… We need to rethink fundamentally the moral framework that underpins our economy, politics, and global inter-connectedness. We need a change of values (Song, 2014, 7).

McCalman and Paton support the same idea insisting that: "The future for leadership, to us, tends to reflect a desire to re-build trust within and with leadership, which stress the significance of virtues, ethics, and integrity over regulation…" (McCalman and Paton, 2010, 252). The wisdom of the past affirms this philosophy of leadership. In the 7th century, the ancient Tang emperor Shimin Li regarded serving the people and ruling by virtue as the most important principle for his governance. Indeed, the Tang dynasty reached its highest prosperity and grandeur under his leadership (Wu, 713-756AD, chapter1). Dolan and Altman, in a paper reviewing more than 150 leadership studies, show that "there is a consistency between spiritual values and practices and effective leadership" (Reave, 2005, 6). Values that have long been considered solely spiritual, such as compassion, contemplation and meditation, are now directly related to personal development and leadership success (Dolan and Altman, 2012, 24). It is acknowledged that "for a change of values to happen, we need to go to the depth of the human person where one's perception of the world is shaped and the motivation for action and external behaviour arises" (Song, 2014, 13). Values and

ethics are not merely notional concepts; they emerge from personal transformation and integration that are the direct fruits of a person's inner journey. From a specifically spiritual perspective, Link confirms that "in many spiritual traditions, practitioners typically first gain self-realization of who and what they really are. Only then do they practice functioning from the depth of realization to develop what one can call self-actualization, i.e. the integration of realization into action in the world" (Link, 2011, 341). Leadership should come from the inner core, rather than from a set of techniques, traditions and strategies, from an inner moral authority rather than external formal authority (Rodney, 2008, 5). This is further corroborated in the statement that "The heart of leadership is in the hearts of leaders. You have to lead from something deep inside" (Bolman and Deal, 2011, 22). The journey towards the more authentic heart of a leader necessarily involves identifying the importance and function of ego. The ego is a very necessary aspect of personality, yet it is often the point of dysfunction and serious impediment to effective leadership. The following assumption will explore the role of contemplation in educating and transforming the ego.

3.2.2 Assumption 2: Transcending the Ego is Essential to Mature in Character and Virtue

The second assumption relates to the conviction that transcending the ego creates a direct link between contemplative practice and leadership. Peter Song, a chief investment officer of the Singapore Government Investment Corporation, and a trustee of the World Community for Christian Meditation insists that, "the transcending of the ego is the link between meditation and leadership. We meditate so that we may be made entirely free of the domination of the ego. It is because of the tyranny of the ego that we see a business world where the standards of ethics and integrity have been severely undermined" (Song, 2014, 12). The ego and the various expressions of self-centeredness is at the heart of corruption, exploitation and injustice. It is the reason for much destructiveness and violence in the world. Speaking to a group of business executives and leaders, Song posited this opinion:

It is because of the tyranny of the ego that we see a business world today where standards of ethics and integrity have been severely undermined. Deceit and lies have destroyed major corporations such as Enron, Worldcom, and Arthur Anderson. Virtue can no longer be taken for granted, and now has to be taught to executives…Much of the general public now believes that CEOs are in the game for their own personal gratification. The good of their employees, their customers, their communities, and even their shareholders are merely ancillary issues for them. The root of the problem lies in character, which determines values and motivation. This is a crisis that cannot be fixed by public relations spin campaigns, or stronger government regulations and accounting rules. Morality cannot be legislated, *but governed by inner conscience* (Song, 2014, 42, italics mine).

Keeping a balance between self-interest and the common good is always a challenge for leaders. An inflamed and dysfunctional ego is often the impediment between them. Although the ego is part of being human (we need the energy of the ego to propel us in action), we hope that our ego can develop in a healthy way, even to the point of transcending the ego so that our true self is not obscured by a counterfeit self (Song, 2014, 12). Thus, transcending the limitations of the ego is imperative to the inner work of leaders if they want to become more authentic in themselves, ethical in their behaviour, and virtuous in their relating. The Christian contemplative tradition verifies that contemplation offers the possibility for dismantling the incomplete ego because it transforms our being at the personal level, as it is illustrated in Teresa of Avila's Interior Castle. John Main also contributes to this argument when he says "God is all goodness, the wonder of the prayer is that when we transcend ourselves, we enter God's all-goodness and become good ourselves, not through any kind of striving to be good, but because we enter the radiance of the orbit of his goodness. That is the basis of all morality. Not that we try to imitate God but that we participate in the goodness of God" (Main, 1993, 58-59). By implication the indwelling Holy Spirit is both the agent of our personal transformation and the ultimate resource for change. In contemplative prayer, we learn to let go of our counterfeit thoughts, worries, problems, anxieties, goals and fantasies. We learn to gaze on God in Jesus Christ; identify ego attachment, and become aware of our self-centred desires. In this way, we learn to be open to God, and encounter the power of the Holy Spirit who makes self-transcendence possible. Gradually, our order of values will be changed, so that "instead of our values system being based on the ego – on personal success,

self-promotion, self-preservation – our values system becomes based on God. We see the greater reality of other-centred values such as compassion, tolerance, forgiveness and justice" (Song, 2014, 11).

Contemplation is "a central onslaught on the ego" (Song, 2014, 43). The contemplative journey is a way of dying to our narcissism. In dying to our self-fabricated ego, we rise to a new way of life that can astonish with its infinite richness; and, gradually, the transformative effect may soon be expressed in all areas of our life: in decision-making, team-management, personal relationships, as well as lifestyle balance (Freeman, 2014, 3).

It is evident that one must transcend the ego to mature in character and virtue in preparation for the movement into a non-dual level of being. Fry and Kriger's non-dual level of being, as discussed in Chapter one, may appear as an ideal, but it is to be supported, encouraged, and presented as an attainable expression of the most authentic form of leadership. Fry and Kriger propose that the leader's level of being and integrity is decisive for the way he or she leads. The question now arises as to how leaders progress to the non-dual level of being, become a truer self, and move into a more transcendent way of being. This introduces and provides the perspective of the third assumption for contemplative leadership.

3.2.3 Assumption 3: The Contemplative Journey Offers a Possibility for Self-transcendence

The third assumption of contemplative leadership is that the inner spiritual journey through contemplative practice offers a possibility for leaders to grow toward the stage of union which corresponds to Fry and Kriger's non-dual level of being. This assumption is based on understanding the wisdom traditions of the East and the West. Although this dissertation focuses on the Christian contemplative tradition, the contemplative dimensions of other traditions are also respected and honoured for their wisdom and their contemplative practices. The Christian contemplative tradition believes that human beings are created in the image and likeness of God, and we are all predisposed, and invited, to an intimate

relationship with God, others, and the whole of creation. According to Rahner, whose understanding of mysticism in everyday life was discussed in section 2.2.9, God has created human beings with a distinctive capacity to transcend themselves and glimpse the "holy mystery" who is our creator and the meaning of our existence. To be human, in Rahner's thinking, is "to be exposed to the mystery which pervades all of reality" (Marmion, 1998, 55). In an essay on *The Experience of God Today*, Rahner writes:

> The moment we become aware of ourselves precisely as the limited being which in so many ways we are, we have already overstepped these boundaries… We have experienced ourselves as beings which constantly reach out beyond ourselves towards that which cannot be comprehended or circumscribed, that which precisely as having this radical status must be called infinite, that which is sheer mystery (Rahner, 1969, 155-156).

For Rahner, our transcendental drive towards mystery reveals who we are as human persons. The essence of this is captured in the famous popular saying, "We are not human beings on a spiritual journey. We are spiritual beings on a human journey". The human spirit yearns for fulfilment in God. As discussed in chapter two, down through the ages, there have been contemplative men and women on every continent, in every age, whose lives reveal the magnificence and transformative power of an intimate relationship with God. Of course, this does not happen overnight. It is a life-long journey and needs daily discipline and practice. By opening to God's presence in contemplative prayer, human beings could develop an intimate relationship with God, could go through a process of significant spiritual growth, and likely be changed by the power of the Holy Spirit to grow toward wholeness and integrity, as revealed in Teresa of Avila's *Interior Castle*. One of the major results of this spiritual journey is a change of consciousness, in which one's worldview, assumptions about human life and the universe, are shaped by the intimate encounter with God. The spiritual journey can generate a paradigm shift in ways of thinking, perceiving, valuing, inquiring, acting and being (Eggert, 1998, 124). Contemplatives perceive a deeper reality and are able to experience, to a greater or lesser extent, a mutual indwelling with one another, with God and all creation. They realize that they are part of a larger divine wholeness; they grow toward the "non-dual level" of being (Fry and Kriger, 2009, 1683).

The next assumption explores why the contemplative way of being generates a shift in consciousness, and how intimate relationship with God can be truly transformative.

3.2.4 Assumption 4: Contemplative Practice Contributes to the Well-being of the Leader and influences One's Leadership Practice

The fourth assumption proposes that contemplative practice can make significant contributions to the well-being of the person and, consequently, to the practice of leadership. Empirical studies in neuroscience offer strong evidence that contemplative practice and mindfulness meditation have positive effects on the well-being of practitioners, physiologically, psychologically and spiritually. According to recent neuroscientific research, "the human brain, far from being fixed and unalterable as it was once thought to be, has astonishing capacity for change, continued growth, and in certain ways for transforming its very own structure" (Bingaman, 2011, 478). In *Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love, and Wisdom*, neuropsychologist Rick Hanson and neurologist Richard Mendius assert that "something transcendental is involved with the mind, consciousness, and the path of awakening—call it God, Spirit, Buddha-nature, the Ground, or by no name at all," and that whatever name it goes by this transcendental dimension is ultimately "beyond the physical universe" (Hanson and Mendius, 2009, 9). The brain's capacity to learn, and thus change, is not simply limited to the early formative years of childhood (Bingaman, 2011, 479). McEwen and Lasley remind us that, "By repeated thought and actions, we can alter not only the functioning but also the structure of the neural networks in our brains" (McEwen and Lasley, 2002, 120). Consequently, by engaging in repeated contemplative practice, we have the capacity to become a new and more highly developed creation (Bingaman, 2011, 480). These findings are particularly compelling. Bingaman states:

> There is overwhelming and conclusive evidence that the careful attention to the daily spiritual discipline of contemplative practice and meditation has, over time, a profound and transformative impact on certain parts of the brain. In the limbic region of the brain, we see from neuroimaging scans that contemplative practices such as centring prayer and particularly mindfulness meditation have a calming effect on the amygdala, the warning alarm system of the brain (Bingaman, 2011, 481).

Furthermore, research has suggested that contemplative practices can be effective in reducing anxiety, stress, depression, chronic pain, and improving sleep pattern and immune function (Duerr, 2008, 15). Another study also shows that "meditation practices can support individuals in developing five attributes that are key in preventing and treating burnout and compassion fatigue: 1) compassion and self-compassion; 2) resilience; 3) self-awareness; 4) metacognition and attention; and 5) meaning" (Duerr, 2008, 1). In addition to the physiological and psychological benefits, there is evidence that meditation techniques, "can cultivate qualities such as compassion, self-compassion, forgiveness, mindfulness, and spirituality" (Duerr, 2008, 16). A longitudinal neuroscientific research study of Roman Catholic nuns provides evidence in support of the role of contemplative prayer and meditation in generating greater joy and serenity. Newberg and Waldman recount the experience of studying a group of nuns, who had been practicing centring prayer for a minimum of fifteen years, as follows:

> This was the first brain-scan study of Christian contemplative practitioners, and we discovered that the neurological changes were significant and very different from how the human brain normally functions. Even more surprising, the neurological changes were nearly the same as those we recorded from a group of Buddhist practitioners, who obviously nurtured very different beliefs. This evidence confirmed our hypothesis that the benefits gleaned from prayer and meditation may have less to do with a specific theology than with the ritual techniques of breathing, staying relaxed, and focusing one's attention upon a concept that evokes comfort, compassion, or a spiritual sense of peace (Newberg and Waldman, 2009, 48).

Similarly, leaders who have been engaging in contemplative practices find it helpful to their practice of leadership. First of all, they find peace and harmony within themselves. Since leaders generally work at an extraordinary pace, Peter Song suggests that silence and solitude are perhaps one of the simplest therapies for the busy executive and the noisy mind. He explains:

> Nothing is more important in life than to find this peace and harmony within ourselves. From my experience, meditation is really the kindest thing that I can do for myself. And the interesting result of that is that it is also the kindest thing you can do for others, because meditation, by bringing you to a greater state of peace and harmony, will affect all your relationships, everything you do. In that way, every relationship will benefit because you take that step to find the peace and harmony within yourself. (Song, 2014, 53).

Secondly, when leaders engage in regular contemplative practice, they develop a greater level of attentiveness and awareness, so that, gradually, an inner observer may become established. Patricia Robertson shares her experience:

117

> As I continued the practice (centring prayer) I discovered that an interior space was being formed in me that was present during some of the rest of my day. This space enabled me to see and experience my life and ministry differently. It turned out that I was learning to work with what many spiritual guides call an "inner observer". I could see my own reactions to events and begin to modify them instead of holding on to old patterns (Robertson, 2008, 3).

The practice also enabled her "to see what was happening in others and respond to them in more compassionate ways" (Robertson, 2008, 3). In other words, she eventually experiences a greater sense of empathy, immediacy and vibrancy in her work and ministry. This acute awareness of the present moment is very important, because it enables leaders to more accurately perceive the demands of any given moment and to respond with clarity, objectivity, compassion and insight. This helps leaders to better discern what is called for to manage relationships, navigate politics, and make wise decisions (Birchfield, 2013, 1).

Robertson also indicates other consequences that come from engaging in contemplative practice: a different kind of seeing that reveals the multilayers of existence; perceptions of reality that go beyond the surface material world; an ability to listen to the deeper movement of truth; intentionally living from the being of God; the possibility of acting out of wisdom instead of knowledge; an interior freedom, and the experience of inner transformation (Robertson, 2008, 2, 4, 7). Ray Dalio who has been on the contemplative path for many years speaks of the practice as helping him "to come to clarity of mind, creativity of thoughts, and the ability to perceive the truth, the reality of things" (Song, 2014, 74). This describes what happens when our perceptions are not distorted by the ego! Such spiritual transformation will, undoubtedly, influence the quality and practice of leadership.

In summary, when a leader repeatedly cultivates a state of stillness and a new level of awareness, his or her physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual capacities develop accordingly. These capacities, in turn, support a more agile, creative, compassionate, collaborative and ethical leadership behaviour.

3.3 Toward a Working Definition of Contemplative Leadership

We see from contemporary Leadership Studies literature that exploration in contemplative leadership is becoming more accepted; however, its conceptual development is still in its infancy. There are some researchers trying to describe what contemplative leadership is, but none has offered a precise and detailed definition. We know that the essence of contemplative leadership is our open presence to the Divine, supported and nourished by contemplative practices, including a daily discipline of contemplative prayer (Crumley, 2014, 1). This prayerful, open attentiveness, or, what Edward's calls, a "mind-in-heartedness presence" is the key to contemplative leadership. "Mind-in-heart presence relates to others heart-to-heart and not just conditioned mind and ego to conditioned mind and ego" (Edward, 2014, 2). With a developing contemplative awareness, a leader's world views will be changed. Everything one sees, be it a person, tree, stone, animal may become a transparency for God's presence. Crumley supports this stating, "As we are available to that Presence, it will inform and transform our awareness and leadership" (Crumley, 2014, 3). When genuinely and attentively present to the Divine, "we are transformed through a different way of knowing, into a different way of seeing, living and leading" (Crumley, 2014, 3). A contemplative way of being perceives a deep connection to God's Spirit, aware of, and trusting, that God is alive in us, around us, for us, and always willing to guide and lead for the good and for love (Crumley, 2014, 4). "As contemplative leaders, our lives and actions are grounded in God so that all that we do is oriented toward letting God guide in the moment…We live and lead from within the Living Presence" (Crumley, 2014, 4). Dean echoes the same when she says, "Contemplative leadership is dependent on a deep desire for spaciousness, flexibility, and openness to the True Leader, the Spirit. To be a contemplative leader, one must be intentionally living at the centre so that leadership flows from within" (Dean, 2014, 2).

This is an alternative and radical stance compared with the habitually presented "rational-scientific paradigm" of leadership (Eggert, 1998, 103). Leading from the spiritual heart opens us to wisdom far beyond our humble knowing. Crumley,

quoting Gerald May, describes his sense of what it means to live and lead from this contemplative stance: "It means to live in conscious love with the here-and-now Divine, to trust God's love no matter what, to know that God flows through us all continually, to believe that God so intimately pervades us and all creation that we can never, ever be really abandoned" (Crumley, 2014, 4). Such Spirit-filled life brings so much to the practice of leadership: it fosters creativity, instils a sense of compassion, encourages collaboration, teaches flexibility, values relationships, enjoys the fruits of transformation, and seeks unity in all things. Such is the power of an open and receptive presence to the Divine.

The goal of contemplative leadership, according to the Merton Institute of contemplative living, is "to influence the direction of leadership in all its manifestations, by integrating the principles and practice of contemplative living into mainstream leadership thinking and training" (Drey, 2011, 355). The Merton Institute further describes contemplative leadership as "an approach to leadership that evolves as one seeks to live in right relationships with self, others, nature and God. Contemplative leadership strengthens the inner results in a conscious use of power and presence to influence the work of a group or organization, realize human potential, and improve the human condition. Truly effective leadership is undergirded and informed by contemplative awareness" (Drey, 2011, 355). Contemplative leadership begins with "self-leadership", a focus on who the leader is rather than what the leader does; it is a leadership that is deeply grounded in relationships, with its centre and focus on intimate relationship with God (Drey, 2011, 355).

Coming from a Buddhist perspective, Kim Nolan, in her dissertation, identified eight traits which she named as the eight C's of contemplative leadership: calling, compassion, care for others, centred communication, cultivate stillness, clarity, currency of time (Now), and contagious joy. Nolan explained the meaning of the eight C's as follows:

Calling: "The contemplative leader is aware of her calling in life. She senses a purpose to her being and is willing to do what is necessary to fulfil it" (Nolan, 2013, 185).

Compassion: "The contemplative leader is aware that wisdom must accompany compassion when she takes action in the world. She needs to keep a soft belly while maintaining a strong back, so remains open to feeling but has the resolve to face the challenges she encounters (Nolan, 2013, 186).

Care for Others: "The contemplative leader cares. She cares for herself, knowing that a depleted leader expresses less than optimal leadership. She cares for others because she recognizes the interconnectedness web of existence. Caring for one aspect of life is connected to all aspects of life. Care is in response to need. It is the heart's response. It is service. It is not strategy or manipulation. Care for others is an expression of compassionate action" (Nolan, 2013, 186).

Centred Communication: "The contemplative leader values wise and centred communication and places an emphasis on listening. There is awareness that our speech is intimately a part of our thoughts and action, so mindfulness is applied not only to what is said, but how words are spoken. The contemplative leader does not fear honest communication. She encourages open and authentic speech without causing harm to others. She listens with her whole being to truly hear what is being communicated to her, matching words with gestures and tone. She does not complicate her message, making her wisdom accessible to whomever she comes in contact" (Nolan, 2013, 186).

Cultivated Stillness: "The contemplative leader can access inner stillness in the midst of chaos and crisis, which is the dominant pace of our modern world. She has cultivated stillness through contemplative practices and familiarized herself with the natural state of being that accompanies a stable mind and relaxed body. When her thinking becomes scattered, she can call upon her skills of concentration and attention. When her thinking becomes unanchored and aimless, she can call

upon her skills of awareness and peaceful abiding. The contemplative leader cultivates stillness to replenish her energy reserves, to maintain her centre and sense of self, and to continue the journey along her path toward wholeness" (Nolan, 2013, 186-187).

Clarity: "The contemplative leader sees clearly into her ways of being. Clarity enhances discernment in forming relationships. It supports decision-making that is appropriate to the situation at hand. She sees beyond habitual mental patterns and automatic responses, which allows more genuine action to follow. Her clarity brings into sight the obstacles that could obscure her continued progress, allowing her to address challenges before they become unmanageable. She is aware that her perspective, which is filled with clarity and wisdom, is rare among peers. Therefore, she infuses her clarity with gentleness when speaking and engaging with others" (Nolan, 2013, 187).

Currency of Time (Now): "The contemplative leader is aware that she is most available to herself and others when her attention is on the present moment. Whether the moment is identified as enjoyable or challenging, she has cultivated the skills necessary to remain fully present for it and all that it contains. As if time has dissolved, when she releases expectations for the future or a regret from the past, what remains for her to engage with is just this moment. She is cognizant that each moment is precious and will never arise again, bringing her great appreciation for the sacredness of life. As a result of eliminating the horizontal line that chronicles time, she can ascend the vertical line of Now without rush or hurried pace. This zero point of timelessness is not stagnant; rather it invites the contemplative leader to align her whole being with the currency of time that is now" (Nolan, 2013, 187).

Contagious Joy: "The contemplative leader radiates a contagious joy that can influence others without explicit articulation. She allows that aspect of her being that is beyond a self-serving ego to arise, buoyantly expressing her inherent joy. This ease of being invites others to lighten their grip on beliefs and expectations,

opening to possibility greater than imagined. Like a fist that cannot shake another's hand, one must release closed fingers and open to meeting the others open hand. Warm hand to warm hand, the joy of becoming whole is transmitted to another. Her light heartedness is not to be interpreted as being frivolous or unrealistic. To the contrary, she possesses a heart of sad joy because she is so profoundly aware of reality. The contemplative leader becomes the Laughing Buddha, smiling at truth, and embodying the realization of profound joy" (Nolan, 2013, 188).

Nolan has made a valuable contribution to contemplative leadership studies from a Buddhist perspective. She indicates the power of a faith tradition to cultivate contemplative leadership and she has developed a model to explain and structure her thinking from her perspective.

Based on a comprehensive understanding of leadership (chapter one), Christian contemplative tradition (chapter two), and contemplative leadership (chapter three), we are in a position to construct **a working definition of contemplative leadership**. *In its narrow sense, contemplative leadership means the practice of leadership is informed and nourished by one's inner life as a contemplative. In its broad sense, contemplative leadership is a holistic approach that aims to help leaders grow toward a non-dual level of being through intentionally embracing the contemplative path, which is a journey inward, a journey from head to heart, and a journey of inner transformation through contemplative practice. It is grounded in an intimate relationship with the Transcendent with an openness to the Spirit, to the present moment, and to intuitive wisdom. Leading in and through contemplative awareness fosters wholesome interpersonal relationships with people and organizations based on, and reflecting, one's personal knowledge and experience of the Divine.*

As a means of assessing and further analysing the understanding of contemplative leadership we will look at the writings, research, contemplative practice and leadership style of Lynne Sedgmore, who is a renowned and recognized mystic

and corporate leader. In her life and work she provides an example of how contemplative leadership can be realistically lived and practically demonstrated in an organizational setting.

3.4 An Exemplar of Contemplative Leadership

Lynne Sedgmore is chosen as an exemplar for a number of reasons: firstly, she is a contemplative who has had several mystical experiences; secondly, she is a practising leader in a secular environment; thirdly, her leadership style is very much influenced by her inner life as a mystic; and fourthly, she is a lay person but lives a profound spiritual life. She indicates in her PhD dissertation that the internal constructs: contemplation, mystical knowing, and her personal spirituality underpin everything she undertakes in her personal and professional life (Sedgmore, 2013, 14). This suits perfectly the working definition of contemplative leadership in its narrow sense, which states that one's "leadership is informed and nourished by one's inner life as a contemplative". She provides an example of a public-sector organization, Centre for Excellence in Leadership, as an organisation that embraced the spiritual values of altruistic love, service of others, employee well-being and sustainability while maintaining high levels of financial performance.

3.4.1 Lynne Sedgmore

Lynne Sedgmore, CBE, is Executive Director of the 157 Group of FE Colleges and advises Whitehall on projects including leadership, innovation, vocational education and community/interfaith cohesion. In 2008, she advised the Further Education Skills Minister on Extremisms in FE and she sat on the Prime Minister's Review of public sector leadership development in 2009 - 2010. She was a former Chief Executive of the UK Centre for Excellence in Leadership, a Principal of Guildford College, Vice Principal of Croydon College, and Head of Croydon Business School (Leaflet, 2015).

Lynne Sedgmore is a mother with three children, a Benedictine Oblate, a trained spiritual coach, an ordained minister, and "a corporate mystic" (Altman, 2010, 35).

She has attended and led spiritual retreats and developmental workshops for over 25 years. She was a member of the UK World Conference for Religions and Peace, and a member of the UK Interfaith Network. She attended the United Nations Summit for Religious and Spiritual Leaders in New York in 2000 and the UN Women's Spiritual Leaders' Summit in Geneva in 2002. She chaired the UK Interfaith Foundation for 4 years and is currently an Elder of the UK One Spirit Interfaith Foundation (Leaflet, 2015). In 2013, she completed a professional PhD by contribution to practice at Winchester University entitled: *Fostering Innovative Organisational Cultures and High Performance through Explicit Spiritual Leadership: A Chief Executive's Integrative Journey of Spirit and Leadership in the workplace*. She has presented papers, and written a number of articles related to leadership and spirituality.

Her leadership style in her role as principal of Guildford College of Further and Higher Education, UK, was the subject of a case study by M. Joseph for his PhD dissertation in 2002. The achievements of the Centre for Excellence in Leadership under her governance (2003 – 2008) have been documented in a series of reports and papers and in a book titled *Spiritual Leadership in Action: the CEL Story* (Fry and Altman, 2013). The Centre for Excellence in Leadership was awarded the International Spirit at Work Award during her tenure and Sedgmore was awarded the CBE for services to education in 2004 (Altman, 2010, 35).

3.4.2 Her Spiritual Journey

Sedgmore was brought up in a Christian environment within an agnostic family (Sedgmore, 2013, 51). She has been an "active spiritual seeker and explorer since childhood; continually seeking truth, meaning and purpose" (Sedgmore, 2013, 52). She says, "she cannot remember a time when she was not asking spiritual / religious questions, nor could she imagine her life without such focus and exploration" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 19). She reports "an unquenchable thirst for exploring and developing her inner life and mindfulness through meditation and says she cannot live without daily contemplation and spiritual practices" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 20). Her spiritual life is nourished by different forms of spiritual

practices such as meditation, the divine office, *Lectio Divina*, spiritual reading, conversation with spiritual gurus, time spent in solitude in monastic environments, a retreat three times a year, spiritual healing training, and formation as a Benedictine Oblate (Sedgmore, 2013, 46). A recounting of her early life and spiritual journey is presented in Fry and Altman's book (2013, 24-30). She gives a detailed report about her spiritual journey as "a journey of transformation to become less ego-centred in striving to fulfil one's ultimate purpose through love and service of others" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 30). April 7th, 1988, was a day of spiritual rebirth for her and since then she began a new spiritually focused life. That day she had a powerful experience when attending a conference on Spirituality in the Workplace at Lancaster University. Sedgmore remembers:

> It happened in a lecture theatre while with others. I found my hands lifting as I was flooded with light into my head and hands. It felt wonderful, as if I was glowing all over from within and without. The person sitting next to me asked what had happened; she did not see the light but told me she could feel that something unusual was happening to me. When I came home, every time I meditated more light flowed, particularly in and from my hands, and I became certain that my path was to become a spiritual healer, as I knew that this light was not just for me but was for others too (Fry and Altman, 2013, 29).

Besides this spiritual experience, Sedgmore consistently had a sense of 'something more and something bigger' than herself. She experienced this as a relationship with a transcendent power, a power she worshipped, held in awe and reverenced (Sedgmore, 2013, 51). She had three mystical experiences: an initial powerful mystical experience of union in 1989; two other powerful but different kinds of mystical experiences, of oneness in 2002, and of the void in 2005 (Sedgmore, 2013, 51).

3.4.2.1 Union Experience: The Mystical Marriage 1989-1998

This first experience she describes as a mystical marriage. In 1989, she felt an incredibly powerful mystical experience of union. When she could find the words in 1997 to describe her encounter and its effect, she wrote:

> I was completely suffused with feelings of love, total unconditional love for everything, everyone. My whole self, every part of me felt totally at one, totally unified, within and without. The boundaries between myself and all around me dissolved … I was in connection with a deep knowing ... stronger than anything I have ever experienced; a heart knowing, a body knowing, a mind knowing, a transcendent knowing … that the true reality is one of unconditional love, peace and

harmony … with the most profound feeling of wholeness, completeness, of coming home … my whole being expanding and dissolving into this new reality. My life is now essentially the attempt to live my mystical vow ... integrating the mystical knowing with my daily life ... To live as congruently as I can ... and to remember to manifest the true reality ... to live constantly in the presence of God while I continue to live a busy domestic and professional life in the mainstream world (Sedgmore, 2013, 53).

She wrote a poem, *Mystical Marriage*, to express her feeling of being filled with a profound Transcendent presence:

Mystical Marriage

Your presence liquefies -

I soften into syrup,
silken and smooth.
Dissolving in your golden light –
flowing into truth,
glimpsing true reality.

Loving union of Thee and I -
singing the symphonic glory
of cosmic consciousness

(Sedgmore, 2013, 53-54).

This union experience initiated "a spontaneous shift from intellectual knowing of the physical and material reality to a direct mystical knowing and infusion of a transcendent presence and a perception of a 'true reality' beyond and joined with me simultaneously", Sedgmore says, "I felt infused by Divinity, light and love. I experienced an expansion of awareness that this transcendent presence was omnipresent and that all truths lead to the same source and all are true. This was accompanied by a powerful sense of wanting to be of service and to be 'the face of God' in the world" (Sedgmore, 2013, 54). This was the period where the fruits of her mystical experience became manifest in her professional life as a desire for service, compassion and the need to live a good and more virtuous life (Sedgmore, 2013, 54). Reflecting on the experience, she continues:

This is when I began to see my personality flaws and the gap between how I wanted to be, a truly good and spiritual person synchronised with true reality, and how I currently lived my life. I began serious therapy work as well as daily meditation. I spent time in monastic environments and in solitude and reflection to assist my understanding of how to manifest my spirituality personally and within my organisational corporate life. I developed a strong desire for quietness, reflection

and contemplation; went on retreat three times a year; and began to engage with spiritual formation activities, extensive spiritual inquiry and development regularly (Sedgmore, 2013, 55).

Following reflection and advice she discovered that she had had a peak experience. This took her many months to understand, work through and articulate. For a better understanding of her experience, she also read writings by ancient and acknowledged mystics, such as Plotinus, Julian of Norwich, Hildegard of Bingen, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, and Brother Laurence (Sedgmore, 2013, 55). These spiritual classics helped her to understand contemplation and action, as well as the concepts and experiences of "being and presence" (Sedgmore, 2013, 55). At this point she recognises herself as "an active mystic" who "takes actions in the world based on a personal encounter with the divine, an encounter that guides and informs all actions, encompassing but also going beyond a moral and ethical base" (Sedgmore, 2013, 57). She believes her contemplative path helped her to understand that she is "in the world but not of it" (Sedgmore, 2013, 57).

3.4.2.2 Oneness Experiences: Non-Duality 1998-2005

From 1998 Sedgmore entered another stage of her spiritual journey. She writes:

> From 1998 I began even more intense meditation and time in silence and retreats to foster my deepening relationship with Source and to explore even more deeply the question: "Who am I?" I undertook a range of spiritual formation activities including a two-year training programme as an interfaith minister and a five-year training programme as a spiritual healer. Such formation has kept me centred and has enabled me to articulate my personal spirituality and to manifest and nurture my personal spiritual leadership within organisational life. In 2002, on an Enneagram workshop, I experienced total oneness rather than unity, an experience in which there never was any division at all, never any separation anywhere in the universe, of there never being two, only ever one (Sedgmore, 2013, 59).

She describes this experience in her journal as "being one with all that is, simultaneously seeing <u>and</u> being the true reality, fully awake and present without any preconceptions or expectations" (Sedgmore, 2013, 59). She further articulated this experience in a poem:

Enlivenment

The form in which I lived
that never was but seemed so real,
dissolving into truer form
of universal life force; rippling waves
pulsating in my body form

reminder of true nature -
I am This.
Every cell enlivened
inside out and outside in,
the two that never were apart
lived now as one.

Relaxing, unfolding, being here now
every moment fresh, alive and truth.

Gone beyond -

all form as objects
all form as death
all form as concepts
all form as falsely seen

Into: *alive to alive -*
all form as one
all form as life
all form as presence
all form as true reality –

Absolute

(Sedgmore, 2013, 59-60).

During this period, she experienced a shift in self-concept and self-understanding:

> …my experience of self shifted to the direct knowing of – I am This, I am God, I am Source. My personality or egoic self dissolved into the true form of my transcendent self. I was being present, Source, rather than being filled with Source. I was eternal, timeless presence, and now perceived my personality as not being real but a construct, a sham with no separate self. This knowing left me with a more still and peaceful mind and the perception that my desire to live a virtuous life was through being goodness and through right action (Sedgmore, 2013, 58).

This experience had an enormous impact on her way of working and leading which will be explored later on in this chapter.

3.4.2.3 Void Experience: Emptiness 2005 – present

In the year 2005, Sedgmore felt enlightened during a one-week Enneagram workshop and understood the deepest meaning of the Buddhist verses from the *Heart Sutra* as expressed in the poem translated by Red Pine:

> form is emptiness, emptiness is form;
> emptiness is not separate from form,
> form is not separate from emptiness;
> whatever is form is emptiness,
> whatever is emptiness is form
> (Sedgmore, 2013, 63).

Reflecting on this experience Sedgmore states:

> From then onwards I have experienced directly the truth and reality of both form and no form, the nature of the void and the expansiveness of space as another facet of true reality. I could now see not only my constructed personality as a shell and fabrication of the mind but that everything I had ever known was a construct of the mind; every construct I have ever known just disappeared. I now knew that everything arises out of nothing, I have no self, there is only quietness, stillness, formlessness and emptiness at the core of everything, including me. This unknowing (which feels a more accurate term than knowing) is constantly with me, even in the midst of my action in the world (Sedgmore, 2013, 63-64).

She also wrote a poem titled *Knowing of No Self* to express this experience:

Knowing of No Self

Spontaneous disappearance into no-self,
form and no form simultaneously arise -
knowing of the deepest truth
appears within expansiveness.

Clearer sight of self-made ark of personality,
survival imprinting on delicacy of soul -
knowing this false nature
causes absence to arise.

Letting go
impermanence
cessation of the mind
dissolved to flow and emptiness -
knowing of beyond in brilliancy of boundlessness

(Sedgmore, 2013, 63).

This 'void' experience was the most difficult one for her because she was initially terrified to let go into this void which felt like a black hole into which she might disappear and never return. An important question arose for her at this time, "how could I continue in my professional work if I really let go into this nothingness completely?" (Sedgmore, 2013, 65). Yet, to her amazement, what she has found since the experience is that:

> I can live an even fuller life. I experience action as flowing from spaciousness enabling me to hold an open space for others to unfold, as well as for myself. What I experience happening is an emergence of form (the manifest) out of being centred and aligned with formlessness (the non-manifest) into the world of action and organizational life; arising from the letting go into total alignment of being Source (Sedgmore, 2013, 65).

Sedgmore commented in her dissertation that she is still in the process of integrating this experience into her daily life, and still needs to assimilate the paradox and limitations of how to continue to act, to be in the world in real time, to lead in organizations more consistently from this state of void (no self), as well as from ego (personality), union or oneness (Sedgmore, 2013, 65).

Summarizing her own spiritual journey, Sedgmore writes:

> My own journey of the experience of self to no-self is one in which through continual inquiry and mystical experience I have come to see that my egoic self has no real existence, nor substance. Rather it is constructed, as modern psychotherapeutic and object-relation theories articulate it, through thoughts, beliefs, stories, experiences, self-images, and ego structures (both conscious and unconscious) that I have identified with since a child, all of which are barriers that have separated me from Source and my fullest potential. Through my spiritual practices, studies, meditation and mystical experiences, I have seen through and let go of many of them by understanding and seeing them for what they are; and many still remain. As my sense of self changes, the personality structures, fixations, behaviours and reactions become thinner and thinner, enabling me to see things, situations and people as they really are in that moment, situation, or event through perceiving a clearer sense of objective reality without my internal structures and constructs, conscious or otherwise, clouding and influencing the way I respond (Sedgmore, 2013, 65).

Despite her range of mystical experiences, she acknowledges that she cannot claim any form of steady state transcendence, instead she "experiences a shifting back and forth, or an opening and closing, between a more present, spacious and unified or transcended sense of self, or non-self and a more constricted egoic or constructed self." She, however, confesses that, "At times, although less so than previously, my egoic habits of many years arise and take charge" (Sedgmore. 2013, 67). She has continued in her contemplative journey of mystical and spiritual experiences while holding down a full-time professional work as an organizational leader.

3.4.2.4 The Map of Her Personal Spirituality

Sedgmore has tried to both explain and chart her personal contemplative journey for her own benefit and that of others. She used the following map to articulate her unique spiritual progress (figure 3.1). Explaining this diagram, Sedgmore states:

At the heart of this model is the mystical knowing of Source. The map is constructed based on her three mystical experiences of union, non-dual and the void. The map has three circles, moving from inner to outer: 1) her three mystical experiences through which she encountered the Source; 2) reflects the dimensions of her mystical knowledge; 3) reflects the ways she lives, integrates and expresses her relationship with and knowledge of the Source, and her mystical knowing, in her personal and professional relationships.
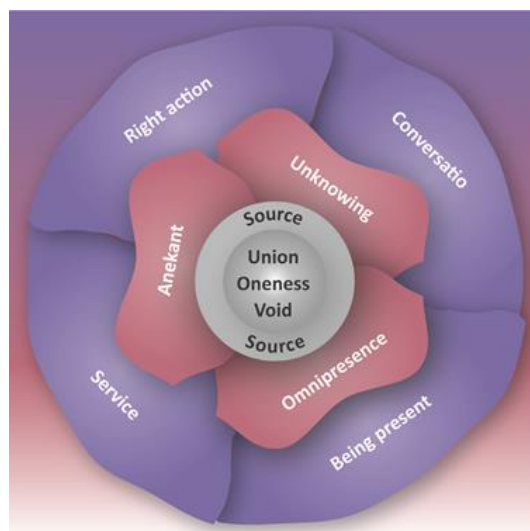
Figure 3.1

Mystical Knowing

1. Source – My use of the word Source is my name for an ultimate reality, or sense of transcendence that is both myself, but is also beyond all aspects of my personality, and is the unmediated knowing of true reality and the sense of self, or no-self, that arises of direct, unmediated knowing of Source.

2. *Omnipresence* – reflects spirit experienced as everywhere, in and of everyone, interconnected, unified, both manifest and unmanifest, form and no form, and available to all.

3. Anekant – is the perceiving of the many-sidedness of truth as truth, also a truth beyond all articulation, alongside and accepting the diversity of all beings, actions, paths and beliefs as part of a universal unity, unfolding, and evolution.

4. Unknowing – is the loss of personal self into a void of emptiness and unknowing, pure nothingness. The disappearance of the small self into no-self, nothing there. Beyond any previous knowing of Source, beyond anything that can be known or conceptualised in any way while knowing all, is already simultaneously divine, empty, nothing and everything. Living consciously with paradox and unknowing.

There are a number of essential indicators of her inner live that give expression to the way she lives her spiritual life. She calls them spiritual manifestations. These are the:

Spiritual Manifestations

5. Being present – directly experiencing an expansive state of being, clarity and presence from the deepest experience of Source. Holding a space, internally and externally, for what can arise as the deepest form of what truly is in the now.

6. Service – offering the fruits of all action to a higher purpose and benefiting others by seeing the spiritual in everything and everyone. Functioning from a place of ego surrender and no-self within Source unfolding and manifesting.

7. Right action – behaviour, responses and decisions based in virtues and experience of Source, arising naturally and intrinsically from virtuous character and actions steeped in and congruent with Source and deep integral personal spirituality.

8. Conversatio – continual inquiry and transformation for spiritual learning, growth, consciousness and expansion into fullest spiritual knowing, potential and perception of true reality (Sedgmore, 2013, 71-72).

Her inner life and mystical experience does not only benefit her own well-being, but was also manifested in loving service of others, in virtuous behaviour, in her approach to leadership, and in right actions that are congruent with her deep, integral personal spirituality.

3.4.3 Her Leadership

Spirituality has always been central in her life, she could not leave her soul and spirit outside her work; instead, her inner life, spiritual development and the three powerful mystical experiences have informed, influenced and been integrated into her practice of leadership. The following section will demonstrate how her practice of leadership, nourished by her contemplative spirituality, makes a difference to the organization she worked with.

3.4.3.1 Dean of Croydon Business School and vice-principal of Croydon College

During the period of her first mystical experience (i.e. union experience, 1989-1998), she was working first as the dean of CBS and then as vice-principal of Croydon College. The union experience was so powerful and all-encompassing

that she began to earnestly study spirituality in the workplace, while at the same time, researching and experimenting with personal and corporate values clarification and organizational culture (Sedgmore, 2013, 58). During this period, her sense of union opened her up to new notions of leadership "including transformational leadership, servant leadership, leading through moral and spiritual character and virtues, collective leadership, and notions of using power **with** rather than **over** other people" (Sedgmore, 2013, 59).

As the head of CBS from 1989 to 1994, "Lynne managed a curriculum portfolio of over 30 higher education programs, 50 full-time staff, and more than 50 part-time staff. During her tenure, she worked to improve the school's strategic vision and strategy, quality, curriculum, staff development, and business systems" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 34-35). She continued to further integrate her spiritual values and her professional life, and at this time she became a Benedictine Oblate, and studied the rule of Benedict. She learned that the role of the Abbot of the monastery is to lead by spiritual values, consensus, and a clear commitment to God through prayer, labour, and love. Sedgmore used this as a model for her organizational leadership (Fry and Altman, 2013, 35). Surrounded by senior managers qualified at MBA level with highly rational mind-sets, she attempted to have conversations on spirituality, only to experience curious looks, incomprehension and, on occasions, hostility. She was advised at this time to focus on values and culture, which she did. She and her colleagues developed a values-led strategic plan, which was considered 'very leading edge' for its time (Sedgmore, 2013, 58). They introduced "a values clarification process based on the '7S model' of *shared values, staff, structure, systems, services, standards,* and *stakeholders.* It was during this process that the staff adapted the model to add students at the centre as well as shared values" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 35). Alongside this, she experimented with "collective and collaborative inquiry days, away days, and new processes that encouraged staff to work more horizontally and share professional expertise" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 35). As a result of these activities, a new sense of community arose among the staff. She also focused on "total quality management, community engagement and interfaith work, semi-

explicit spiritually based interventions with non-spiritual approaches" (Sedgmore, 2013, 43). Her senior team introduced a major culture change program that led to a 30% increase in fee income as well as improved teamwork and quality control. As the performance and quality of the school improved significantly, CBS was acknowledged by a range of external sources. These include:

> -CBS being awarded a grade one (the highest level), which denotes outstanding or excellent, in the office for Standards in Education inspection in 1993…
> -being one of the first business schools to be accredited as a Management Charter Initiative Centre (MCI) and introducing innovative management…
> -the CBS business plan being praised by several vocational higher education institutions who wrote to Lynne and asked if they could use its innovative structure and content for their own planning purposes (Fry and Altman, 2013, 36).

It was not always easy to make changes and initiatives. She continued to encounter a number of professional relationship problems, conflicts, and misunderstandings. Inexperienced in dealing with these kinds of issues at the time, she made several mistakes in terms of staff appointments and interventions. As she faced many professional challenges she found that her inner life spiritual practice was an important resource and source of nourishment. She "began a daily spiritual practice of meditation and prayer. She began going to the monastery on a regular basis to be in worship and silence. She also undertook bodywork with a holistic therapist on a weekly basis and went on retreats as often as she could amidst her busy schedule" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 36). During these years at CBS, she was acutely aware that there was still a separation between her inner life and her professional work. "At times, she could lead from love and a deep sense of connection to her higher purpose; but there were times when her personality took over, and she experienced doubt and fear and uncertainty" (Fry and Altman, 37).

Sedgmore was promoted and served as a vice principal in higher education and then as academic vice principal at Croydon College from 1994 to 1998. In these roles "she managed the operational and developmental aspects of the vocational and higher education curriculum, including equal opportunity programs. She also had responsibility for all academic schools in the college, which included 400 staff, 14,000 students, and revenue of over £20 million" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 37). Externally, Sedgmore made great achievements. These included:

-The highly prestigious Sussex University becoming a strategic partner for higher education (HE) programs, followed by the successful accreditation through Sussex of eleven degree and master's programs;

-The establishment of a new University Centre for all higher-level programs, which was very uncommon at this time and led to increased enrolments and additional funding from the national HE funding body;

-The development of an innovative modular framework for all further education programs, which was acclaimed by national sector agencies and used as a regional curriculum pilot; and

-The establishment of one of the first-in-house, and highly successful, management development programs for college managers (Fry and Altman, 2013, 37).

Internally, she developed and executed a challenging and successful education strategy and corporate academic plan for the entire college. "She led a college-wide visioning and values clarification process. It was during this period that she became affectionately known as 'the values lady' and the 'conscience of the college', although some staff were deeply resistant, suspicious, and even antagonistic to what she was doing" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 37). She focused on "forming new teams and co-creating a strong sense of membership and a spirited, creative community that placed the students at the heart of all they did. Her approach included team building, clear targets and the necessary support for achieving them, authentic dialogue and inquiry for creativity and problem solving, and a rigorous and generous program of staff development for both their personal growth and professional development" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 38).

Gradually, she was acquiring a reputation for creating high performance teams and generating significant surplus income. At this time, she experienced an increased sense of integration of her inner life and professional spheres. "She trained as a spiritual director in the Christian tradition, as a spiritual healer with the National Federation of Spiritual healers, took vows as an Oblate to Douai Abbey monastic community, and began a journey of exploring Catholicism and Christianity in more depth" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 38). She was also involved in interfaith dialogue and conferences, and participated in joint services across the major faith traditions. Time away on retreats continued to give her nourishment and inner peace. She acquired new depth to her inner life and developed a strong sense of love and service. "She could feel a more intuitive responsiveness and the

ability to be more and more in the moment… She also became more able to recognize and contain her own negative personality traits and was gaining better insight into how she was both effective and flawed as a leader" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 38).

3.4.3.2 Principal of Guildford College

During her second mystical experience (i.e. oneness experience), Sedgmore worked as the principal of Guilford College and served there for six years from 1998 to 2004. There she was able "to be more explicit and to use the word spirituality in an open, if tempered, manner within a broader more mainstream dialogue in the college" (Sedgmore, 2013, 62). She undertook a profound inquiry into the strategic application and articulation of spirituality in the workplace. As a leader, she focused on "four key areas: virtues-led personal spiritual leadership; one-off explicit spiritually based projects; interfaith field work; and corporate sustainability" (Sedgmore, 2013, 62). With her senior team "she improved communication and introduced major culture change, performance management, and e-learning throughout the college" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 38). In 2001 Guildford College was named as one of the UK's top 100 visionary organizations and was presented with the 'Good Corporation' award. The college also achieved the Business Excellence Bronze Award for the high quality of its curriculum and services (Fry and Altman, 2013, 38-39).

During this period, Sedgmore expanded her scope and type of intervention with "a lot more focus on encouraging the inner life and well-being of individual staff and on collective learning activities for staff" (Sedgmore, 2013, 62). She began to witness the power, impact and difference of how staff could and would change when they were able to see themselves, and others, in a new, changed perspective. She also explored the notions of "interconnected leadership, flow and synchronicity, distributed leadership, spiritual leadership, and power <u>for</u> and <u>through</u>. In particular, exploring the notion of a virtuous leader" (Sedgmore, 2013, 62). Vision, values and virtues have always played an essential role in her leadership. Joseph did an eighteen-month objective observation on Sedgmore's

practice of leadership for his PhD research completed in 2002. He experienced a spiritual dimension to her leadership – a dimension which he believed affected her work, and gave an added element to the way she led, transformed, improved, and empowered the Guildford College staff and students (Sedgmore, 2013, 35). Joseph describes her spirituality as strongly steeped in the experience of a benign true reality that was consistently present in the here and now. He comments, "she feels able to trust in a Higher Order and not only was this (peak experience) a precious time for her but was indeed life changing and had an impact that went far beyond the time of the experience itself" (Joseph, 2002, 117-123). He witnessed her genuine desire to be "of service, to care and love" (Sedgmore, 2013, 85), and concluded that the spiritual and virtues dimension of her leadership resides in six specific elements that characterize how she was "different". These are:

> a clear awareness of wanting to be good, of higher order and a transcendent dimension; a lessening of the ego expressed by being less controlling; a sense of wanting to be of service; a strong connection with and concern for people; a more all-round (holistic) concern about her job; increased energy; and, finally, a strong, perhaps unstoppable, desire to work and function for the greater good, guided by her spiritual experiences and their meaning for her (Sedgmore, 2013, 77).

How to use power has always been an important issue for leaders. The staff in Guildford College used the word "empowerment" to describe Sedgmore's leadership style. Joseph described her use of power as "power **with** rather than power **over**" (Joseph, 2002, 182). Sedgmore believes that "character and virtues stem directly from living congruently with one's own personal spirituality …as an individual progresses spiritually, or metaphysically, the virtues increasingly inform and influence, through a virtuous circle, inner experience and moral character, which becomes reflected in outer action as action for goodness for its own sake" (Sedgmore, 2013, 85). She admits, "I have a strong desire to behave morally, and to treat others as I would wish to be treated myself, which has deepened over the years. I have found unethical and self-serving behaviour to be less and less appealing, but more importantly have sensed that I am less and less capable of behaving (knowingly) in an inappropriate manner" (Sedgmore, 2013, 88). When Sedgmore left in 2004

> the college budget was £28 million with 890 staff and 24,000 students. Student success was 84%, staff morale had significantly increased, and there was a £400k surplus. The college improved overall efficiency by 10%, improved student

achievement by 26%, and increased student retention to 86%, while significantly increasing Guildford's national and local reputation. Moreover, a report by the national agency Investors In People (IPP) praised the college's strong and effective leadership, the raising of standards, strong support of students, the professional development of staff, and the wide range of effective partnerships. In recognition of these achievements Queen Elizabeth awarded Lynne the Commander of the British Empire (CBE), which is the second highest British honour, next only to Damehood (Fry and Altman, 2013, 39).

The period from 1989 to 2004 demonstrated that her leadership was closely connected with the importance she places on cultivating her spiritual state of being. As she indicates, "My core focus lay in *how I was being* as a leader as much as in *what I was doing* in the organisation, while recognising that the two are deeply interrelated" (Sedgmore, 2013, 78). By cultivating strong inner life practices, she acquired a high moral standard and a transcendent vision of love and service which she lived and expressed in her relationship with students, staff, and key stakeholders in the education sector.

3.4.3.3 Chief Executive of the Centre for Excellence in Leadership (CEL)

During her third mystical experience (i.e. void experience), she worked as the chief executive of the Centre for Excellence in Leadership (CEL). She comments that "CEL was the culmination of a lifelong journey and a deep inquiry, at the core of my whole life and being, into how I integrated my educational, organisational and spiritual life and to live my deepest truths, as an effective and authentic leader, while integrating my spirituality and lifelong quest for spiritual wholeness" (Sedgmore, 2013, 65). During this period, she had the experience of leading primarily "from oneness, but also had glimpses of the void and a sense of manifesting from the unmanifest and letting go of power in a more radical manner" (Sedgmore, 2013, 65). She notes, "My professional and spiritual journey in CEL is my most significant attempt to live spirituality across a whole organisation in the workplace and to be an overt spiritual leader within my professional life" (Sedgmore, 2013, 65).

The Centre for Excellence in Leadership was launched in October 2003 as a key national agency funded by the UK Secretary of State within the *Success for All* initiative (Fry, Sedgmore, Altman, 2009, 13). CEL's responsibility was "to foster

and support leadership improvement, reform, and transformation throughout the learning and skills sector" (Fry, Sedgmore, Altman, 2009, 13). CEL was intended to be experimental in creating a more entrepreneurial form of organization with a remit to be financially self-sufficient within three years. In 2004, Sedgmore inherited a dysfunctional partnership organization that was failing to meet its targets, had no coherent mission or defined culture, and was not using its budget to good effect (Sedgmore, 2013, 102). Fry and Nisiewicz give a detailed description of the initial situation of CEL and the subsequent turnaround in their book *Maximizing the Triple Bottom Line through Spiritual Leadership* (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 257-276). Before taking the role as CEO of CEL, she had been thinking and deliberating on this role for 10 months. Fry and Altman record:

> While meditating at a retreat in Sri Lanka in the summer of 2003, she experienced a powerful and strong vision of CEL and her role as an organizational spiritual leader. She wrote a vision and set of aims for CEL that resonated within her own mind and soul. She had gone on another retreat in October 2003, before the interview, to ascertain if her desire for the job was based primarily in satisfying her own ego, or was it the next "aligned" role for her and the next authentic step on her spiritual path. After much soul searching she felt strongly that this was a role she wanted for the right reasons and that it would enable her to continue her spiritual growth and development, as well as make a contribution to FE and her profession. In taking on this new role, Lynne drew especially on her inner life practices to develop a strong and clear vision of what CEL could be and the difference and impact it could make (Fry and Altman, 2013, 48).

It was this spiritual "knowing" and certainty that enabled her to tackle and withstand the immense difficulties of the first twelve months at CEL. She applied six spiritually explicit interventions to develop and form an innovative and high performing culture in CEL. The six interventions will be discussed in the following section.

A) Living Collectively from Virtues, Meaning, Higher Purpose and Service

Sedgmore used a values-led corporate process to encourage the articulation and the living of values and virtues in all of the organizations she worked, especially in CEL. She has also spent considerable time co-creating collective meaning, higher purpose and identity based on strong staff engagement and influence (Sedgmore, 2013, 109). In 2005/2006, with an external facilitator, Sedgmore introduced a process to articulate shared values with all CEL staff invited to participate. All participants were encouraged to share their personal values and

moral purpose. The outcome of this process is that CEL's vision, mission, organisational values, strategic aims, and personal values were agreed upon and formulated. Valuable time and energy had been put into revisiting, discussing, agreeing on, and affirming a shared vision, mission, aims, and values. Two opportunities were provided annually to reflect on the individual's living of values and virtues within the organisation; this fostered a thoughtful and conscious connection of the staff to a collective purpose. The vision and mission of CEL was focused deeply on the leaders and the students they served. In actual practice, "they also cared passionately about their customers and learners and listened to them in order to provide the programs and services they most needed and wanted" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 51). The CEL vision and values served to create a culture which centred on clearly articulated values and lived virtues, and provided the foundation and benchmark for fostering a virtuous company. Quoting Malloch, Sedgmore says that "'business led by faith creates the moral space required by virtue' which is what I was attempting to do in CEL" (Sedgmore, 2013, 110).

B) Fostering a Spiritually Intelligent, High-spirited Community

Sedgmore was keen to foster collective spirituality and spiritual capital within the whole CEL community. She wanted to create "a liberated peer community that was top-down and bottom-up with the structure, flexibility and scope to respond to constant change" (Sedgmore, 2013, 112). According to Sedgmore, CEL's collective underpinning philosophy of leadership was:

> one of servant leadership with strong spiritual elements, encompassing leadership as a collective, distributed and relational activity that moves beyond the traditional model of the lone, charismatic, egoic hero model. This philosophy held moral purpose at its core and encouraged a distributed, student-centred, empowering leadership approach to enable and allow all staff, at every level, to develop and lead to their fullest potential, including the spiritual dimension (Sedgmore, 2013, 112-113).

Proactively led by Sedgmore, and fully supported by the senior team, spirituality within CEL incorporated both horizontal and vertical levels of spiritual expression. The horizontal level is defined as "expressing spirituality primarily through living beings and the environment with strong desire to be of service to others and to the planet" (Sedgmore, 2013, 113). Vertical spirituality was defined as "relationship

with a higher power or source, a sense of connecting or relating to something beyond ourselves, however that may be experienced" (Sedgmore, 2013, 113). Sedgmore attributed much of the success to CEL's culture of working as peers and in teams beyond the formal hierarchy role. She commented that, "We recognised functional or knowledge expertise as more important than hierarchy, and were good and willing team players, understanding that we are all interdependent, but in difficult times taking full responsibility" (Sedgmore, 2013, 113). She personally instigated the annual staff "away days" and gave it a clear responsibility to include "four key dimensions: enhancing team effectiveness and spirit; nourishing creativity and the soul; facilitating the 'stepping into leadership' of junior staff; and tackling together difficult organizational issues and tensions" (Sedgmore, 2013, 114). The "away days" were organized by HR and held for two days, twice each year. All CEL's constituents – full-time and part time, core and associates, external contractors and long-term affiliates were invited to participate; sometimes external facilitators were used to enhance and support team processes (Fry and Altman, 2013, 67). Venues were in beautiful places and "allowed time for inner nourishment, walking and reflective space and staff voluntarily shared their creativity by providing workshops in knitting, salsa dancing, hand massage, poetry and other activities that nourished and inspired them" (Sedgmore, 2013, 114). Formal and informal feedback from the staff on their experience of the away days was positive and consistently outstanding in all areas: they were powerful events for personal change, professional development, interconnecting, building community, collective fun and high spirit (Sedgmore, 2013, 114).

As a publicly funded organization, the focus of spirituality in CEL was primarily on the horizontal dimension, although they encouraged and fostered vertical discussions, explorations, and discourse as they emerged naturally and organically. CEL animated and allowed everyone to explore, clarify, articulate and understand their own spiritual, transcendent or non-transcendent way of being within their life and work. All staff were provided access to a coach or mentor with an annual staff budget of £3,700 per person, a much higher investment in people than the then national benchmark of £500 per person per year spent in UK Business

Schools (Sedgmore, 2013. 120). This reinforced CEL's core principle that "a leadership development centre should invest in its employees' inner lives and model positive staff development" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 67). At the same time, CEL respected the free choice of each individual to engage with it, or not. CEL embraced a wide range of individual approaches to spirituality, "including the traditional religious and faith paths, views of more modern spiritualties and what might be defined as New Age and Green spirituality, as well as openly self-defined agnostics and atheists. All were respected, acknowledged and listened to" (Sedgmore, 2013, 114). "Conversations and exchanges about soul needs, personal fulfilment and spiritual aspirations abounded in the organisation. Facilitators and coaches were aware of occasions when individuals experienced vertical dimensions on CEL's programmes, but these were private and confidential unless the individual chose to share" (Sedgmore, 2013, 114).

C) Introducing Spiritually Informed Policies and Liberating Processes

Sedgmore had consistently worked with a spiritual director or counsellor for 20 years by the time she began to work in CEL. Facing the challenging situation in CEL, "she felt a need for the assistance of a professional coach to help her perform this new leadership role effectively. At the same time, she sensed her inner life needed special attention to help her focus on and expend more and more energy on ensuring the success of CEL" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 56). Sedgmore chose an experienced executive coach, Dr. Simon Western, who could respond to and support her spiritual, inner life, and also help integrate it with her professional development. These coaching sessions helped her enormously. As the sessions progressed, her spirit lifted, and she could feel her energy increase. She not only worked on her personal issues with the coach, but also worked on the strategic and structural issues of the organizational system. With the help of her coach, she took a radically inclusive approach to facilitate CEL's policy making. They used the so-called Democratizing Strategy in-house development program which formally invited staff at every level to the strategic consultation and decision forums. This project attempted to engage and involve all CEL staff to the articulation and decision-making of CEL's strategic planning through strategic

forums, creative engagement, networking, and open communication (Sedgmore, 2013, 115). According to Fry and Altman, this program had two goals:

1. to democratize strategy by creating an inclusive strategic process that would also create opportunities for more distributed leadership; and

2. to create an organizational forum that allowed creativity, communication, and emergent ideas to flow from all parts of the organization (Fry and Altman, 2013, 64).

This process involved three stages: forums specifically for project leaders; forums for all staff; then an organization-wide exchange process between all the forums. "Lynne attended these forums to legitimize them and openly participate. The structure of each forum was an evening and a day with space for reflection, communication, and cross-fertilization of ideas" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 65). Staff engaged actively in an open and profound manner. "Three key themes emerged: fostering genuine distributed leadership; identifying sustainable success; and designing collectively business models that could really work as a joined-up whole" (Sedgmore, 2013, 115-116). This project contributed significantly to increasing staff initiative, confidence, creativity, renewed responsibility, accountability, trust and enjoyment to work, as well as strategic thinking and junior staff stepping up into leadership roles. At CEL, they worked to "create a no-blame culture and a developmental framework in which competence and conduct issues were dealt with fairly, transparently and supportively…communicated openly and extensively through dialogue, transparent information, delegated budgets, and encouraged bottom – up organic networks and task groups" (Sedgmore, 2013, 117). Simultaneously, "Lynne and her team spent extensive time and effort to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders through a mix of relationship building, consultation, and sharing of information...During this period Lynne gave many presentations to key stakeholders to share the vision and purpose of CEL and gain feedback to co-create the nature of services desired and to foster engagement with CEL" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 65-66). Overall, there was a great desire to reflect the notion that "quality is energy" rather than just a procedure and that everything undertaken should be infused with a spirit and essence of quality. This expresses the desire to release energy and innovation while building systems that would satisfy increased scrutiny by funders.

D) Developing the Whole Person through Fostering Inner Life, Spiritual Awareness, Growth and Inquiry

CEL considered the need for critical self-reflection and awareness as central to all its programs for customers and its own development of staff. Sedgmore developed comprehensive processes to foster critical self-reflection and awareness, including the spiritual dimension within the voluntary development of staff, investing an average of £3,700 a year for each member of staff. CEL's commitment to and investment in reflection and self-awareness was an aspect that the ISAWA judges commented upon as a very positive and well-developed area. The whole person development process includes diverse approaches:

> A range of coaching, mentoring and 360-degree diagnostic and self-reflective tools were available, including the Global Executive Leadership Inventory, Myers-Briggs, Facet 24, the Enneagram, and the CEL Leadership Qualities Framework. Emotional and spiritual intelligence were viewed as key components of leadership effectiveness. Staff were encouraged to engage in whatever inner work appealed to them, and it was made very clear that engagement was not compulsory, and that individuals could engage to whatever depth they could or wanted to. Meditation, massage, healing, and yoga were also offered by CEL staff on a voluntary, unpaid basis, as were their own stories, passions and hobbies, such as knitting, salsa dancing, hand massage and poetry on staff development events (Sedgmore, 2013, 120-121).

This open and all-embracing policy encouraged engagement from staff. Most staff members engaged enthusiastically in their own structured self-awareness activity and the majority of staff availed of access to a coach or mentor for personal and professional development. Those who chose not to engage were reassured that this was not a problem (Sedgmore, 2013, 121).

As part of staff development, in 2007, CEL sponsored two workshops led by Judi Neal and Martin Rutte, two renowned leaders in the spirituality in the workplace field. Another famous consultant, Don Beck was also invited to give a workshop for the associates, and supported the CEL senior team through using his Spiral Dynamics framework (Sedgmore, 2013, 121). Staff and external feedback on this inner work development process was very positive. It seems that fostering employees' inner life can be beneficial for organizational commitment and productivity, employee life satisfaction, financial performance and corporate responsibility.

E) Celebrating and Supporting Pluralism and Diversity

CEL embraced a pluralist culture and "modelled the value of being diverse by truly celebrating and respecting differences while embracing the unity and harmony of the spiritual values that underlies CEL's vision" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 73). All differences were genuinely cherished and valued, including gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, disability and faith. The staff were from more than ten countries, who between them spoke fifteen languages and were from a wide range of ethnicities (Sedgmore, 2013, 123). "Diversity awareness training was available for all staff and included space to explore all facets of diversity. They were counselled that disrespecting other faiths, beliefs and values or attempting to 'correct' others inappropriately were not acceptable in the organisation" (Sedgmore, 2013, 124). To encourage appreciation of diversity, they undertook appreciation exercises, and activities that enabled staff to "walk in each other's shoes" in workshops. As part of the effort to value diversity, "CEL produced and launched, in the East London Mosque, the *Faith Communities Toolkit* to assist sector leaders in understanding different faith traditions and belief systems. It was highly popular, with over one thousand copies requested in the first three months of publication" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 73). CEL welcomed all kinds of approaches and practices favoured by its staff, including agnostics, atheists, individuals who might be defined as "new age", and green spirituality, as well as followers of orthodox faith traditions. Clear guidelines were set for acceptable and desirable behaviour within the *Dignity at Work* policy with specific reference to spirituality. It states that "employees are free to express themselves as they choose, and no form of spirituality is excluded from the organisation so long as behaviour does not discriminate against or harass others" (Sedgmore, 2013, 124). As a result of their effort, CELentered the *UK Stonewall Diversity Champion List* and was placed forty-seventh in the top one hundred gay-friendly companies. They also won the *British National Diversity Award* for their work of *Black Leadership Initiative* project (Sedgmore, 2013, 124).

F) Providing Good Leadership Development Programs and Excellent Performance

According to Fry and Altman, all CEL's programs and services "were personalized and designed to meet the customer where they were, both accepting where they were in their own developmental journey and working in partnership to co-create and generate creative solutions and improvement" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 77). CEL considered the need for critical self-reflection and awareness as central to all its programs for customers and its own development of staff. They offered programs to facilitate building self-esteem, confidence, critical reflection, self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and authentic integrity in leaders (Fry and Altman, 2013, 77). A new initiative in advanced leadership development encouraged dialogue on leadership purpose, potency and presence. A "Spirited Leadership" introductory workshop was organised; it shared the design of a nine day pilot program to model a calm and centred state of being, being present, and the becomingness of the leader; experiential exercises including visualization, meditation, and silence were offered to develop the key skills of contemplative awareness, deep inquiry, and presence (Fry and Altman, 2013, 77). CEL has identified a compelling need for FE leaders (i.e. its participants) to be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and understanding to provide leadership for sustainable development, and has incorporated sustainable development into all its programs as an integral element of leadership development. In its strategy for sustainable development, *Leadership for Sustainability: Making Sustainable Development a Reality for Leaders*, CEL defined sustainable development as "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 271). The strategy set out four aspects that CEL would support FE leaders in developing their capability to be leaders for *sustainabilit*y by building 1) CEL's capacity for sustainability, 2) partnerships with key stakeholders that were committed to sustainability development, 3) leadership capability for developing sustainable organizations, and 4) sustainability practices (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 271-272).

Every program offered by CEL had an evaluation process. The feedback from the participants was highly positive and manifested high customer satisfaction. Samples include:

> Significant impact…certainly achieved the objectives of enabling us to reflect upon our current practice, to identify the ways in which we worked individually and as teams and therefore to work much better as a team and I think most of us felt that our individual skills improved as a result of that process of reflection, analysis and debate and the work with the consultants.

> It's been exhilarating and has given me a new outlook on my future. I now know that I'm capable of doing more and have set my sights higher. I've also promoted the course to colleagues (Fry and Altman, 2013, 80).

By March 2007, less than four years after its launch, "CEL had trained nearly 26, 000 individual participants and worked with 91% of the organizations in the learning and skills system. CEL's annual review of that period shows that 12,000 participants were recruited during the financial year to March 31, 2007, exceeding the target by 46%, and that customer satisfaction had improved again, with 97% of participants rating CEL's programs, courses, or events as good or very good" (Fry and Altman, 2013, 80-81). CEL had been a significant catalyst for change. Its reflective and learning approach provided a model to the rest of the further education sector. Its programs had a strong and positive impact on individuals and institutions. In October 2007, CEL won the International Spirit at Work Award. It was the second UK organization at the time, after the iconic Body Shop, to be honoured with this prestigious award to create a new paradigm for organizational performance – one that values employee wellbeing, social justice, spiritual development, and sustainability as much as business output and material wealth (Fry and Altman, 2013, 71); and, by April 2008, CEL was again recognised for its excellent organisational performance because it had:

-80 full time staff members, 250 associates
-Customer satisfaction of 97 percent
-Nearly 40,000 participants through CEL in five years
-Surplus of £1m in 2006-2007, surplus of £1.5m in 2007-2008, all reinvested in the further development of CEL's activities
-32 product offerings
-Received International Spirit at Work Award
-Organizational spiritual leadership and stakeholder perception surveys very positive
-Overall budget at £16m annually in 2006-2007 and 2007-2008
-Financial dependency at 50 percent
-High staff morale, strong stakeholder engagement
-Powerful impact studies on college performance and inspection results
-High and positive media profile (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 275-276).

3.5 Conclusion

From what has been shown above, Sedgmore has demonstrated all the characteristics of a contemplative leader and her leadership approach provides a concrete understanding and appreciation of contemplative leadership at work. This contemplative example of leadership espouses an unconventional wisdom and spiritual knowing that is different from the mainstream academic mind-sets and approaches to leadership (Sedgmore, 2013, 141); it provides a means of rethinking and perhaps transcending the limitations of current ways of thinking and acting about leadership. Greater demands than ever are placed on leadership and in order to meet these challenges leaders need to become aware of the experiences and potential of their interior world as one of the greatest resources available to them for the development of self, their organizations, and the people who work with them. Now seems to be the decisive moment to explore the nature of the interior world, the integration of a leader's external and internal world, and move toward developing a deeper understanding of leadership (Ross, 2012, 1).

The framework, assumptions and perceptions of contemplative leadership presented above will be tested and further explored through interviews with contemplative leaders with a view to developing a comprehensive model of contemplative leadership. The next chapter will discuss the methodology used for the interview process.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will describe the methodology used to explore the research question. In general, a research methodology provides a framework for the research process and a foundation for the analysis and presentation of the results of the investigation. Qualitative research, using a narrative inquiry approach, is deemed appropriate for this thesis. The following sections will give reasons for using qualitative research, explain the meaning of narrative inquiry, introduce the sampling procedure, provide the rationale and sequence for the interview questions, consider the ethical considerations, and acknowledge the limitations of this research.

4.2 Qualitative Research

The choice of a research methodology is based on the nature of the topic. This research on contemplative leadership is relatively new and is "exploratory" (Creswell, 2003, 22). Thus, qualitative research best suits this study. Qualitative research addresses the question of "what?" (Wertz and co-authors, 2011, 2). This research will investigate "what" are the concepts, forms, opportunities and challenges of contemplative leadership that will help refine and further develop the working model for such leadership. Since a deeper understanding is needed, and more depth than breadth is sought; a qualitative approach is used in order to gather the relevant in-depth information. Compared with quantitative research, qualitative research provides data that is seen as richer, more vital, allowing for greater depth of understanding and more likely to represent a true picture of people's experiences, attitudes and beliefs (Hammersley, 1990, 6). Denscombe echoes the same opinion when he states that qualitative research seeks to "explore the life experiences of individuals through words or visual images, leading to an in-depth understanding of their perspective on a particular topic or event" (Denscombe, 2010, 197). He also indicates that "qualitative research relies on the relationship between the researcher and the respondent for the construction of data, rather than the collection of numerical data, as in quantitative research (Denscombe 2010, 197). Denzin and Lincoln suggest that "qualitative research

involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, 4).

In his book *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, Creswell defines qualitative research as

> an inquiry process of understanding based on a distinct methodological tradition of inquiry that explores a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 2007, 249).

Qualitative research aims "to produce rounded understanding on the basis of rich, contextual, and detailed data" (Mason, 1996, 4). Its goal is to bring greater understanding and enlightenment, it seeks "insight rather than statistical analysis" (Bell, 1993, 6). Qualitative researchers may use one or a combination of different approaches in their research. Creswell identifies and examines five different approaches to qualitative research: narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study (Creswell, 2007, 53). For the purpose of this research the approach taken is that of narrative research, also called narrative inquiry, by way of in-depth interviewing.

4.3 Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry is a research methodology that has grown in acceptance and acquired an increasingly high profile in social research in the last two decades (Andrews, Squire and Tamboukou, 2008, 1), and the same is true in the humanities (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, 4). Narrative inquiry "inquires into, or asks questions about, and looks for deeper understanding of particular aspects of life experience" (Wiebe, 2009, 2). Exploring experience is the key role of narrative inquiry (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, 2). Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly view narrative inquiry as "a way of understanding experience. It is a collaboration between researcher and participants…narrative inquiry is stories lived and told" (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, 20). "Experience-centred narrative researchers think we can understand personal experience stories because of narratives'. The second defining feature is that: narratives are the means of human

sense-making…" (Andrew, Squire and Tamboukou, 2008, 43). Schwandt defines narrative inquiry as, "…the interdisciplinary study of the activities involved in generating and analysing stories of life experiences (e.g., life histories, narrative interviews, journals, diaries, memoirs, autobiographies, biographies) and reporting that kind of research" (Schwandt, 2007, 204). Swinton and Mowat regard "narrative as knowledge" and they emphasise the importance of narrative and story in qualitative research. They maintain that:

> The telling of stories and the accurate recording, transcription and analysis of this data forms the heart of the qualitative research enterprise…For the qualitative researcher, narrative knowledge is perceived to be a legitimate, rigorous and valid form of knowledge that informs us about the world in ways which are publicly significant. Stories are not simply meaningless personal anecdotes; they are important sources of knowledge (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 38-40).

The collection of the narrative data for this thesis will take place by way of qualitative, semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

4.4 Semi-structured Interviews

In his book *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*, Steinar Kvale maintains that:

> The qualitative research interview is a construction site of knowledge…and is a professional conversation…It is defined 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…An interview is a conversation that has a structure and a purpose (Kvale, 1996, 2,5-6).

There are two main approaches to qualitative interviews, namely unstructured and semi-structured. In an unstructured interview, "there is just one question that the interviewer asks and the interviewee is then allowed to respond freely, with the interviewer simply responding to points that seem worthy of being followed up" (Bryman, 2005, 320). In a semi-structured interview, "the researcher has a list of questions or fairly specific topics to be covered often referred to as an interview guide, but the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply" (Bryman, 2005, 321). For this research topic, a semi-structured in-depth interview approach was chosen as the most appropriate means to elicit and learn from people's experience. Questions for the semi-structured interview have been developed based on the research of the first three chapters of this thesis. The formulation of the questions was reviewed and modified after the completion of a pilot study

with the first two interviewees in order to test the questions and make them less ambiguous and easier to understand.

According to John Creswell, a researcher can conduct different types of interviews for the same research: "e-mail, face-to-face, focus group, online focus group, telephone interviews" (Creswell, 2007, 130). In this particular research, face-to-face and online one-to-one interviews were carried out for collecting data. The nature of a semi-structured interview allows participants to share their experiences of what is of personal significance and meaning for them. The interviews were conducted on an individual basis with the intention of gaining as much insight as possible. The semi-structured interview was adaptable in the sense that it allowed the researcher the opportunity to immediately follow-up on ideas expressed, to probe for further explanation and to clarify points made (Bell, 2010, 161). This also provided the opportunity to check for accuracy during the interview and therefore increase validity. The recording provided an objective record of the interview and allowed the researcher to give full attention to the interviewee. All interviews were digitally recorded with the prior permission of the interviewees. The recorded data were later transcribed for the purpose of analysis.

4.5 Sampling Procedure

Sampling is a very important factor of research study. Generally speaking, there are two types of sampling, probability and non-probability. In probability sampling, every member in the population under examination has an equal chance of being selected, and the probability of this selection is known. While non-probability sampling "implies that some units in the population are more likely to be selected than others" (Bryman, 2005, 541). After careful consideration, the sample group chosen for this study is based on non-probability, purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is often used in qualitative research. It is "essentially strategic and entails an attempt to establish a good correspondence between research questions and sampling. In other words, the researcher samples on the basis of wanting to interview people who are relevant to the research questions" (Bryman, 2005, 333-334). In this research, the interviewees were deliberately chosen from those who have a contemplative and leadership

background. The prospective participants were sought, nationally and internationally, based on one of the following criteria: be a recognised leader in a contemplative organisation or religious congregation; be involved in the training of people in contemplative leadership; be a recognised writer and practitioner in the contemplative field; be a contemplative leader in the business world, or other fields such as education and the health services. Thirty people were invited to participate in the interviews. Sixteen people responded to the invitation and agreed to be interviewed. Those who were geographically available have been interviewed face to face; those who are geographically distant have been interviewed online.

4.6 Rationale for Questions

The questions used for the interview process are shown in Appendix B. These are open-ended questions and are intended to give the interviewees the freedom to respond as they wish. There are thirty questions in total. These questions are grouped and divided into the following sections:

Ice breakers

Inner spiritual life

Contemplation and transformation

Contemplation and leadership

Concepts of contemplative leadership

Manifestations of contemplative leadership

Outcomes of using a contemplative leadership approach

Opportunities and challenges

Final question

Ice breakers: Each interview began with an icebreaker. This consisted of general welcoming comments, a moment of thanks, checking with each interviewee to ensure that they are happy and clear regarding the interview process, and the signing of the consent form. The first two questions, about their social profile (questions 1-2), were asked to help the interviewee feel at ease and to give a general idea of the interviewee's background and experience. This also helped to establish a professional relationship.

Inner spiritual life: Questions 3-7 were general questions relating to their inner spiritual life and their understanding and experience of contemplation.

Contemplation and transformation: Questions 8-13 are specific questions that explore the effects of contemplation on a personal level. These questions helped to explore their experience of transformation.

Contemplation and leadership: Questions 14 -18 aimed to discover the impact of contemplation on their leadership style and practice.

Concepts of contemplative leadership: Questions 19-22 intended to uncover their personal understanding of the notion and the essence of contemplative leadership.

Manifestations of contemplative leadership: Questions 23-24 examined the expressions of contemplative leadership take according to their experience.

Outcomes of using a contemplative leadership approach: The aim of question 25 was to find out the benefits of using a contemplative leadership approach.

Opportunities and challenges: Questions 26-29 sought to discover if there were opportunities to live and express contemplative leadership, and to investigate the unique challenges a contemplative leader faces in his/her life and work.

Final question: Question 30 invited any comments or additional insights the interviewees would like to share. Lastly before leaving, each interviewee was thanked and asked if they had been happy with the interview process.

4.7 Ethical Considerations

The research for this thesis has been carried out in accordance with the procedures and policies for a PhD in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science of Dublin City University. I am aware of the issues of researcher integrity, objectivity and bias. Lawrence Neuman expresses concerns about personal prejudices, and I took these into account during the process of the research. He states as follows:

> Recognising the human factor does not mean that a qualitative researcher arbitrarily interjects personal opinions or selects evidence to support personal prejudices. Instead, a researcher's presence is always an explicit issue. A qualitative researcher takes advantage of personal insight, feelings, and perspective as a human being to understand the social life under study, but is aware of his or her values or assumptions. He or she takes measure to guard against the influence of prior beliefs or assumptions when doing research. Rather than hiding behind "objective" techniques, the qualitative researcher is forthright and makes his or her values explicit in the report. Qualitative researchers tell readers how they gathered data and how they see the evidence (Neuman, 1997, 332-334).

There is a danger in composing narrative research in terms of a "Hollywood plot" in which everything works out in the end (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, 181). The researcher endeavoured to analyse the collected data and represent them honestly, fairly and objectively. The researcher honoured individual narratives when personal experiences and unique perspectives are amalgamated to create general statements (Riessman, 2008, 23). The researcher was conscious about making generalised statements by being aware that what may be true for one interview participant may not be true for all.

4.7.1 Information Prior to the Interview

Before undertaking the interviews, an invitation letter, with an information sheet, which describes the research topic and the purpose of the interview, were sent to the potential participants (see Appendix A). This helped them make an informed decision regarding whether they wish to partake in the research project. The letter made sure that they fully understood what would be involved. Permission to use a tape-recorder was sought. They were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. They were informed of their rights not to answer particular questions if they didn't want to. They were reminded that they are free to withdraw at any stage. Upon the completion of the thesis, the data collected has been disposed of according to the rules and policies laid down by DCU. The consent forms were signed by those who have been interviewed (see Appendix C).

4.7.2 Actual Interviews

The interviews that took place face to face were conducted in a private, safe environment. Permission to use a tape-recorder was sought and they were informed that they were free to have it switched off at any stage if they wish. Those participants taking part in the interview through Skype were also

guaranteed that the interview took place in a private and secure environment. The interview guide was given to the participants beforehand so that they were familiar with the questions might be asked and had time to reflect on them. Each interview took about one to two hours. Participants weren't probed for further details when he/she appeared to be reluctant to discuss an issue further. Closure was provided by taking time at the end of each interview to thank them for their participation and support, and check with them if they were happy with the interview process. An electronic copy of the thesis was offered for those who would like to have a copy when the research was completed.

4.7.3 Protection of Anonymity and Storage of Data

Each participant was given a pseudonym to protect their identity. The information gathered from the interviews was securely stored in a password secured computer to which only the researcher has access and would not carry any details to identify participants. For the sake of confidentiality, all data gathered from the interviews and the transcripts will be destroyed and erased on completion of this research project. All ethical considerations required by the Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee were respected and adhered to.

4.8 Analysing the Data

Data analysis is a process that takes place at every stage of the research and involves "working with data, organising it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned and deciding what you will tell others" (Bogden and Biklen,1982, 145). To achieve an accurate analysis of the interviews, I followed the suggestions of Bogden and Biklen quoted above, and the guidelines of Creswell's "Data Analysis in Qualitative Research" shown in figure 4.1. Each interview was digitally recorded and later transcribed by this researcher. This raw data was organised and prepared according to the questions. In the process of rereading the transcripts, written notes were made in the margins of the pages. Significant statements made by the interviewees were revisited and noted. The next step was manually colour coding the transcripts and noticing recurring themes. These emerging themes were the point of departure for identifying the major themes. Through a long process of analysis, the major themes and sub-themes were

identified and clustered. The meaning of these themes and sub-themes were interpreted and described in dialogue with the literature review to validly and accurately reflect the findings of the research.

Figure 4.1 Data Analysis in Qualitative Research

```
                        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                        │ Interpreting the Meaning of │
                        │     Themes/Descriptions     │
                        └─────────────────────────────┘
                                      ↑
                        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                        │ Interrelating Themes/Description │
                        └─────────────────────────────┘
                              ↑               ↑
                        ┌──────────┐    ┌──────────────┐
                        │  Themes  │    │ Description  │
                        └──────────┘    └──────────────┘

    ┌──────────────┐    ┌─────────────────────────────┐
    │ Validating the│    │       Coding the Data       │
    │ Accuracy of the│   └─────────────────────────────┘
    │  information  │                   ↑
    └──────────────┘    ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                        │   Reading Through All Data  │
                        └─────────────────────────────┘
                                      ↑
                        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                        │ Organising and Preparing Data for │
                        │          Analysis           │
                        └─────────────────────────────┘
                                      ↑
                        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                        │ Raw Data (transcripts, field notes, │
                        │        images, etc.)        │
                        └─────────────────────────────┘
```
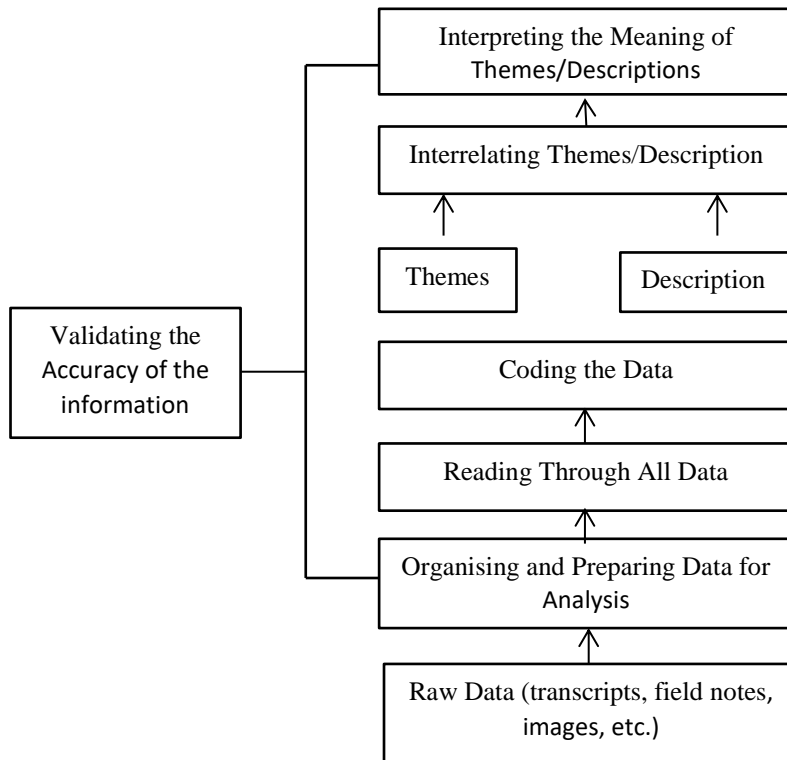
Source: Creswell, 2009, 185

4.9 Limitations of the Research

Every research process has its limitations. This project shares all the limitations of qualitative research. This research is confined to a "situated perspective" (Ribbins and Marland, 1994, 6), where information was gathered from the self-reporting statements of sixteen participants, and was not accompanied by empirical test which is normally done in quantitative research. Interviews are time consuming, as a result, the sample tends to be small, and only sixteen people were interviewed; accordingly, the experiences and understanding of many other contemplative leaders was not included in this study. There are many perspectives from which the research of contemplative leadership could have been approached, but it is not possible to cover all them in detail. This research is not a complete study of contemplative leadership in every aspect, but rather an exploration of its

concepts, characteristics, opportunities and challenges. Furthermore, this research is done primarily from a point of view of the Christian contemplative tradition and not from the perspective of other contemplative traditions; but it is open to the insights from other faith traditions.

4.10 The Pilot Study

A pilot study using the semi-structured narrative interview method was carried out to test and help finalize the questions in the interview guide before proceeding with the actual interviews. Two people, one male and one female were chosen for the pilot study. Confidentiality and ethical issues also applied to the two pilot studies. The same procedure as with the general body of interviews applied to the two pilot interviews. As a result of this pilot study a number of modifications were made to the interview guide. In question 3 'How would you describe your inner spiritual experience?' the word 'experience' was changed into 'journey' because the term 'journey' is closer to what I would like to know in the light of the literature review. In question 15 'Does contemplation contribute in any way to your motivation or enthusiasm as a leader?', to make it simpler the words 'or enthusiasm' were omitted, and the question became 'what difference, if any, does contemplation make to your leadership motivation?'. In question 17 'In your opinion, does a contemplation perspective inform your use of power?', the word 'contemplative' was used instead of 'contemplation'. The word 'dimensions' was substituted by 'characteristics' in question 22, 'What are the dimensions of contemplative leadership?', because people were blocked by the term 'dimensions'. Question 23 'in concrete terms, how does contemplative leadership manifest itself in your work?' and question 24 'Could you describe how to lead in a contemplative way?' seemed the same, so question 23 was kept, and question 24 was changed into a new question 'As a contemplative leader, what do you do to influence your organizational culture and performance?'. The Question 'What are the challenges that you have faced in practicing contemplative leadership in your work?' was put in front of the question about the opportunities and possibilities, because it is better to end the interview with a positive note. The pilot study proved to be a helpful exercise which gave a sense of clarity and improvement regarding the interview guide.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined and illustrated the qualitative research methodology used in this project. It has also explained how a narrative inquiry by way of semi-structured in-depth interview was carried out. It also discussed ethical issues, the consent form, confidentiality, sampling procedures, the rationale for the questionnaire, and how the data gathered was kept and stored to insure confidentiality. The limitations of this research have also been addressed. In the following chapter, the information obtained from the interviews will be analysed, reported, and presented.

Chapter 5 Data Analysis and Findings

5.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to analyse the content of the qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews and present the findings discovered during this process. The first part of this chapter will outline the background and social profile of the participants; the second part will present the themes identified from the analysis of the data gathered from the interviews. These themes reflect the understanding and insights of the participants about contemplative leadership through a systematic identification of themes, and these will constitute the findings of this chapter.

5.2 Participant Profile

Sixteen contemplative leaders were interviewed for this research project. They are in leadership roles in different areas such as: Church ministry, financial services, higher education, health service, leadership development, primary and secondary schools, religious communities, spiritual formation, and the voluntary sector. The age range varied from 40's to 70's, with the majority of them in their 50's and 60's. Eight males and eight females participated in the interviews, and they come from five different countries across three continents, Europe, Asia and the Americas. Ten participants were from the Catholic faith-tradition and the other six were from different Christian denominations. All are practising contemplatives and all habitually put into operation a contemplative orientation toward life and work. To maintain confidentiality, each participant has been given a pseudonym to protect his/her identity.

5.3 Analysis

The initial analysis of the conversations with these contemplative leaders led to the identification of many themes and sub-themes. Upon further analysis, seven major themes were identified, as well as corresponding sub-themes. A small number of the sub-themes appear under more than one heading because of their relevance to that theme. As the findings of each major theme is presented, the relevant sub-themes will also be included. The seven major themes are the

following: 1) the importance of nurturing a disciplined inner spiritual journey; 2) the transformative aspects of contemplation; 3) the complementarity of contemplation and leadership; 4) concepts of contemplative leadership; 5) contemplative leadership and organizational culture; 6) practical challenges of contemplative leadership; 7) the present and future opportunities of practising contemplative leadership.

5.3.1 Theme 1 - Nurturing a Disciplined Inner Spiritual Journey

After analysing the interview data, it was obvious that one of the primary themes was the significance of nurturing a disciplined journey into one's soul and developing an intimate relationship with God. All participants take their relationship with God seriously and have a daily spiritual practice to foster this. The following overlapping sub-themes help to describe and explain this major topic and they are 1) an intimate relationship with God; 2) cultivating the relationship; 3) a dynamic and self-discovery process; 4) different degrees and intensities of spiritual and mystical experience.

5.3.1.1   An Intimate Relationship with God

Some participants clearly stated that the core of the inner spiritual journey is growing toward an intimate relationship with God and others. For example, Alex simply stated, "my inner spiritual journey is an experience of desire for a deeper communion in God, and an experience of trust that such communion exists, and occasionally more direct awareness of that deep Reality". Bob corroborated this opinion when he said:

> I feel that the spiritual journey is basically an invitation to a deep and profound relationship with God, with others, and with the world…Contemplation can be one of those most intimate experiences when you feel very close to God…there is a real loving presence, and the power of the communication at that level is phenomenon. Contemplation for me also means coming to a deeper knowledge of God…and contemplation is also a way of learning for me. In deep conversations, you have the opportunity to know the inner thoughts and feelings and the reality of the other person, the same with me and God, those moments of conversation are very deep and profound. God reveals to me things that I wouldn't know from books, I would not know by my own effort. Sometimes they are very personal about God, personal about me, that really helps to cement the relationship and grow the relationship, and makes it all the more intimate.

162

Barbara was passionate in her belief that the inner spiritual journey is "the most precious and important thing in my life. I couldn't live my life without that inner journeying, inquiring, thirsting, questing for God". Barbara always felt "a need to be with God, to be with the transcendent". In her contemplation, she had experiences of intimately knowing of God. She said:

> To me contemplation is like receiving the mystery; it can be basking in the beauty of the blessing of the unknown, of God, of Spirit, of the Divine…for me contemplation is when you go beyond all knowing into the unknown. It's usually for me a very beautiful experience, very nourishing, it can be blissful, it can be peaceful; but I can feel myself going very quiet in real experience, even talking about it. The word unknowing and mystery come to mind, because you can't describe really what it is, just the effect of it; but it's a direct experience of knowing of God, truth, beauty, and goodness. It's different you know, but it's always beautiful, nourishing, wonderful, it lasts.

5.3.1.2   Cultivating the Relationship

All the participants engage in a variety of spiritual practices to cultivate this relationship with God. Each in his or her own way revealed that their spiritual practices took different forms over the span of their lifetime. Despite the broad spectrum regarding spiritual practice, there was a consistency among all the participants in that they all have a daily routine for silent prayer, which included centring prayer, *Lectio Divina*, talking and listening to God in silence. Nine of the interviewees mentioned that they read the Scriptures daily. Some indicated that they read it in a lectio style; others revealed that they meditate on the Bible on a daily basis. For instance, Anna emphasized that *Lectio Divina* is a central part of her spiritual practice saying, "for me it's very important to be in the Word on a regular basis, the Holy Scripture. I really have a connection with God through the Word; for me it is very living". Seven participants have a deep commitment to centring prayer. Francesca is representative of them when she stated, "I love the centring prayer, which is a way of prayer, silent form of prayer. I would get up early morning and spent time in prayer every morning; and I have done it for many, many years, and every evening as well...". Eight of them felt energized and enlightened by their time of silence and listening to God in prayer. Maintaining that it is the prayer of silence that nourishes the soul, Bob acknowledged:

> As I grow older, as I grow more mature, I am more at home with silence, and the willingness to listen. I'm aware there is a deep and profound presence in me and around me. If I'm silent for a while, that inner reality has a chance to speak and

communicate; and to this end, I really enjoy times of meditation and mindfulness, because it opens my mind and my heart, it opens my soul, it opens my being to this deeper reality.

For all the participants, contemplative prayer nurtures their spiritual growth and is the essential means for developing an intimate relationship with God and expressing this love.

Besides daily silent prayer, community prayer is another common practice among the participants. Eight of them enjoyed going to prayer meetings and emphasized the importance of a faith community. Reading spiritual material is another widely-exercised practice. Five participants had a habit of reading spiritual materials. An example of this preference is expressed by Carl who said, "I love to read all facets of spirituality, particularly on the contemplative dimension". Six participants regarded the Eucharist as essential to their spiritual life. Carl mentioned, "I attend Mass daily, I see daily Mass as extremely important in my life…to enter into the silence for forty minutes, open to the unknown, is absolutely to centre yourself on what the very reality of life is, and then go out nourished, and go back into that world again, and see if you can be a positive influence". Other spiritual practices like spiritual direction, journaling, undergoing ongoing spiritual formation, and intentional contemplative awareness were also identified. Spiritual music was mentioned by two people; walking in nature, reflection, examination of conscience, and retreats were also specified. Gina found listening to global spiritual teachers on the internet very important, because "they keep the vision big and not small". These are the principal methods used by the participants to help them maintain contact with the Divine and contribute to the development of an intimate relationship with God.

5.3.1.3   A Dynamic and Self-discovery Process

All the participants have a desire to develop their capacity to love God and others, and are committed to their spiritual life. However, it is evident that their spiritual path is not always easy or predictable; it is a complex, sometimes painful, and dynamic process. This is asserted by Carl who said, "it is not revolutionary, it is evolutionary". Another interviewee, Claire, summed up the views of many of the

participants on the issue of the inner journey when she said:

> …my spiritual journey has been a series of journeys, it's not just one; it's one very long journey, it had many chapters. To me one of the pieces and important part of the contemplative journey is it continues to help me see what I don't initially see, to help me wake up, to help me see the illusions that I thought once were real, to see the areas of attachment…it is a very humbling journey at times.

Some participants also mentioned that the spiritual life is a journey of self-discovery. Evidence of this is found in Gabriel's statement, "when I focus on Christ, there is self-revelation. I begin to see my life as a sinner, I begin to see this particular moment I am in… this life is an ongoing journey of struggling with the ego and discovering who we truly are as a person, and what God wants us to be". Henry endorses this when he acknowledged:

> …that's why I love solitude. This is a process of self-discovery. Sometimes, I find my weaknesses, shortcomings; I need the grace and mercy of God especially in these areas to be healed and transformed... The more I dig into myself, the more I discover different possibilities, potentials…there might be some ugly things buried or repressed in our unconsciousness, but those dark things need to be seen under the light, so that they won't be able to control me or influence me without my awareness. This is my inner journey, it is a continuous journey of self-discovery, and in the same time, I know God deeper and deeper.

5.3.1.4 Different Degrees and Intensities of Spiritual and Mystical Experience

All the participants have had spiritual and mystical experiences of God, some very powerful and intimate; others, though personal, were less intense. Three people had the experience of spiritual union. Of these, two had rare and brief experiences of union; while the other had more frequent experiences. Alex said, "I have had rare, brief times of humbling ineffable gifted communion, with a sense of a larger enlightened Love embracing, pervading and inspiring me and all of life, times that I trust to be direct consciousness, however briefly, of the divine Wellspring of my life and all life, the deep Reality that I trust is always present regardless of my awareness of it". Bob also shared:

> I had number of mystical experiences. The fact of being directly taught by God in moments of silence and prayer, where God reveals himself in a way that I could never have imagined, could never have anticipated. And the revelation by God is very personal revelation of the nature of God, and the wonder of God, and how close God is…Even though I would feel unworthy, you have the sense that God's love is so powerful that nothing will come between us, not even death, not sin, not anything like that. So, the relationship is very deep and profound. It is very liberating; it teaches me deep things about God. I get the sense of having great insights, that having a sense of the wisdom that can only come from God, that the experience of union and communion.

For Barbara, who is one of the three, said for her it is easy "to know God directly, and to be in that mystical peak experience". She explained these experiences as:

> …completely dissolving into God or the Other, a total, total sense of union, joining together, becoming one... So, at the same time I am more than my ego, I am dissolved into God, into that big unity, that big love, oneness, divinity; and there is no sense of ego-self, everything is one, everything is benign. That's the most powerful effect on me, that there is a benign true reality that we could be living in, if only we did, if you know what I mean. It's there, it really exists, everything could be good, because at its heart everything is good, and Goodness can overcome everything else.

A number of participants haven't experienced such union, but they have had an extraordinary sense of God's presence in life. Gabriel belongs to this group, he stated:

> I see God's presence very much every day. You see God's presence in nature, you see God's miracle happens every day. However, about 10 years ago…I had a tremendous sense of God's presence in my life, an overpowering presence of God's love that I never experienced before, a tremendous sense of peace, and that everything was going to be ok; and God was going to provide everything I ever needed; such an overwhelming sense of joy; I just wanted to die at that moment, I just wanted to join God in heaven…I started singing God's praise.

The other participants have had less intense mystical experiences. Nevertheless, they felt the powerful presence of God in nature, in arts, in dreams. Some became aware of the power of God's love, or gained extraordinary insight in prayer. Others were conscious of God's presence in different life situations. David is representative of this group when he said:

> I have spiritual experiences and mystical experiences of God, but they are nothing unusual, every day I have a connection with God. I mean everything you see…it was so beautiful, the sun rises and the sun sets, all the leaves on the tree…it's like God every day doing another painting…to me the world is a sacrament. Every time when I go to X (name of a place), I have the most beautiful experiences, and you know that you are having an experience of God. So, it's through nature and arts as well. My present interest is Mark Russell…his paintings, I find that they are the most amazing mystical experience. You know that this person is able to show you something about God that you never seen before. So, it happens in big letters on some occasions, and little flowers you see on the side of the road another time. So, it depends, but all the time I would find every day I'm giving thanks for the presence of God in so many different things, in people too actually.

5.3.2 Theme 2 – the Transformative Aspects of Contemplation

A second major theme that emerged from the research pointed to the experience of inner transformation. All participants believed that, in contemplation, the Spirit of God helps a person die to the old self and be reborn to a new self. For example,

Bob declared, "the transformation is much deeper than I could have ever imagined; it touches me to the core of my being". The power of God was experienced by the participants as continuously transforming them into a new creation. The experience of this dynamic transformation will be presented under the following headings: 1) becoming less ego-centric; 2) developing a transformed consciousness; 3) finding a truer self; 4) becoming a better person; 5) a change in values; 6) a sense of inclusiveness and interconnectedness; 7) a sense of well-being.

5.3.2.1   Becoming Less Ego-centric

One significant insight that emerged through the analysis process was that the participants felt they were becoming less ego-centric. For example, Diana stated clearly:

> I think the experience of contemplation moves you more and more away from feeling and believing that you are the centre of the universe. We are born feeling we are the centre of the universe; you know, an infant is the centre. Hopefully all of us grow out of that; but contemplation does that, because it is an opening; it is an opening not only to God, but also to God's creation, to other people in God's world; it's the kind of opening that increases our compassion. Contemplation helps you to see yourself less and less the centre of everything, more and more willing to let go or let loose that ego-centrality.

Gabriel described at length how contemplative prayer can help a person let go of the ego:

> …By coming back to the Word, and putting aside your feelings, your thoughts, you are putting aside the ego, to focus on those words, focusing on the Spirit within you, but not in an intellectual way or theological way, but it is a very simple way of dying to the ego, offering up the ego, to focus on Christ who dwells within you. You are also not focusing on the effects of this form of prayer, because you are not looking for anything from the prayer itself. But what begins to happen is you begin to see changes in your life style, and those changes begin to happen over a period of time. But the funny thing is you are not looking for changes. The paradox of the situation is that the changes begin to happen in a very radical way because Christ dwells in each one of us. You begin to see Christ working within you in a very profound way, in your life style, in your search for God, in your difficulties, in your challenges, in the way you live your life, in the way you work, in your relationship with other people, in the ego, in the way we judge ourselves, in the way we judge other people… in all of these things you begin to see something very profound happening…So this form of prayer has had a huge impact on my daily life.

Barbara contributes to this understanding of a radical change in ego-centeredness when she acknowledged:

> My sense of self, who I am, has completely, totally, absolutely changed, and shaped differently. I was so caught up in my ego sense of self, in my patterns, my fixations before; now it is less fixed in the ego; and it's more based in the virtues…my experience of contemplation, that just nourishes me, wanting to be a better person, wanting to live a virtuous life, and what being present means, somehow contemplation enables me to be present in the here and now; and enables me to be responsive and appropriate to other people, relating to them where they are rather than relating to what I need. It completely enables me to go to a more selfless or a self-transcendent place beyond my ego needs. I do know that if I don't have a daily practice, I get more stressed, and I get in my own way more.

Some other participants conveyed a similar understanding but applied different terminology. They used the concept of false self and true self, my will and God's will. For them, contemplation helps to recognise and disentangle the energies of the false self to find a truer self in God. Bob said the contemplative journey "also involves a conflicted self as understood in Merton's idea of the true self and the false self. My experience of growing in contemplation is also the experience of the inner conflict between my will and God's will, and trying to let go of my own will out of love, not out of fear, or fear of judgment, or anything like that, but out of love. I feel that inner conflict is part of my experience of contemplation".

5.3.2.2 Developing a Transformed Consciousness

In their intimate relationship with God in contemplation, in life's circumstances, and in mystical experiences, some participants have acquired a deeper knowledge of God. As one of them, Bob, said, he had "a direct experience of intimately knowing God". For them, this experience entails a consciousness of a profound reality, it is the innermost call of the spiritual world. This transcendent reality is the God who is love, truth, beauty, goodness, intelligibility, mystery; it is, as Alex said, a "direct consciousness of the divine Wellspring of my life and all life". Having such felt knowledge transforms their consciousness, understanding, perceiving, knowing, relating, being, and living. Barbara said that her mystical experience had a powerful effect when she realized that

> there is a benign true reality that we could all be living in…it is there, it really exists, everything could be good, because at its heart everything is good, and goodness can overcome everything else…that reality exists, it is true … because of this experience work became worship for me. I couldn't separate any thought of

my life away from this knowing…I had to live as best I could to the truth I knew…That was the major transformation.

5.3.2.3 Finding a Truer Identity

A number of the interviewees mentioned that the contemplative experience helped them find a truer identity in God. For example, Alex said, "I'm being ever more fully converted to a sense of my deepest, truest identity, being my self-in-God, rather than an ultimately separate ego self. My deepest "I" is God's "I" - the paradox of non-dual deep reality". Other participants revealed that they feel like "a beloved child of God". Anna said, "…the most transformative part for me is to really know myself as God's beloved child and to own and embrace and accept my belovedness, that I'm gifted, that God has created me, that I am filled with love; and to be able to live from that belovedness". Another participant, Bob, echoes the same when he said:

> Because of the relationship with God, because of the bond, and the union and communion, I really do feel like a child of God; and it means more than being a child, it means sharing in the nature of God, not because I deserve it, but because it's a gift of love that invites me to share the nature of God; and having a deep sense of sharing the nature of God really profoundly changes my understanding of myself; not only an understanding of myself, but, if it's a reality for me, it's a reality for other people; that they also have the opportunity for this bond with God, this closeness with God. So my self-understanding has really been altered. It moves away from being just a person to a sacred person.

The experience of being a beloved child of God helps them to feel confident in the reality of their own being and existence; it is the source from which they find meaning and purpose in life; and it is the reason to be full of hope, faith and love. This is shown in what Bob said, "…the confidence that I have, the security that I have, the faith that I have, the hope that I have, the ability to love that I have, are just growing, growing, and growing. The deeper I go with the relationship with God, the more profound, the deeper, the more real these things become".

5.3.2.4 Becoming a Better Person

All interviewees acknowledged that contemplation helped them to be a better person in one way or another. For Anna, "coming from a place of centeredness and being grounded in love helps me to be a different kind of person…being contemplatively grounded helps me to be a better listener; it helps me to be able

to be with people from a place of love". Helena explained how contemplation can lead to love. She gave this example:

> …here is a person, probably talks too much, and doesn't allow you to talk. Probably says things about you because she is feeling insecure, probably goes out of her way. Now because you have that discipline of centering prayer you simply allow all these things to pass and let them go. You realize that this person is hurting; this person is feeling insecure; this person wants attention; so, you start empathizing with her; you start to reach out; then you realize it's not about me, it's about her; so you start reaching out in love…that is what I mean when I say contemplation can lead you to love. First of all, in contemplation you go to the source, when you encounter the false self, you are in your true self, and the true self is love".

Gina maintains that "if you come from a contemplative stance, what is valued is different in terms of wisdom gained, being at peace, having the capacity to be present…I think by contemplative practice you become a different type of person, because the values you hold are quite different to what the fast-paced consumer culture emphasizes."

All agree that contemplation enables them to become "more loving and compassionate" towards others. The terminology used to express this sense of becoming a better person included language such as: "much more open to people"; "be a better listener, and more supportive"; "able to respond in love"; "to be more selfless, to be in a self-transcendent place beyond one's own needs"; "to have a greater capacity to love people"; more "patient", "kind", "gentle", "calmer"; "more authentic", "more virtuous", "more accepting of others", "more reflective", "more truly present to people", "more sensitive to people", "less judgmental of others", "less reactive", "less manipulative", "more God centered, less ego-centred". These, and similar comments, were repeated throughout the interviews, and they indicate how and in what ways they experience this transformation into a better person.

5.3.2.5   A Change in Values

The experience of contemplation has also changed their value system. Eight participants revealed that contemplation and meditation helped them to embrace Gospel values, rather than materialist and consumerist attitudes. One of them, Bob, said:

I think the closer you get to God, the more God's values become important, like the value of compassion and mercy, the value of honesty, the value of perseverance, the value of seeing beyond the limitations, beyond the problems of life, to see the deeper reality behind them. I think my value system has changed a lot especially that invitation not just to love everybody but to have the ability to love anybody; this is the reality of God, his compassion, forgiveness, mercy, gentleness, patience, and sharing of himself, all of those; these are the values I appreciate; these are the values I try to live in my own life, and express in my relationships.

Gabriel summed up the opinion of many when he said:

I find my value system is based very much less on the ego, less on the 'me' and more on the other. Very much rooted on the Gospel values. St. Paul in Corinthians talks about what love is. Love is gentle, love is kind, love is compassionate… love is all of these. I think my value system is based on those values in the Corinthians. Contemplation helps you to live out those values.

While the other eight participants did not use the same type of specifically Christian language, they did, however, believe that their value system has changed by helping them become more inclusive, and more tolerant of other people's values. An example of this is when Claire reported, "as the journey continued, I can see my values shifted to more universal values versus an earlier age of my life, it used to be my people, my group, people like me. I don't have a need to relate to people who only think like me anymore." Emmanuel, corroborating this experience, expressed, "I have become a more universal thinker. I see a bigger connection with all of life. Everything is connected to something, I am part of a bigger whole."

5.3.2.6   A Sense of Inclusiveness and Interconnectedness

The majority of the interviewees consider all things to be interconnected and interdependent. This sense of inclusiveness was expressed in different ways. Some acknowledged that contemplative awareness helps them to have a wider world view, it generates a sense of solidarity, a deeper compassion, and real love toward people. Diana stated, "…it's becoming bigger, not just my house, my community, my town. It's bigger. It gives you a broader world view, a sense of solidarity and compassion with suffering people no matter where they are".

Several interviewees regard the world as a beautiful place, a gift, and have a profound sense of being part of the whole. Bob is of this view when he said:

> I have a great love for life, a great love for the world, and a great love for the cosmos. I see the experience of contemplation really influencing my understanding of where I am in the universe; that I'm a very small part of it, but I'm still part of it…I'm very conscious of Teilhard de Chardin, his omega point where the whole of civilization is moving towards that omega point, that fulfillment point, that end point which is God…I can't manipulate or use the world for myself. In many ways, I'm a steward…We are given all of the wonderful gifts, how can we use them wisely and help them to grow for future generations. So, it's not just me; it's not just now; it's that world view that sees it growing slowly but surely toward a more interior way of being, toward a better use of the resources that we have.

For other interviewees, the understanding of inclusiveness, interdependence and mutual belonging of all of life in God is not just a concept anymore but a fully direct knowing of our shared and privileged humanity. Emmanuel is representative of this view when he affirmed, "you see all things interconnected. I don't mean intellectually. I would have known that in my head long time ago; but I didn't know it in my stomach or my heart, now I know it. I know we are all connected on a feeling level; it's a God-thing; it's an experience; that's what makes it mystical; it's an experience of we-are-all-connected".

5.3.2.7   A Sense of well-being

It was asserted by the participants that contemplative practice contributes to a sense of well-being, although the intention is not to seek this directly, rather it is a consequence to being present to and loving God. This is, nevertheless, a wonderful by-product. Their sense of well-being was experienced at a spiritual, psychological and physical level. A few described it in terms of feeling an inner stillness and groundedness. Alex said:

> It provides the deepest grounding for all dimensions of living, grounding ultimately in an intimate yet boundaryless Mystery that we are all part of, not distant or ultimately separate from. That sense of reality brings a sense of latent community with everything, and great room for absorbing further discoveries given us. It transcends the mind's thinking, so there is no longer pressure to master the Mystery, but to let all the new wonders we experience intensify that Mystery, leading to my awe and praise.

Fourteen participants mentioned that contemplative practice contributes to their psychological well-being. This is demonstrated in the use of terminology such as:

happy, cheerful, joy, peace, serenity, stillness, calmer, stability, resilience, appreciative, grateful and mindful. For example, Barbra said, "I'm always happy and cheerful. I'm never stressed…even when I was a very busy person, I never felt particularly busy. I think there is something about timelessness and doing. When work is worship, it is a joy". Carl said, "it brings a greater sense of peace, and it's the peace the measurable element, because the peace is the divine working in us and through us". Two of the female participants believe that it brings them to a place of stillness and calmness. Others feel frequent overwhelming episodes of appreciation, gratefulness and contentment; it provides them with stability and resilience. Four participants said that contemplative practice contributes to their physical well-being as well. For example, Gina stated "it is good for blood pressure, for sleep, for eyes, for general well-being and health".

5.3.3 Theme 3 - The Complementarity of Contemplation and Leadership

Seven participants see the relationship between contemplation and leadership as complementing each other. For instance, Carl said, "I genuinely think you can't be one without the other. You definitely can't be an effective leader without being a contemplative." Francis further illustrated, "…the pressures of leadership push you deeper into contemplative prayer, and the blessings and benefits of contemplative prayer push you deeper into leadership." Gabriel more empathically stated:

> They complement each other, you cannot separate the two…I see myself as a contemplative in action. In order for me to be a contemplative in the world, I need every day to take time to listen to God in silence. It's like refuelling the car or plugging in your phone each day to be recharged. So, each morning in contemplation you are recharging the battery so that you are ready to go out into the world again…my contemplative life is an extension of my life in the work place, and my life in the workplace is an extension of my contemplative life in prayer. Contemplative life is not just two separate identities. I can be contemplative in any situation, in love, forgiveness, awareness in every situation.

One of the participants regarded contemplation and leadership as two sides of the same coin. For Bob, they are both life-giving:

> At this stage of my life they are the same thing. I cannot be a contemplative without being a leader, and as a leader I'm a contemplative. In essence, my experience as a contemplative and as a leader, is expressed in my life as life-giving, I give life to people wherever I go. I want to give life, I want to, in my own way, reflect, manifest, foster, promote the Kingdom of God… If you are a contemplative you have to lead,

you have no choice, because part of contemplation is going beyond yourself, sharing yourself, being there for other people, being with other people, engaging with other people. So for me to be a contemplative is to lead, and it doesn't mean necessarily in formal ways; they can be very informal. The very nature of contemplation is that it has to be expressed, it has to be lived, it has to be manifested, that other people will experience it at one level or another, but it is primarily life-giving.

5.3.4 Theme 4 – Towards an Understanding of Contemplative Leadership

The understanding of contemplative leadership will be presented through the following sub-themes: 1) diversity of the understanding about contemplative leadership; 2) essence of contemplative leadership; 3) necessary qualities for a contemplative leader; 4) manifestations of contemplative leadership.

5.3.4.1   The Diversity of Understanding of Contemplative Leadership

One of the findings of the data analysis is that the participants' understanding of contemplative leadership was varied in the sense that all, while being leaders who practiced contemplation daily, differed somewhat in their perception of contemplative leadership, and varied in the use of language. The following reflects the different points of view. According to Emmanuel contemplative leadership begins with awareness, with the invitation to be like Jesus, being there for others with compassion. He expressed this in the following way:

> there has to be a level of awareness, self-awareness, a sense of prayerfulness, it increases…The big key is, to be a leader is to be like Jesus, get out of the way, and help people become aware of their notion, their spirituality, their sense of who they are…I think a genuine contemplative leader will also be someone who is aware of your own shadow. That gives you compassion, because you are experiencing compassion and healing from God, so you are going to be more inclined to be gentler and compassionate with others.

Carl sees contemplative leadership having different aspects. Firstly, "one must be very aware and attentive and engaged in the mission that the organization is working towards". Secondly, a contemplative leader aspires to instil the organizational values and the transcendental values that the company and the individual uphold. Thirdly, "contemplative leadership brings both at an individual level and also at a leadership team level that sense of wisdom that comes from contemplation in all its forms". For David, a contemplative leader is someone

who tries "to find out what God wants you to do with the community or organization". Diana thinks contemplative leadership is to "bring the mind into the heart, and having a radical willingness to trust", trust in God who is in community as we discern together. For Emily, "the heart of it is listening, being able to listen, being non-judgmental, being able to reflect, and out of that make a good decision". Francis believes that contemplative leadership means leading

> from a deep place within yourself, and all your actions are done to a good end; they are done in service of others, even the difficult decisions one has to make are done with the best intentions… you go to the place of God and listen to what's going on and be open to the direction. Not only be open to the direction, but also to be confident in God. God is always with us…like the battery in a machine, if you take the battery out, there is no leadership there, that's the power.

Anna and Helena both mentioned love, but expressed it differently. Anna said, "It is leadership from a deep place of centeredness and groundedness in love". While for Helena, "it is to be able to lead with love, and by the example of your life". For Francesca, "it is leading from the core… It's really being an instrument, being there for others and empowering others. It's working from the being, just in that place, that presence of God, and knowing that things will work out". Gina emphasised the role of wisdom in contemplative leadership when she said:

> …contemplative leadership is a leadership that focuses on wisdom, wisdom of the great traditions, wisdom drawn from the scripture, wisdom drawn from the mystics, so, it doesn't make decisions just on the basis of a management book, administration handbook, or the law, or finance. It tries to be wiser in the ways it makes decisions. Sometimes make decisions maybe the law or finance wouldn't suggest. That's what contemplative leadership is, is leadership from wisdom.

Gabriel has an insightful point of view, he said, "it is leadership with all the skills what leadership takes, but adding contemplation to the leadership role. Acting as a servant leadership, but bring the fruits of contemplation into that leadership role and that's what makes it work on a different level, because contemplation brings a new set of attributes…a new lens, a new way of looking at your role in that situation; and they are the fruits of the Spirit". Claire has a unique way of communicating her understanding. She said:

> Contemplative leadership is a socially engaged contemplative practice. As you know, through history, when we talk about contemplative practice and the mystics, it is often an inward journey and transforming consciousness and awareness, a lot of transformation inside the individual…You may notice some changes about me based on what is happening inside my spiritual journey. I may or may not talk about it. You don't know the source of the changes you observe. That's one level of

contemplative leadership, my behaviour changes, and my speech changes because of the inner transformation that is happening to me. What if we begin to talk… what if we bring the kind of inner practices to a group, and take time to pause instead of reacting…we make it part of a group, or part of an organization; then this becomes the insight of the group, like the culture of the group; then we work not only inside of the individual, but also in the group, let the universal language of silence become the group practice. That's part of what I mean by socially engaged contemplative practice.

Henry suggested that a contemplative leader must first be grounded in the context of the external world of one's organisation and leadership skills. Secondly, one has to be "…open to something bigger than oneself…and pay attention to your inner world and your outer world, because God is at work all the time". Elaborating further Henry said, "A contemplative leader needs to understand the two worlds: the visible ego world and the invisible inner world... and let these two worlds interact together". Alex held that contemplative leadership in its pure form "is not a calculated role or act", but "a quality of presence", and it is leadership that "is grounded in direct, open, available presence to God's Spirit in our spirit". For Bob the heart of contemplative leadership is relationship. He said:

> …the deeper we grow in contemplation, the more we are aware of the essence of contemplation being relationship; being the knowledge that comes from that relationship, the experience of that relationship. So, contemplative leadership is primarily that relationship, it's primarily about the knowledge you have of God, the wisdom that gives you, the insight that gives you, the vision it creates.

Barbara insisted that contemplative leadership is grounded in an unequivocal and immediate knowing of a higher spiritual reality which is sustained by the wisdom of that knowing. She said, "For me contemplative leadership is leadership that sits in the knowledge of a direct knowing of a higher spiritual reality and have a clear inner wisdom that is informed by that true reality…"

5.3.4.2   The Essence of Contemplative Leadership

The participants' understanding of the essence of contemplative leadership is grouped under six headings. One group regards the essence of contemplative leadership as openness and availability to an intimate relationship with God. Bob said:

> I would say the essence is openness to God, like if someone wants to love you and you open yourself to that love, and you allow it to touch you. It is the same with God. you are open, you are available, you are aware…this awareness has to be kept

alive, the sense of wonder and awe, the child-like expectation of more and more, that deep trust in the reality that God will feed you more and more love, more and more wisdom, more and more insight. So the essence of contemplative leadership is that openness, that awareness of these deep realities, and having that child-like expectations…the essence will be awareness, openness, availability, excitement, anticipation, expectation…to a deepening relationship with God and with people.

In a similar but different way, Alex was of the opinion that the essence of contemplative leadership is, "availability for the presence of a higher power, vulnerability to the Transcendent, trust in the larger gracious Presence and its calling in which we live and move and have our being".

Another group of participants thought trusting and surrendering to God is the essence of contemplative leadership. Although the language they used is different, the ideas are similar. Speaking about her opinion, Diana stated, "Leadership comes from God. What we can do is to be present to God, listening, trusting so that direction will come from God." Francis said, "Humility, listening, and trusting in God's love…a sense of all is well".

Another essential aspect mentioned by most participants is loving God and loving neighbour. Barbara is representative of this view, she said, "loving God and being present to that love, and being that love for others... Leadership is relational, it's all about how you relate with, for, and through people. If you have a love of God, if you have a love of people, if you have a love of the work you do…that helps you to be a stronger leader".

Similar to the centrality of loving God and neighbour, another group used different terminology to describe their understanding of the essence of contemplative leadership as contemplation and action. Francesca said, "…contemplation really isn't true contemplation if it doesn't have action with it. To me, the four pillars of contemplation: silence, solitude, solidarity, and service, are very important to contemplative leadership". Emily gave her understanding when she said, "for me is to be open to God's presence and action, to take time to pray and listen to God, out of that, I hope whatever I do will be God-centred as oppose to me-centred". For Helena it is "the ability to lead out of your deep contemplative life and practice".

Another group considered self-awareness as essential to contemplative leadership. For example, Gina said, "I think the essence of contemplative leadership is awareness, be able to live in awareness…most importantly is aware of yourself, aware of your own motivations". Carl suggested a holistic approach to leadership. He said:

> the very essence of contemplative leadership would be the sense of bringing mind, body, soul and all aspects of a human person to the table when it comes to leadership. Leadership goes far beyond the mind, the psychology; that it goes beyond the financial bottom line for a firm; and that the very function of an organization has multiple goals, multiple areas of contribution both officially and unofficially. It's bringing that holistic sense into leadership.

5.3.4.3 Qualities for a Contemplative Leader

The participants identified many personal qualities they felt essential for a genuine contemplative leader. In many respects, these reflect the personal qualities that an ideal contemplative leader would possess. In reality, it's not likely that a contemplative leader could have all of these qualities. Nevertheless, there are some that have been agreed upon by the participants as fundamental qualities. The inner personal qualities deemed most essential for contemplative leadership are sincerity and humility. Carl said that a contemplative leader must be "someone who carries themselves with a sense of sincerity day-in-day-out with the values they try to achieve, somebody who will speak with sincerity and humility to the whole organisation". This is closely followed by the recognition of the need to love and the ability to genuinely care for others. Bob represents this view when he said, "The ability to be able to love in a non-possessive way, in a way that liberates and frees people, promotes their unfolding as unique individuals is very important as a contemplative leader". The participants saw the need for honesty and empathy as key requirements for this type of leadership. Barbara summed up her sense of the qualities needed when she said:

> I honestly think service is absolutely essential. I think love conquers all. I think you have to have humility. I think you have to have courage to be a contemplative leader in a secular world because not everyone understands or wants it. You need perseverance, authenticity, integrity and generosity…and I love the power of appreciation as well. I think there is something about appreciating what others do and acknowledging them.

Francis felt that being cheerful and having a good sense of humour, being self-sacrificing, and willing to do the least important job" are crucial attributes. Bob named some qualities that he thinks vital to contemplative leadership:

> I'm a person of great hope. It's one of the greatest gifts that we have. I have great optimism for life and for people. No matter how bad things are, there is always that deeper reality, there is always that deeper truth, the people are more than their problems, life is more than its hurts. The kind of hope we have can be very profound, and it's not a naïve understanding of reality, but it is a hope based on the experience of God, the power of God, and the love of God, and the authority of God. So the virtues are many. I mean we talk about faith, hope and love, but optimism, compassion, strength, courage, honesty, perseverance, and faithfulness, all of these contributes significantly to the real expression of contemplative leadership. You can't be a contemplative leader without this kind of qualities, because they create an inner reality that is naturally manifested in virtues.

The identification of these qualities represents an honest attempt to catalogue the qualities deemed most essential for the lived expression of contemplative leadership. When these qualities are practiced and reflected in real life and work, they become virtues. Therefore, contemplative leadership reflects an inherently virtues-based leadership style.

5.3.4.4   Manifestations of Contemplative Leadership

Many expressions of contemplative leadership in everyday life were identified by the participants. Despite this, there is a certain consistency among them in relation to how contemplative leadership is manifested in the workplace. Most of them agree that contemplative leadership is expressed in the following ways: A) greater self-awareness; B) better quality of presence; C) leading with love and compassion; D) better listening and less judgemental; E) interiorly motivated; F) better use of power; G) less ego-centric; H) informed by wisdom; I) make better decisions.

A) Greater self-awareness

There are many references to self-awareness throughout the conversations with these leaders. Some of them referred to self-awareness as one of the fruits of contemplation. Others mentioned self-awareness in the context of leadership practice. Contemplation enables them to have an increased sense of attentiveness and awareness and this helps them to develop, as Emmanuel said, "an ability to stand back from situations, and have that moment of decentring yourself and

becoming aware of what's going on, and to remind yourself that the ultimate goal is to serve the other". For Carl contemplation gives him "a deep awareness in terms of how I live my life, particularly my work life, how I form decisions, how I interact with other people, how I make policies and strategies that will be congruent with organizational values…". Francesca indicated that self-awareness is very important for a leader because "If you aren't self-aware, you cannot work efficiently with other people, because then your own ego gets involved". Gina is of the same opinion, she maintains that to be a contemplative leader means, "being able to live in awareness. Why am I making that response? Am I free in making that response? What motivates me now as I make this suggestion?"

B) Better Quality of Presence

Nine interviewees agreed that contemplation helped them develop a quality of presence and enabled them to be totally present in the here and now with people. For instance, Barbara said "your mind isn't somewhere else, your ego isn't wanting something for yourself; you haven't gotten a self-interest or a game play going on. You are completely there for the other person in all the situations…and able to respond appropriately in the moment to what is needed". She also insisted that there is a direct correlation between contemplation and the quality of leadership presence, "it doesn't just contribute to a good quality of presence; it sustains it constantly… As a leader, myself is a presence; my presence is able to open up a field in which others can go as far as they can. I think that's the heart of it". Bob believed that contemplation does contribute to his quality of presence:

> I sometimes, in a strange way, feel I'm not myself, that there is a deeper reality in me that is a union. It's not just me that speaking, sometimes the words and ideas that come are not mine, they come from a deeper reality. There are times when the quality of my presence is more than I can achieve, in the level of engagement, in the level of empathy, in the level of understanding that seem way beyond my capacity, and yet they are there.

For the other interviewees, they described their presence in terms of: openness, really listening, non-judgemental, very accepting, reliable, collegial, kind, loving, faithful, persevering; try to do their best, good performance, efficiency, authenticity, honesty, gentle, humble, respect for others.

C) Leading with Love and Compassion

The majority of the participants in this research mentioned they have experienced God's love and care in prayer and in life's circumstances. The love of God is so powerful they want to share this love with others. They believe that the love they experienced underpins and informs how they lead. It is the heart of who they are; it gives character to everything they do; it gives a depth to their love, kindness, and compassion. For example, Anna said, "to lead from your heart, to lead with love…I try to adopt a loving gaze toward whoever I'm with, so that they can experience that love through my presence and through my gaze". Emily thought, "it manifests itself in my taking that approach of doing all of those things: encouraging people, listening to people, being open to people…". Carl shared that in his day-to-day interaction with employees, he tries "to encourage people, to listen to them". There is also an element of ministry for him, "a ministry of reaching out to colleagues", and he tries to live by example. Barbara made an interesting comment saying, "A word that people would use a lot about me is generous. I haven't used it up to now; actually, that's quite important; what I experienced in contemplation is I get so much from it, it nourishes me so much; that enables me to give to others". Bob found himself being "more patient, more gentle, more understanding with people…" he continued, "I consciously, deliberately try to promote human flourishing in whatever way I can, whether it's intellectual, or social, or spiritual, or psychological. Again, for me the great model is Jesus, wherever he goes he brings healing, he brings life, he brings love, he brings wisdom, he brings truth; that's what I try and do in my relationship with others, and in my practice of leadership".

D) Good Listening and Less-judgmental

Nine of the participants recognized that the experience of contemplation enabled them to be a good listener in their role as a leader. This is witnessed in the expressions they used such as "contemplation enhanced my gift for listening"; "being able to listen and be open to others"; "being able to make time to listen to people"; "more open to listening, more pastoral, more supportive". Francesca thinks that being a good listener allows her to work with people, not to work above

them. For her this is a means of empowering and being supportive of what they are doing.

Eight of the interviewees also said contemplation helps them to become less-judgmental towards others, more accepting and loving of people. Barbara stated, "people tell me that I'm very easy to talk to, very approachable; I'm not judgmental, and I'm very accepting". Emily echoes the same meaning when she said: "before I would be inclined to judge. I don't do that now…I'm much more accepting of others; and I'm constantly, constantly, constantly reminded that I know I'm special, and, equally, somebody else is too. It makes me realize I'm not the end of all things…yes it has changed my relationship with others. I don't jump as quickly to judge".

E) Interiorly Motivated

Seven participants said that they are motivated by a higher purpose and not by "human success" or "material gain" or "looking for power" or "climbing up to the top". For instance, Bob asserted that, "the real source of my motivation is having Jesus as my model. There is nothing I want to attain. In many ways, I'm not looking for success in a human sense…it's about sharing; it's wanting to serve, wanting to make the world a better place, wanting to be a loving person." Barbara was particularly insightful when she said, "My inner leadership motivation is about community and organizations can co-create spiritual potential for everybody in it... Work can be a possibility for spiritual growth; and I'm being motivated by a higher purpose and meaning, so it informs my motivation".

For two among the interviewees, their motivation would be more person-centred, in other words, they consciously promote human flourishing. Gina said, "the glory of God is a person fully alive. So, I'm motivated by whatever movement toward wholeness, life, and vitality for the people involved." Carl also takes a person-centred approach to his work using the following illustration:

> I think contemplation helps you to realize that you are dealing with complex human beings in a holistic form, the emotional, the physical, the mental, the spiritual. We can be extremely unrealistic within the corporate world to expect people to leave their personal challenges behind the door. In that regard, the motivation for me is

to treat people as individuals with respect and dignity…the only thing that we don't measure on the evaluation sheet in a company is the contribution that human capital made, that element is intangible and yet is so important to the corporate culture. When we treat people as unique individuals, and we respect them with dignity, that allows them to both contribute and grow. The benefit is significant. That's what motivate me as a leader.

Another interesting point made by one third of the participants is that, in general, they don't look for leadership, but rather a leadership role has been entrusted to them. Dianna shared that she was asked three times before she said yes to a leadership role in an organization. They, in general, do not seek leadership for power but see it as a means of service.

F) Better Use of Power

Fourteen of the participants indicated that contemplation does inform and influence their understanding and use of power, although the language and the explanations they gave are different. For Alex, the power a leader uses is motivated by the power of love. A contemplative perspective has made him "aware of and at least free in desire from the ego's little self-oriented temptation to build itself up as the centre of reality". It makes him conscious that "authentic power flows from a deeper source than our contained ego sense of self, and at its heart that power is creative love. I believe we are made of that love, and our contemplative practices can show us that; and we can let the power of that love live at the centre of our being." He added, "such love has no ultimate boundaries. It transcends all boundaries".

Eleven of the fourteen participants indicated that they wouldn't consciously want to exercise power over anybody. They don't want to use power to force anybody, or be manipulative in any way, or use that power of influence to move things according to their own will. For instance, Bob said:

> Most definitely. I'm no longer ambitious. The thought of forcing ideas on people, or manipulating people in any way, is foreign to me. I can't do that. I feel the only kind of power I can exercise is that of service. How can I help people to be all that they are meant to be? That's my understanding of power. I don't want to dominate, even in conversations I can be quiet and listen. When I have to use power, when I have to make serious decisions, when I have to develop policies, I'm very conscious that it's not just about me; it's about reflecting this deep relationship that I have with God; and it's a good way to live. It's not just being forced to do this,

it's something that becomes very natural, very spontaneous, almost child-like. There is no need to try to force or convince or manipulate in any way.

Some participants thought that the power they exercise is primarily expressed in terms of service. Two participants acknowledged that their way of leading and using power is to empower others. Another two understood that power comes from the community as a team working together, sharing their gifts and collaborating, or discerning together. For example, Dianna stated, "What I understand about power and leadership is that our power is as a community, everyone has a power, and the power is coming from that community as we discern together…I never considered myself the boss, we are a team working together… Power is power in the community, power of all, and the power of God".

G) Less Ego-centric

A number of the interviewees mentioned that letting go of the ego is not only an aspect of personal transformation, but also a constituent part of their exercise of leadership. For example, Francesca mentioned that the heart of leadership is "to be able to support and to empower the team that's working with you in leadership; and to take the 'I' out of leadership." Claire said, "the quality of my contribution to a group will be less from my personal ego, more from a place that sees the whole." Anna also stated that, "Contemplative practice helps me to lead from the heart, instead of leading from my head, which is relying on myself, my ego thoughts, and the things that I have developed over the years. When I lead from my heart, I'm yielding to God and God is the one who is being in control of the situation rather than me." Bob explained:

> My vision of reality in terms of leadership is that we are here to try to promote the kingdom of God… I think my leadership comes primarily from within me. It's not something that is given to me as an external reality. Yes, it's there, you have a job, you have an appointment, you have a leadership role; for me it's primarily an inner reality that is more important than status, more than the name of leadership; it's far beyond the ego thing, very much to do with the ability to serve, to be with people, to be a model of gentleness, and perseverance, and kindness, and strength, and be willing to work at a deeper level of commitment.

Carl sums up the beliefs of many when he said:

> true leadership is to bring the mind, the heart, the soul, the whole person, into our daily life and work; and particularly engage the spiritual dimension not as something extra, but something from the very core. It is to bring that and in a non-

egoistic way to stand by those transcendental values of goodness, truth, beauty and intelligibility, and hope to be a beacon of light for some people.

The general consensus is that in a less ego-centred self, there is more congruence between what they say and who they are as leaders.

H) Informed by Wisdom

One third of the participants clearly acknowledged that contemplative leadership is informed by an inner wisdom. Contemplation helps them to "get a sense of having great insights, a sense of wisdom that can only come from God" as Bob disclosed. Some of the contemplative leaders emphasized wisdom many times throughout the conversations. For example, Carl believes that "contemplation brings wisdom, a wisdom that you don't artificially create yourself; it comes with practice; it comes from being aware of the movement of the Spirit in our daily life." He thought, "being contemplative in life, and practicing it with all its sincerity will bring wisdom that goes beyond management books, that goes beyond what corporate leadership can be seen to be". He gave a concrete example:

> Go back to the official and unofficial leader, when I look at organizational values, you look at power bases within the corporate world, and a lot of those power bases come from positions that are not considered leadership in a hierarchical chain, but because of the individual's gifts, talents, practices through contemplation reflecting on the wisdom, the knowledge of the situations they find themselves in, through their own practice of authenticity, they by default end up going into leadership, initially unofficially, because of all their peers tend to look to them for advice, look to them for guidance, and then at the later stages the corporation sees their gifts within the individual and formerly promote them.

"Contemplative leadership", Carl acclaimed, "brings both at an individual level and also at leadership team level that sense of wisdom that comes from contemplation in all its forms…interesting enough, there are people who say little at a leadership team meeting, but when they do talk everybody listens, when they do talk wisdom comes". Gabriel also suggested many times throughout the conversation that contemplation helps him to have "a sense of wisdom in the situation". To illustrate this he said, "I think they see things in me that are the fruit of my prayer life…another fruit is that, in the situation, I have a window of wisdom, and I say maybe we could look at it this way…".

I) Make Better Decisions

One third of the participants maintained that engaging in daily contemplative practice helps them make better decisions. Gabriel compared the difference it makes in saying:

> when I don't have a prayer life, or when I'm not focused on my contemplative life, I'm acting out of my own ego. I'm acting out of my weakness rather than my strength…I'm more irritable; I may rush decisions; I'm more judgmental; I'm not focused so much. While when I'm rooted in my contemplation, I certainly more focused; less judgmental; I'm more focused on the present moment; I make better decisions in the situation.

Contemplative practice also helps Claire to be more present and more aware, this allows her to "not get triggered as quickly by strong emotions; and in the midst of a group conversation or decision-making meeting, I hope that the quality of the decisions will be better, or the quality of my contribution to a group will be less from my personal ego, more from a place that sees the whole, and make decisions for the benefit of all". Coming from a contemplative stance enables Emily "to listen, be non-judgemental, be able to reflect… and out of that make good decisions". Francis went further, saying, contemplation helping him, "makes decisions and choices and judgement from a deep place within yourself; and all your actions are done to a good end; they are done in service of others". Gina sums up the views of some of the interviewees when she declared that contemplative leadership is "leadership based on wisdom. It doesn't make decisions just based on a management book…it tries to be wiser in the ways it makes decisions". A contemplative awareness creates a more thoughtful and wiser approach toward making and supporting decisions.

5.3.5 Theme 5 – Contemplative Leadership and the Organizational Culture

One of the major themes emerged is that a contemplative leadership approach to an organization or business can both promote and support the creation of a good organizational culture. This is shown in the following aspects: 1) create a good work environment; 2) an organization with social conscience; 3) a holistic approach to employee welfare. 4) leadership effectiveness.

186

5.3.5.1   Create a Healthy Work Environment

Nine of the interviewees agreed that a contemplative approach to leadership can create and nurture a good and healthy atmosphere in the work place, though they used different language and emphasized distinctive aspects of what constitutes a good work environment. For example, Bob said:

> Contemplative leadership can help you to create an atmosphere of respect, atmosphere of collegiality, atmosphere of collaboration, atmosphere of openness to people, a willingness to listen, to empathize, and to work together on common projects. The quality and depth of presence, the quality and depth of relationship will be profound. In terms of the work culture, contemplative leaders will promote the ethos, and maintain the ethos, and you create an ambiance where people feel free and relaxed, where people are trusted and respected.

Describing what a good working community is, Anna said, "there would be no fear, there would be honour between people, there would be the ability to be transparent, competition would be healthier and open; and then there would be a sense of love, love is at the heart of it, rather than greed or capitalism; the relationship between people is good; then it would be a healthier organization as opposed to the toxic space where there is suspicion, fear, and back stabbing". Anna felt that in such an environment, "…everybody feels safe, everything is welcome, nothing is pushed away so there is a sense of safety, that the ground we all occupy together is holy, feel safe in that environment, no hostility, no judgement, very open and welcoming and loving".

Speaking of working with colleagues, Carl mentioned that "they feel their contribution is valued, their experience in the work place is more fulfilling and there is alignment between what the individual believes and what the organization is doing". Another participant, Barbara, said:

> there is a sense of freedom, a sense of possibility…they feel satisfied, motivated, energized and creative in their work and they perform highly. But to me that's not the heart of it; the important thing is they feel a sense of wellbeing; they love what they are doing; they are creative; they just love to work in an organization when everybody is buzzing.

Recalling the work environment in his organization, Francis expressed, "the general atmosphere is good; everybody is happy. People work longer hours than they should; people come with ideas; people take initiatives; people are happy;

we have very low turnover staff, nobody leaves". The common agreement is that people work better in a healthy working atmosphere, because they can focus their energy on the main mission of the organization, instead of wasting energy on managing conflict or confrontation. It is hoped that with an environment such as this failure can be turned into learning and be an opportunity for growth. Gina suggested that contemplative leadership tends to reflect a more hope-filled attitude that is "visionary, forward oriented… encourages the move to new frontiers". From this contemplative perspective, Claire posits that "the traditional, hierarchical leadership approach that uses power, prestige, and the privilege of the few is based on external influence rather than a quality of inner presence". The ethos generated by such a contemplative stance sees the leader not so much as the person in charge but rather the one who empowers and serves. Alex spoke of the need to identify and promote potential leaders who are not only competent and effective but also contemplatives who will continue to grow the organisation while endorsing and encouraging a good working environment. It is such people who will promote the ethos which creates an atmosphere of dignity, respect, collegiality, collaboration and openness to people that genuinely expresses a depth of relationship and quality of presence across a business, group or organisation. Bob believes that, "the contemplative side of things really contributes to my performance within the organisation in terms of my level of commitment, level of engagement, level of openness, willingness to listen to other people and grow with other people, to move toward a better future for all". Organisations that operate at this higher level of consciousness, according to Claire, will find that, "people work together better when there is less fighting or less resistance; when people are committed to serve a higher purpose than their own needs, they perform better because they try to remove the obstacles that normally get in the way of good relationships… when the motive is service they do their best". Gina is very down-to-earth in her observation that, "one person may have an impact within their own space but that does not affect the whole organisation". She is of the opinion that, "if an organisation does not have a contemplative stance, it will be quite limited in terms of achievement".

5.3.5.2 An Organization with Social Conscience

An organisational culture that is influenced by a contemplative approach will have a social conscience, and be socially engaged. Alex spoke of his organisation having, "an inclusive sense of the human community and its mutual belonging so that whatever the organisation does it takes this awareness into account… What is said and done may be geared to serve a particular constituency or restricted purpose but always with a background sense of what is said and done must ultimately serve the good of the whole human family". Bob feels that he is, "very conscious of wanting to contribute to the larger society, of being an individual who is always part of a community, and that community can be local, or a national or international one". This social awareness included being conscious of recycling and sustainability development, keeping an organisation green, and conserving the world for this and future generations. Claire feels that, "contemplative leadership is going to enable us to work better with others on complex problems like climate change, difficult social issues, maybe racial or ethnic problems… instead of escalating violence and destruction we might have the possibility of collaborating together because we see ourselves as connected, as one".

5.3.5.3 A Holistic Approach to Employee Welfare

A contemplatively oriented business will also genuinely care about the welfare of its employees not only in terms of the functional needs of the organisation but be concerned for the holistic development of each person. In creating such an ethic of care, Bob suggests that an organisation can provide for people both as individuals and as professionals by helping and providing them with the means to understand their possibilities, what they can be, what they can achieve. Barbara spoke of the inherent obligation of a contemplatively grounded organisation to develop the whole person in all aspects of life from the spiritual, physical, and job prospects to celebrating and supporting pluralism and diversity in the workplace. Carl suggested that as a contemplative leader, "there is an element of ministry in my work. Contemplation means not only reaching in and reaching up, but also reaching out to others, being sensitive to what is good for them". The participants saw themselves contributing to human flourishing, and this reflects a basic altruistic approach to being a contemplative and servant leader.

5.3.5.4   Leadership Effectiveness

Eleven participants believe that a contemplative approach enhances leadership effectiveness. Alex said, "when operational it is effective in drawing me and others to a deeper presence in reality and its holy living ground, which in turn leads to the fruit of more on-target, creative, compassionate, serving decisions, and a sense of shared transcendent (of ego) purpose". Barbara stated:

> I think without any doubt, it is effective. The staff in all the organisations I worked as a CEO, all talked about some sort of specialness, or magic, I don't mean it literally, magic or awesomeness that takes place in our organisation… Staff feel better and enjoy coming to work. All organisations performed massively, not just a little bit, but absolutely…we made half a million to one million profit a year…our customer satisfaction was 98%...all those bottom lines were maximized, something significant was happening.

Claire asserted, "I think it is most effective. We have to change our consciousness in order to meet the complex challenges of our world today…the contemplative piece is the only one I have found that helps you to shift consciousness". Francis professed, "our absentee rate in school is very low…the children are generally very happy. Because the children are happy the workers are better, and the parents are happy, and staff generally are happy. There were no bandits in the school, and people in the community look after the school…Our numbers are going up, there is more children coming to the school than it was ten years ago. We have very low turnover staff, nobody leaves". Francesca suggested:

> I think it is very effective if it is world-wide. We would have a totally different world, I really do believe if we respect different peoples and nations and cultures, it will be a very different world. It will be less materialistic; poverty could be looked at in a more healthier way. The area of poverty tends to attract corruption whatever the country. I do feel if more leaders were coming from a contemplative point, centred in their own lives, if more leadership teams were coming from a contemplative stance, the world will be a better place.

5.3.6 Theme 6 – Challenges in being a Contemplative Leader

Besides the huge social, economic, political and environmental challenges every leader faces in our contemporary society, the participants acknowledged some major challenges of being a contemplative leader. These will be considered under the headings of 1) internal challenges; 2) cultural challenges; and 3) organizational challenges.

5.3.6.1   Internal challenges

From a personal perspective, one of the major challenges encountered by the participants is letting go of one's ego. Helena is of this opinion, and indicated that the greatest challenge is herself. She is very conscious of her false-self getting in the way. Alex endorses the same idea when he said, "the greatest challenge is letting myself go in radical trust to a deeper source of reflection and discernment especially when my ego and mind is separated from my spiritual heart, and letting myself return to the heart when I've lost its centrality". Another challenge identified by a number of leaders is finding time for contemplation every day, "because there are always thousand things distracting you from doing that", but, as Gabriel stated, "when I'm doing it (contemplation), I'm a better person; I'm a better person to myself, and I'm a better person to other people; and hopefully I'm a happier person; I'm more rooted in the present moment, less in the past and less worrying about the future".

5.3.6.2   Cultural Challenges

Since contemplative leadership is not a widely known or a generally accepted orientation to leadership, the issue of rejection or dismissal is ever present. Claire spoke of the human need to be accepted or find approval. When this leadership approach was used she experienced a negative response and this made it more difficult for her to continue with her work and it became a serious challenge for her to keep going. Francis spoke of his experience of not being understood, the loneliness this generated, and, "being thought of as a fool" because people do not understand what he was about. Self-doubt can be generated when you continue to be opposed and people constantly resist the contemplative approach. Another problem that emerged for Bob was that colleagues may see him as naïve, as over optimistic and having unrealistic expectations of people and organisations. He said, "I'm afraid that people might see me as being too idealistic and dismiss my thinking and my attitude, or my way of relating". Barbara was appallingly criticised by a number of management consultants and, in her own words, said, "they thought I was mad, seriously. They were constantly challenging and deconstructing what we were doing, they were very critical and demeaning… they

actually said I shouldn't be in the job because what I was doing was wrong." She felt humiliated in the face of their criticism of her approach to leadership. Carl spoke of some fellow leaders having no interest in trying to understand the expressions and implications of contemplative leadership. He said some of his colleagues were "not interested, they were cynical, they mask with cynicism their own insecurity, their own lack of knowing what is going on… at the end of the day they want only for themselves and walk on everyone to get there". David, from an educational background and speaking of the role of God in education, found that young people nowadays were, "completely opposed to that kind of waste of time… they don't want anything to do with contemplation, or what you are suggesting".

These are some of the external challenges experienced by the participants in this research project. In many ways, it demonstrates that the contemplative approach is still quite countercultural. Contemplative leaders often face misunderstanding, rejection, anger, false accusation, personal attack and humiliation from people who are against bringing spirituality into the workplace, or who principally work out of a business model and are materialistically motivated.

5.3.6.3   Organizational Challenges

Another major challenge, according to Carl, is how "to manifest the transcendental values in the reality of living on a day-to-day basis in a secular environment". He further explained, "organizations by default are toward self-propaganda and for profit. How to apply the transcendental values in the way we treat our fellow workers, in our decision-making process, how do we define the processes and functions that take into consideration all the key variables, and not just the financial side of it". Bob suggested that to maintain a contemplative presence in an organisation can be particularly problematic, "especially nowadays when people tend to be individualistic, self-centred and introspective". Francis is also in the same view when he stated, "it is not easy, you are under pressure from the business setting, and you are under pressure from staff, from stakeholders who believe the materialistic approach. It's a constant challenge, but it definitely works.

As I said before, if I wasn't taking time for prayer, if I wasn't from a contemplative approach, I couldn't survive the job". Another great challenge for contemplative leaders to face, according to Barbara, is "envy from other organizations that weren't successful, huge envy and anger towards us, and they try to find fault with us", Barbara continued, "that has been really painful actually. They had to kind of bring us down in order to raise themselves up…We were too outside of the norm, we were open to spirituality".

5.3.7 Theme 7 – Opportunities for Contemplative Leadership

Despite the challenges, the participants were full of hope and insist that it is possible to practice contemplative leadership in the workplace, and there are opportunities for integrating the principles and practice of contemplative leadership into the main stream leadership thinking and training.

5.3.7.1   Present Opportunities

Fourteen of the participants agree that it is possible to practice contemplative leadership in their professional life, and they are already doing it. Carl stated, "I think you are not being authentic if you are not practicing it. We need to realize for ourselves that we are human beings not human doings, and we operate so much as human doings that we don't value our human being. I think everyone needs to realize this…it is a practical way of moving forward". Anna said, "yes, it is possible, but it takes intention, it takes practice, it takes desire to want to do that". Alex affirmed, "I can bring the desire to practice it, and an awareness of when I have submerged it to a mind or ego-based leadership disconnected from contemplative presence. That awareness of what I have lost brings me back to the contemplative heart. Such desire and return to the heart lead me to at least sometimes of contemplative leadership". Bob believed it is possible but with some conditions. He said, "Yes, it is possible to practice contemplative leadership if you have the experience, if you have the supporting structures, if you have mindfulness, if you have prayer, if you have the silence, if you are open, if you are expecting, if you are anticipating, if you are child-like, if you are filled with wonder and awe, if you can't wait for the next experience of God, then, the answer

is yes". Emily is a little different in that she said, "yes, but not every day". She admitted that this is what she aspired to, but she has "missed many opportunities". Francis felt it is possible, but it is not easy, because of the pressure of living in a business setting, the expectations of your colleagues, and those who operate under a more materialistic approach to life. Gina felt that in her professional life, she has met people from many busy professions and each in his or her own way, "found a way of embedding a contemplative stance in their profession".

5.3.7.2   Future Opportunities

The participants also considered that there is an opportunity to integrate the principles and practice of contemplative leadership into mainstream leadership thinking and training; and, according to them, it is already happening around the globe in many ways. There are a lot of activities that can be undertaken to raise awareness. Alex is representative of several participants when he said, "the introduction of contemplative practice can get the camel's nose under the tents". He continued:

> The first-hand awareness and vulnerability known through those practices can lead to greater sensitivity to a larger identity that moves beyond exclusive utilitarian focus to a sense of being part of a larger sacred Mystery that inspires enlightened love at the heart of our identity and purpose. The way to this "conversion" from little self to big self in God I think can be aided by the vulnerable openness cultivated in contemplative practice.

Emmanuel further suggested that it is very important to make centring prayer part of leadership training programmes, and encourage leaders to practice it twice a day. Otherwise, "without contemplative practice, how would you become self-aware? If a leader isn't self-aware, if a leader hasn't gotten emotional intelligence, what kind of job he/she does? Yeah, I think you have to have contemplative practice in all of leadership programmes because that increases self-awareness, and self-awareness is important". Barbara thought that "the mainstream leadership thinking and development is more open now"; and she has been involved in a leadership training programme that is explicitly contemplative; they integrate contemplation and the latest leadership theory into their teaching. Some participants suggested "role modelling" as one of the ways to integrate the principles and practices of contemplative leadership into mainstream leadership development. Helena said, "most definitely, but that has to be done by example".

Bob also said, "I think there are a number of things you can do. First of all, you practice it in your own life as a role model. Some people might find it attractive, appealing, and might want to imitate that. They see the benefit of it, not only the functional benefit of it, but the personal, spiritual benefit of it. So role modelling is one thing you can do". Another way of raising awareness about contemplative leadership recommended by a number of participants is through research papers. Bob is of this point of view when he said:

> …writing research papers, say look this is a possibility. Maybe as civilization progresses, we are moving towards a more interior way of being, and interiority is becoming a more and more focused part of life. If the research papers are out there saying contemplative leadership is a possibility, and this is what it does for the individual, this is how it benefit the unfolding and flourishing of the human being in relation with others and in relation with the world, some people will find that attractive.

From Gina's point of view, "it is really important to have academic events: student researching in this field; you have modules being taught in this area; to have expert practitioners come in and share their experiences through conferences. A whole lot of activities can be undertaken to grow the awareness, because unless somebody is aware they can't really make a change, you must begin with awareness".

5.4 Conclusion

The process of analysis, interpretation, and coding identified the major themes and sub-themes that describe and document the phenomenon that is contemplative leadership. These themes were then organised into a set of coherent findings. The findings uncovered are evidently linked to the research questions so that they have the potential to significantly contribute to the development of a comprehensive model of contemplative leadership. Therefore the scope and sequence of the findings presented in this chapter directly address the research question and confirm the potential for constructive dialogue between the theory and practice of contemplative leadership. These findings, in dialogue with the literature review, will be the subject of the next chapter and become the foundation for an in-depth discussion and integration of the research findings with a view to developing a model of contemplative leadership.

Chapter 6 Discussion of Findings and Presentation of a Model

6.1 Introduction

The ongoing quest for centred and grounded leadership was anticipated in China more than two thousand and five hundred years ago by Laozi when he wrote:

Centre and Ground

> The leader who is centred and grounded can work with erratic people and critical group situations without harm. Being centred means having the ability to recover one's balance, even in the midst of action. A centred person is not subject to passing whims of sudden excitements. Being grounded means being down-to-earth, having gravity or weight. I know where I stand, and I know what I stand for: that is ground. The centred and grounded leader has stability and a sense of self. One who is not stable can easily get carried away by the intensity of leadership and make mistakes of judgment or even become ill.
>
> ---Laozi saying 26 (Heider, 1985, 51)

This ancient and ever new search for a deeper and more accurate interpretation and expression of what can be truly authentic, dynamic and generative about leadership, from both a professional and personal perspective, is precisely the motivation and inspiration of this research. The sixteen contemplative leaders in this study conveyed a sense of professionals with great integrity and living the essence of Laozi's insight in most challenging times. Each, in his or her own way, reflected on the essence of contemplative leadership in terms of their own experience and wisdom so that the analysis of the data they provided constitutes the current, lived experience of these practitioners. This chapter will integrate the insights of the literature review and the practitioner-based data analysis with a view to generating a model of contemplative leadership. In the process, this will develop the concepts, characteristics, challenges, and opportunities associated with contemplative leadership, and the potential impact such leadership will have on organisational culture.

The following sections offer an insight into the different constituent aspects of the inner life of a contemplative leader, and will serve as the basis for developing a model of contemplative leadership.

6.2. Interiority

Fundamental to contemplative leadership is personal development through the interiority process. The literature and the participants agree that this is an essential component of contemplative leaders' personal and professional lives. They find their daily contemplation and other spiritual practices nourishing, energizing, enlightening, and, these have become an indispensable source of personal growth and practical wisdom. The intimate relationship with God, the times of silence and solitude, and the desire to reflect the life enhancing reality of God, animates and guides their thinking and interaction with people and in organisations. As with other contemplatives throughout history, the participants' experience of union with God means that even in the twenty-first century, communion with the Divine is possible, is transformative, and has practical implications for how we live, work, and relate.

6.2.1 Prayer life

Prayer is at the heart of the contemplative experience. St. Teresa of Avila, Pseudo-Denys, and other contemplatives, have shown that prayer is, in essence, a deep conversation, an intimate communion, and union with the Divine and, as in all relationships, everything else flows from this because it grounds a person, provides meaning and identity, offers a vision of who we are, and how we are meant to live. Over a life time, they learned this from the teacher and leader who is Jesus Christ as they grew from active meditation to gifted contemplation. Prayer is not always easy and can be laborious; it takes great effort, it demands great conviction and constant commitment. But, being a labour of love, it has proven to the practitioners, and many others, to be the source of true wisdom, inspiration, and committed energy.

6.2.2 The Dynamic Self-Discovery Process

The spiritual path taken by the participants is depicted as a dynamic, self-discovery process. This concurs with Teresa of Avila's description of the interior journey, where a person has to travel through seven stages into God. This journey involves a series of transformations that is analogous to a silkworm transferring into a cocoon and becoming a butterfly; it involves change, dying, and rebirth (section 2.4.7). Likewise, the participants became aware of the shadow side of

their personality but healing and transformation more than compensates for this. One of the insights of chapter two speaks of the initial and necessary entry into the depths of the neglected aspects of our unconscious and the often unacknowledged, negative side of our personality. As discussed (section 2.4.6), if unrecognized, this negative energy generally becomes destructive. However, if this shadow side is seen in the light of God's unconditional and transforming love, it has the potential to be transformed into a positive source of energy leading to indispensable self-knowledge and personal development. The participants used the term self-discovery to describe this process. The intensity of this inner struggle is due to the fact that we do not really know ourselves or our own true reality and this is the original source of inner conflict. It is therefore essential to be aware of our inner reality, including the shadow side, in order to be healed and transformed, and become fully human, fully alive and better able to relate with God and others.

6.2.3 The Different Stages of Spiritual Journey

Significantly, the findings show that the participants, although all practice contemplation, appear to be at different stages of the spiritual journey. This can be seen in the distinct language about their spiritual and mystical experience. As demonstrated in chapter five, the participants' experience of God and relationship with God, are varied in degree and intensity. From Bonaventure's perspective, we can say that one group primarily relates with God through creation and people; another group experienced God through the powers of the mind, and through love and contemplation; the last group experienced mystical union through encountering the ineffable mystery that is God and show that it is possible to experience a real communion and union with God. This developmental understanding of the spiritual life broadly agrees with Fry and Kriger. Their being-centred leadership theory proposes five levels of being and begins with the knowledge gained through the sensible/physical world. They understand that human beings then progress through images and imagination. This is followed by an integrated inner, personal experience of self which corresponds to their understanding of soul. The next level involves the world of spirit and self-transcendence. When people experience the transcendent and universally-

connected self, this reflects a non-duel level of being which is the highest level and reflects the integration of all previous levels. For many this stage of union or non-dual being seems unattainable. However, this research shows that through the contemplative journey there are people who live at this non-dual level, at least occasionally. This agrees with assumption 3 which proposes that engaging in the inner spiritual journey through contemplative practice offers the possibility for people, for leaders, to grow through the different stages toward the non-dual level being, or toward union with the divine. The developmental stages of the spiritual journey are reflected in the quality of one's inner way of being and outer expressions of leadership.

6.3 Inner Transformation

One of the significant findings is that the contemplative journey is transformative and for many participants it is a life-changing and awe-inspiring experience. This theme provides the opportunity to identify some of the reasons why contemplative practice can be transformative and life-changing.

6.3.1 Letting go of the Ego

The participants suggested that one of the most transformative aspects of contemplation is becoming less ego-centric, less self-centred. This agrees with Welch's understanding of Teresa of Avila's interior castle (section 2. 2 4), where letting go of the ego is seen as a very necessary part of the inward journey. Obviously, the participants' experience of inner conflict between the false self and the true self concurs with Merton's idea that essential to the practice of contemplation is the destruction of the false self and the emergence of a truer self. Becoming less ego-centric confirms assumption 2 (section 3.2.2), where Song suggested that contemplation provides "a central onslaught on the ego" (Song, 2014, 43), and therefore imperative to helping a leader grow toward authenticity, integrity and a more virtuous way of being.

6.3.2 A Transformed Consciousness

The participants' experience of developing a transformed consciousness and finding a truer identity corresponds well with the literature review in chapter two, especially that of Merton, Johnston, and Downey. Merton regards contemplation as "a sudden gift of awareness, an awakening to the Real within all that is real. A vivid awareness of infinite Being at the roots of our own limited being" (Merton, 1961, 3). This awareness is a different kind of knowing, this new type of consciousness happens because of "a direct experiencing of intimately knowing of God". Johnston maintains that: "contemplatives, sometimes quite unexpectedly, become conscious of a mysterious and loving presence in themselves and in the whole universe. They have entered a new state of consciousness characterized by what they call the "sense of presence" (Johnston, 2000, 92-93). This is also confirmed by Downey's view that our way of seeing reality changes as a result of this new restructuring of consciousness. Downey insists that this restructuring empowers the perception of, ability to relate with, and become sensitive to divine presence and action (Downey, 1993, 139). This also corresponds with assumption 3 which proposes that one of the major results of the inward journey is a change of consciousness (section 3.2.3). The findings show that the participants have gained a felt knowledge of God, experienced a transformed mind-set, and become more sensitive and alert to the reality of God.

6.3.3 A Change in Values and Becoming More Inclusive

The participants in this study find, through contemplation, their value system has changed. They exhibit spiritual values such as compassion, love, mercy, honesty, forgiveness, gentleness, kind, and become less egoistic and more inclusive. This confirms assumption 1 in chapter three where it asserts that values and ethics are not merely notional concepts; rather, they emerge from inner transformation and personal integration and are the direct result of a person's spiritual journey (section 3.2.1). This agrees with Song who states, "for a change of values to happen, we need to go to the depth of the human person where one's perception of the world is shaped and the motivation for action and external behaviour arises"

(Song, 2014, 13). Both the theory (the assumption) and practice (participants' experience) suggest that one's deepening interiority prepares the way for a change of values, a change of the mind-set, and for the inner transformation essential for the movement toward moral and ethical leadership.

6.3.4 Personal Integrity and High Ethical and Moral Standards

The participants, having experienced inner transformation, found themselves becoming better persons. Using their own words, they became "more loving and compassionate", "less egoistic", "have a greater capacity to love people", "more selfless, in a self-transcendent place beyond one's own needs", "more authentic", "more virtuous". During the contemplative journey, their moral compass becomes more God-centred, and their world view expands to become more inclusive. Diana stated, "…it's becoming bigger, not just my house, my community, my town. It's bigger. It gives you a broader world view, a sense of solidarity and compassion with suffering people no matter where they are". This shows that the interior process helped them grow towards a greater personal integrity, and progress to "a higher level of being" (section 1.7), as expressed in the pursuit of high ethical and moral standards.

6.4 The Complementarity of Contemplation and Leadership

The participants experience contemplation and leadership as complementary. This finding agrees with Teresa of Avila, Evelyn Underhill, and Thomas Merton's view of the relationship between contemplation and action (section 2.5). The participants believe that contemplation and leadership are mutually supportive and naturally reinforce each other. Contemplation provides energy, wisdom, courage, and enthusiasm to undertake leadership and it is a source of love and compassionate for action in the world. Sheldrake quoting Merton states that:

> Contemplation cannot construct a new world by itself… But without contemplation we cannot understand the significance of the world in which we must act… And finally, without contemplation, without the intimate silent, secret pursuit of truth through love, our action loses itself in the world and becomes dangerous (Sheldrake, 2010, 137).

Both theory and practitioners concur that contemplation and leadership, or contemplation and action, augment each other. They are not two opposite entities as twentieth and twenty-first century mainstream secular and leadership studies might suggest. The pseudo-problem of a supposed conflict between contemplation and leadership is solved in the life and experience of contemplative leaders. They are able to unite contemplation and leadership into a mutually enriching and effective way of being and doing.

6.5 What is Contemplative Leadership?

Some of the participants suggest that to be a contemplative leader, one has to be grounded in two worlds: one is the external world of one's organisation with all the skills and competencies that leadership requires; the other is the inner world of contemplation that facilitates a dynamic and ongoing inner transformation through intimate relationship with God. These two worlds are meant to dynamically influence and complement each other (section 5.3.4.1). We see this exemplified in the life and work of Sedgmore. She competently and skilfully integrated her personal spirituality with her professional life (section 3.4.3). Sedgmore knew her job well, was highly professional, she demonstrated many leadership competencies such as a) high ethical and moral standards; b) fostered organic organisational culture change; c) developed a sense of connection and belonging among people; d) empowered others and engaged in collective leadership; e) was open to new ideas and encouraged innovation and creativity; f) nurtured personal growth and learning; g) and fostered team building, collaboration and net-working (section 3. 4.3). She acknowledged that all these expressions of leadership were deeply influenced and informed by her profound spiritual life and ongoing inner development. Based on the findings and the literature review, we understand that, at its heart, contemplative leadership results when the practice of leadership is motivated and enlightened by one's contemplative way of living. Figure 6.1 illustrates the interface between contemplation (inner being) and leadership (outer doing). These reflect the two wings of contemplative leadership.
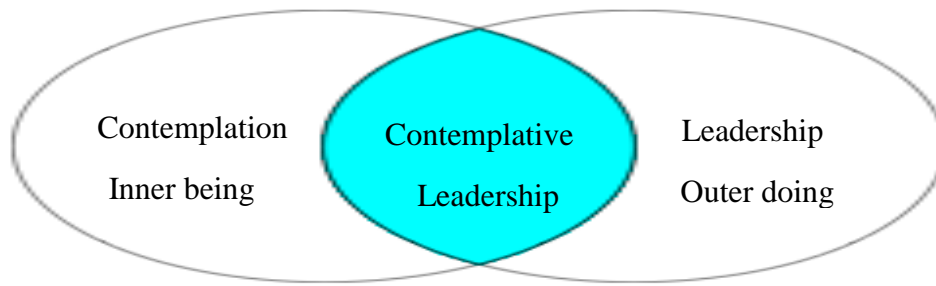
Figure 6.1 What is Contemplative Leadership

6.6 Characteristics of Contemplative Leadership

Sedgmore tells us that, "character and virtues stem directly from living congruently with one's own personal spirituality… as an individual progresses spiritually, or metaphysically, the virtues increasingly inform and influence, through a virtuous circle, inner experience and moral character, which becomes reflected in outer action as action for goodness for its own sake" (Sedgmore, 2013, 85). This is also true of the participants' experience. Their personal spirituality resulted in developing the following characteristics: a) greater self-awareness; b) better quality of presence; c) leading with love and compassion; d) better listening and being less judgemental; e) interiorly motivated; f) seeking right use of power; g) being less ego-centric; h) informed by wisdom; i) developing the ability to make better decisions (section 5.3.4.4). Identifying and clarifying this specific cluster of nine interrelating characteristics of contemplative leadership is a unique contribution of this research. These specific characteristics are explained below.

A) Greater Self-awareness

Self-awareness is a critical aspect of leadership development. It is necessary if one is to progress toward maturity and wholeness, and constructively affect one's relationships with other people. Such self-awareness is the basis of perceptive emotional intelligence, as Carroll states:

> Self-awareness is the first component of emotional intelligence… Self-awareness means having a deep understanding of one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives. People with strong self-awareness are neither overly critical nor unrealistically hopeful. Rather, they are honest – with themselves and others. People who have a high degree of self-awareness recognize how their feelings affect them, other people, and their job performance… It shows itself as candour and an ability to assess oneself realistically. People with a high degree of self-

awareness are able to speak accurately and openly… about their emotions and the impact they have on their work (Carroll, 2007, 118).

The interview participants confirm this opinion and believe that contemplative practice helps them to have a greater self-awareness about their emotions, motivations, interactions with others, their ego attachments, and their decision making. This higher degree of awareness makes them a more self-possessed and balanced person, and enables them to work more effectively with others. This finding corresponds with one of Nolan's eight traits which she termed as clarity, which means "clear seeing into self, others, and situations that is not obstructed by ego" (Nolan, 2013, 183-184).

B) Better Quality of Presence

This is one of the fruits of a disciplined cultivation of the spiritual life. This concurs with Sedgmore's experience, indicated in chapter three, where she regards quality of presence as one of the manifestations of her inner spiritual life (section 3.4.2.4). This quality of 'being present' enables contemplative leaders to be more available in the here and now with an open mind, open heart, and open ear to people and to the movement of the Holy Spirit. This helps them to better relate with people, be amenable to new ideas and possibilities. This better quality of presence is quite similar with one of Nolan's eight traits, which she termed as *currency of time (Now).* Although the language is different, the content is similar; by *currency of time* she means being "fully present" and aligning one's whole being with the now (section 3.3).

C) Leading with Love and Compassion

Leading with love and compassion become apparent when contemplative leaders feel deeply loved, nourished and transformed by the unconditional love of God and his compassion. This enables them to want to share God's love, and be that love for others. Over years of spiritual practice and growth, such leaders develop a greater capacity to love and to serve. For example, this enables Anna to adopt a loving gaze toward whoever she is with, and helps Carl to "reach out to colleagues" (section 5.3.4.4). In the literature, Sedgmore is a good example of this. Joseph witnessed her genuine desire to be "of service, to care and love" (Sedgmore, 2013, 85), and as the years go by she developed an even stronger sense of love and desire

to serve. These actions of love and service stem from the life altering experience of being loved by God. Jesus Christ is a role model for contemplative leaders, for "wherever he goes, he brings healing, he brings life, he brings love, he brings wisdom, he brings truth" (section 5.3.4.4). This is what contemplative leaders want to be and do in their relationship with people and in their practice of leadership. This characteristic of leading with love and compassion parallels Nolan's understanding of compassion (section 3.3).

D) Better Listening and Less-judgmental

Listening intensely and being willing to hear other's stories and opinions as a contemplative leader "…helps to develop a welcoming heart and a way of listening to others that allows us to really hear and not just focus on what we think we should be hearing. When we engage in a contemplative stance we realise that we are not in control and that we don't always have the best answer" (Sylvester, 2009). For this reason, a contemplative leader tends to be very approachable, non-judgmental, and very accepting of people and situations. She/he welcomes new ideas and encourages initiative and creativity. Through genuine listening, a contemplative leader empowers co-workers and supports what they are doing so that the one who is listened to feels noticed, respected, worthy, encouraged, and energized. This also builds trust and enhances good interpersonal relationships. The characteristic of better listening is echoed in one of Nolan's traits named *centred communication* (section 3.3).

E) Interiorly Motivated

A contemplative leader is less likely to be motivated by prestige, status, human success or material gain, rather tends to be inspired by a higher purpose and a transcendental vision of life, love and service. This intrinsic motivation enables Bob to want to "promote the kingdom of God", to "make this world a better place, and want to be a loving person". It impels Gina to foster human flourishing, and promote "wholeness, life and vitality for the people involved" (section 5.3.4.4). This is also shown implicitly in the example of Sedgmore's leadership in her desire to be good, in her strong sense of wanting to be of service, and her deep

desire to work and function for the greater good (section 3.4.3.2). A contemplative leader is not manipulative, but rather seeks to influence people by a persuasive inner conviction, by living virtuously, and by articulating collectively a values-based vision to inspire others to achieve a common goal.

F) Better Use of Power

"Power corrupts and absolute power corrupt absolutely". This saying conveys the temptation that leaders normally face; it is relatively easy for a leader to abuse the different expressions of power. In history, we have seen many leaders misuse their power. However, the interview participants and the theorists in this research suggest a solution to overcome this temptation: they advocate that contemplation informs and influences the understanding and use of power. A contemplative leader regards the power of a leadership position as the power to love and serve. This is true for Alex who thinks that, "authentic power comes from a deeper source…, and at its heart, that power is creative love". He tries to let that power of love live at the centre of his life and leadership. A contemplative leader does not consciously want to use power over anybody, but seeks to distribute power. This confirms Sedgmore's idea that a contemplative leader does not misuse power, rather uses power with and for other people (Sedgmore, 2013, 57). Additionally, a contemplative leader is not power driven. He/she doesn't look for power, for leadership, but rather leadership roles are often assigned not sought. A genuine contemplative leader serves and empowers others and uses power for the greater good of the community and organization.

G) Being Less Ego-centric

This research has shown that a significant characteristic of contemplative leadership is becoming less self-centred. The findings of this research and the literature review both agree that becoming less ego-centric is one of the fruits of the inward journey (section 6. 3.1and 5.3.4.4 G); and this is not only shown in personal transformation, but also manifested in the way one leads. For the contemplative, leadership is not about herself/himself; it is about empowering others and is to serve a higher purpose, to be a model of love and compassion, to be a beacon of light for others.

H) Informed by Wisdom

Being informed by wisdom is another integral characteristic of contemplative leadership. Some participants in this research believe that contemplation brings wisdom that can only come from God, it is a wisdom that you cannot manufacture or create for yourself; it is a wisdom that is gift, that can only be received at the foot of the Master, it is a wisdom that results from an intimate presence to God in the bond of love. Such wisdom cannot be found in books. It comes with practice and it is one of the fruits of a contemplative way of living (section 5.3.4.4.H). This is not particularly discussed in the literature review but the contemplative tradition is often regarded as a wisdom tradition. It is implied in the literature that the contemplative journey brings wisdom that goes beyond the knowledge of this world.

I) Ability to Make Better Decisions

All the characteristics mentioned above help to contribute to better decision-making. Leaders who maintain a daily spiritual practice become more self-aware, more present, less ego-centric, less judgemental, a better listener, compassionate, interiorly motivated, wanting to love and serve, and have wisdom that cannot be learned from leadership books (section 5.3.4.4.I). As a result, a contemplative leader is more disposed make better decisions because she/he is not triggered by strong negative emotions, is free of ego attachment and seeks to serve the other (section 5.3.4.4.I). This is a much-needed leadership competency in today's world.

6.7 Contemplative Leadership and Organizational Culture

The findings and the literature review confirm that a contemplative approach to leadership can positively influence organizational culture. It can promote and support the creation of a good working environment and express a coherent and well-developed ethic of care. The effect of a contemplative approach on organisational culture can be demonstrated under the following headings: a) a values-based organisation, b) a healthy working environment, c) an inclusive, innovative and high-performance culture, d) a holistic approach to employee welfare, and e) an organisation with a social conscience.

6.7.1 A Values-based Organisation

There is a tendency for contemplative leaders to want to co-create a values-based organisation which reflects, in the light of their own spiritual experience, an understanding of the relationship between people, work, and an organisation. To make this happen a leader needs to consciously encourage the articulation and living of values that inspire and motivate people to commit to and achieve a collective and mutually agreed vision. This process helps to communicate why an organisation exists and what it stands for, as was seen in Sedgmore (section 3.4.3.3.A) and in Tom's of Maine (section 1.6.2.4.B). The participation of employees is essential to the formulation of organisational values. The collaborative creation of shared vision, shared mission, shared aims, and shared values is a means of maximizing values, of articulating an organisation's self-identity, and giving employees a sense of belonging and membership. This type of alignment between personal and organisational values can produce a sense of intrinsic meaning and purpose. This kind of values-led corporate process contributes to introducing and supporting major culture change within an organisation.

The desire to change, through the articulation and living of values as a leader, does not guarantee that all members of an organisation are similarly prepared or willing to change. Ongoing and successful change must involve planning and implementing for both organisational and individual change. One of the particular challenges facing leadership in these circumstances is that all may not be sufficiently motivated or capable of effecting the intended changes. Accordingly, a leader must be aware of the extent to which individuals hold key beliefs regarding change, must recognise what potential problems needs to be addressed, and help participants understand the changes that they and the organisation need to make (Holt and Vardaman, 2013, 9-10). To support change, it may be necessary for a leader to promote "…the collective, coordinated actions of many interdependent individuals, each of whom contributes something to the change

effort" (Holt & Vardaman, 2013, 10). To make this possible it is important to be aware of the circumstances and conditions that may either enhance or inhibit the acceptance and implementation of change. To facilitate change, a leader needs to be sure that people in the organisation have the requisite knowledge, the appropriate skills, and the individual ability to sustain the change. This, together with a culture and climate of support, and with clearly articulated goals and objectives, will help implementing the desired change, redefine roles were necessary, and serve as a means of measuring the progress of change (Holt and Vardaman, 2013, 12).

6.7.2 Creating a Healthy Work Environment

One of the chief concerns of human resource personnel is health and safety, but contemplative leadership brings this duty to a higher level. The task then is not just about creating an environment that protects health and guarantees physical safety, but introduces a notion of health and safety that encompasses the entire person – emotionally, socially, psychologically, spiritually, relationally. This translates into generating an atmosphere of mutual trust, respect, openness, collegiality, collaboration, and a willingness to listen, care, love and serve in real and quantifiable ways (section 5.3.5.1). In such an environment, where there is transparency, where honour is promoted between people, then competition tends to be healthier and difficulties less conflictual and confrontational (section 5.3.5.1). It is clear that such an approach would foster interpersonal relationship between people which can be genuine and profound, creating a good foundation for sincere relationships, real dialogue, and good community (section 5.3.5.1). In such a safe and trusting environment, employees are likely to feel free, relaxed and happy, to feel valued as individuals, and more fulfilled in their work (section 5.3.5.1).

6.7.3 An Inclusive, Innovative and High-Performance Culture

A contemplative leader tends to promote an organisational ethos which values inclusivity and mutuality. In practice this means respecting difference, celebrating diversity and promoting inclusivity and equal opportunity for all. This adds an

extra element to a healthy environment. This approach can generate a sense of freedom and possibility allowing employees to be open to creativity, on-going learning, and seeking always to improve. In such an open and supportive culture, people are more likely to take initiative, be genuinely committed to their work, and actively involved in building teams and creating a high performance community. This is shown in the influence Sedgmore had on her organisation, where she applied different programmes and activities to foster an inclusive, innovative and high performance organisational culture (section 3.4.3.3).

6.7.4 A Holistic Approach to Employee Welfare

A contemplatively oriented organisation fosters a holistic approach to employee welfare (section 5.3.5.3). This finding agrees with one of Sedgmore's leadership priorities which is that of "developing the whole person through fostering inner life, spiritual awareness, growth and inquiry" (section 3.4.3.3). She was committed to investing money and time for employee wellbeing through promoting human, spiritual, and professional development (section 3.5.4). Human capital is the most essential resource for an organisation. However, for the contemplative leader, the employees' well-being is a significant aspect of concern not only for the benefit of the organisation, but also for the genuine care of co-workers. Working with an organisation that cares for its people, it is likely that employees will "feel satisfied, motivated, energized, and creative in their work and perform highly… The most important thing is they feel a sense of wellbeing" (section 5.3.5.1).

6.7.5 An Organisation with Social Conscience

The contemplative leadership approach helps to develop an organisation with a social conscience, so that it is concerned not only about its own profit and benefit but also about the entire human family and our common home. This finding corresponds with Benefiel's idea of building values-based organisations (section 1.6.2.4). It also confirms Fry and Nisiewicz' view that a company which is facilitated by a spiritual leader embodies the idea that it is possible for "profit and

prosperity to go hand in hand with social justice and environmental stewardship" (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 243). An organisation with a social conscience, has the benefit of people as a priority, works for the greater good, and is motivated by wider understanding of care and service. This can only happen when the strategic application and articulation of a lived spirituality in the work place is truly advocated. This is an example of how the spiritual dimension can inform leadership and expresses the practical impact of contemplative leadership in the lives of others.

6.8 Challenges to Practising Contemplative Leadership

The challenges a contemplative leader faces in a secular, often complex, competitive business and organisational world are many. Some of the challenges that emerged from this research are discussed under the headings of: a) spiritual development, c) culture, and d) education.

6.8.1   Spiritual Development a Challenge

The spiritual growth and inner transformation is fundamental to practicing contemplative leadership. The question is, how many appreciate the need to move beyond the narrow confines of the ego as a means to becoming a better leader? How many are willing to allow the transcendent permeate their individual and professional lives? Even for those who are willing, it is still a demanding to engage in spiritual practices, and transcend one's ego. In our busy, noisy, digital information era, it is difficult to make time for silence, solitude, meditation, and contemplation. There are many appealing things that distract us from doing so, many seductive concepts of what a successful person is meant to look like, and it is always a challenge to discipline oneself.

Perhaps the major challenge is the self; letting go of the false self and letting the true self emerge is a lifelong process; it is a huge challenge as Laozi affirms, "letting go is like dying" (Heider, 1985, 31), just like the silkworm has to die to become a butterfly, so the person must strive to go beyond ego-centeredness. This is a life-giving but painful process. Even for the interview participants who have been engaging in spiritual development for many years, it is still a struggle at

times. It really takes conviction, determination and willingness to engage in on-going inner work. This requires great belief and radical trust to pursue this process of personal transformation.

Another crucial challenge is making a connection between one's personal spirituality and professional life. Very often, for many, spirituality is a private matter, and it may not be easy for them to share their inner life and faith convictions with others. It also takes time and courage to integrate one's inner life and professional life, to try to align personal and corporate values. Since personal spiritual development is a lifelong process, the unfolding partnership between inner life and professional work is also on-going. It requires deep conviction, and heartfelt spiritual experiences to be motivated enough to integrate the two aspects of one's life, as in the case of Sedgmore (section 3.4.3.1).

6.8.2 Cultural Challenge

A principal limiting factor is the secularised, materialist, consumerist mentality that operates today. The reality of living and working in a secular environment brings challenges to contemplative leaders. In general, the business world is guided by values such as success, efficiency, profit, and self-gain. To bring spiritual values into a business world is, typically, counter-cultural. Introducing spirituality into the workplace can be conceived of as problematic, simple minded, and even eccentric. A contemplative leader, just like any leader, faces pressures from stakeholders to provide results, to ensure progress, and be profitable. Sometimes it is a major challenge when "spiritual principles and business success no longer seemed to go together" like the dark night experienced by Tom's of Maine (Benefiel, 2008, 149). Furthermore, in our contemporary situation, people have become cynical about faith, and there is a current climate of hostility towards religion. Although spirituality and religion are deeply connected, they are different, but people often associate spirituality with religion - they are suspicious and want to keep spirituality and religion out of the public sphere. Therefore, it is often difficult to talk about spirituality in the workplace, it is even more challenging to apply spiritual values in a secular organisation. A leader who tries

to do so may feel isolated and not receive much support from peers. It takes deep conviction to base one's leadership on love and service in our world.

6.8.5 Lacking in Education

A further obstacle is the fact that contemplative leadership is not usually taught in business schools, leadership courses or in universities, so that there is no appreciation of this type of approach to leadership or its applicability. Fortunately, a few spirituality centres and universities are promoting and teaching contemplative leadership, but comparably speaking they are a rare voice in a noisy all too pragmatic world. As a result, most people are not aware of the significance of contemplation and spiritual values for the business world. Needless to say, seeking heartfelt spiritual experiences that could initiate changes in self-concept, value systems, and world views are not so popular. Without awareness people will not have the expectation or appreciation to support this type of leadership. Unless people are aware, change cannot happen. Before the successful introduction and integration of contemplative leadership can take place, a transformation of our understanding is required. One has to appreciate its spiritual and faith foundation, its anthropology, its sociology, its attitude to work, and desire to care for the world and the people in it. Undoubtedly, Leaders will also encounter difficulties in the attempt to create a spiritually anchored organisation. Most do not have such a background or training in this area. A contemplative approach is still an unconventional way of leading in today's world. However, as we have seen in the personal and professional lives of the research participants, it is not impossible. There is significant research being carried out into the connection between spirituality and leadership and the implications of this connection for the world of business and organisations.

6.9 Opportunities for Practicing and Fostering Contemplative Leadership

There have always been mystics and contemplatives throughout all ages; men and women who grew close to God and in small and great ways have changed the course of human history for the better. It is no different in our time.

6.9.1 Learning from the Past

Although finding it challenging in various ways, the participants in this research have been trying to practice contemplative leadership in their day-to-day work for many years. Each has shown it is possible to be a contemplative leader in our

modern complex world. In the literature review we have seen that people of deep faith throughout the ages in the Christian tradition have been practising contemplative leadership as a natural consequence of their intimate relationship with God and in response to the needs of their times. They were effective in initiating change, gathering followers, being ethical and moral leaders, caring for people and the world, they were visionaries in search of wholeness of 'being and doing' for themselves and their companions; they were trailblazers in the art and discipline of contemplative leadership before it had that name. There is something ancient and something new about contemplative leadership. Ancient in the sense that mystics have been leaders who found their relationship with the Divine the source of inner strength and the wisdom that informed their leadership style. It allowed for the integration of, rather than separation between, one's private inner life and the public life of service to others. It provided them with the courage to face difficulties and challenges with dignity and conviction. They saw their leadership and work as a way of serving and loving, as a way of providing a nurturing environment for human beings to flourish and initiate social change. It is new in the sense that in our own day, people like the interviewees, and the theorists such as Sedgmore and Song show that, in life of an individual and in organisations, contemplative leadership does work, it does have a place and chance to positively influence and guide the development of our understanding of a person fully alive and effective, inspiring leadership for the twenty-first century.

6.9.2 Looking Toward the Future

The literature review has provided a developmental perspective of leadership, particularly over the past one hundred years. Tracing this development points towards the interiorization of leadership, the gradual movement from doing to being, from action to virtue. This understanding of leadership is now attracting

interest not only in leadership studies, but there are a number of individuals and organisations that are actively promoting the viability and importance of contemplative leadership in all walks of life. For instance, the Shalem Institute of Spiritual Formation offers courses in the theory and practice of contemplative leadership. There are other centres which promote the introduction of contemplative practice into leadership education such as the Centre for Contemplative Mind in Society. Such centres are reaching out to partner universities and professional schools who educate leaders in all fields of human endeavour. These centres offer a variety of Leadership Training Programmes, retreats, workshops, and conferences. They aim to introduce and establish standards by which institutes and universities can guide and measure the teaching of contemplation and its application to personal and organizational life. These collaborations promise to extend the work of contemplative pedagogy by supporting a network of scholars and academic professionals in universities and business schools. Viterbo University teaches contemplative leadership in their department of Servant Leadership to create space for reflection and contemplation. This is an indication that the necessary skills and disciplines can be taught and learned in the formation of contemplative leaders. In 2015 the Academy for Contemplative and Ethical Leadership, sponsored by the Mind and Life Institute, was envisioned as a launch pad to support the development of this new field of inquiry and to address a growing hunger for a deeper understanding and experience of leadership. In terms of exploring the research dimension of contemplative leadership, *The Journal of Contemplative Inquiry* was established as a peer-reviewed journal to advance the understanding, development, and application of a contemplative vision of higher education as an opportunity for cultivating personal and social awareness and an exploration of meaning, values, and engaged action.

These are some of the opportunities taken to integrate the principles and practice of contemplative leadership into conventional leadership thinking and training. Consequently, mainstream organisations are learning of it now, and there are both researchers and practitioners involved in integrating contemplative practice into leadership training programmes at many levels across the globe.

Having explored the concepts, characteristics, challenges and opportunities of contemplative leadership it is now possible to contribute to the ongoing research in this area by presenting a proposed model. This model highlights the importance of personal growth to become an authentic contemplative leader; it indicates how the contemplative approach is concretely expressed in leadership values and practice, and also outlines the potential impact this can have on an organisation and its culture.

6.10 A Model of Contemplative Leadership

As can be seen from the previous chapters, the focus on the personal growth of self as a contemplative does not diminish the need to be the best possible leader one can be to create a first-rate organisation. In fact, as the research suggests, the outcomes of an organization can be strengthened by a contemplative leadership approach: there is no inconsistency between contemplation and seeking excellence in business or an organisation. This research has demonstrated that contemplative leaders have the inclination to create the conditions for success at all levels in an organisation (secular or religious) through positive inter-relationships and good management (Schuttloffel, 2013, 91). They have the desire to make decisions that foster the experience of achievement for all, and intentionally create a working environment that reflects moral values, meaningful work, and a sense of belonging and community. Contemplative leaders believe that part of their role as leaders is to espouse a culture of care, to help others develop their own identity, and even foster spiritual growth of others within their own faith tradition or none. In this way, they try to nourish employee experience of Spirit at work, which can be manifested through respect, love, humility, courage (Pawar, 2009, 382). They seek to achieve authentic relationship between the inner world of the person and the outer world of the organization to the mutual benefit of both.

To this end fostering good relationships is a priority. This is underpinned by the basic Christian anthropology that sees people created in the image and likeness of God. Leaders put this belief into practice in the many ways of relating at an individual and corporate level. Gospel values are at the heart of these relationships. This emphasis on relationships is central and could be considered the dominant operating value. Therefore, facilitating good relationships is seen as the essence of community building in which each person has value, is respected and belongs, is nurtured and cared for, and their holistic unfolding as individuals is considered an important dimension of the organization (Schuttloffel, 2013, 93).

Combining the findings of the data analysis and literature review, this model provides an outline of the kind of exemplary growth and integration that can take place within the contemplative leader, and an organization. It is a means to illustrate and explain the inner dynamics, developmental stages, and potential impact of contemplative leadership. A visual representation of the model is presented in Figure 6.2. It comprises six major interconnected and interdependent components that begins with cultivating the inner life; developing a transformed consciousness, which is experienced and expressed as a new level of being that is made manifest in the specific characteristics of contemplative leadership. This form of leadership will influence the organizational culture and organisational outcomes.

(Flowers)
Values-based organisation
Healthy work environment
Priority of relationships and community
Culture of empowerment
Holistic approach to employee welfare
Innovative and inclusive culture
Social conscience and social engagement

(Fruit)
Employee
Excellence
Extended
human family
Environment

(Leaves)
Greater self-awareness
Better quality of
Presence
Leading with love and
Compassion
Better listening and
Less-judgemental
Interiorly motivated
Better use of power
Less ego-centric
Informed by wisdom
Make better decisions

(Branches)
World view
Value system
Well-being
Personal qualities
Relationships

(Trunk)
A transformed
consciousness

(Nourishing the Roots)
Contemplative practice
Intimate relationship with Divine
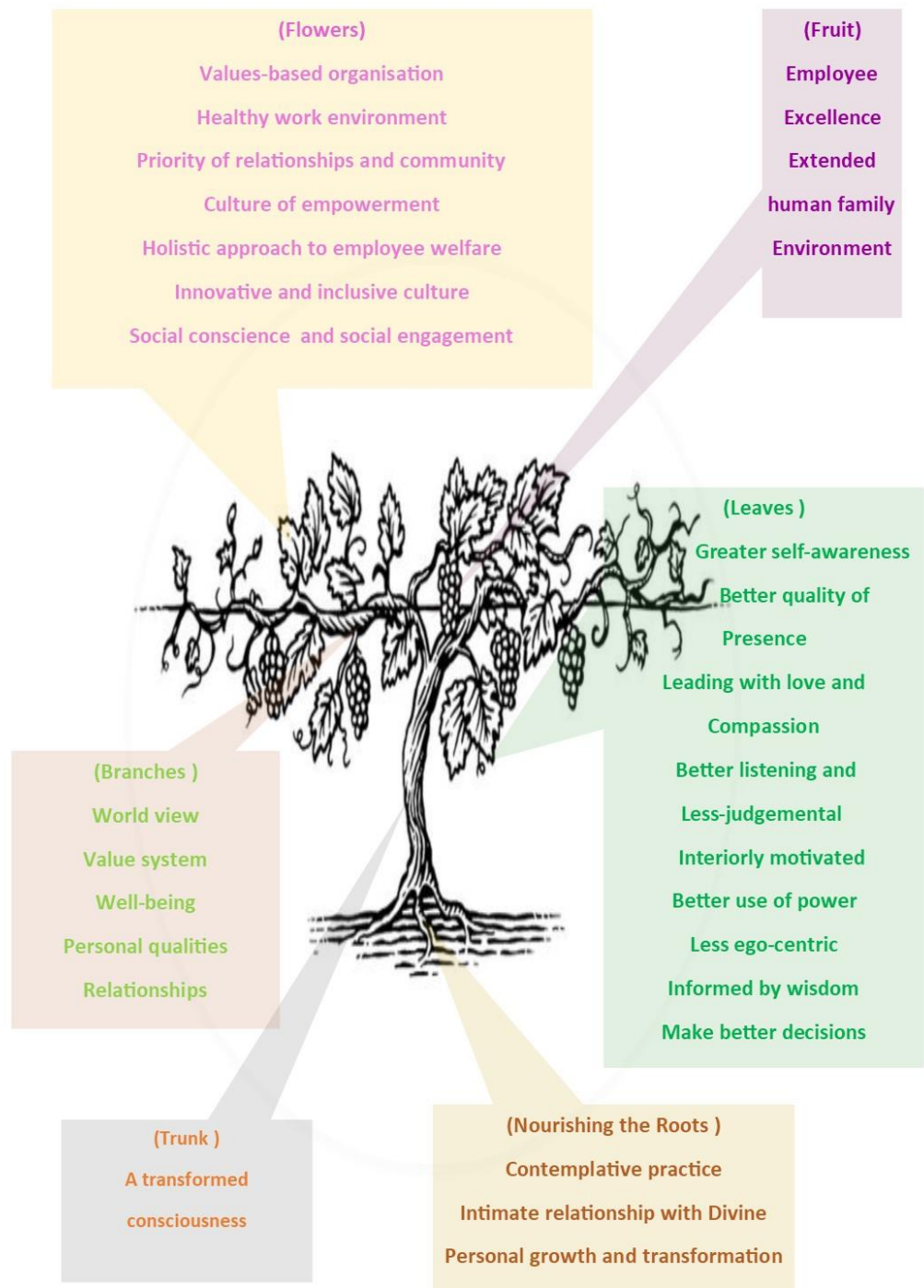Personal growth and transformation

Figure 6.2. A Model of Contemplative leadership
A Vine tree

6.10.1 The Inner Life of a Leader (Nourishing the Root)

The source of contemplative leadership lies in the inner life of a leader. For a leader to shed light rather than shadow, to do good rather than harm, the inner life has to be in touch with God, the Ultimate Reality. The contemplative journey is a way of growing toward intimate relationship with this Source. The journey, nurtured by contemplative practice, is, in fact, a transformative process which moves a person from a kind of ordinary acquaintance with the Divine to ever deepening levels of friendship, commitment, and experience, and can lead toward degrees and intensities of union as time goes on. This relationship supports letting go of egoist attachments and fosters self-transcendence; it promotes a growth and development toward wholeness, toward a non-dual level of being. This process is not linear; it is a dynamic movement shifting back and forth. To be fully human, to move toward this dynamic personal transformation, to be one's true self, takes conviction, time and dedication. This spiritual journey is also a journey into the heart of humanity and is the gateway, not only to a transformed self, but also a transformed social self.

6.10.2 A Transformed Consciousness (The Trunk)

As a result of the inward journey, a contemplative leader is in the process of becoming a new creation growing out of a transformed consciousness. One who engages in interior work through cultivating contemplative knowledge, developing spiritual intelligence, and moving toward self-transcendence, will reach a new level of awareness, develop a transformed mind-set, and a deeper perception of self and others. In other words, being born of the Spirit and becoming a "twice born" leader (Zaleznik, 1992, 8) means experiencing an epistemological shift from intellectual knowing of the physical and material world to a direct felt knowing of a transcendent presence and a participation in a truer reality creating an expansion of comprehension and an illumined sense of being.

6.10.3. Expressions of a New Level of Being (The Branches)

This new level of being can be reflected in a leader's world view, value system, sense of wellbeing; it will enhance personal qualities and the desire for a more genuine relationship with God, others and the world.

World view: Spiritual awareness in this state of consciousness normally surpasses ordinary experience because of union with the transcendent reality of God. In this situation, a leader is transformed through a distinct way of knowing. He/she develops a new kind of world view, seeing and feeling differently, understanding the universe and everything in it as interconnected, perceiving the apparent many-sidedness of truth as one essential truth (Sedgmore, 2013, 70). One is moved to accept the diversity of all beings, actions, paths, and beliefs as part of a universal reality continually unfolding and evolving. The perception of self also changes, enabling a general response of heartfelt love and compassion towards life. This makes it feasible to relate to all living things with unreserved respect and concern. Coming to a deeper understanding of the meaning and purpose of human existence does not deny the reality of suffering, chaos, and the everyday pain and challenges of life. Nevertheless, this world view does provide a context for understanding, interpreting and engaging with these realities.

Value system: One's value system changes; it becomes less egoistic, less self-centred and more altruistic in that the person values authenticity, integrity, benevolence, and compassion because these reflect the essence and experience of the mutual relationship between the self and the Divine. In dealing with the reality of life, one now cherishes the unfolding of others by wanting to promote democracy, protect diversity, ensure equality, and be ethically responsible. The personal growth and development that takes place within the self can be reflected in fostering justice, humility, inclusiveness, unconditional love, and environmental sustainability. This leader is there to serve and build a service-oriented culture. The leader's God-centred value system functions as a moral compass, or perhaps a transcendent compass, directing one's life and guiding one's behaviour. It motivates and influences action and decision-making.

Wellbeing: contemplative practice and inner transformation generally make a significant contribution to the physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing of the leader. Contemplative practice can be effective in reducing anxiety, stress, depression, chronic pain; it can improve one's sleep pattern, immune function,

and prevent burnout and compassion fatigue. The practitioner of contemplation can experience a sense of greater peace, joy and serenity, and a better concentration, an increased capacity for empathy towards self and others. Last but not least, it can develop spiritual intelligence and foster spiritual virtues such as charity, forgiveness, and wisdom. It this way it contributes to and enhances the experience of wholeness and fullness of life.

Personal Qualities: The person tends to develop a set of qualities and virtues such as authenticity, integrity, generosity, humility, to name but a few. Because of the encounter with and experience of God, this person has a greater appreciation of the goodness of divine nature. God is love, beauty, truth, light, life… so reflects these qualities and virtues to a greater or lesser extent. Because of this he/she can develop the ability to inspire and motivate; being unafraid of challenges, they encourage transformation in others, they are passionate individuals who have a deep-seated interest in genuine progress and a great conviction about their vision for a better world. They are dedicated to the flourishing of all people.

Relationships: The transformed world view, value system, and a conversion of the heart triggered by the experience of the love of God, affect the leader's way of relating. This leader perceives a deeper reality and has a profound sense of interconnectedness with the Transcendent and all living things. Thus he/she relates differently. In this intimate relationship with God, a leader tends to have a more authentic relationship with self, a conscientious relationship with others, and develop a responsible rapport with nature. In other words, a contemplative leader lives in "right relationships with self, others, nature and God" (Drey, 2011, 355). Developing such good-quality relationships is central to healthy interpersonal and social functioning and plays a crucial role in team building, community developing and net-working which is so crucial in the corporate world. This orientation goes a long way to contributing to a healthy workplace culture and a high-performance organisation.

6.10.4 Characteristics of Contemplative Leadership (The Leaves)

A greater self-awareness is an important aspect of emotional intelligence and relational competence, which is vital for effective leadership. The quality of presence can enable the leader to live in the present moment, with clarity of mind, and with an open heart to people and to the guidance of the Spirit of God. Such a person is more likely to lead with love and compassion. This is the fruit of personal growth and a cultivated spiritual life. In one's intimate relationship with God, the person is touched by the unconditional love of God, and wants to share that love with others and serve God's people. Being open-minded, non-judgemental, and listening attentively makes one more approachable. A contemplative leader is intrinsically motivated by a higher purpose and transcendental vision of life, and understands power differently. Power is seen in terms of service and the opportunity to care. He/she is not power driven, but empowers others and distributes power for the greater good of the community and the organisation. Leadership is not for one's personal gain; it is there to build community, and embody the love and compassion of God for humanity. Being informed by wisdom, a wisdom that can only come from God, a leader who has a contemplative approach to life and to work is more likely to make better decisions because he/she is much freer of ego-attachment. Another expression of contemplative leadership is demonstrated through living the leadership virtues of authenticity, appreciation, courage, empowerment, generosity, humility, integrity, love, non-attachment, perseverance, trust, transparency. These virtues stem directly from living congruently one's personal spirituality. They are the characteristics and manifestations of "inner attitudes and orientations that are expressed as qualities of actions, both inner and outer, reflecting the soul's alignment with Being" (Maitri, 2005, 20). They are what keeps a leader behaving appropriately, morally, and ethically. As a contemplative leader progresses spiritually "the virtues increasingly inform and influence, through a virtuous circle, inner experience and moral character, which becomes reflected in outer action as action for goodness for its own sake" (Sedgmore, 2013, 88-89).

6.10.5 Impact on Organisational Culture (The Flowers)

As a moral and ethical person, a contemplative leader is likely to encourage the articulation and expression of the moral values and virtues that inspire and motivate. It is possible for these values to become the organisational ethos to be implemented in the work environment and become part of the culture of an organisation. The very positive and transformative experience a contemplative leader has can lead to the desire to facilitate a similar experience for others. This translates into wanting to create the opportunity to promote good relationships and build community. A healthy work environment is generated when people trust, honour, care and love each other. As a person who values the contribution of human capital, a contemplative is more likely to invest in employee wellbeing by supporting their inner life, spiritual awareness, and human and professional development. This not only encourages the nourishing of creativity, the sense of belonging, and fosters collaboration, it also includes creating a culture which values and embraces inclusiveness, equality, diversity and differences. In such an atmosphere, when a person feels empowered, valued, and fulfilled, it is possible for the welfare of the employee and the wellbeing of the organisation to be aligned. It is not a far step to see how this care for the person, the work environment, and the overall wellbeing of the organisation is expressed in terms of an organisational conscience. This research has shown that the care and concern that is experienced and promoted in the workplace can be extended to the larger society and the ecosystem. As it is indicated, a contemplatively grounded leadership style tends to have a considerable impact on the work environment and the organisational culture.

6.10.6 Outcomes of Using a Contemplative Approach (The Fruit)

A contemplative approach to leadership has potential to contribute to the wellbeing of employees, one's organisation, the larger human family, and the ecosystem, This is shown in figure 6.2 as the four "E"s: employee, excellence, extended human family, and environment. This confirms Fry and Nisiewicz' study that spiritual leadership can lead to the advancement in the three domains of people, profit, and planet (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 1). As mentioned above, a

contemplative approach can lead to a holistic approach to employee welfare; it takes all aspects of the person into account including the mind, heart, and soul. As a result, this benefits to the wellbeing of the employees.

A contemplative approach not only cares for its own employees, but is also concerned for others outside the organisation. This social concern is a natural development of a contemplative stance towards people, work, and the world. A leader and organisation with a social conscience will be inclined to reach out to the larger society, particularly the poor and marginalised, to contribute to their lives in whatever way reasonably possible as a way of extending care to our human family.

There is also a place for excellence in an organisation led by a contemplative leader. A healthy work environment and a good organisational culture provides a foundation for employee commitment. This in turn contributes to high quality products and excellent services such as business products, commercial goods, educational programs, health services. Thus, to strive to truly satisfy customers' needs and seek to achieve high organisational performance are not incompatible with a contemplation orientation. Generating financial surplus and additional income for an organization and its shareholders is not contrary to a contemplative stance.

An organization influenced by a contemplative leader tends to be committed to sustainable development. Respect for the interdependence of all creation and acting as a conscious entrepreneur, caring about the environment and the needs of people other than investors are all consistent with contemplative leadership. In Laudato Si', Pope Francis speaks eloquently about caring for our common home, and developing an awareness of our common origin and our mutual belonging and future to be shared with everyone for the benefit of all. There is something very positive about utilizing business models that are innovative and can help solve the world's many social and environmental problems. It is possible to embody the idea that "profit and prosperity go hand in hand with social justice and environmental stewardship" (Fry and Nisiewicz, 2013, 243).

6.11 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the different aspects to contemplative leadership: the importance of spirituality, the concepts, characteristics, opportunities and challenges, and its potential influence on organisational culture. It also presented a model of contemplative leadership. Figure 6.1 provides a visual representation and summarises the main meaning of the model. John 15:5 captures the essence of this model: "I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing" (NRSV). For a leader to bear good fruit, to care for others, to be effective in leadership, to do good for one's organisation and society, and contribute to the kingdom of God, one must be rooted in God and have an intimate relationship with the source of life as the inspiration and model of this way of being and doing.

Chapter 7 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Overview of the Research

Having explored the history of leadership studies, particularly over the last hundred years, the movement toward interiorization, toward the inner life of the leader, is evident. Leadership studies show how effective leadership is when one pays attention to the inner life. This research, along with many other scholarly studies, indicate that effective leadership cannot be reduced to what a leader does, but rather who a leader is; it is the inner quality of a leader that is the source of the values, vision, inspiration, commitment and motivation that guide leadership practice. The participants in this study proved that those who engage in a contemplative journey and follow a religious belief system, will have their leadership behaviour shaped by the underlining beliefs and perspectives of their faith tradition. These participants have shared their experience of the intimate connection between contemplation and leadership and in so doing they have contributed to a more developed understanding of contemplative leadership, its concepts, characteristics, challenges and opportunities. This research has primarily centred on the being of a leader that is not just moral, or ethical, or the expression of servant leadership, but rather an expression of an I-Thou relationship with God that transforms every aspect of one's being, inner and outer. What this research has been able to do is to identify the qualities and characteristics that emerged through the movement from contemplative practice to transformed consciousness, and, subsequently, to the development of a highly internalised value system which has the potential to positively impact an organisation's culture and outcomes.

7.2 Significance of this Research

Spirituality is becoming a more significant factor in leadership studies and practice. So much has been written on the spirituality of leadership in the recent past that has added significantly to our knowledge of the theory and practice of leadership through the continuous development from one model to another. The understanding of leadership is never complete, it is always developing in response

to new insight, complexity, experience and need. An essential part of evaluating the significance of this research is to situate it within the wider context of spiritual leadership studies. Contemplative leadership, as this research shows, reflects the development of the concept of spiritual leadership in that it has explored contemplative spirituality in depth, and the potential impact this can have on the understanding, quality and characteristics of spiritual leadership for the individual leader and an organisation. Thus, this research has further developed the spirituality dimension of spiritual leadership, and so contributes significantly to the understanding of spiritual leadership.

Over the decades leadership studies have discovered that the essence of leadership resides in the heart of a leader. This research project has demonstrated how leadership continues to develop and build upon previous models of spiritual leadership to provide a model that will advance our understanding. Contemplative leadership as a relational process, aims at constructing, coordinating and transforming self, others, the organisation, and our common environment to accomplish personal, social, organisational, and business ends. The development of a model of contemplative leadership acknowledges the complexity of leadership, and recognizes that leadership does not progress by the mere acquisition of strategies, or the tendency to reduce leadership to techniques. This model emphasises the importance of the leader's inner journey, and provides a spatial image of the various elements of the journey and its possible results. The unique contribution of this research is that it provided a map for leaders to develop toward a non-dual level of being and doing.

The development of a theory of contemplative leadership is still in its early stages and, hence, there is much potential for future research. Nevertheless, it is the intention of this research to provide the language to understand the key concepts and an integrative model for the understanding of contemplative leadership in organisations from a Christian contemplative tradition. Presenting such language, and a model for contemplative leadership, will contribute to a more

comprehensive understanding of leadership and, perhaps, contribute to the redefinition of leadership and its possible transformation.

This research also demonstrates that the contemplative life affects not just the personal and spiritual life of the individual leader, the care for others, and organisational performance but also demonstrates concern for the larger society and the environment. Such concern is an integral aspect of effective leadership as shown by Fry and colleagues who have done empirical studies and found that spiritual leadership can possibly maximize the triple bottom line of people, profit and planet. This study has not only confirmed their findings but has been able to more specifically indicate how the development of the leader, as a spiritual person, directly contributes to the success of an organisation and its concern for people and the environment. The participants in this research confirmed and developed the fact that contemplative leadership can influence organisational culture, create beneficial outcomes for employee well-being, promote organisational excellence, and care for both the extended human family and the environment (figure 6.2).

Fry and Kriger's being-centred leadership theory suggests that a leader's level of being directly influences the practice of leadership, and the non-dual level of being and leading is the highest stage a leader can aspire to. For this to become evident the specific qualities and integrity of the leader have to be identified because they are crucial for promoting personal spiritual growth, leadership effectiveness, organisational performance, and a desire for the good of the larger society. What this research has done is to explore, from the Christian contemplative perspective, the language, meaning, significance, and implications of a non-dual level of being, and provide a "how to" step to grow toward this non-dual level of being and leading.

Sedgmore has contributed significantly, through her own experiences, to the study of spiritual leadership and its potential impact on organisational culture and performance. We witnessed how her personal spiritual life and mystical experience informed her leadership practice, and offered us valuable insights on

how to "foster innovative organisational cultures and high performance through explicit spiritual leadership" (Sedgmore, 2013, 83). What this research has done is to contribute to Sedgemore's witness and insights by identifying and naming the internal reality of a contemplative leader and trace how it can influence the person, relationships, organisational culture, and social outcomes. This leadership model demonstrates that, just like a vine tree, contemplative leadership can be a dynamic, life giving, and effective way of being. It shows how the contemplative journey forms and transforms a person's value system and worldview, how it shapes moral character and ethical standards to become a virtuous way of being and positively influence the shape and character of an organisation.

7.3 Conclusions

Contemplative leadership is based on highly internalised moral, ethical and spiritual values, embodied in the organisational culture, and aimed at improving working conditions, the decision-making process, and care of people and the environment. Seven overlapping conclusions can be drawn from this research, and these will be outlined below.

7.3.1   The Primacy of the Inner Life of a Contemplative Leader

In the contemplative leadership model, primacy is first given to the inner life and spiritual transformation of the leader. The qualities, outcomes and effectiveness of contemplative leadership is a by-product of contemplation, but the ultimate goal of contemplation is an intimate relationship with God and love of others. This kind of leadership is predicated on the basis that a leader is willing to undertake that necessary inner journey to self-knowledge and self-transcendence which is discovered in relationship with the divine, and provides a broad base for understanding personhood, practising leadership, and seeking right relationships with others and the world. It is only as a consequence of this personal growth that there is an impact on the organisation as a whole. It is the depth of conviction, commitment, service and selfless altruistic love that distinguishes a contemplative leader from other styles of leadership. This inner growth is the source of a series of personal attributes, and is characterised by an intrinsically virtuous approach

that sets out to cultivate a sense of love, hope, faith, integrity, meaning, purpose and interconnectedness in the workplace.

Self-transcendence is an ongoing process in the progressive discovery of the divine in self and others, and it always involves continuing conversion; it is one's faith experience that leads to intimate relationship with the Divine, which is the foundation of values such as justice, service, community, and love. This research suggests that leadership, in essence, cannot be reduced to what a leader does, but who a leader is. It is the inner transformation and the inner quality of a leader that is the source of values, moral compass, and ethical behaviour. It is relationship with the Divine that makes possible a deeper understanding of the self, and a truer vision of humanity. Life itself is the context of leadership, not just the job or the product, or policies or strategies. Contemplative leadership touches and involves every facet of one's life and personality.

7.3.2 The Concept of Person and Work

Contemplation opens a person to the Divine "Thou". This influences one's mind and heart to appreciate the unique dignity of the human person, the power of right relationships, and benefits from a wisdom that can only emerge from such a relationship. This relationship with the Divine impacts our life together, it makes possible the journey from a self-referential, self-interested pragmatism to a more liberated altruistic self. Contemplation encourages a profound and deep transformation in the way one understands all of reality, and can generate a new vision of who one essentially is, and what we are called to be. It is in contemplation that a leader finds the seeds of care, love, and compassion, and understands work as worship, as promoting and reflecting the kingdom of God on earth. With a contemplative stance, a leader approaches people and work in the light of this relationship, and it's out of that relationship they feel the need to serve and want to make a difference and contribute to humanity.

7.3.3 The Workplace as Community

Being a person for others, able to appreciate their gifts, and recognise our fundamental interdependence, a contemplative leader seeks to create in the workplace a sense of community, and to make work as meaningful as possible.

Such leaders are dedicated to creating a workplace environment that leads to greater creativity, effectiveness, and empowerment. It is leadership that works through networks and teams, seeking to implement a shared vision, helping others to become leaders themselves, be aware of their own talents and how they can use these for the well-being of the wider community. Good leadership makes people partners in a common cause. A contemplative leader recognises that people and communities are not just a means to an organisational outcome, but are an end in, and of, themselves. Accordingly, such leaders tend to be collaborative, value the authentically human in others, operate out of deep respect, and seek always to empower. With a vision of the world of work being a better place where the dignity of the person is enshrined and the goodness out of work is celebrated, a contemplative leader is consciously committed to community building and providing an occasion for human flourishing in all its aspects.

7.3.4 A Holistic Understanding of Leadership Effectiveness

Contemplation is essential to help a leader develop a mind-set that emerges and develops out of one's relationship with God and makes all decisions in the light of this relationship for the benefit of others. Contemplative leadership is a work of love and compassion, a reflection of intimate relationship with God and a manifestation of transcendent values. A leader's world view and faith, informs one's moral framework and shapes practice. A contemplative leader understands leadership effectiveness not only in terms of achieving organisational goals such as productivity and profit, but also in terms of work environment, employee well-being, contribution to the larger society and care for our common home. Contemplative leadership is always part of who one is. It is out of such being that a leader has a strong commitment to socially based values that leads to the development of a social conscience and social concern in which an organisation remains sensitive and responsive to the wider world and the environment.

7.3.5 Contemplative Leadership cannot be reduced to a Technique

This research provides a model of leadership that unites what we do and how we do it, with who we are and what values motivate us in life. This leadership is grounded in a contemplative way of living, and it is centred on the values such as integrity, humility, love, service, and compassion. It is not another management

style, or a technique that can be easily understood and arbitrarily applied; rather it is the result of a willingness to change one's life, by way of conversion, and generate a new vision of what it means to be truly and authentically human. Contemplative leadership cannot be reduced to a technique of contemplative practice only, although it is an important part of the journey. The essence of the contemplative journey is self-transformation and self-transcendence through an intimate relationship with God.

7.3.6 The Challenges of Contemplative leadership

This model of contemplative leadership provides a real challenge for leaders. It requires a radical shift in perception, thinking, and new orientation to leadership. There will be people who find themselves uncomfortable with the use of concepts such as "spirituality", "contemplation", "God" or the "Transcendent" because these terms are generally outside their understanding of the requirements for leadership. This discomfort is understandable given the fact that many leaders, and potential leaders, are not people of faith, nor was this taught in their leadership training programmes. The challenge of integrating one's inner life with professional leadership may be a step too far for them. Furthermore, not all leaders will have strong moral values, and some may even be motivated by accruing personal power and self-aggrandisement or see leadership as an attractive possibility for personal gain. There may be some interest in pursuing socially based goals simply as a means of building a positive self-image for the leader or the organisation, but to engage in a personal journey of inner transformation, and on-going formation of self-relationship with God, the world and others, may be too challenging.

7.3.7 There is Hope

Although it is challenging to become a contemplative leader, it is not impossible, as we have seen in the personal and professional lives of the research participants. Many people have become aware of the importance of spirituality in leadership training programmes, just as Klenke stated, "more courses on budgeting, strategic planning, niche marketing, lean management, or even business ethics will not do. What is needed, instead, are educational leaders who are willing to plumb the depths of their inner wisdom and contemplate the deepest values that they hold

for themselves and their students to bridge the gap between private and public expressions of spirituality" (Klenke, 2003, 57). To respond to this need, there are currently some universities, leadership development programmes and various journals (section 6.9.2) dedicated to advocating contemplative leadership as a viable and effective way of leading and promoting contemplative leadership in search of a personal growth process that is never static but always growing, dynamic, and maturing through stages that enrich one's life as well as one's leadership.

7.4 Limitations of this Research

I am conscious of the limitations of this research. Firstly, the sample size was small compared with that of using a quantitative methodology. Only sixteen people were interviewed. Accordingly, the experiences and understanding of many other contemplative leaders was not included in this study. Secondly, the study was confined to a "situated perspective" (Ribbins and Marland, 1994, 6), where information was gathered from the self-reporting of sixteen participants and was not accompanied by observation of them in action or by the views of their colleagues or employees. Thirdly, this research is not a complete study of contemplative leadership in every aspect, but rather an exploration of its concepts, characteristics, opportunities and challenges. There are many perspectives from which the research of contemplative leadership could have been approached, for example, the influence of the organizational context on the practice of contemplative leadership, but it was not possible to cover all in this research. Fourthly, this research is done from a point of view of the Christian contemplative tradition, and not from the perspective of, for example, the Buddhist, Sufism, or secular humanist contemplative tradition. The scope of this research is further limited because 1) the sometimes complex, chaotic environments within an organisation that challenges leadership was not considered in detail; 2) leaders fail sometimes and, no doubt, contemplative leadership could fail. This research attempted to investigate the concept, characteristics, opportunities and challenges of contemplative leadership, and did not explore the possibilities and consequences of failure; 3) contemplative leadership has been presented as a journey and there are stages to every journey. The various stages of contemplative leadership were not considered other than to acknowledge the degrees and

intensities of contemplative leadership as depicted by the interviewees; 4) the paradox underlying contemplative leadership is that the person, the leader, is both the greatest asset and the weakest link because so much depends on that person; 5) what kind of person is likely to become a contemplative leader was not investigated.

7.5 Recommendations

Leadership training courses and business school education have traditionally focused on the horizontal development of leaders, i.e. leadership competencies and skills, in order to equip leaders for the job, such as how to manage the task, people, complexities of the situation, and financial success. But the vertical development of leaders, i.e. the emotional, spiritual, and being aspects of leaders, have not been a strong focus of either corporate leadership development or business school education programmes. All these aspects are critical to leadership training and effectiveness. I recommend that the future leadership development programmes take a holistic approach to include the horizontal and vertical dimensions of development into their training programmes. The emotional domain is increasingly being addressed in recent years. However, many people may still view the spiritual domain as far removed from the practice of leadership (Quatro, Waldman and Galvin, 2007, 428). Nevertheless, this research shows that spiritual leadership as understood and practiced from a contemplative perspective contributes considerably to effective leadership and the ongoing development of the leader.

One of the recommendations is to use the different measurement instruments to assess the viability of such the contemplative leadership model. In particular, one of the measurement instruments used to measure a leader's spirituality and relationship with the Transcendent is the Beazley Spirituality Assessment. Other possibilities are the use of "INSPIRIT" to assess personal conviction about God's existence and the quality of the internalised relationship between God and the person. The Inner Life Scale uses a 7 point Likert-type scale to ascertain the depth of one's spirituality. The "Virtuous Leadership Scale" and the "Assessment

Rating Scale" can be employed to test character attributes. Each of these tests, and others, can bring empirical research to test the validity of the contemplative leadership model presented as the heart of this research project. (Nicolae et al., 2013, 560-561).

This research has looked at leadership from a Christian contemplative tradition. However, there are many other contemplative traditions with different concepts of a Higher Source, such as secular humanist or a non-theistic Buddhist perspective, or modern secular mindfulness. Future research could compare the similarities and differences between the models that emerge from the different contemplative traditions so as to discover how a belief system contributes to the understanding and practice of contemplative leadership.

7.6 Concluding Remarks

The contemplative leadership model integrates the highly internalised transcendent values of faith, hope and love that have influenced, as a result of an intimate relationship with the Divine, the personal growth and transformation of the person leading to a transformed consciousness. This way of being is the source of highly developed personal leadership characteristics expressed in attributes and virtues that guide the leader's understanding of, and engagement with, an organisation's culture, performance and outcomes in a dynamic way for the good of all.

It was a privilege to have the opportunity to engage in a professional conversation with a group of contemplative leaders exhibiting such intimate relationship with God, and demonstrating high levels of ethical and virtuous leadership. They have witnessed that leaders not only need to be "out-directed", building relationships, establishing net-works, but "must also be 'inner-directed', nurturing a disciplined journey into their souls, discovering how their lives can be rooted and grounded in God's love. Leaders cannot lead organisations beyond present, confining realities into a new and revitalized future unless their own lives have been opened to new possibilities wrought by the spirit" (Granberg-Michaelson, 2004, 176).

References

Almaas, A.H. 2008. *The Unfolding Now: Realizing your True Nature through the Practice of Presence*. Boston: Shambhala.

Andrews, M. Squire, C. and Tamboukou, M. 2008. *Doing Narrative Research*. London: Sage Publications.

Augustine of Hippo. 1982, *Saint Augustine: Eighty-Three Different Questions*. In "The Fathers of the Church" series. Translated by Mosher, D. Washington D.C: Catholic University of America Press.

Augustine of Hippo. 1991. *Confessions.* translated by Chadwick, H. New York: Oxford University Press.

Augustine of Hippo, 2017. *Morals of the Catholic Church*. Translated by Stothert, R. and Overett, A.M. Savage Minnisota: Lighthouse Christian Publishing.

Avolio, B. J. 1999. *Full Leadership Development: Building the Vital Forces in Organizations.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Avolio, B. and Gardner, W., 2005. Authentic Leadership Development: Getting to the Root of Positive Forms of Leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly.* 16, 315-338. Available from: http://www.sciencedirect.com. Accessed 17 Oct. 2013.

Avolio, B., Walumbwa, F. and weber T. 2009. Leadership: Current Theories, Research, and Future Directions. *Management Department Faculty Publications* 37. Available from: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/managementfacpub/37. Accessed 28 Dec. 2012.

Barry, W. 1993. *God's Passionate desire and our Response*. Norte Dame IN: Ave Maria.

Bass, B. M. 1985. *Leadership and Performance beyond Expectations*. New York: the Free Press.

Bass, B. M. 1990. *Bass and Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership.* New York: the Free Press.

Bass, B. M. and Avolio, B. J. 1994. *Improving Organizational Effectiveness through Transformational Leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bass, B. M. and Riggio, R. E., 2006. *Transformational Leadership*. New York: the Free Press.

Bell, J. 1993. *Doing Your Research Project*. England: Open University Press.

Bell, J. 2010. *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First Time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science.* 2nd ed. New York: Open University Press.

Benedict of Nursia, 2012. *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, translated by Murray, P. OSB. Ireland: Glenstal Abbey.

Benefiel, M. 2005. *Soul at Work: Spiritual Leadership in Organizations*. Dublin: Veritas Publications.

Benefiel, M. 2005. The Second Half of the Journey: Spiritual Leadership for Organizational Transformation. *The Leadership Quarterly*.16 (5), 723-747.

Benefiel, M. 2008. *The Soul of a Leader*. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company.

Bennis, W. G. and Nanus B., 1985. *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge.* New York: Harper & Row.

Bernard of Clairvaux. 1971. *Bernard of Clairvaux – On the song of Songs I,* translated by Walsh, K. Michigan: Cistercian Publications.

Bernard of Clairvaux. 1971. *Bernard of Clairvaux – On the song of Songs II,* translated by Walsh, K. Michigan: Cistercian Publications.

Bernard of Clairvaux. 1979. *Bernard of Clairvaux – On the Song of Songs III,* translated by Walsh, K. Michigan: Cistercian Publications.

Bernard of Clairvaux. 1987. *Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works.* Translated by Evans, G. New York: Paulist Press.

Bilinkoff, J. 1989. *The Avila of Saint Teresa: Religious Reform in a Sixteenth-Century City*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Bingaman, K. 2011. The Art of Meditative and mindfulness Practice: Incorporating the Findings of Neuroscience into Pastoral Care and Counselling, in *Pastoral Psychology.* 60, 477–489.

Birchfield, J. 2013, Web page, Available from http://contemplativeleadershipdevelopment.com/ Accessed 27 May 2015.

Bogdan, R. C. and Biklen, S. K. 1982. *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

Bonaventure. 1978. *The Soul's Journey into God –The Tree of Life-The Life of St. Francis.* Translated by Cousins, E. New York: Paulist Press.

Bracken, J. 1985. *The Triune Symbol: Persons, Process, and Community.* Lanham Md.: University of America Press.

Brown, M. and Trevino, L., 2006. Ethical Leadership: A Review and Future Directions. *The Leadership Quarterly*. 17, P595-616. Available from: www.sciencedirect.com Accessed 5 Dec. 2013.

Bryman, A. 2005. *Social Research Methods*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Burns, J. M. 1978. *Leadership.* New York: Harper & Row.

Carroll, M. 2008. *The Mindful Leader: Awakening your Natural Management Skills through Mindfulness Meditation.* Boston: Trumpeter.

Casas, B. de Las, 1992. *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*. Ed. and Translated by Griffin, N. New York: Penguin Books.

Castro, D. 2007. *Another Face of Empire: Bartolomé de las Casas, Indigenous Rights, and Ecclesiastical Imperialism*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Catechism of Catholic Church. Available from: www.vatican.va/archive. Accessed 12 June 2012.

Centring Prayer. Available from: http://www.contemplativemind.org. Accessed 11 June 2012.

Charismatic Leadership. Available from: http://www.chaningminds.org. Accessed 25 Sep. 2013.

Chen, C. C. and Lee, Y. T. 2008. *Leadership and Management in China: Philosophies, Theories, and Practices*. UK: Cambridge University Press.

Cherry, Kendra. A Brief of the Great Man Theory of Leadership. Available from: http://www.about.com. Accessed 30 July 2013.

Clandinin, J. and Connelly, M. 2000. *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Coffey, D. 2005. Trinity, in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*. Eds. Marmion, D. and Hines, M. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Conger, A. and Kanungo, R. 1998. *Charismatic Leadership in Organizations*. London: Sage Publications.

Conroy, M. 1993. The Discerning Heart: Discovering a Personal God. Chicago: Loyola University Press.

Creswell, J. W. 2003. *Research Design*: *Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approach*. 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. 2007. *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches.* 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. 2009. *Research Design, Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 3rd ed. London: Sage Publications.

Crumley, C. 2014. *Leading from within the Living Presence: the Essence of Contemplative Leadership*. Available from: http://www.shalem.org/files/publications/CJ_CCrumley_Leading.pdf. Accessed 20 May 2015.

Dean, A. 2014. *Mystery Taking Shape: Creativity and Contemplative Leadership*. Available from: http://www.shalem.org/files/publications/CJ_ADean_Creativity.pdf. Accessed on May 20, 2015.

De Chardin, P.T. 1960. *The Divine Milieu.* New York and London: Harper & Row.

De Chardin, P.T. 1965. *The Making of a Mind, Letters from a Soldier-Priest, 1914-1919.* Translated by Hague, R. New York: Harper & Row.

De Chardin, P.T. 1968. *Cosmic Life* in *Writings in Time of War*. Translated by Hague, R. New York and Evanston: Harper & Row.

De Chardin, P. T. 1979. *The Heart of Matter.* Translated by Hague, R. New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Denscombe, M. 2010. *The Good Research Guide for Small Scale Social Research Projects.* 4th ed. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. 2008. *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Dierendonck, V. 2011. Servant leadership: A Review and Synthesis. *Journal of Management.* 37 (4), P1228. Available from: http://jom.sagepub.com/37/4/1228.refs.html Accessed 17 Feb. 2014.

Dionysius the Areopagite, 1965. *Mystical Theology and the Celestical Hierarchies*. Translated by the Editors of the Shrine of Wisdom. 2nd ed. England: the Shrine of Wisdom.

Dolan, S. and Altman, Y. 2012. Managing by Values: The Leadership Spirituality Connection, in *People & Strategy*. 35 (4), P21-26.

Doohan, L. 2007. *Spiritual Leadership: The Quest for Integrity.* New York: Paulist Press.

Downey, M. Ed. 1993. *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*. Minnesota: The Liturgical Press.

Drey, J. 2011. Contemplative Leadership in Organizations, in *Contemplation Nation: How Ancient Practices Are Changing the Way We Live*. Ed. Bush, M. MI: Fetzer Institute.

Duerr, M. 2008. The Use of Meditation and Mindfulness Practices to Support Military Care Providers: A Prospectus. Available from: www.contemplativemind.org Accessed 21 May 2015.

Duffey, S. 2005. Experience of Grace, in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*. Eds. Marmion, D. and Hines, M. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Edwards, T. 1978. Integrating Contemplation and Action. In *Theological Education*. Available from: https://stella.catalogue.tcd.ie/. Accessed 28 Feb. 2015.

Edward, T. 2014. *Collaboration as a Quality of Contemplative Leadership*. Available from: http://www.shalem.org/files/publications/CJ_TEdwards_Collaboration.pdf. Accessed 7 May 2015.

Egan, H. 1984. *Christian Mysticism: The Future of a Tradition*. New York: Pueblo Publishing Company.

Egan, H. 1987. *Ignatius Loyola the Mystic*. Delaware: Michael Glazier.

Egan, H. 1991. *An Anthology of Christian Mysticism*. Minnesota: The Liturgical Press.

Egan, H. 1997. Introduction in Karl Rahner, *The Need and Blessing of Prayer*, translated by Gillette, B. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press; originally published by Verlag Herder GmbH & Co. KG. as Von der Not und dem Segen des Gebetes, xi.

Egan, H, 2005. Theology and Spirituality, in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*. Eds. Marmion, D. and Hines, M. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Eggert, N. 1998. *Contemplative Leadership for Entrepreneurial Organizations: Paradigms, Metaphors, and Wicked Problems*. London: Quorum Books.

Ehrhart, M. G. 2004. Leadership and Procedural Justice Climate as Antecedents of Unit-level Organizational Citizenship Behavior. *Personal Psychology.* 57, 61-94.

Eisenbeiss, S. 2012. Rethinking Ethical Leadership: An Interdisciplinary Integrative Approach. *The Leadership Quarterly.* 23, 791-808. Available from: www.elsevier.com. Accessed 5 Dec. 2013.

Elizabeth of the Trinity. 1995. *I Have Found God, Complete Works.* Volume II, Letters from Carmel. Translated by Nash, A. Washington: Institute of Carmelite Studies.

Elizabeth of the Trinity, *Your Presence is my Joy.* Translated by Conrad de Meester. Printed at Darlington Carmel.

Endean, P. 2009. *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Fanning, S. 2001. *Mystics of the Christian Tradition.* London: Routledge.

Finnegan, J. 2007. Contemplation in Every day, in *The Furrow*. 58 (5), 270-279. Available from: http://www.jstor.org/stable/27665535. Accessed 26 Feb.2015.

Freeman, L. 2014, Introduction in *Contemplative Leadership* by Song, P. Kindle book. A Meditatio Publication.

Frenette, D. 2008. Three Contemplative Waves, in *Spirituality, Contemplation and Transformation.* Contributors: Thomas Keating and Others. New York: Lantern Books.

Fry, L. 2003. Toward a Theory of Spiritual Leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly .14, 693-727.* Available from: www.siencedirect.com. Accessed 6 Sep. 2013.

Fry, L. and Wittington, J. 2005. In Search of Authenticity: Spiritual Leadership Theory as a Source for Future Theory, Research, and Practice on Authentic leadership. In *Authentic Leadership Theory and Practice: Origins, Effects, and Development. Monographs in Leadership and Management*, 3, 183-200.

Fry, L. and Kriger, M. 2009. Towards a Theory of Being-centred Leadership: Multiple Levels of Being as Context for Effective Leadership. *Human Relations*. 62 (II), 667-1696. Available from: http://www.uk.sagepub.com. Accessed 15 June 2013.

Fry, L. and Altman, Y. 2013. *Spiritual Leadership in Action: The CEL Story Achieving Extraordinary Results through Ordinary People.* Charlotte: Information Age Publishing Inc.

Fry, L. and Nisiewicz, M. 2013. *Maximizing the Triple Bottom Line through Spiritual Leadership*. California: Stanford University Press.

Galilea, S. 1980. Liberation as an Encounter with Politics and Contemplation, in *Understanding Mysticism*. Ed. Woods, R. London: Athlone Press.

Garms, E. T. 2013. *Practicing Mindful Leadership.* Available from: www. astd.org. Accessed 17 Feb. 2014.

George, B. 2003. *Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

George, B. and Sims, P. 2007. *True North: Discovering your Authentic Leadership*, San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

George, B. 2014. *Mindful Leadership: Compassion, Contemplation and Meditation Develop Effective Leaders*. Available from: www.billgeorge.org. Accessed 17 Feb. 2014.

Goldman, B. and Kernis, M. 2002. The Role of Authenticity in Healthy Psychological Functioning and Subjective Well-being. *Annals of the American Psychotherapy Association.* 5, 18-20.

Gonzalez, M. 2012. *Mindful Leadership: The 9 Ways to Self-Awareness, Transforming Yourself and Inspiring Others.* Canada: Jossey-Bass.

Granberg-Michaelson, W. 2004. *Leadership from Inside Out: Spirituality and Organizational Change.* New York: the Crossroad Publishing Company.

Greene, D. 1991. *Evelyn Underhill, Artist of the Infinite Life*. London: Longman and Todd.

Greenleaf, R. 1998. *The Power of Servant Leadership*. Ed. Spears, L. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Gregory, J. 2006. *The Emerging Spiritual Revolution: Embodying the Spiritual Imperative of Our time.* Wrekin Trust Conference Paper.

Hammersley, M. 1990. *The Dilemma of Qualitative Research*. London: Routledge.

Hanson, R. and Mendius, R. 2009. *Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love and Wisdom*. Oakland: New Harbinger Publications.

Hardon, J. 1980. *Modern Catholic Dictionary.* New York: Doubleday & Company INC.

Harpur, J. 2005. *Love Burning in the Soul*. Boston: New Seeds.

Harter, S. 2002. Authenticity, in Snyder, C.R. and Lopez, S.J. Eds. *Handbook of Positive Psychology.* 382-394. London: Oxford University Press.

Holt, D.T. and Vardaman, J. M. 2013. Towards a Comprehensive Understanding of Readiness for Change: The Case for an Expanded Conceptualisation. *Journal of Change Management.* 13 (1), 9-18.

House, R. 1976. *A 1976 Theory of Charismatic Leadership.* Working Paper Series 76-06 ERIC. Available from: http://eric.ed.gov. Accessed 20 Sep. 2013.

Hu, J. and Liden, R.C. 2011. Antecedents of Team Potency and Team Effectiveness: An Examination of Goal and Process Clarity and Servant Leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 96 (4), 851-862.

Ignatius of Loyola, 1991. *A Pilgrim's Journey*. Translated by Tylenda, J. Minnesota: The Liturgical Press.

Ignatius of Loyola, 2011. *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius.* Translated by Corbishley, T. New York: Dover Publications Inc.

Ilies, R., Morgeson, F. and Nahrgang, J. 2005. Authentic Leadership and Eudaemonic Well-being: Understanding Leader-follower Outcomes, *The Leadership Quarterly.* 16, 373-394.

Jackson, B. and Parry K. 2008. *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonable Cheap Book about Studying Leadership.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

John of the Cross. 1976. *The Ascent of Mount Carmel,* in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross,* translated by Kavanaugh, K. and Rodriguez, O. Washington D.C: Institute of Carmelite Studies.

John of the Cross. 1983. *The Ascent of Mount Carmel.* Translated by Peers, A. Kent: Burns and Oates.

John of the Cross. 1991. *The Ascent of Mount Carmel,* in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross.* Translated by Kavanaugh, K. and Rodriguez, O. Washington D.C: Institute of Carmelite Studies.

Johnson, C. E. 2012. *Meeting the Ethical Challenges of Leadership: Casting Light or Shadow* 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications

Johnson, T. E. 1998. Evelyn Underhill's Pheumatology: Origins and Implications. *Downside Review*. No. 403.

Johnston, W. 1995. *Mystical Theology*. London: Harper Collins Publishers.

Johnston, W. 1996. *Mystical Theology: The Science of Love*. Fount Paperbacks.

Johnston, W. 2000. *"Arise, My Love…": Mysticism for a New Era.* New York: Maryknoll, Oribis Books.

Joseph, M. 2002. *Leaders and Spirituality*, *A Case Study PhD thesis,* Surrey University, United Kingdom.

Kabat-Zinn, J. 2012. *Mindfulness for Beginners: Reclaiming the Present Moment and your Life*. Colorado: Sounds True.

Kalshoven，K., Den Hartog，D. and De Hoogh, A. 2011. Ethical Leadership at Work Questionnaire (ELW): Development and Validation of a Multidimensional Measure. *The Leadership Quarterly.* 22, 51-69. Available from: www.elsevier.com Accessed 5 Dec. 2013.

Kanungo, R. and Mendoca, M. 1996. *Ethical Dimensions of Leadership.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Keating, T. 2001. *Intimacy with God.* New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company.

Keller, D. 2008. Reading Living Water: The Integral Place of Contemplative Prayer in Christian Transformation, in *Spirituality, Contemplation and Transformation*. Contributors: Keating T. and Others. New York: Lantern Books.

Kernis, M. 2003. Toward a Conceptualization of Optimal Self-esteem. *Psychological Inquiry.* 14, 1-26.

King, U. 2004. *Christian Mystics: Their Lives and Legacies through the Ages.* London and New York: Routledge.

Klenke, K. 2003. The "S" Factor in Leadership Education, Practice, and Research. *Journal of Education for Business.* 56-60.

Kodell, J. 2013. Mutual Obedience: My Brother's Need is the Voice of God. *American Benedictine Review.* 64 (3). 404-411.

Kowalska, F. 1987. *Divine Mercy in My Soul, The Diary of the Servant of God, Sister M. Faustina Kowalska.* Stockbridge: Marian Press.

Kriger, M. and Seng, Y. 2005. Leadership with Inner Meaning: A Contingency Theory of Leadership Based on the Worldviews of Five Religions. *The Leadership quarterly.* 16, 771-806. Available from: www.siencedirect.com. Accessed 10 April 2014.

Kvale, S. 1996. *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing.* London: Sage Publications.

Laird, M. 2008. *Into the Silent Land: The Practice of Contemplation.* London: Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd.

Langille, J. 2008. There is Nothing Between God and You: Awakening to the Wisdom of Contemplative Silence, in *Spirituality, Contemplation and Transformation*. Contributors: Keating T. and Others. New York: Lantern Books.

Laozi, *Dao De Jing.* Available from: www.daodejing.org. Accessed 13 March 2014.

Laozi, *Tao De Jing.* Translated by Witter Bynner in 1944. Available from terebess.hu/english/tao/bynner.html. Accessed 10 May 2015.

Larkin, E. 1983. *St. Teresa of Avila and Prayer.* Available from: carmelnet.org/larkin/larkin084.pdf. Accessed 28 Feb.2015.

Larkin, E. *Contemplative Prayer Forms Today: Are they Contemplation?* Available from: http://carmelnet.org . Accessed 28 May 2012.

Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Zhao, H., & Henderson, D. 2008. Servant leadership: Development of a Multidimensional Measure and Multi-level Assessment. The *Leadership Quarterly.* 19 (2), 161-177.

Linnane, B. 2005. Ethics, in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*. Eds. Marmion, D. and Hines, M. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Luthans, F. and Avolio, B. J. 2003. Authentic Leadership: A Positive Developmental Approach, in *Positive Organizational Scholarship.* 241-261. Eds. Cameron, K.S. and Quinn R.E. San Francisco: Barrett-Koehler.

MacCulloch, D. 2009. *A History of Christianity*. London: Allen Lane.

Main, J. 1993. *Word Made Flesh: Recovering a Sense of the Sacred through Prayer.* Norwich, England: Canterbury Press.

Maitri, S. 2005. *The Enneagram of Passions and Virtues*. New York: Penguin Group.

Markova, D. 2008. Spiritual Courage: Leading from the Inside Out, in *Spirituality in Educational Leadership.* Eds. Houston, P. Blankstein A. and Cole, R. California: Corwin Press.

Marmion, D. 1998. *A Spirituality of Everyday Faith.* Louvain: Peters Press.

Marmion, D. and Hines, M. 2005. Introduction, in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*. Eds. Marmion, D and Hines, M. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Marques, J. Dhiman, S. and Biberman J. Eds. 2011. *Managing in the Twenty-first Century: Transforming Toward Mutual Growth.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Marturano, J. 2013. *Simple Daily Tips for Mindfulness at Work.* Available from: www.mindful.org. Accessed 2 Feb. 2014.

Mason, J. 1996. *Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications.

McCalman, J. and Paton, R. 2010. The Way forward for Leadership, in *European Management Journal.* 28, 251-252. Available from: www.elsevier.com/locate/emj. Accessed 20 March 2015.

McGinn, B. 1991. *The Foundations of Mysticism*, Volume 1 of *the Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism.* London: SCM Press.

McGinn, B. 1998. *The Flowering of Mysticism*, Volume III of *the Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism.* New York: the Crossroad Publishing Company.

McGinn, B. 2005. Mysticism. In *The New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality.* Ed. Sheldrake, P. London: SCM Press.

McIntosh, M. 1998. *Mystical Theology*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Merton, T. 1961, *New Seeds of Contemplation.* New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation.

Merton, T. 1968. *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*. New York: Doubleday Image Books.

Merton, T. 1980. Peace: A Religious Responsibility, in *The Nonviolent Alternative*. Ed. Zahn, G. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux.

Merton, T. 1995. Nuclear War and Christian Responsibility, in *Passion for Peace: The Social Essays*. Ed. Shannon W. New York: Crossroad.

Merton, T. 1996. *A Search for Solitude: The Journals of Thomas Merton*, Vol.3, 1952-1960. Ed. Cunningham, L. San Francisco: HarperSan Francisco.

Mittal, R. and Dofman, P. 2012. Servant Leadership Across Cultures. *Journal of World Business.* 47, 555-570. Available from: www.elsevier.com. Accessed on 17 Feb. 2014.

Myss, C. 2007. *Entering the Castle: An Inner Path to God and your Soul*. London: Simon & Schuster.

Nash, J. 2011. Prayer and Meditation in Christian Mysticism, *The Esoteric Quarterly.* 17-41.

Nelstrop, L., Magill, K. and Onishi, B. 2009. *Christian Mysticism: An Introduction to Contemporary Theoretical Approaches*. England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Neuman, L. 1997. *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 3rd ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Newberg, A. and Waldman, M. 2009. *How God Changes your Brain: Breakthrough Findings from a Leading Neuroscientist.* New York: Ballantine Books.

Nicolae, M., Ion, I., and Nicolae, E. 2013. The Research Agenda for Spiritual Leadership. Where Do We Stand? *Review of International Comparative Management*. 14 (4), 551-566.

Nolan, K. 2012. *Laughing Buddhas: The Everyday Embodiment of Contemplative Leadership.* Dissertation submitted to Ph. D in Leadership and Change Program of Antioch University.

Norris, T. 2008. *Living a Spirituality of Communion*. Dublin: the Columba Press.

Northouse, P. 2004. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* California: Sage Publications.

Northouse, P. 2013. *Leadership: Theory and Practice* 6th edition. New Delhi: Sage Publication.

Nowen, H. 1994. *The Wounded Healer.* London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

O'Connor U. and Grogan, B. 1988. *Reflective Living*. Dublin: Messenger Publications.

O'Donnell, J. 1988. *The Mystery of the Triune God*. London: Sheed and Ward.

O'Murchu, D. 1998. *Quantum Theology*: *Spiritual Implications of the New Physics*. New York: the Crossroad Publishing Company.

Order of St Benedict. Available from: http://www.osb.org/lectio/rbonld.html. Accessed 6 June 2011.

Osborne, A. 1970. *A Ramana Maharshi and the Path to Self-Knowledge.* Boston: Weister Books.

Paintner, C. and Wynkoop, L. 2008. *Lectio Divina: Contemplative Awakening and Awareness*. New York: Paulist Press.

Palmer, P., Zajonc, A. and Scribner, M. 2010. *The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal*. Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Pawar, B. S. 2009. Workplace Spirituality Facilitation: A Comprehensive Model, in *Journal of Business Ethics.* 90, 375-386.

Posner, B. 2009. From Inside Out: Beyond Teaching About Leadership, in *Journal of Leadership Education.* 8 (1), 1-12

Quatro, S., Waldman, D., and Galvin, B. 2007. Developing Holistic Leaders: Four Domains for Leadership Development and Practice. *Human Resource Management Review*. 17, 427-441.

Rahner, K. 1963. God, Christ, Mary and Grace, in *Theological Investigations* 1, translated by Ernst, C. London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

Rahner, K. 1970. Teresa of Avila: Doctor of the Church, in *Opportunities for Faith*. Translated by Quinn, E. New York: Seabury.

Rahner, K. 1981. The Experience of God Today, in *Theological Investigation* 11, translated by Bourke, D. London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

Rahner, K. 1982. *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*. Translated by Dych, W. New York: Crossroad.

Rahner, K. 1983. Experiencing the Spirit, in *The Practice of Faith: A Handbook of Contemporary Spirituality.* New York: Crossroad.

Rahner, K. 1984. The Dignity and Freedom of Man, in *Theological Investigations* 2, translated by Kruger, K. London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

Rakoczy, S. 2006. *Great Mystics and Social Justice: Walking on the Two Feet of Love*. New York: Paulist Press.

Reynolds, J. 2013. Transformational Leadership, in *Authentic Leadership after God's Own Heart*. Eds. Reynolds, J. and Takamine, K. USA: Reynolds and Takamine.

Ribbins, P. and Marland, M., 1994. *Headship Matters: Conversations with Seven Secondary School Headteachers*. London: Longman.

Riessman, C. 2008. *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*. California: Sage Publications.

Rivera, L. A. 1992. *Violent Evangelism: The Political and Religious Conquest of the Americas.* Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press.

Robertson, P. 2008. Contemplative Leadership – Discovering the Wisdom to lead, in *Seattle Theology and Ministry Review*. Volume 8. Available from: http://maryjude.org/publications/Contemplative%20Leadership.pdf Accessed 20 May 2015.

Rodney H, 2008. *Developing Spiritual Potentialities, Principles and Practices of Leadership: A Self Study in Teacher Education*. A Paper presented at the American Educational Researcher Association Annual Meeting, New York.

Ross, N. 2012. Epoch of Transformation: An Interpersonal Leadership Model for the 21st Century – Part 1, in *Integral Leadership Review.* 12 (1), 1-20.

Rubiés, J. 2007. Book Review: Daniel Castro. Another Face of Empire: Bartolomé de las Casas, Indigenous Rights and Ecclesiastical Inperialism. *Journal of Ecclesiastical History.* Available at http://eprints.lse.ac..um/26123/. Accessed 10 Jan. 2018.

Ruffing, J. 2001. Introduction, in *Mysticism and Social Transformation*. Ed. Ruffing, J. New York: Syracuse University Press.

Schuttloffel, M. 2013. Contemplative Leadership Practice: The Influences of Character on Catholic School Leadership, in *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice.* 17 (1), 81-103.

Schwandt, T. 2007. *The Sage Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry*. 3rd ed. California: Sage Publications.

Sedgmore, L. 2013. *Fostering Innovative Organisational Cultures and High Performance through Explicit Spiritual Leadership*. An e-copy of Doctoral Thesis for the University of Winchester, UK.

Seyranian, V. 2012. Contingency Theories of Leadership. *Encyclopaedia of Group Processes and Intergroup Relations.* Eds. Levine J. and Hogg, M. Thousand Oaks. CA : SAGE, 2009. 152-156. SAGE Reference Online.web.

Shamir, B. and Eilam, G. 2005. What's your Story? : A Life-stories Approach to Authentic Leadership Development. *The Leadership Quarterly.*

Sheehan, T. 2005. Rahner's Transcendental Project, in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*. Eds. Marmion, D and Hines, M. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sheldrake, P. 2010. *Explorations in Spirituality: History, Theology, and Social Practice*. New York: Paulist Press.

Sheldrake, P. 2013. *Spirituality: A Brief History*. UK: John Wiley & Sons.

Slade, C. 2001. St. Teresa of Avila as a Social Reformer, in *Mysticism and Social Transformation*. Ed. Ruffing, J. New York: Syracuse University Press.

Song, P. 2014. *Contemplative Leadership*. Kindle book. A Meditatio Publication. (Introduction page as page 1).

Spears, L. 2009. Servant Leadership: Cultivate 10 Characteristics. *Leadership Excellence.* 26 (5),

Steinmetz, M. 2012. Thoughts on the Experience of God in the Theology of Karl Rahner: Gifts and Implications. *Lumen et Vita* Vol.2. Available from: http://ejournals.bc.edu Accessed 12 Aug. 2014.

Streit, N. 2007. *Karl Rahner: On Grace and Salvation.* Available from: http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu. Accessed 14 Aug. 2014.

Swinton, J. and Mowat, H. 2006. *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*. London: SCM Press.

Tarver, H. M. and Slape, E. eds. 2016. *The Spanish Empire: A Historical Encyclopidia* 2 Volumes. California: ABC-Clio.

Teresa of Avila. 1921. *The Interior Castle or The Mansions*. Ed. Zimmerman, B. Available from: http://www.ccel.org/ccel/teresa/castle2.htmlURL. Accessed 10 Feb. 2015.

Teresa of Avila. 1976. *The Book of Her Life,* in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila.* Translated by Kavanaugh, K. and Rodriguez, O. Washington D.C: Institute of Carmelite Studies.

Teresa of Avila. 1979. *The Interior Castle*. Translated by Kavanaugh, K. OCD and Rodriguez, O. OCD. New York: Paulist Press.

Teresa of Avila. 2003. *The Interior Castle*. Translated by Star, M. New York: Riverhead Books.

The Catholic Encyclopaedia. Available from: http://www.newadvent.org Accessed 13 June 2012.

The Cloud of Unknowing, 1981. Ed. Walsh, J. London: SPCK.

Thompson, S. 2008. Spiritual Leadership – The Invisible Revolution. In *Spirituality in Educational Leadership.* Eds. Houston, P. Blankstein A. and Cole R. California: Corwin Press.

Tichy, N. M. and DeVanna, M. A. 1986. *The Transformational Leader*. New York: John Wiley.

Tichy, N. M. and DeVanna, M. A. 1990. *The Transformational Leader*. 2nd ed. New York: John Wiley.

Toll, E. 1999. *The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment.* California: Namaste.

Tomlinson, J. 2016. A Relational Human Development Perspective on Benedictine Spirituality. In *American Benedictine Review*. 67 (1). 81-102.

Underhill, E. 1940. *The Church and War*. London: Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.

Underhill, E. reprinted 1944. *Letters of Evelyn Underhill.* Ed. William C. London and New York: Green & Co.

Underhill, E. 1961. *Mysticism*. New York: E.P. Dutton.

Underhill, E. 1986. *Practical Mysticism*. Columbus, OH: Ariel.

Underhill, E. 1988. *Evelyn Underhill: Modern Guide to the Ancient Quest for the Holy*. Ed. Greene D. Albany: State University of New York.

Underhill. E. 1989. *The Letters of Evelyn Underhill*. Ed. Williams, C. Westminster, MD: Christian Classics.

Underhill, E. 1992. *The Mystical Way*. Atlanta, GA: Ariel.

Underhill, E. 1993. *Fragments from an Inner Life: The Notebooks of Evelyn Underhill.* Ed. Dana Greene. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers.

Underhill, E. 1999. *Mysticism: The Nature and Development of Spiritual Consciousness.* Oxford: One World.

Walumbwa, F., Avolio, B., Gardner, W., Wernsing, J. and Peterson, S. 2008. Authentic Leadership: Development and Validation of a Theory-based Measure. *Management Department Faculty Publications.* Paper 24. Available from: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/managementfacpub/24. Accessed 25 Oct. 2013.

Walumbwa, F., Hartnell, C.A. and Oke, A. 2010. Servant Leadership, Procedural Justice Climate, Service Climate, Employee Attitudes, and Organzational citizenship Behavior: A Cross-level Investigation. *Journal of Applied Psychology.* 95, 517-529.

Ward, T. 2008. Spirituality, Contemplation, and Transformation: An Opportunity for the Episcopal Church, in *Spirituality, Contemplation and Transformation.* Contributors: Keating T. and Others. New York: Lantern Books.

Weber, M. 1947. *The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations*. Translators: Henderson and Parsons. Ed. Parsons. New York: Free Press.

Welch, J. 1982. *Spiritual Pilgrims: Carl Jung and Teresa of Avila.* New York: Paulist Press.

Wertz, F. et al. 2011. *Five Ways of Doing Qualitative Analysis*. London: the Guilford Press.

West-Burnham, J. 2009. *Rethinking Educational Leadership: From Improvement to Transformation.* New York: Continuum.

Wiebe, N. 2009. What is Narrative Inquiry? in *Narrative Inquiry in Education. Eds:* Hoogland, C. and Wiebe, N. Available from: http://www.edu.uwo.ca/Narrative_Inquiry/faq.html. Accessed 13 Aug. 2015

Wilber, K. 2000a. *A Theory of Everything: An Integral Vision of Business, Politics, Science and Spirituality*. Boston: Shambhala.

Wilber, K. 2000b. *Integral Psychology: Consciousness, Spirit, Psychology, Therapy*. Boston: Shambhala.

Woods, R. J. 2006. *Christian Spirituality: God's Presence through the Ages*. New York: Orbis Books.

Wu jing, 713-756 AD, On the Polity, in *Essentials of Government of the Zhenguan Period.* Available from: www.gushiwen.org/guwen/zhenguan.aspx Accessed 5 May 2015.

Wu, L.Z., Tsz, E., Fu, P.P, Kwan, H.K. and Liu, J. 2013. The Impact of Servant leadership on Hotel Employees' "Servant Behavior". *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly.* 54 (4), 383-395.

Young, F. 2007. *Brokenness and Blessing: Towards a Biblical Spirituality.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Yukl, G., 1999. An Evaluation of Conceptual Weaknesses in Transformational and Charismatic Leadership Theories. *The Leadership Quarterly.* 10 (2).

Zaleznik, A. 1992. Managers and Leaders Are They Different? *Harvard Business Review.* March-April 1992. Available from: www.hbr.org Accessed 5Aug. 2015.

Zell, R. 1997. The Discovery of the Interior Castle: The New Understanding of Virtue by Sixteenth-century Humanists, in *The European Legacy: Toward New Paradigms.* 2 (4), 715-725. Available from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10848779708579800. Accessed 10 Feb. 2015.

Zhu, w., Newman A., Miao, Q., and Hooke A., 2013. Revisiting the Mediating Role of Trust in Transformational Leadership Effects: Do Different Types of Trust Make a Difference? *The leadership Quarterly.* 24, 94-105.

Appendices

Appendix A   **Plain Language Statement (I)**
(Information sheet for participants in a research project)

Dear xxx,
Warm greetings!
My name is Cui Ying Gao. I am conducting a PhD research at the Faculty of Humanity and Social Science, Dublin City University, Ireland. My area of research, and title of the dissertation is: An Investigation of Contemplative Leadership in terms of its Concepts, Characteristics, Challenges, and Opportunities.

This research requires an in-depth interview with people who are contemplative leaders. I would like to invite you to help me with this research. The interview will take about one hour. In order to avoid unnecessary note taking, the interviews will be tape recorded with the permission of those who agree to participate. When the data has all been gathered I will analyze it, present it, draw conclusions and make recommendations.

Confidentiality is guaranteed and all data gathered will be stored safely. When the thesis is finished, all data will be destroyed. A pseudonym will be used to protect your identity.

I would be very grateful if you would agree to be interviewed. I hope to do the interviews in the months between October 15th to December 23rd, 2015. If these dates are inconvenient, please let me know what date/time suits you. My e-mail: cui.gao2@mail.dcu.ie Tel: 0876279825.

You may withdraw from the research study at any point, for any reason. There is no compulsion for you to participate.

I would be most grateful if you could let me know as soon as possible if you are willing to participate in this research, if so, I will contact you again with further information.

If you have concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact:
The Secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel 01-7008000

I look forward to hearing from you!
Yours sincerely,
Cui Ying Gao

Plain Language Statement (II)
(Information sheet for participants in a research project)

Dear xxx,

Warm greetings!

My name is Cui Ying Gao. I am conducting PhD research at the Faculty of Humanity and Social Science, Dublin City University, Ireland. My area of research, and title of the dissertation is, An Investigation of Contemplative Leadership in terms of its Concepts, Characteristics, Challenges, and Opportunities.

This research requires an in-depth interview with people who are contemplative leaders. I would like to invite you to help me with this research. The interview will take about one hour to one and half hours. In order to avoid unnecessary note taking, the interviews will be tape recorded with the permission of those who agree to participate. When the data has all been gathered, I will analyse it, present it, draw conclusions and make recommendations.

Confidentiality is guaranteed and all data gathered will be stored safely. When the thesis is finished, all data will be destroyed. A pseudonym will be used to protect your identity.

Since we are geographically distant, I would be very grateful if you would agree to be interviewed on skype. I hope to do the interviews in the months from October 15th to December 23rd, 2015. If you are not able to make these dates, please let me know what date/time suits you. My e-mail: cui.gao2@mail.dcu.ie Skype: jennywg2010. Tel: 00353-876279825.

You may withdraw from the research study at any point, for any reason. There is no compulsion for you to participate.

I would be most grateful if you could let me know as soon as possible if you are willing to participate in this research and, if so, I will contact you again with further information.

If you have concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact:

The Secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel. 353-1-7008000

I look forward to hearing from you!

Yours sincerely,

Cui Ying Gao

Appendix B   Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Ice Breakers
1. Would you like to introduce yourself and your work to me?
2. You are in a leadership role. Can you tell me, for you, what is the heart of leadership?

Inner Spiritual life
3. How would you describe your inner spiritual journey?
4. What do you do to foster your spiritual growth?
5. What is your understanding of contemplation?
6. Can you tell me about your experience of growing in contemplation?
7. Have you had any spiritual/mystical experience of God? If yes, would you like to share about it?

Contemplation and transformation
8. In what ways has the experience of contemplation transformed you as a person?
9. Can you describe, in your own words, how the experience of contemplation shapes your self-understanding?
10. In your life, how has the experience of contemplation influenced your relationship with others?
11. What changes, if any, has the experience of contemplation made to your value system?
12. In what way does the experience of contemplation influence your world view?
13. What benefits does contemplation bring to your overall sense of well-being as an individual?

Contemplation and Leadership
14. What difference, if any, do you think contemplative practice makes in your role as a leader?
15. What difference, if any, does contemplation make to your leadership motivation?
16. Has contemplation contributed to the quality of your leadership presence? How?
17. In your opinion, does a contemplative perspective inform your use of power?
18. How would you summarise your experience as a contemplative and as a leader?

Concepts of contemplative leadership
19. How would you define contemplative leadership?
20. What would you consider as the essence of contemplative leadership?
21. What do you regard as the essential qualities/virtues needed to be a contemplative leader?
22. What are the characteristics of contemplative leadership for you?

Expressions of contemplative leadership
23. In concrete terms, how does contemplative leadership manifest itself in your work?
24. As a contemplative leader, what do you do to influence your organizational culture and performance?

Outcomes of using a contemplative leadership approach
25. How effective is this contemplative leadership approach?
26. What would be the outcomes of using a contemplative leadership approach to your work
    a) in terms of co-workers and work culture
    b) the organizational performance
    c) the larger society
    d) the ecosystem

<div align="center">Challenges and Opportunities</div>

27. What are the challenges that you have faced in practicing contemplative leadership in your work?
28. Do you think there is an opportunity to integrate the principles and practice of contemplative leadership into mainstream leadership thinking and training? How are we going to do that?
29. From your own experience, is it possible to practice contemplative leadership in your everyday professional life?

<div align="center">Anything else?</div>

30. Is there anything else that you would like to add in relation to contemplative leadership?

Appendix C　　　　Consent Form
Research topic: An Investigation of Contemplative Leadership in terms of its Concepts, Characteristics, Challenges, and Opportunities.

Clarification of the purpose of the research: This research is conducted by Cui Ying Gao, in fulfilment of the requirements for a PhD degree at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, Dublin City University, under the supervision of Dr. John Murray and Dr. Margaret Benefiel.

Confirmation of your participation: You are invited to participate in an in-depth interview. And a tape recorder will be used during the interview.

Please complete the following (Circle Yes or No for each question):
Have you read or had read to you the Plain Language Statement　　　Yes / No
Do you understand the information provided?　　　　　　　　　　Yes / No
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?　Yes / No
Have you received satisfactory answers to all your questions?　　　　Yes / No
Are you aware that your interview will be audio-taped?　　　　　　　Yes / No

Confirmation that involvement in the research study is voluntary:
I am aware that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary. I am clear that I am free to withdraw from the research at any point. There will be no penalty for withdrawing before all stages of the research study have been completed.

Confidentiality: Any information that is obtained in this interview will be kept confidential. All data gathered will be stored safely; in the end, when the thesis is finished, all data will be destroyed. A pseudonym will be used to protect my identity. If it is to be shared with any third party my consent will be required.

Offer: If I would like to have an e-mail copy of the completed thesis, it will be sent to me in the end of this research study.

Signature: I have read and understood the information in this form. My questions and concerns have been answered by the researcher, and I have a copy of this consent form. Therefore, I consent to take part in this research project.
Participant's signature:_____
Name in block:_____
Date:_____