

**The Salient Factors that Assist or Impede Conversion:
A Psychological and Theological Assessment**

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The Salient Factors that Assist or Impede Conversion: A Psychological and Theological Assessment

Abstract

Catherine Frances Cherry

This thesis is based on a twofold question: "What are the salient factors that assist or impede conversion?"

Conversion is the shift that includes changes in the interior process of a person, the way one regards an issue, one's actions, and one's openness to God. Conversion is a technical word as defined by Bernard Lonergan in his book, *Method in Theology* (1971). It does not refer to a change of religious affiliation. It does refer to an inner change of heart (affective conversion), a change of viewpoint (intellectual conversion), actions enacted out of a choice of values over satisfaction (moral conversion), and ultimately the inner shift that occurs when grasped by God and moved in love (religious conversion).

These questions will be explored through psychological considerations, understandings of spiritual development, theological reflection, and the call beyond to authentic self-transcending intentional loving.

Like the pieces of glass in a kaleidoscope, which shift as one alters their border, religious conversation makes the pieces of our lives give off a new light and colour.

Being in love with God changes the rest of our lives.

Religious Conversion is "to be grasped by God and to respond with total and permanent self-surrender to God without conditions, qualifications, and reservations."

This then is what I pray, kneeling before the Father, from whom every family, whether spiritual or natural, takes its name:

Out of his infinite glory, may he give you the power through his Spirit for your hidden self to grow strong, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith and then, planted in love and built on love, you will with all the saints have strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth; until knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, you are filled with the utter fullness of God.

Glory be to him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine; glory be to him from generation to generation in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3: 14-21

This thesis is dedicated to my grandchildren,

Shaun, Jack, and Shannon

**Who demonstrate a curiosity about life and about the world,
a *joie de vivre*,
and effusive love.**

In the wonder of their being, they inspire conversion.

The Salient Factors that Assist or Impede Conversion: A Psychological and Theological Assessment

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The Salient Factors that Assist or Impede Conversion: A Psychological and Theological Assessment

Introduction

The Context

The twofold question that drives this thesis, “What are the salient factors that assist or impede conversion?” arises from a myriad of life experiences. Both as a child and later as an educator I have asked a multitude of questions. I have pondered extensively about eternity, about the universe, about different aspects of science, about art and culture, about the existence of God, about Christ as universal savior, about the Trinity, about relationships, free will, sin, death, and about decisions that affect generations. I could continue for my mind and my heart have always been so alive with reflections and questions. Essentially human beings have an infinite number of questions because the one they desire to know is infinite. I will approach the topic from the vulnerability and the strength of who I am and how I have lived and worked in the world. Because I have worked as a therapist, a spiritual director, and as a student of theology, I will approach the topic psychologically, spiritually, and ultimately provide a theological assessment of the issues.

The Underlying Questions

According to most philosophers and scientists, human beings are unique among living creatures in their capacity for reflection and self-reflection. If this faculty is

exclusive to *homo sapiens*, it is essential to our designation as human beings, I wonder why so many people seem *not* to reflect.¹ Many questions emerged: “Why is it that so many humans seem not question themselves, their understanding, their behavior, their relationships, the meaning of life, the meaning of their own lives, their place in history, in the cosmos, and ultimate concerns - life after death, and a relationship with a higher power, a transcendent being, God? What gets in the way of reflection? Do they not want to grow? Do they not want to be really deep, alive, authentic², caring human beings?” I wonder.

Not only are these human questions important to me personally; they are the questions that underlie the designated tasks of my work within the service of Spiritual Care and Guidance and Community Involvement Animation as mandated by the Ministry of Education of the Province of Quebec.

This service is designed as a tool to accompany students in their search for identity and quest for meaning, in their need for recognition and belonging, in their effort to develop an open attitude toward difference and plurality, in their desire to find mutual understanding, to play a role in their community and to help others.³

¹ This study recognizes the attempt that Abraham Maslow made in 1943 to establish his classic hierarchy of needs, and acknowledges that most humans do not have the time to reflect when they are under the duress of basic physical survival, or when they feel that their safety is threatened. However, these situations often become the gist for later reflection, and many stories attest to moments of heightened awareness, of intense clarity even in the midst of a dire situation. Examples include the poem “In Flanders Fields”, written by Canadian soldier John McRea from a First World War battlefield, as well as the reflections of Jesuit priest, scientist and mystic Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, also inspired by his experiences in the Great War. Thus my questions still stand.

² Bernard Lonergan. *Method in Theology*. (Minneapolis: The Seabury Press, 1972). Lonergan claims that one “achieves authenticity in self-transcendence”. (104). He goes on to say, “Human authenticity is not some pure quality, some serene freedom from all oversights, all misunderstandings, all mistakes, all sins. Rather it consists in a withdrawal from unauthenticity, and the withdrawal is never a permanent achievement.” Ibid. 252.

³ Ministère de l'Éducation. Sar-Dass. Developing the Inner Life and Changing the World: The Spiritual Care and Guidance and Community Involvement Service: Definition and Organization. Ministerial Framework. Province of Quebec. 2001:5.

The spiritual life is often associated with such words as inner belief, religion, philosophy of life, transcendence, God, etc. It finds expression in quests, doubts and a wide range of attitudes and behaviors that **always relate to the big questions of life**, namely its origin, value, purpose and ultimate outcome.⁴

One of the objectives of the service is to enable the students to “reflect and experiment on situations designed to help them progress freely in their spiritual lives”.⁵ Reflection on the big questions in life as presented here, and as presented in the previous paragraph, can lead to conversions of mind, heart, behavior, and even to a deeper relationship with God. These questions provide the impetus for this study.

The Necessity of Reflection

Without reflection, humans go on living their lives, yet they do so foraging for immediate means to self-gratification, and in doing so, they make poor decisions about relationships. They misjudge one another and hurt one another. Without reflection humans latch on to the simplest reasons to justify their actions and their pleasure, irrespective of the pain of another.

Reflection is not the self-pitying diatribe of a misfit who posits his hurt and anger online; nor is it help, as did the Virginia Tech killer. No, reflection is a result of interaction with other human beings engaged in their own exploration; learning, thinking and applying our learning to our own situation in life. But in our world there have always been destructive people closed off from healthy self-reflection, who use violence to attack the intellectual, spiritual and artistic growth of others.⁶

⁴ Ibid. 7.

⁵ Ibid. 11. One of the objectives of the service is to enable the students to “reflect and experiment on situations designed to help them progress freely in their spiritual lives”.

⁶ Stephen J. Toope. Convocation address to the graduating students at Dawson College in Montreal, June 21, 2007 (Montreal: The Gazette. June 22, 2007). A21. The school year at Dawson College had begun with a shooting spree in which a young man shot and killed one student and injured many others (Montreal: The Gazette. June 22, 2007). A21. Stephen Toope who is currently the president and vice-chancellor of the University of British Columbia, was Dean of the McGill Law School when his own parents were bludgeoned to death by three teenagers who admitted they just wanted an exciting experience.

Without reflection, humans can get caught up in simplistic and fundamentalist attitudes and dogmas that diminish others, that provide the rationale for violence and power, and that often lead to unhealthy projection and “scapegoating”.⁷ Unfortunately, in this lack of reflection about the ultimate interconnectedness of all humans to each other and to the earth, individuals diminish themselves and set the human community into a cycle of pain and a vector of decline.⁸ Empathy, compassion, and other-centered courage only become possible with reflection. With reflection humans can be present to one another from a place of inner peace and joy. With reflection, humans have the possibility of rising to states of altruistic self-transcendence. With reflection and with the concurrent actions that bring life to that reflection, the human community can enter a vector of progress.

Relation of Reflection to Conversion

The word “conversion” implies a shift. Reflection is a necessary prerequisite antecedent to any interior shifts leading to a change in the way one regards an issue (intellectual conversion), one’s actions (moral conversion), and one’s openness to God

⁷ Anthropologist Rene Girard addresses this in much of his work, most notably in his 2001 CBC radio lectures published as *The Scapegoat*. The theological and ecclesial implications of Girard’s work are well developed by James Alison in *Faith Beyond Resentment: Fragments Catholic and Gay*. (New York: Crossroads. 2001).

⁸ There are many examples in history: Nero played his fiddle while Rome burned; Hitler gained control of Germany and established extermination camps; Rasputin abdicated his responsibility to use his gifts to help Russia and chose his own satisfaction instead; Stalin; Saddam Hussein; and unfortunately many others failed to reflect on their responsibilities to care for other human beings. It takes heroes and saints, and a critical mass of ordinary people who are willing to live an authentic other-centered life to turn the tide on a vector of decline.

(religious conversion).⁹ This study explores possible explanations for the apparent lack of serious reflection on the part of so many, and on those factors that assist humans to engage in this unique quality of being human. As such, it presents the salient factors that assist reflection – and hence, conversion – as well as the salient factors that impede reflection – and hence, the process of conversion. In this context, I am referring to a conversion that leads to greater self-transcendence and personal authenticity. This said, it must be acknowledged that one can reflect and refuse to partake in the conversion presented, becoming less authentic in the process.

Conversion

In this thesis, “conversion” is used in the technical sense as defined by Bernard Lonergan in his groundbreaking text *Method in Theology*.¹⁰ It does not refer primarily to a change of religious affiliation, though this may become one of the decisions flowing from conversion. It does refer to an inner change of heart (affective conversion), a change of viewpoint (intellectual conversion), actions enacted out of a choice of values

⁹ In the musical, *Les Misérables*, Jean Valjean sings “Who am I?” when confronted by the possibility of letting another man take his place and go to jail for breaking his parole. He sings his inner conflict: “If I speak, I am condemned (to go back to jail). If I am silent, I am damned. (to hell) He asks himself, “Who am I?” and finally claims his own self, “I am Jean Valjean! I am 24601!” He lets himself be known and lets the other man go free. This is not just a classic tale of temptation, it is a story of reflection, conversion, and self-appropriation. A. Boubtil & C.M. Schonberg. *Les Misérables*. 1985.

In this song Jean Valjean clarifies his values and chooses to live a self-transcendent authenticity. ‘A person is self-transcendent when the isolation of the individual is broken and he or she acts not just for self, but for others as well. Affective conversion is a matter of both passion and commitment. It is the transformation of our deepest life of feeling. Our desire for the authenticity of a self-transcending life demands reasonable choice consistent with critical, realistic judgments of fact and value’. Walter E. Conn. “The Desire for Authenticity: Conscience and Moral Conversion”. In *Desires of the Human Heart: The Theology of Bernard Lonergan*. Edited by Vernon Gregson. 36-56. (New York: Paulist Press. 1988). 54.

¹⁰ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*. (Minneapolis: The Seabury Press. 1972).

over satisfaction (moral conversion), and ultimately the inner shift that occurs when grasped by God and moved in love (religious conversion).

Various commentators on Lonergan's thought develop different dimensions of this understanding of conversion.

Intellectual Conversion is a radical clarification of knowing and the elimination of the myth that reality is what is seen. Knowing is not just seeing; it is experiencing, understanding, judging, and believing. Reality is not just looked at; reality is given in experience, organized and extrapolated by understanding and affirmed by judgment and belief. Intellectual conversion is the realization that the world is mediated by meaning, that the world is not known by the person's sense of experience but by the continually checked and rechecked judgments of that community. *Moral Conversion* changes the criterion of a person's decision and choices from satisfaction to values. Moral conversion consists in personally opting for the truly good, for values in place of satisfaction when value and satisfaction conflict. *Religious conversion* is God's love flooding the person's heart through the Holy Spirit. Religious conversion is a total and permanent self-surrender to God without conditions, qualifications, and reservations. This conversion is characterized by an increasing simplicity and passivity in prayer.¹¹

Walter Conn develops the notion of *affective conversion* in Lonergan's writing, naming it as "a matter of passion and commitment. It is a matter of the transformation of our deepest life of meaning." He goes on, "Feeling is the locus of value and it gives our conscious life its mass and momentum. The radical transformation of feeling in affective conversion gives the power of sustained self-transcendence, of authentic living."¹²

Thus, conversion is at once religious, moral, intellectual, and affective. According to Lonergan, conversion is constituted in a basic horizon of integrity, and is the result of a process of prolonged personal transformation. Robert Doran uses the

¹¹ Ibid. 239-240.

¹² Walter Conn, *Christian Conversion: A Developmental Interpretation of Autonomy and Surrender*. (New York: Paulist Press. 1986). 53-54.

term “psychic” conversion in a slightly different way from Lonergan’s notion of “affective” conversion. Doran claims that Lonergan’s term, affective conversion, is actually the *fruit* of psychic conversion, for “psychic conversion releases from repression the underlying neural manifold oriented to images for insight and thus makes available materials that need to be transformed if one is to be in love in an unqualified fashion”¹³. For Doran, *psychic conversion* “is a transformation of the subject, a change both illuminated and often mediated by modern depth psychology. It is a reorientation of the specifically psychic dimension of the censorship exercised over images and affects by our habitual orientations, a conversion of that dimension of the censorship from exercising a repressive function to acting constructively on one’s shaping of one’s own development. Grace alone can hold together the unity in tension that is human consciousness, and hold it together in relative integrity”.¹⁴

Other Issues of Import

Lonergan also presents the possibility for individuals to broaden what he terms “common sense”¹⁵ to a higher vision. The higher vision presents a clarity that is the result of reflection, for reflection leads to a “differentiated consciousness”¹⁶ that

¹³ Robert Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 9.

¹⁴ Ibid. 9.

¹⁵ The “common sense” mode of communication “is not common to all men of all places and times, but to the members of a community successfully in communication with one another”. (Lonergan, 1972: 154). In the realm of “common sense”, “meanings are expressed in everyday language”. (257). We speak in the realm of common sense when we say the sun is coming up or going down even when we know that scientifically this experience is related to the rotation of the earth on its axis as it rotates around the sun. The latter explanation is within the realm of “theory”.

¹⁶ Undifferentiated consciousness may be found in those who do not think things through, who do not bring rigor and reflection to their theological positions. “In a differentiated consciousness, a person has

incorporates a broader horizon and the possibility of a deeper interiority grounded in self-transcendent loving. The choice and even the ability to choose to expand or to contract one's vision, one's horizon, and one's heart and to live with authenticity is always possible, for God's grace¹⁷ is always available, yet this study explains how human experiences can interfere with one's psychic growth and thus limit one's openness to grace.

Parameters

It is important to note that this thesis will not directly address the specific conversion processes that often take place in therapy, spiritual direction, or retreats. Much has been written on those processes, and to enter those processes, usually a person has already begun to reflect, and hopefully his or her heart is already open to conversion. This work is primarily concerned with those individuals at the "normal" end of the spectrum – happy or sad, slightly neurotic or well-adjusted, free or in pain. Individuals with more serious personality or psychiatric disorders, do not fit within the parameters of this study.¹⁸ This thesis will focus on the factors that affect "healthy" individuals in the ongoing process of life. "Psychic health has two components: a relative absence of

shifted from the world of immediacy to a world mediated by meaning. The shift is from common sense thinking to the more rigorous world of theory." (Lonergan, 1972: 303).

¹⁷ It is important to clarify the term "*grace*". Grace is not a substance or a thing. It is God's gracious offering of God's own self, God's love poured out and offered to a human being. This offering is understood in the western Judeo-Christian understanding that God calls each and every human being to an eternal experience of differentiated union, a union of love.

¹⁸ The conversion patterns of individuals who exhibit the psychic profiles of borderline personality disorder or narcissistic personality disorder are outside the parameters of this thesis, for the former is a psychic wound attained under eighteen months, and the latter is a wound attained under two years of age. DSM4-R. Situations of extreme abuse also limit an individual's ability to respond to God's grace because the person develops coping patterns based on the extremes of highly defended boundaries around an interior hole filled with pain, or suffers from a lack of boundaries and no sense of self. A healthy individual has porous boundaries and a defined sense of self.

pathology and a relatively successful calendar of advance toward maturity – in other words, a sense of well-being and the ability to meet the demands of life”.¹⁹

The Importance of Reflection In Our Relationship with God

The above definition limits maturity to a sense of well-being and an ability to meet the demands of life. I claim that the mature human person is one who lives and loves with integrity. To live with integrity, one needs to reflect on life, on oneself, and on one’s relationships. The key relationship that underscores all other relationships is one’s relationship with God, and it is so important that personally I want to live my relationship with God with a passionate love that pours out on all other relationships. To do this I need to pray and to reflect on myself, grow in self-knowledge, authenticity, and holiness. I am in a process of ongoing conversion. To live well, I need to reflect on the needs of others in the context of their lives, ponder what I can contribute, and reflect on how I can love them on their journey of holiness, on our mutual journey to union with God. It is of utmost importance to reflect on our relationship with God for it sets the goal and the context for our lives: “to be grasped by God and to respond with total and permanent self-surrender to God without conditions, qualifications, and reservations”.²⁰

Throughout my life, thoughts about God, and a relationship with God have always been of utmost importance to me. Fundamentally, my theological question

¹⁹ Robert Rossi, “The Distinction Between Psychological Counselling and Religious Counseling,” in David Fleming, ed., *The Best of the Review # 3: The Christian Ministry of Spiritual Direction*. (St. Louis: 1988). 124.

²⁰ This is Lonergan’s moving definition of Religious Conversion. Lonergan, 1972: 240.

comes from wanting everyone to know and to experience the joy of knowing God and experiencing God's personal love.

Central Question:

Impediments and Assists to Reflection and Conversion

Even in a process of reflection, of desired ongoing conversion, one can experience interior resistance and blocks. However, some individuals seem to resist reflection altogether.²¹ This study asks, "What impedes conversion?" and "What assists conversion?" In general, the answers to these questions will surface as the thesis moves from the psychological to the spiritual and finally, the theological.

Chapter I will focus on those aspects of the **psychological** development of the human person influential in assisting or impeding reflection, and ultimately the process of conversion. I will trace these factors through infancy, childhood and adolescence, and examine how one's family of origin influences the individual. Then we will look at the family in itself. The individual needs to live in the world, so practical applications that assist moral conversion will be presented. Life involves change, and change involves transitions, and transitions surface uncomfortable states and feelings. Conversion also involves a change and a time of transition. The discomfort inherent in the various stages of transition can be uncomfortable enough for some individuals to

²¹Jalvert's suicide Soliloquy in *Les Miserables* demonstrates a resistance to reflection, a resistance to incorporating new information, a new view of the "Law", a new view of relationships in the world. "The world I have known is lost in shadow". His resistance is so strong, and his dread of facing life in a new way is so great that he commits suicide. A. Boubtil & C.M. Schonberg. *Les Miserables*. 1985.

resist conversion, so the factors that assist or impede an individual in the transition process of conversion will be considered. It will be shown that reflection, which is a prerequisite for conversion, needs to be appropriately focused for conversion to take place. Finally, the influence of society will be considered. Ultimately, this chapter will attempt to explain the underlying psychological issues that assist or impede psychic, intellectual, and moral conversion.

Chapter II's focus is the **spiritual** development of persons. It will focus on religious conversion, how it is unique among the conversions, and yet how it too is influenced by a person's early psychological experiences. We will consider the universality of religious conversion in light of James Fowler's²² work on the stages of faith development. I will also elaborate on the spiritual dynamics within early conversion, as well as the relation of images of self and images of God delineated in the teaching of John Wickham, S.J. More advanced conversion will be highlighted in a discussion of the ancient Christian understanding of "The Three Ways" and the dynamics underlying the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Since religious conversion is directed toward authenticity – within the self, and within one's relationship with God – both the notion of the "personal vocation" as the authentic living of one's "name", and the Consciousness Examen as a spiritual practice that enables one to live this vocation authentically in daily life will be presented.

²² James W. Fowler. *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers. 1981).

Having considered the human and spiritual dimensions, the ground has been laid to offer theological reflections on the thesis statement. Chapter I begins with a person's life experience, and Chapter II discusses God's interventions in a person's life as well as the person's experiences and possible responses to God. According to John Wickham, following a time spent in prayer, it is important and valuable to focus one's attention on the interior movements experienced during prayer to be able to discern God's touch. This focused attention, which may include journaling or explicit sharing, involves the first level of reflection on these spiritual experiences. Theology occurs at the second level of reflection, for it is the reflection of a community of believers who systematize and theorize on the combined reflections of a multitude of believers.

Finally, chapter III will elucidate the **theological** issues involved with conversion and consider the salient factors that have surfaced as assists or impediments to conversion. It will present the notions of fear and dread as salient factors impeding reflection and hence conversion, and consider unreflective ways of living that impede conversion, namely drifting, moral impotence, various ideologies and biases. Fundamentalism²³ and the lack of attention to worldviews will be shown to have a

²³Fundamentalism, whether religious or secular, is a closing off of the mind to new information and new questions. As such, it limits the data of experience, inhibits the development of understanding, interferes with the questions for judgment (Is there enough data? Is it true?), and results in an inadequate and irresponsible decision concerning an important religious or secular stance in life. The contributions of both Bernard Lonergan and James Fowler on this topic are presented more fully later in this study. Another author, Andrew Sullivan has the following to say about fundamentalism: "The essential claim of the fundamentalist is that he knows the truth. It's a simple, short phrase, but it would be foolish to underestimate its power in today's unmoored West and developing world. The fundamentalist doesn't guess or argue or wonder or question. He doesn't have to. He *knows*. This knowledge may be the fruit of slow, guided spiritual evolution or, much more probably, sudden revelation – but from his point of view, it is still knowledge. The distinction that others make in the modern world – that there is a difference between what we know empirically and what we believe normatively – is one the fundamentalist rejects. And what the fundamentalist knows is true. It isn't a proposition, held provisionally, to be tested by further evidence. It isn't an argument from which he could be dissuaded by something we call reason. It isn't something that is ever subject to change; what is fundamentally

detrimental effect on individuals, cultures and societies, even to orienting a society to a vector of decline. We will then examine the assists to reflection that ultimately assist conversion, and the elements of conversion that enable authentic loving.

true now, by definition, must be true for all time. The values of the fundamentalists *are* facts. God has revealed them in a book that is inerrant, whether that book is the Bible or the Koran; or he has entrusted them to a hierarchy whose interpretation of scripture and tradition and history and nature is authoritative and even, in some cases, literally infallible. The truth comes from outside the human being who holds it. It is an external truth, brought to him by a book, a text ... but it never emerges from within organically. (...) Fundamentalism, in the sense I am using it, means adherence to this external system of thought and faith. You could call secular fundamentalisms ideologies. You could call religious fundamentalisms the moment a living faith becomes an ideology, a dogma. But the pattern of thought is the same.”

(Andrew Sullivan, *The Conservative Soul*: New York: HarperCollins, 2006: 23-24)

Lonergan describes a (religious) fundamentalist as someone who incorporates the common sense and the transcendent realms of meaning, but has not appropriated the realms of meaning of theory or interiority. Lonergan, 1972:257. (Fundamentalism is explained in more detail on page 58, and in footnote 95; on page 59 in footnote 97, on page 99, and in footnote 168).

Chapter I

Psychological Factors

Affective, Intellectual, and Moral Conversion

Introduction

This chapter will examine certain features of human development from infancy to adulthood, namely reflection, conversion, maturation, and the transition processes involved in change; and how these influence affective or psychic conversion, intellectual conversion, and moral conversion.

Several terms relevant to the topic need to be clarified before the issues in this chapter can be tackled. One of the most significant cognitive processes that underlies conversion is reflection, and it is different from the cognitive process of thinking. One can think about which jacket to wear in consideration of the weather, what to buy for supper, or about who might win the Stanley Cup. This is not reflection. The word reflect comes from the Latin, *reflectere*, (*re*, back and *flectere*, to bend)²⁴, such that reflection means to think back on a thought, to think seriously or to contemplate. Thus one could reflect about one's experiences, one's thoughts, one's feelings, one's behavior, or one's relationship with the transcendent. Reflection suggests a distinct understanding of a difference in one's awareness, comprehension, and judgment of things, a shift that leads to an increased differentiation of consciousness.

Also relevant to this discussion is a difference between "maturation" and "conversion". The mature individual possesses "the essential characteristic of

adulthood, i.e., responsibly augmented by good judgment and adequate insight.”²⁵ Psychologist Gordon Neufeld describes a mature temperament “as having a reflective consciousness; a relationship with self; the capacity for self control; the ability to consider context; cooperativeness and considerateness; a mature sense of fairness; an intrinsic understanding of work; a capacity for courage, patience, and forgiveness; spontaneous moral development; and balance, stability and perspective”²⁶.

This vision of a mature adult acknowledges the need for reflection, which underlies conversion. One can age without maturing, for maturation requires an ongoing development in the aforementioned qualities. It also requires a growth in other-centered caring.²⁷ Conversions can happen during the process of maturation, however, conversion is a more dramatic shift in consciousness such that the person undergoes a paradigm shift. Conversion involves a change of horizon leading to a new self-appropriation that results in a new way of being and acting and relating. As described in the introduction, Lonergan posits four conversions: affective, intellectual, moral, and religious. Doran subsumes Lonergan’s affective conversion into his notion of psychic conversion.

²⁵ Albert Deutsch (ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Mental Health*. (New York: Franklin Watts, 1963), p.116, cited in Rossi, 1988: 125.

²⁶ Gordon Neufeld. *Making Sense of Adolescence*. (Conference given in Montreal, February 2007). 45.

²⁷ A person in maturation is in the process of moving toward this ideal of maturity. “He is reasonably self-directed, self-reliant and independent. He has achieved a certain intellectual openness and practical competence. He lives with a sense of security, realism and purposefulness in a social world where he communicates, gives and receives, cooperates with authority and tolerates frustration and routine. He has integrated his feelings and behavior, and has balanced his values. He is sexually mature and capable of self-donation. He has developed an appropriate sense of humour and can find his own recreation. But while the adult has ‘the capacity to respect, possess and at the same time give the self,’ his maturity is not synonymous with continuous contentment or peace of mind and it does not preclude emotional conflicts and upsets”. Rossi 1988: 125.

Growth, maturation, and conversion involve change, and change involves a transition from one way of being to another. Even the first transitions undergone by an infant continue to have an influence on the later adult. In Erikson's eight psychosocial stages of development²⁸, the appropriation of basic trust rather than mistrust is a child's first task such that he can relate to other individuals with any sense of confidence. An infant's first experience of trust comes through his or her skin - through the gentleness with which he or she is touched and held.

It continues to develop through the response of caregivers to his or her basic needs. The toddler continues to grow in trust if these adults gaze at him with warmth, respond enthusiastically to his attempts to speak, and attend to any expressed feelings. Rough treatment, inattention to needs, inattention to feelings, or ignoring a child's attempted interactions lead to insecurity and a sense of mistrust. The trust or mistrust that is developed at the hands of these primary caregivers influences all other relationships and interactions in life.

Basic human trust underlies the ability to trust the transcendent caregiver, God, and it influences one's ability to deepen a relationship with God. A child, adolescent, or adult filled with trust sets about tasks and relationships imbued with the virtue of hope. A mistrustful person lives in fear. Lacking trust, a person suffers, for he or she cannot trust himself or herself, other individuals or God. Without healing this early psychic wound, an individual lacks the interior solidity to undergo further conversion on his or

²⁸ Erik Erikson. *Childhood and Society*. (New York: Norton, 1950). The eight psychosocial stages are presented in Appendix VII.

her own. Situations of extreme abuse also limit an individual's ability to respond to God's grace because the person develops coping patterns based on the extremes of highly defended boundaries around an interior hole filled with pain, or suffers from a lack of boundaries and lacks a sense of self. A healthy individual has porous boundaries and a defined sense of self.²⁹

This study is based on the assumption that God will never abandon creation; rather, God loves all creation with abandon. This study is founded in the faith stance that the *raison d'être* of a human being is ultimately total union with God, so God is inevitably involved in the process of conversion. God will attempt to communicate with each and every human being always and everywhere, even in the midst of the messiness of life. The grace is always there, all that is needed is there, freely offered. Many humans do not realize this gift, so they do not access the grace.³⁰ They do not receive

²⁹ "In terms of relative maturity, the human personality can have one of three basic statuses along a continuum of mental health and development, statuses which are fluid and admitting of regression as well as advance: abnormal, normal-developing, and mature". Rossi, 1988: 124. Citing Albert Deutsch, Rossi defines "Normal" as "the freedom to adjust appropriately to changing signals, whether they arise from within the body out of changing tides or of biophysical and biochemical processes, or from changes in external circumstances. It means the capacity to sustain effort when this has any chance of achieving its goal, but free of a compulsive necessity to maintain the same effort when it has proven inappropriate or ineffectual". Ibid. 125.

³⁰ Late one evening many years ago when I was a new single mother, my six-year old daughter, Tara, woke up crying in pain. I realized she was probably suffering from a strep throat, so we wrapped up my other sleeping daughter and dropped her off with friends on the way to the Montreal Children's Hospital. Many tearful hours later the doctor saw her and provided some Ampicillin. He said that she had such a bad case of strep that she would be in severe pain for at least another twelve hours. Tara fell asleep on the way home, so I had to wake her to give her the medicine. She didn't like it and she started to cry again. By then it was 4:30 in the morning. As I stood holding the medicine in one hand and opening the door of the fridge with the other, in my heart I screamed at God, "I asked you for strength. Where is it?" I looked in my hand, and there was the bottle of medicine, all the medicine that Tara needed, yet if I gave it to her all at once it could kill her. She needed to take it one teaspoon at a time, and it would taste bad. Ah! All the strength, all the grace was there. I had asked and it was given. It was all there, yet I could only receive it one teaspoon at a time and often it would taste bad. Aquinas thought about it. Lonergan pondered it. I experienced it. Operative Grace – God's own self-offering – in action!

what is offered. God's call to union is termed operative grace, while the human response is termed cooperative grace.³¹

A person who is filled with trust and hope tackles life with an energy and joy that makes psychic conversion, safe; intellectual conversion, a pleasure; and the discerned decisions required for moral conversion, possible. Let us now turn to several developmental issues that pertain to the wider theological and moral basis for cooperative grace.

The Infant

The ability to reflect, and the associated levels of maturity are influenced by early life experiences. As discussed above, the first psychosocial task for an infant is the development of trust. Besides developing the psychosocial capacity of trust, between six and eighteen months, infants develop and usually master the cognitive capacity of "object permanence"³². Object permanence means that an infant has developed a clear understanding that besides things, the caregiver continues to exist even when he or she is out of sight. Infants display this facility when they begin to play peek-a-boo and laugh when someone hides and appears again.

³¹ Lonergan, 1972: 241.

³² Jean Piaget in Laura E. Berk, ed. 1996. *Infants, Children, and Adolescents* 2nd ed. (Toronto: Allyn and Bacon. 1996). 264.

Once an infant has begun to identify known caregivers, and to establish the emotional ties of attachment to their primary caregivers,³³ one can claim that the infant has appropriated the pre-attachment phase (birth to 6 weeks) and the attachment in the making phase (6 to 8 months). At the next stage, they display separation anxiety when these known and remembered caregivers leave. This phase of “clear-cut” attachment³⁴ is the third of four stages in the development of the attachment bond of babies³⁵ and it is key to the development of psychic security.

The “strange situation” technique measures the quality of attachment attained by infants and toddlers. There are four patterns: a secure attachment pattern, and three patterns of insecurity – namely, avoidant attachment, resistant attachment, and disorganized/disoriented attachment.³⁶ If the primary caregivers establish a secure attachment with their baby, they become the “secure base” from which the babies can move out and explore the environment. This development and these concepts are key to this thesis for their role in establishing the trust upon which reflective capacities emerge in consciousness.

³³ John Bowlby. *A Secure Base*. (New York: Basic Books. 1988) in Ibid. 266.

³⁴ Ibid. 266.

³⁵ Ibid. 266. The development of attachment takes place in four phases: 1. *The preattachment phase* (birth to 6 weeks) Infants “recognize their own mother’s smell and voice but do not mind being cared for by someone else. 2. *The attachment in the making” phase* (6 – 8 months) Infants respond more quickly to familiar caregivers and begin to develop a sense of trust, but do not exhibit distress when cared for by a stranger. 3. *The phase of “clear-cut” attachment* (6 – 8 months to 18 months – two years) Babies display separation anxiety when the known caregivers leave. They have mastered Piagetian object permanence for they have a clear understanding that the caregiver continues to exist even when out of view. The primary caregivers become the “secure base” from which the babies can move out and explore the environment. 4. *Formation of a reciprocal relationship* (18 months – two years and on). If a child has mastered these stages, he or she is able to withstand a time of absence from the primary caregiver.

³⁶ Refer to Appendix II.

The Infant and the Child

Gordon Neufeld has posited a theory based on the development of the various attachment patterns to explain that children who have not achieved a secure attachment become “stuck”³⁷, that is, they not only fear going out beyond the safety of their primary caregiver, but because of their lack of attachment, they become afraid to venture into new realms of thought and action as well. These new realms are frightening, so school children and adolescents do all that they can to prevent thought, reflection and learning. Not having attached to their primary caregivers, the children cannot transfer their attachment to teachers and other authority figures. Instead, they bond with peers who do not have the caring, the maturity, or the wisdom to help them to mature.

A lack of adult attachment leaves a child “stuck” and psychologically impaired. In this state, she attempts to cover her underlying fear with behavior that interferes with any experience that is perceived as unfamiliar or new. So defended, psychic conversion becomes nigh impossible.

It is easy to see that the difficulty these children have developing a secure sense of self, influences their ability to become authentic persons in their own right. Neufeld claims that for these children, new ideas are also frightening, for new ideas and the reflection and expanded horizons that accompany them are sources of discomfort. Thus

³⁷ “Stuck” and “stuckness” are terms used by Neufeld to describe the situation of a child who, lacking a secure attachment with his primary caregivers, is unable to move forward and deal with new situations in his life. Gordon Neufeld and Gabor Mate. *Hold Onto Your Kids: Why Parents Matter*. (Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf Canada. 2004).

Neufeld's work helps to explain the impediments to intellectual conversion occasioned by a lack of attachment. In their experienced insecurity, children become unable to venture out into the world of new ideas, and so their fear of the new impedes intellectual conversion.

Moral conversion entails first a choice of values over satisfaction, and secondly, living that choice with authenticity. A child, an adolescent, or an adult who has not attained a secure attachment to his or her primary caregiver as an infant, lives with an ongoing insecurity that makes it difficult to defer satisfaction for the sake of a possibly perceived value. Thus poor attachment impedes moral conversion.

Some reparation can take place if another adult (often a teacher, and usually in the early school years) forms a safe haven in which an attachment bond can be formed. This new bond does not heal the depth of the wounding insecurity, but it can ameliorate the wound, making it possible for the child and the subsequent adult to venture out into new realms of feelings, questions, ideas, insights, reflections, and moral responsibilities. Therefore the healing that occurs through the caring of other adults can provide a new psychic base that makes conversion experiences possible.

The Adolescent

In the book, "*Hold onto Your Kids: Why Parents Matter*",³⁸ Neufeld goes on to explain that parents need to keep attaching to their children or they will turn their bonding energies to their peer group who are necessarily ego-centric, immature, and incapable of assisting them in the healthy growth (conversion) that would lead to personal authenticity, integrity, and ultimate self-transcending adulthood. The presence of an ongoing attachment³⁹ bond with parents or other adults is just as important in an adolescent's life for it provides the protective environment in which the adolescent can develop a reflective and speculative consciousness.⁴⁰ In the context of this study, it seems apparent that the development of a reflective and speculative consciousness is a rather necessary faculty to be able to undergo affective, intellectual, and moral conversion.

In examining this further, it is important to clarify that peer bonding in adolescence is a natural phenomenon. It is only a problem if the adolescent becomes primarily peer-attached and peer-oriented rather than adult-oriented. If he has not attached to caregivers as a child, or if the adults in his life abdicate their responsibility to continue to cultivate a strong emotional bond, the adolescent shifts his attachment to peers becoming peer-oriented rather than adult-oriented. This peer-orientation leaves adolescents in a very vulnerable position. They need to remain adult-oriented, attached

³⁸Neufeld & Mate, 2004.

³⁹Neufeld & Mate, 2007: 8. "Attachment is that drive or relationship characterized by the pursuit and preservation of proximity".

⁴⁰ Ibid. 5. "A reflective and speculative consciousness is meant to facilitate the discovery of self in the context of both inner experience and one's ideals".

and bonded to the caring adults in their lives from whom they can continue to take their cues and get their main protection, affirmation and guidance.

If this attachment bond with adults is missing, these adolescents will set up walls to defend against the pain within their own interior being so as to block the accompanying feelings of vulnerability. They become sensitized to the insensitive relating of their peers, and in the process, having lost the most effective shield against external stress (their parents), any signs of vulnerability are often shamed or even exploited. Feeling so vulnerable in this peer culture, invulnerability is venerated. These young people become unable to develop gentleness, softness, and compassion for themselves and others. Peer interaction becomes a source of so much separation, so much insecurity, and so much shame.

Lacking a safe place for the self to emerge, and lacking a safe place to accomplish their task of becoming individuated, they do not have the wherewithal to stand alone on solid ground or to make moral decisions that require the personal choice of a value over a satisfaction. They are consumed trying to satisfy their need for comfort, protection, and immediate gratification. Feelings become needs to be met, not the data for discernment that underlies affective conversion. Values are those of the peer group, not those of society. To think or act counter to the peer group is a source of fear incorporating the possibility of rejection. Thus values are neither reflected upon, nor acted on. Generally speaking, both intellectual conversion and moral conversion are foreign experiences.

We see here how the lack of a secure attachment impedes psychic, intellectual and moral conversion. But it is no less true that secure attachments **assist** conversion. Just as those children who have not achieved a secure attachment become “stuck”, that is they are afraid to venture into new realms of thought and action; the children who have formed a secure attachment as infants attain a curiosity about life and about the world. They feel secure, so they have access to their feelings and can undergo affective conversion. They develop an open questioning stance, and a readiness to venture into new realms of thought and reflection (intellectual conversion). They feel secure with adults and easily transfer their attachment to other adults (relatives, teachers, and other authority figures).

Attached children can also transfer their attachment to God, so parents who are and remain emotionally bonded to their children assist them in opening themselves to the transcendent and to the religious conversion that accompanies this bond. To assist their children’s growth, parents need to keep growing themselves – in other-centered personal authenticity, in integrity, and in self-transcendence. Therefore it is apparent that continued growth (conversion) on the part of parents involves reflection and effort. These children grow up in a family structure that enables conversion. The children of such parents have a head start, yet eventually they too will need to take on the yoke of ongoing conversion. No one is free from the call to authenticity.

The infant grows into a child, and the child grows as a person in a family, and the person becomes an individual in society. Thus the effects of the caregivers on the infant, and the family dynamics established by those caregivers ‘influence’ the development of the individual. This is not to say that individuals are bound by their upbringing, for grace is always available. Individuals still have the opportunity to live with integrity or not. Their integrity, their authenticity, their other-centered connectedness and caring is dependant on the attitudes they take towards their experiences in life, and through the choices they make. Although personality as a mode of being in the world is given at birth and nurtured or warped by life and by caregivers, individuals form their own character by their choices. That is why the word used is “influence”.⁴¹

The Individual and Society

When enough individuals (a critical mass) choose conversion, the whole society benefits, and a vector of growth in society ensues. If enough individuals fail to choose conversion, then the society is affected and it enters a vector of decline. During a vector of decline, the supportive community is diminished and individuals and families suffer. Most individuals need a supportive community to supply the safe environment in which to ask the reflective questions and to try out the new modes of behavior inherent in affective, intellectual and moral conversion. Lacking a community of support, many will not have the internal resources to go it alone.

⁴¹ In my work as a therapist I have met very fine people who have endured terrible abuse and who have made the reflected decision not to act as their parents had.

Thus one can extrapolate: parents have an incredible influence on the lives of their children, on society, and on their children's children. The love, or the sins of mothers and fathers influence generations. The Inuit peoples of northern Canada claim that each person's choice affects seven generations.

Family of Origin

If subsequent generations are affected by the choices of previous generations, it is important to examine how the lives and choices of one's family of origin can impact a person, and as regards this study, how the dynamics of one's family of origin can assist or impede conversion.

All families are imperfect. All families are messy. There is a range of family dynamics from those that are quite functional to those that are quite dysfunctional. This study posits that functional families assist conversion and dysfunctional families impede conversion. These terms need to be clarified.

According to John Bradshaw, "a functional family is the healthy soil out of which individuals can become mature human beings".⁴² In short, the functional family is a survival and growth unit that supports the attainment of self-knowledge, self-esteem,

⁴² John Bradshaw. *Bradshaw: On The Family*. (Deerfield Beach, Florida: Health Communications Network. 1988.) 42.

and helps meet the emotional needs of the various members. These needs include a balance between autonomy and dependency, living one's individuality in respect of the common good of society. As such, it provides social and sexual training. In contrast dysfunctional families demonstrate a "high level of chronic anxiety, a fusion of boundaries, confused and covert rules, a rigid system with static and rigid rules, an undifferentiated ego mass, a loss of the five freedoms and pseudo-intimacy".⁴³

Bradshaw describes various aspects of dysfunctional families – not only the destructive effects alcoholic parents have on their own children, but also the hidden effects this dysfunctional behavior will have on future generations and on society. Invariably, the unwritten norms of a dysfunctional family include: "Do not talk; do not trust; do not feel; control; deny."⁴⁴

Lack of trust, an inability to talk, denial, and pain; it is no wonder that a dysfunctional family of origin impedes conversion. Such a family does not offer children a safe place to question, to reflect. Children in this kind of family system are "just expected to know": how to get from here to there, how to write a cheque, how to cook a meal, or how to clean the kitchen floor. Without the freedom to ask questions a person brought up in this environment will have difficulty reflecting. Asking questions

⁴³ Bradshaw, 1988: 71. See Appendix III and IV for more information.

⁴⁴ Bradshaw provides the following example: "One night at supper mother falls out of her chair and onto the floor in a drunken stupor. Upset and worried, one of the children asks her father what is wrong with mother. Father replies denying that there is anything wrong." The child is now stuck. With enough such experiences, the child's reality is denied, her feelings squelched. If the child does not talk about what is happening around her and within her, she will not have to feel the pain; yet the pain is there. By not talking about it, she stops trusting her own experience, and her own thoughts. She stops trusting what she sees before her. She stops trusting the people around her. To survive the child now needs to deny her observations and her experience, and to remain in denial so that she does not feel the pain.

is key in the process of coming to know; it is key in gathering enough data in a situation. Lacking data, a person will have difficulty making a decision.

In his epistemology, Bernard Lonergan places 'asking questions' within the process of 'understanding' which is one of the four levels of consciousness: experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. He claims that these processes are oriented towards acting and loving. It is interesting to contrast these four conscious levels of intentionality with what occurs in the thinking process of a person brought up in a dysfunctional family.

In experience, one is to attend to the data. In a dysfunctional family one remains in denial of the data. In understanding, one is to ask questions, gather knowledge, insights, and understanding of the data, and ask the questions, and talk about it. In contrast, the unstated rules in a dysfunctional family are: do not talk, do not feel, and do not ask questions. In judging, one must be free to reflect on whether one has enough data, and whether the data is true rather than deny what is obvious. Thus the claim can be made that the discerned decisions that underlie moral conversion become nearly impossible in a dysfunctional system. Individuals who do not function with any consciousness of what they need to know cannot make informed decisions. Moral conversion entails a choice of a value over a satisfaction. Individuals from a dysfunctional family do not have the necessary resources to enable them to undergo moral conversion.

To indicate that an individual from a dysfunctional family cannot undergo conversion is too strong a statement because it would imply there is no such thing as grace. It would apply if one did not learn from imitation, absorb some values from one's family and the surrounding society, and if there were no such human feature as a conscience. Healing can occur. Humans are immensely resilient. Grace is available. So too, can one heal in the safety of a supportive group, or with the help of a qualified therapist.⁴⁵

This study is about impediments, not impossibility. Thus the statement needs to be written as follows: individuals from dysfunctional families suffer in their lack of knowledge, in their lack of freedom to ask questions, in their impoverished communication styles, and in their insecurity, such that their ability to make a discerned decision, their ability to undergo a moral conversion is impeded.

What Bradshaw and so many others have discovered in research and in therapy is that individuals from dysfunctional families often lose a sense of self-value, a sense of self as unique and separate from another.⁴⁶ They do not have appropriate boundaries, or even a sense of boundaries – a sense of where one starts and one leaves off or where another begins. They have lost a sense of the essence of their own thoughts and their own feelings as different and separate from those of another. As a result, they do not know how to give an honest “yes” or “no” in any situation. It is my claim that moral

⁴⁵ Please refer to Appendix V for an overview of the process of healing necessary in this context.

⁴⁶ Catherine Cherry. *A Study to Evaluate a Variety of Treatment Modalities Used to Assist Adult Children of Alcoholics Towards a Positive Change in the Behavioral, Affective and Attitudinal Realms*. (M.Ed. Thesis, McGill University, 1988). Bibliography.

conversion for a person who has lost this inner core, this inner sense of self, in which one determines a value and chooses this value over an immediate satisfaction, becomes very difficult although not impossible.

Dysfunctional families also introduce individuals to the experience of shame. Shame is different from guilt, for shame infers “there is something wrong with me, I am a mistake”, whereas guilt infers “I made a mistake”. In this inner pain and turmoil everything feels out of control, so individuals often become very controlling in their external world. They can be difficult to live with or to work with, and they struggle with authority figures who do have control: bosses, police officers, teachers, pastors, the hierarchy of the Church.

It is easy to see how feelings of shame can get in the way of conversion for the shame is based on the fear or dread, that “I am a mistake!” This is too painful a thought for many to endure for long. It is no wonder that individuals from dysfunctional families hesitate to think at any depth. To face the lie of an unconsciously painful identity is a process filled with dread, for beneath the pain of the lie, “I am a mistake”, and its corollaries, “I am no good”, and “I am not worth anything”, lies the question: “could it be true?” Reflection is so painful that it is passionately avoided. Thus the fear, which is inherent in a shame-based dysfunctional family system, consistently challenges and impedes conversion. It is through the gentle listening of a safe person of integrity, a friend, or a therapist; and often with the support of a group (12-step groups, therapeutic

groups, self-help groups, or other gatherings) that a person receives the help and support needed to face, and to deal with, the underlying pain long enough for healing to occur.⁴⁷

The Family In Itself

Thus far the focus has been on the individual, and the individual in a family. What about the family itself? All families develop belief systems about relationships, gender issues, openness to others, the value of education, owning a home, and how to respond to illness, to name a few. Sometimes the belief systems, that a family holds, but about which they may not be fully aware, impede a family in dealing with a new situation. For example, a family may hold the belief that someone must have done something wrong to get sick. This family gets caught in blame of the person who is sick, and experiences so much guilt and anger that they are unable to be helpful to the one who is ill. Another family could be facing the first divorce among their members, or another family could be hearing that one of their members is gay. Up until that time the family had maintained that these situations “don’t happen in their family”.

Beliefs such as these impede the necessary conversion process required by the family to be empowered as a family to grow in this new situation. There are ways to assist families move beyond the constraining belief systems that they may have regarding illness in the family. These methods, which can be transferred to other issues

⁴⁷ See Appendix V for an overview of the necessary stages of recovery for those who grew up in dysfunctional families of origin.

that constrain the family in their attitudes and coping mechanisms, demonstrate interventions that assist affective and intellectual conversion.⁴⁸

One such question is: “If you could open that belief just a crack and peek through, what would you see?” With the shift in feelings (affective conversion) and new attitudes (intellectual conversion), the family may be able to respond with love to the needs at hand. The members of the family may be able to act out of new values instead of old satisfactions. Thus “Belief Therapy” can assist moral conversion as well. Therapists and other individuals who listen with caring hearts provide a safe place for affective, intellectual, and moral conversion to take place.⁴⁹

Belief Therapy helps families in difficulty. Yet there is more to a healthy family than functionality. Healthy families encourage questions, attention to feelings, differentiation of individual members, appropriation of oneself, one’s thoughts, one’s feelings, and one’s own mode of living. These families are usually connected to some kind of community within which it is safe to reflect and to question.

Like healthy individuals, healthy families also have porous boundaries. They welcome new members through marriage, birth, and adoption. They have a sense of hospitality and generosity. They share their knowledge, skills, strength, and monetary resources with those in need – whether that person is an out-of-town guest, a neighbour,

⁴⁸ Lorraine M. Wright, Wendy L. Watson, & Janice M. Bell. *Beliefs: The Heart of Healing in Families and Illness*. (New York: Basic Books, 1996).

⁴⁹ I am a clinical member of the American Association of Marital and Family Therapists (AAMFT), so I can attest that Belief therapy is only one example of the many kinds of therapy that can help families.

or a stranger in difficulty, from the inner city or across the world. They have a sense of integrity. They view themselves a part of a larger picture connected to others in time and history. They see each other as having meaning and value, as having a contribution to make in the here and now.

Healthy families do things together. They laugh heartily, cry together, and tease well. The members in healthy families are thoughtful and present to each other in times of sorrow and joy. They celebrate, and they live and act towards each other and others with intentional loving. Healthy families and supportive communities provide the safe spaces wherein individuals can become authentic, self-transcending, other-centered, and loving human beings. In all these ways, healthy families assist affective, intellectual, and moral conversion.

Practical Applications - Moral Conversion

Given the importance that healthy functional families play in the ongoing conversion of their members, it is important to examine how adults can assist their toddlers, children, and adolescents to go about making ethical decisions. Throughout life all humans are faced with ethical decisions. Barbara Coloroso outlines a method for children and adults to use as they reflect on the situation before them. This study posed the question, “Why do so many people not seem to reflect, and not seem to reflect on how their actions affect others?” Coloroso claims that people need to reflect on the “I and 3C’s” – intention, content, circumstances, and consequences - before they can make

ethical decisions in service to caring deeply, sharing generously, and helping willingly, instead of hating, hoarding, or harming.⁵⁰ Coloroso outlines in clear terms the process for making a moral decision. However, moral actions do not involve just the reflective function. Moral conversion involves choosing a value over a satisfaction, and then acting on what one knows is the right thing to do. How often do humans know the right thing to do, yet hesitate out of fear of what others will think, of the personal cost involved, or the desire for immediate self-gratification? When individuals do not choose the moral option, whether out of fear or self-gratification, they act unauthentically in relation to God, to others, and to their own selves.

In healthy individuals this unauthentic decision is uncomfortable and usually results in experiences of guilt. Even though the internal consequences of a lack of moral conversion are uncomfortable, it takes courage to reflect, to choose, and to act ethically. Factors that are integral for moral conversion include: family upbringing, friends with integrity, and a community that can provide support during times of difficulty.⁵¹

This study posits that reflection is a prerequisite for conversion. To reiterate, grace is God's loving gift of self to a person. Generally, human beings need to reflect on the particularities of the grace offered - whether God is offering this gift of love as courage, steadfastness, or forgiveness, etc. - to be able to receive it. God's offering is operative grace, calling us beyond into a new horizon, and cooperative grace is not just

⁵⁰ Barbara Coloroso. *Just Because It's Not Wrong Doesn't Make It Right: From Toddlers to Teens, Teaching Kids to Think and Act Ethically*. (Toronto: Penguin Group. 2005).

⁵¹ My friends deserve so much credit for the number of times they have said, "Don't lower yourself. You are more than that. Hang in there. We are here with you", and encouraged me to be all I could be – to be the authentically loving person that I was created to be.

the reception of the grace, but the incarnation of the grace in good works that are based in self-transcending love.

I also propose that a solid family of origin that provides the stable and loving environment for the development of trust, and attachment, can become the instrument of God's grace, the instrument of sanctifying grace which the children in the family absorb such that they live almost automatically a life of other-centered self-transcendent love. This does not mean that they don't sin, it just means that suffused with God's grace, these children grow up and continue to live what they experienced. This explains how a multitude of good yet simple people, who lack education and a differentiated consciousness, but for whom love rather than dread is their existential experience, continue to make *love*, their *modus operandi*.

Thus far the development of trust and attachment issues in small infants, the effects of functional or dysfunctional families, constraining belief systems, and the lack of courage to act morally have all been shown to impact one's ability to say "yes" to conversion at all levels. It is necessary to consider those elements involved in the change process itself.

Transitions

Transitions are inherent in the process of change. Conversions involve changes that mark a transition from one place, one viewpoint, or one mode of being

to another. However, the transition process is necessarily uncomfortable and quite possibly imbued with fear. A conversion is a deep level change, so consideration of these transitions is important to this study. Change may take place suddenly, as in a crisis, or more slowly, as in a transition. For the Chinese, the word “crisis” is composed of two symbols:

危机

Dangerous

Opportunity

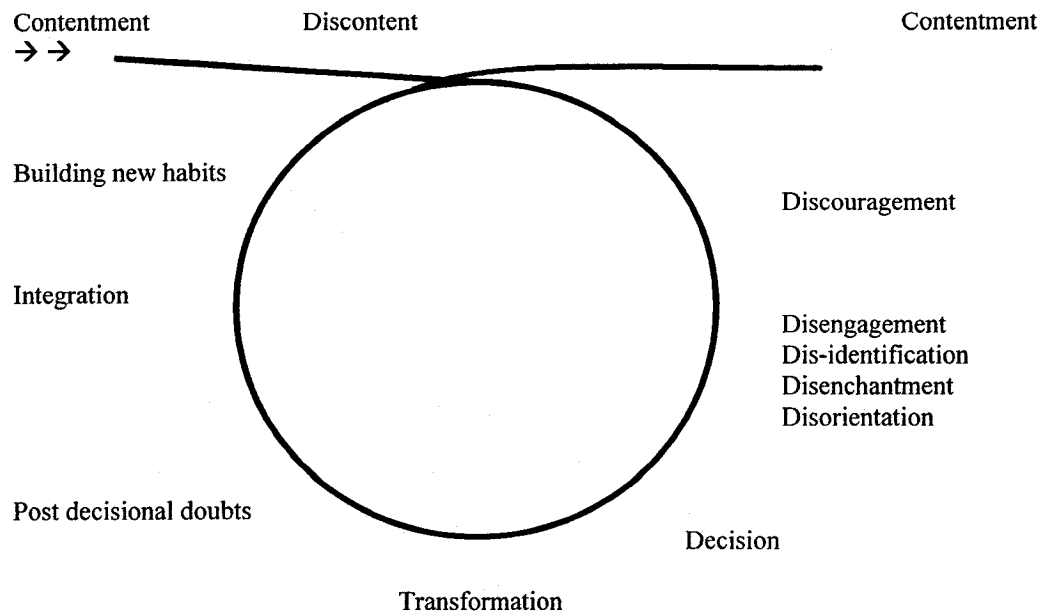
Figure 1

Thus a crisis is a dangerous opportunity. All change involves an *ending*, a *transition*, and a *new beginning*. It involves the ending of a phase of stability, of contentment, a subsequent phase of discontent, followed by a phase of discouragement and conflict. A time of trouble initiates a process of disintegration wherein the old order comes apart. The new order becomes clear only after a period of “withdrawal and return”.⁵²

I have developed the following diagram compiled from the work of William Bridges and John Wickham. It outlines the experiences that accompany change.⁵³

⁵² John Wickham. *Prayer Companion Handbook*. (Montreal: Ignatian Centre, 1984). 97.

⁵³ Catherine Cherry. *A Turning Point: Mid-Life Career Change*. (Essay for M.Ed. Program in Counselling Psychology, McGill University. 1988). 15.



Transitions and Transformations
Figure 2

The tasks of a developmental transition include: to terminate a time of one's life; to accept the losses the termination entails; to review and evaluate the past; to decide which aspects of the past to keep and which to reject; and to consider one's wishes and possibilities for the future. One is suspended between the past and the present.⁵⁴ It is easy to hear the pain and the fear that accompany change. Much from the past must be given up so that which is life-giving can be used for the future. Changes can be attempted in both oneself and one's world.

⁵⁴ Daniel L. Levinson. *The Seasons of a Man's Life*. (New York: Ballantine Books. 1978). 51.

According to Bridges, the period of conflict has four phases: disengagement, dis-identification, disenchantment, and disorientation. One of these alone is enough to inspire fear. All four together can turn fear to dread.⁵⁵

Disengagement: “Divorces, deaths, job changes disengage individuals from the contexts in which they have known themselves. They break up the old cue-system which served to reinforce roles and to pattern behavior”.

Dis-identification: Involves a loss of a sense of self-identification either through the loss of a role or a label. “Who am I?” becomes the basis for new growth as the bonds of “who we are” become transformed into a new reality, a new identity.

Disenchantment: Occurs as an individual discovers that his/her world as he/she knew it no longer comprises reality, i.e. some part of his/her old reality is in his/her head, not out there. The disenchantment experience is a signal that the time has come to look below the surface.

Disorientation: Is a meaningful “time of confusion and emptiness when ordinary things have an unreal quality about them. Things that used to be important don’t seem to matter any more. Individuals feel stuck, dead, lost in some great dark non-world.

Often during these latter two phases of transition (of conversion), an individual needs to withdraw. In withdrawing, he/she enters a ‘neutral’ zone, a limbo, a gap between one phase and the next, during which he/she gradually comes to see and understand a whole new view of reality. This new view of reality provides a new stance and a new horizon.

How can an individual cope during the pain of transition? There are practical steps to help find the meaning in the neutral zone: find a regular time and place to be alone, begin a log of neutral-zone experiences, take this pause in the action to write an autobiography, take this opportunity to discover what one really wants, think of what

⁵⁵ William Bridges, *Making Sense of Life's Changes: Transitions: Strategies for Coping with the Difficult, Painful, and Confusing Times in Your Life*. (Manila, Addison-Wesley, 1980): 92-103.

would be unlived in life if it ended today, and take a few days to retreat and go on a version of a passage journey.⁵⁶

A person who prays takes the issue at hand to God and asks for assistance, finds a spiritual director, takes this major decision on retreat, or goes through the discernment process within the context of a modality such as the Ignatian Exercises. Affective, intellectual, moral, and religious conversion involves change. Having examined the elements involved in the transition process it is evident that fear is a major impediment to conversion.

The Need to Be Appropriately Focused In Reflection

Another assist to conversion is the life-orienting task of writing one's own mission statement as suggested by Covey in his book, the "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People".⁵⁷ People have issues about which they are concerned. If their area of influence is larger than their area of concern, they may be acting unethically. The word is 'may' because a caring teacher or parent who says something loving to one child may influence another within hearing in unknown positive ways; whereas a rock star, who dresses provocatively and sings about suicide, may have a disastrous influence on many youngsters. In both cases the circle of influence is larger than the circle of immediate concern, but in the former, the influence is positive, whereas in the latter, the

⁵⁶ Ibid. 121- 128.

⁵⁷ Stephen R. Covey. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990).

influence can be very negative. This can be phrased another way. In cases of intentional loving, the grace spreads, whereas in cases of unreflective uncaring behavior, the destruction also spreads.

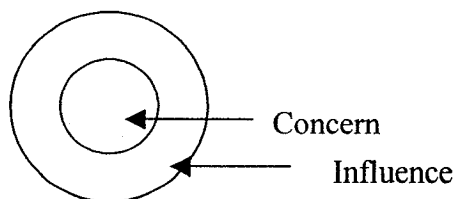


Figure 3

If a person's area of concern is larger than her area of influence, one will experience only frustration if one remains focused on the area of concern that is outside one's area of influence. This is the experience of many women in the Catholic Church who wish for more equality and opportunity in ministry. Covey claims that consideration of these circles assists people focus their life energies proactively within their "circle of influence – on things they can do something about (A below). The nature of their energy is positive, enlarging and magnifying, causing their circle of influence to increase."

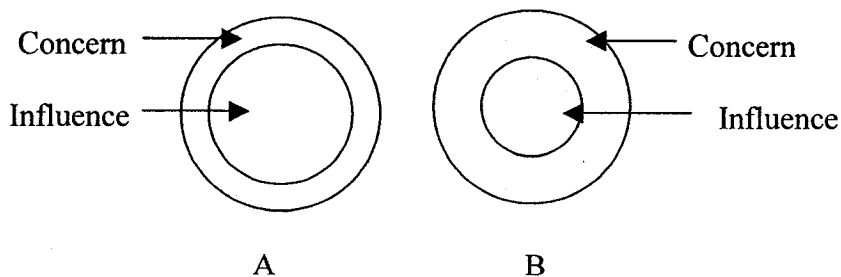


Figure 4⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Ibid. 81.

Reactive people focus their energy on the area in their circle of concern where they have no influence (B above). This focus inhibits change and only leads to a loss in energy, and an increase in frustration and negativity in personal relations. This aside serves to demonstrate that even reflection needs to be appropriately focused for it to be open to conversion.

Society

Thus far, this study has examined individual and familial factors that assist or impede conversion. Now it is time to consider those elements in society that support the development of fear, or minimize its effect.

When a person is suffering “anomie”, he or she would be living a deep level pain, and filled with fear. Anomie is defined as a lack of purpose, identity, or ethical values in a person or in a society. The person experiences a kind of rootlessness that arises from the social instability caused by the erosion of standards and values. Humans need to belong, they need to connect to each other and to something of transcendent value and meaning. Jessie Sutherland claims human beings have “five fundamental identity needs: meaning, connectedness, security, recognition, and action/autonomy.”⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Jessie Sutherland. *Worldview Skills: Transforming Conflict from the Inside Out*. (Victoria: Worldview Strategies, 2005). 63. She cites Vern Redekop, *From Violence to Blessing: How an Understanding of Deep-Rooted Conflict Can Open Paths to Reconciliation*. (Ottawa: Novalis. 2002). 31.

In this era of post-modern relativism it could be said that many individuals feel lost and suffer anomie. A lack of rooted-ness, a lack of a sense of identity, and a lack of a sense of purpose could drive a person to meet these needs, or leave him with an underlying discomfort and fear that there is no meaning in life. In this state one could conclude, “Do not think, live for the moment”. The song “Another Day”, sung by the junkie in the musical “Rent”, demonstrates this ache:

The heart may freeze or it can burn. The pain will ease if I can learn. There is no future.
There is no past. I live this moment as my last. There are only us. There's only this.
Forget regret, or life is yours to miss. No other road. No other way. No day but today.⁶⁰

The song's lyrics epitomize this pain of being lost and the fear of reflection, the fear of any possible change, the fear of conversion.

Doran posits a human and structural response to this problem of the emptiness and confusion in contemporary culture. He expresses a vision that involves not only promoting a program of organized and collaborative interdisciplinary research directed to the reorientation and integration of the cultural superstructure. He hopes to promote an educative process that can meet people in their everyday level of culture and support them in a formation and transformation such that they are encouraged to become catalysts of what ought to be – ecclesially, personally, culturally, and socially. He claims that in true education, the dialectic that would reorient and integrate the superstructure promotes and indeed becomes the dialogue that challenges and enables

⁶⁰ See Appendix VI.

all participants, including critical dialecticians, to change and to grow.⁶¹ In other words, he is promoting conversion.

Lonergan explains that besides conversion, there are breakdowns. The social instability caused by the erosion of standards and values mentioned above becomes the state of a society in a vector of decline. In this state, "Once a process of dissolution has begun, it is screened by self-deception and it is perpetuated by consistency." "Increasing dissolution will then be matched by increasing division, incomprehension, suspicion, distrust, hostility, hatred, violence."⁶² He claims that in this kind of society, the numbers of intellectual, moral and religious skeptics mount, which in turn influences the book market, the educational system, and the mass media, until intellectual, moral, and religious self-transcendence are threatened. These observations support the thrust of this study.

The individuals who become skeptics and who refuse to think rigorously, add to the instability of society, and add to the fear which permeates society. It becomes difficult for others to deal with this fear and undergo the process of conversion. Thus the individual affects society, and society affects the individual as regards to reflection, self-transcendence and conversion. In this environment, it takes the alliance of individuals of integrity and reflection, and the presence of a supportive community to counter the fear and to offer a place of safety for conversion to take place.

⁶¹ Doran, 1990: 6.

⁶² Lonergan, 1972: 244.

Summary

This chapter described how the early development of trust or mistrust, along with successful attachment or inadequate attachment to primary caregivers, were important factors enabling or impeding conversion. The dynamics of the family of origin, the experience of anomie, and the orientation of society towards progress or decline were also instrumental influences. The confusion and pain within the transition process itself highlighted how an individual could be derailed on his or her journey of conversion. Essentially, all of these experiences were shown to be influences in the development of fear or courage. Isolating fear, or structures of supportive friends, family, and a community, surfaced as important factors impeding or assisting conversion.

Chapter II

Spiritual Development

Religious Conversion

Introduction

The preceding chapter looked at human development including some of the psychological, familial, and social experiences that could influence a human being's tendency to respond from a position of fear, or one of openness, enthusiasm and courage. It focused on affective or psychic conversion, intellectual conversion, and moral conversion. This chapter will focus on religious conversion, how it is a unique form of conversion, and yet how it too is influenced by a person's early psychological experiences. Thus this chapter will focus on the spiritual development of persons.

The chapter will begin with the common features of the experience of religious conversion across cultures and faith traditions. In it, the movement will flow from universal themes to particular responses, the ways in which the individual person can respond to God's call to conversion as delineated in James Fowler's stages of faith development.⁶³ Conversion will be clarified as the domain of God. We will look at the dynamics of spiritual growth⁶⁴, the interrelationship of the images of self and the images of God,⁶⁵ and the ancient Christian mode outlining spiritual growth called "The Three Ways". Clarifications will be presented regarding the notions of: the true and the false

⁶³ Fowler, 1981.

⁶⁴ Wickham, 1984: 1. "Spiritual growth refers to a closer union with God in personal love, trust, forgiveness, discipleship and service in the Church and in the contemporary world".

⁶⁵ Ibid.

self, dying to self, the dark night of the senses, and the dark night of the soul.⁶⁶ These clarifications are pertinent to the topic of this thesis.

According to the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, God calls each person by name. This study will examine the value of discovering, attending to, and living the deep meaning within this unique name.⁶⁷ Finally, the “examination of conscience” or “Consciousness Examen”,⁶⁸ developed by Ignatius Loyola in his Spiritual Exercises, will be introduced as a simple method of reflection that can counter fear and lead to spiritual growth.

The Universality of Religious Conversion

To Lonergan, “Religious conversion is being grasped by ultimate concern. It is other-worldly falling in love. It is total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, reservations.”⁶⁹ What is relevant here is his description of religious conversion in relation to self-transcendence, values, one’s relation to the universe, and its ground and its goal, for that will open up the concept of religious conversion to other religions beyond Christianity.

⁶⁶ Wickham, John. Unpublished material from his course on *Ongoing Spiritual Direction*. (Montreal: Ignatian Center. 1978-88).

⁶⁷ Herbert Alphonso. *Discovering Your Personal Vocation: The Search for Meaning through the Spiritual Exercises*. (New York: Paulist Press. 2001).

⁶⁸ Ludovico J. Puhl. *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: A new translation based on studies in the language of the Autograph*. (Chicago: Loyola University Press. 1951).

⁶⁹ Lonergan, 1972: 240.

“Religious conversion is to a total being-in-love as the efficacious ground of all self-transcendence, whether in the pursuit of truth, or in the realization of human values, or in the orientation man adopts to the universe, its ground, and its goal”.⁷⁰

The question may be asked, “Is religious conversion, that unrestricted questioning and being in love without limitation, a human phenomena unlimited to any particular time, tradition, or culture?” Do all human beings demonstrate the call to know and to love? Do all human beings experience the call to self-transcendence?⁷¹

In the eastern religions, the turning around (conversion) involves enlightenment, a new path beyond worldly wisdom, guided by “the whole or ultimate that one meets at the end or in the depths of human knowledge and love”.⁷² However, the main sense of the ultimate is impersonal. It is referred to as light rather than love, although *bhakti* (devotional love) is a giving over one’s lesserness to that which is greater. In Confucian, Taoist, and East Asian Buddhism, ultimate mystery is mediated by the cosmos and the ancients and assisted by a rejection of worldly ambitions. In East Asia, attention is given to harmony and beauty that put one in touch with the rhythm of the earth. Indian religions proclaim that ignorance and bad karma distort the human condition. Nirvana, in Buddhism, becomes possible when one calms the mind, purifies the passions, and lets go of cravings and desires.⁷³

In the monotheistic religions of the west (Judaism, Islam, and Christianity), the main sense of the ultimate is personal. Religious conversion involves responding to the

⁷⁰ Ibid. 241.

⁷¹ Denise Carmody. “The Desire for Transcendence: Religious Conversion”. In *Desires of the Human Heart: The Theology of Bernard Lonergan*. Ed Vernon Gregson. (New York: Paulist Press. 1988.) 68.

⁷² Ibid. 71.

⁷³ Ibid. 70.

word of God with a turning of the heart, letting go of all our refusals to love unrestrictedly, loving others and God with all our heart, mind, and strength. Religious conversion for Christians involves loving and following Jesus as the one who not only demonstrates the way and life of authenticity, but with whom they can partake in the divine nature and participate in the communal embrace of the Trinity.

Since Denise Carmody posits that all the major world religions⁷⁴ call their adherents to self-transcendence, to conversion, albeit in different ways;⁷⁵ I claim the conclusions of the present study can apply to all the major religions. Individuals who follow a particular religious tradition share a belief system in the truth claims of that tradition. Beliefs are found storied in sacred scriptures and codified in rules and creeds. Beliefs can be stated and proclaimed.

“Beliefs do differ, but behind this difference there is a deeper unity. For beliefs result from judgments of value, and the judgments of value relevant for religious belief come from faith, the eye of religious love, the eye that can discern God’s self-disclosures”.⁷⁶

Faith is based on affectivity and values. Feeling is the locus of value and it gives our conscious life its mass and momentum. The radical transformation of feeling in affective conversion gives the power of sustained self-transcendence, of authentic

⁷⁴ “The seven common areas found in the world religions of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Mazdaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism are: there is a transcendent reality; that he is immanent in human hearts; that he is supreme beauty, truth, righteousness, goodness; that he is love, mercy, compassion; that the way to him is repentance, self-denial, prayer,; that the way is love of one’s neighbour, even of one’s enemy; that the way is love of God, so that bliss is conceived as knowledge of God, union with him, or dissolution into him.” Friedrich Heiler. *The History of Religions as a Preparation for the Cooperation of Religions*. p.142-153. in Lonergan, 1972: 109.

⁷⁵ Carmody, 1988.

⁷⁶ Lonergan, 1972: 119.

living.⁷⁷ The fullness of this transformation lies in religious conversion.⁷⁸ For Lonergan, “faith is the knowledge born of religious love” and “religious development is dialectical, that the task of repentance and conversion is life-long”.⁷⁹

As a Catholic, and as a Jesuit, Lonergan views faith as personal and social, in which one’s relationship with God needs to be lived concretely in the world, and celebrated in community. James Fowler expresses a more Protestant position in which faith is more individualistic and personal, even though the influence of community and culture are recognized, and one’s faith is expressed in active social action for others. Since Fowler has conducted extensive research on the faith development of individuals across the life span, his valuable contribution is pertinent to this study and will be examined next.

Faith Development

James Fowler claims that faith is large and mysterious, fundamental to life, universal as a phenomenon beneath all the religions, and yet so infinitely varied that each person’s faith is unique. He elucidates several definitions of faith. At first he

⁷⁷ In the Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) that Sue Johnston developed, she stays focused on the feelings presented by each person in the couple. By staying with the feelings, each individual gradually moves deeper and deeper until the major pain is accessed and healed. This healing (which at an 82% success rate is the highest success rate for marriage therapy) is an affective conversion. Because it puts the individuals in touch with their authentic selves, the changes they initiate do not break down after a few months as is so common with other marriage therapies. Susan M. Johnson. *The Practice of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy*. 2nd ed. (New York: Brunner-Routledge. 2004).

⁷⁸ Walter E. Conn. “The Desire for Authenticity: Conscience and Moral Conversion”. In *Desires of the Human Heart: The Theology of Bernard Lonergan*. Edited by Vernon Gregson. 36-56. (New York: Paulist Press. 1988). 50.

⁷⁹ Lonergan, 1972: 117- 118.

incorporates the interpersonal aspects of faith: “faith is interactive and social, it requires community, language, ritual and nurture. It is shaped by initiatives from beyond us and other people, initiatives of spirit or grace. How these images are recognized and imaged, or unperceived and ignored, powerfully affect the shape of faith in our lives.”⁸⁰

Then he adds a sense of meaning to the interpersonal:

faith as a person’s or group’s way of moving into the force field of life. It is our way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces and relations that make up our lives. Faith is a person’s way of seeing him or herself in relation to others against a backdrop of shared meaning and purpose.⁸¹

He goes on to quote Paul Tillich who writes about faith as one’s “ultimate concern” that “shapes the ways we invest our deepest loves and our most costly loyalties”.⁸² Herein there is a similarity to Lonergan’s statement quoted earlier, “faith is the knowledge born of religious love”.

It is when Fowler turns to the theologian, H. Richard Niebuhr, that the relationship to the current study is most obvious. Niebuhr, he says,

sees faith taking form in our earliest relationships with those who provide care for us in infancy. He sees faith growing through our experience of trust and fidelity – and of mistrust and betrayal – with those closest to us.

⁸⁰ Fowler, 1981: xiii. His research draws together Piaget’s theories of cognition, Erikson’s theories of psychosocial development, and Kohlberg’s stage theory of moral development. (Please see Appendices IV and V). In his later work he included the feminist insights of Carol Gilligan. Fowler finally defined *faith* as: “Peoples evolved and evolving ways of experiencing self, others and world (as they construct them) as related to and affected by the ultimate conditions of existence (as they construct them) and of shaping their lives’ purposes and meanings, trusts and loyalties, in light of the character of being, value and power determining the ultimate conditions of existence (as grasped in their operative images –conscious and unconscious – of them).

⁸¹ Ibid. 4.

⁸² Ibid. 5. Fowler quotes from the “Dynamics of Faith” by Paul Tillich.

Neibuhr's statement parallels earlier constructs in this thesis about the influence of the trust developed at the hands of our earliest caregivers. Neibuhr continues, proclaiming faith as the unifying force between peoples and what gives them meaning: faith is found in the shared visions and values that hold human groups together. He sees faith as the answer to the search for an overarching, integrating and grounding trust in a center of value and power sufficiently worthy to give our lives unity and meaning.⁸³ From the claims of these theologians, it would seem that faith is a counter to anomie and that faith would assist one to meet the five fundamental identity needs of meaning, connectedness, security, recognition, and action/autonomy mentioned earlier. In this vein, it is not the individualistic and controlling "*Cogito ergo sum*", the "I think therefore I am" of Decartes, but the "*Cogitor ergo sum*", the "I am because I am known" (by God)⁸⁴ that gives human beings their basic recognition, meaning, value, and identity.⁸⁵

Returning to this universal theme of faith as a unifying force between peoples found in the shared visions and values that can ground an individual's life, James Fowler describes how faith, any religious faith - can develop as a person develops psychologically. After much research, Fowler posits six Stages of Faith. He turns to the work of Kohlberg on the levels of moral development, to Erikson and his work elucidating psychosocial development and finally to Piaget's studies on cognitive development. Kohlberg's levels are divided into pre-moral, conventional, and post-conventional categories. Because of the necessity for the development of cognitive

⁸³ Ibid. 5. Fowler quotes unpublished material by H. Richard Niebuhr.

⁸⁴ Lonergan, 1978: Alluded to on p. 414. (Exact source undetermined).

⁸⁵ Thomas Merton writes that "For the contemplative there is no *cogito* ("I think") and no *ergo* ("therefore") but only *SUM*, I Am". Thomas Merton. *New Seeds of Contemplation*. (New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation. [1962] 1972). 9.

processes along with the psychosocial development, Fowler's stages have minimum age requirements for the passage from one stage to another; however, there is no maximum chronological age for any stage. Thus one may remain in Stage 2, the Mythic-Literal Stage, which is more suitable for those in childhood, aged 7- 12, for a lifetime.⁸⁶

In this stage story is the major way of giving unity, and value to experience. Individuals at this stage are functioning at the level of common sense. The stories, the myths, are perceived as literally true. Thus there were actual prehistoric humans named Adam and Eve. For individuals at this stage, the world has not yet become mediated by meaning. They cannot see this story as an important myth expressing deep meaning about our relationship to God and to the rest of creation. Any threat to the literal content of this story threatens their faith. Thus, individuals can get stuck in this stage such that intellectual conversion, with its changes in horizon and deeper reflection, becomes inhibited. Yet, it goes without saying, these people can be very moral and have a relationship with God.

The shift from Stage 2 to Stage 3 is a movement from the world in which meaning is immediate (the world of unreflected sense experience) to the recognition that meaning is mediated (this world goes beyond experience to include understanding and judgment).⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Fowler, 1981. Fowler begins with Infancy and Undifferentiated Faith, and follows with Stage I: Intuitive-Projective Faith (age 3-7), Stage II: Mythic-Literal (age, childhood), Stage III: Synthetic-Conventional (adolescence), Stage IV: Individuative -Reflective (age 20-35), Stage V: Conjunctive (age 35 -), and Stage VI: Universalizing (advanced) See Appendices VII & VIII.

⁸⁷Lonergan, 1972: 76-77.

Fowler's Stage 3, Synthetic- Conventional is most often initiated in adolescence. These young people are still conformist, not fully individuated, and have not yet achieved a differentiated consciousness. Older adults who remain in Stage 3 also demonstrate these features, at least in issues of faith. At the beginning of this stage, the adolescent brain is developing, such that they are moving from 'concrete operational thought' to 'formal operational thought'. This shift in mental ability usually occurs around the time an adolescent is sixteen years old. Concrete operations constitute a logic of objects and of the relationships between objects, whereas formal operations constitute a logic of propositions. Concrete operations manipulate objects while formal operations manipulate *concepts* about objects and their relationships.

Older adolescents are able to think about thinking, and think about method in thinking. Fowler calls this *hypo-thetico-deductive thinking*.⁸⁸ (In the terminology used by Lonergan this process would be referred to as the beginning of differentiated thought). At this stage, individuals can develop third-person perspective taking, however, even though they can stand back and view a situation from another point of view, they usually respond to a situation according to the social expectations of their group. Fowler claims that Stage 3 "marks the beginning of the conventional level of moral judgment and he calls it "*mutual interpersonal expectations, relationships and interpersonal conformity*."⁸⁹ The third person perspective is the beginning of a sense of a generalized other, and a perspective on society, but it is limited by a personal identity that is only in process, a desire to please significant others, and by a lack of theoretical

⁸⁸Fowler, 1981: 70-71.

⁸⁹ Ibid. 74.

perspective on society. A sense of a faith in God is possible, yet it needs to be supported by a community of like-minded believers.

The reflective and speculative consciousness (not just what is, but what could be) that can develop during adolescence is the burgeoning of a differentiated consciousness. When differentiated consciousness assists one to take a critical distance from one's previous assumptive value system and begin to think for oneself (the emergence of the executive ego), one is ready for Stage 4, Individuative-Reflective Faith. Faith in this stage is demythologizing for it involves logic and clear propositions. A shift occurs from Stage 3, during which one functions at a level of "common sense"⁹⁰, to Stage 4 in which one has developed a *differentiated consciousness* and has begun to function at a level of "theory".⁹¹

According to Fowler, in Stage 5, *Conjunctive Faith*, a person moves from the head to the heart, and listens to the voices of his "deeper self". He is alive to paradox, to symbol, to ritual, to myths that are now mediated by meaning, and aware that reality

⁹⁰ Ibid. 72. Lonergan defines "common sense" as "a nucleus of habitual insights such that the addition of one or two more will bring one to the understanding of an open series of concrete situations. By that understanding one will grasp how to behave, what to say, how to say it, what to do, how to do it, in the currently emerging situation. Such a nucleus of insights is centered in the subject: it regards his world as related to him, as the field of his behavior, influence, action, as coloured by his desires, hopes, fears, joys, sorrows. When such a nucleus of insights is shared by a group, it is the common sense of the group; when it is just personal it is considered odd; when it pertains to the common sense of a different group, it is considered strange". "Theory", Lonergan explains is inquiry pursued for its own sake. It is when logic and methods are formulated, when a tradition of learning is established, different branches are distinguished, and specialties multiply.

⁹¹ Ibid. 257. Lonergan defines the *Four Realms of Meaning*. 1. The realm of common sense with its meaning expressed in everyday language. 2. The realm of theory where language is technical, simply objective in reference, and so refers to the subject and his operations only as objects. 3. The realm of interiority where language speaks indeed of the subject and his operations as objects but, none the less, rests on self-appropriation that has verified on personal experience the operator and his operations and the processes referred to in the basic terms and relations of the language employed. 4. The realm of transcendence in which the subject is related to divinity in the language of prayer and of prayerful silence.

overspills its mediation. A person in stage 5 makes one's own experience of truth the principle by which other claims to truth are tested, yet, at the same time that person is willing to spend and be spent for the cause of conserving and cultivating the possibility of others' generating their own identity and meaning, even when this leaves one feeling vulnerable by the strange truths of those who are other.⁹² These individuals are simultaneously grounded and open. The fear impeding someone from living the fullness of Stage 5 is related to "his inability to sacrifice the self and to risk the partial justice of the present order for the sake of a more inclusive justice and the realization of love".⁹³

In the final stage, *Universalizing Faith*, persons live according to "the criteria of inclusiveness of community, of radical commitment to justice and love and of selfless passion for a transformed world, a world made over, not in their images, but in accordance with an intentionality both divine and transcendent".⁹⁴ Human beings who attain this level of faith, this level of other-centered caring, this level of transcendence, **do not live in fear and do not need the community to support them**, rather these stalwart leaders and/or solid individuals provide the mentoring, the wisdom, and the support for others. They are able to utilize all their skills and their inner resources in support of the community for these individuals live with generosity and authority, and experience a genuine freedom in their loving even when it is at great personal cost. Transformed, the conversions are alive in them. These people demonstrate religious conversion accomplished: "religious conversion is being grasped by ultimate concern. It

⁹² Ibid. 187 & 198. Stage 5 fits with the mandate of Spiritual Community Animators.

⁹³ Ibid. 200.

⁹⁴ Ibid. 201.

is otherworldly falling in love. Religious conversion is a total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, or reservations”.⁹⁵

While Fowler presents the ideal pattern of development, he does not claim that all people manage the transitions or do the necessary reflection to move from one stage to the next. It may be noted that for some the transitions and the reflections are blocked by fear. For Fowler, faith is relational, so family, friends and community can support one in the movement from one stage to another, unless of course, the community itself is stuck in an early stage. Fowler claims that Fundamentalists of any faith are stuck in Stage 2 or 3. Lonergan writes in primitive undifferentiated consciousness the ‘common sense’ and ‘transcendent’ realms of meaning are interpenetrating, while the realms of ‘theory’ and ‘interiority’ have not yet developed.⁹⁶

In relating the concepts of these two authors, I can posit that as regards these realms of meaning, Fundamentalists do have a sense of the transcendent, God, yet they remain at the level of common sense by insisting on a literal interpretation of the myths and stories in scripture. They have not examined these myths in a historical context, or recognized that meaning is not direct; rather, it is mediated. The meaning remains trapped in the narrative, and without reflection and a conceptual perspective they do not function at the level of theory. Lacking context, the realm of meaning of interiority is missing or limited in its appropriation.

⁹⁵ Lonergan, 1972: 240.

⁹⁶ Ibid. 257.

Fundamentalists appear to experience much fear, much interior conflict (disorientation and disenchantment) and guilt if they begin to think with rigor, and try to transition to a broader horizon. Even in a more open faith community, some people within that tradition remain in Stage 2 - *Mythic-Literal*, or Stage 3 - *Synthetic-Conventional* for the rest of their lives. However, these individuals or groups can be good and loving people.

[T]o approach a new era in the adult life cycle while clinging too tightly to the structural style of faith employed in the previous stage is to risk anachronism. It means attacking a new agenda of life tasks and a potential new richness in the understanding of life with the limiting pattern of knowing, valuing, and interpreting experiences that served the previous era. Such anachronism virtually assures that one will settle for a narrower and shallower faith than one needs.⁹⁷

Theorists who study human development

[M]ay be able to predict the sequence of human growth stages on a variety of levels, but the mystery of conversion while it operates within the context of these developmental stages always eludes mere identification with them.⁹⁸

Thus it can be seen that ongoing conversion is a necessity which entails dealing with the transitions, discomfort, disorientation, as well as the fear which accompanies the breakdowns before the breakthroughs can occur. Finally, commitment to continued growth over a lifespan is necessary to become a spiritually mature adult.

In this section, Fowler's Stages of Faith Development, which are related to the life transitions determined by cognitive, moral, and psychosocial stages of development, and which he posits as a universal phenomenon underlying all the religions, have been

⁹⁷ Fowler, 1981: 114.

⁹⁸ Wendy Ann Jewkes Aitken. *Storytelling and Conversion in Children*. Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Theological Studies. (Montreal: Concordia University. 2001). 39.

examined in the light of conversion or its lack. The next section focuses on God's impetus in ongoing conversion, and our limited or generous response.

Religious Conversion as God's domain

Lonergan defines "religious conversion as being grasped by ultimate concern. It is otherworldly falling in love. Religious conversion is a total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, or reservations".⁹⁹ This study makes two contradictory claims. The first is that one's psychological development is instrumental in one's ability to respond to God and grow spiritually; and the other is that religious conversion remains the domain of God. Both are true. God can intervene in a person's life in a dramatic way.

Before we examine these two apparently paradoxical statements, several terms need to be defined. Lonergan, as a good Jesuit, and as a disciple of Ignatius Loyola, uses terms common to Ignatian spirituality. An understanding of the concepts of consolations and desolations solves the apparent dilemma. Consolation is understood as an interior movement towards God, and desolation is understood as an interior movement away from God. The concepts do not have the same connotation as when they are used psychologically, for a person might feel good but be regressing morally, and so be experiencing easy desolation spiritually. The following diagram highlights

⁹⁹ Lonergan, 1972: 240.

these concepts and demonstrates that it is not the feelings that are the major source of discernment; rather, it is the direction of movement.

Feel good and the movement is towards God - easy consolation
Feel good and the movement is away from God – easy desolation

Event → Feeling →

Feel bad and the movement is towards God – hard consolation
Feel bad and the movement is away from God – hard desolation

Reflection, and attention to one's feelings as data for discernment are key for growing in a relationship with God. In Chapter I, we saw how a lack of attachment and/or a dysfunctional family can interfere with reflection and attention to one's feelings because these conditions cause pain and promote fear. Thus the experiences of the infant, the child, the adolescent, and their family dynamics can diminish or interfere with religious conversion. Yet the statement that religious conversion is within the domain of God still stands. Further explanation is necessary. In the Ignatian tradition, the reception of grace (God's outpouring of his love) may be experienced as a "consolation with previous cause" or as a "consolation without previous cause". A consolation with previous cause (*consolacion con causa precedente* or CCCP) is one in which the person responds gradually to God's call to loving union. It refers to the buildup of experiences of God accompanied by openness to a greater depth of relationship and/or desire for God.

The person spirals through the affective, intellectual and moral conversions, gradually being prepared by God for the deeper interior shift experienced in a religious conversion. A consolation with previous cause (CCCP) involves awareness, reflection, and a conscious discerned response. The person's ability to respond is limited by their life experience for it requires a basic trust in God, and some level of secure attachment attained as an infant. Just as a child needs the strength of his or her early attachment bond to be able to transfer that attachment to other authority figures in his or her life, to listen to them and to feel safe with them, a child also needs the human experience of this attachment bond to be able to attach to God. Thus the ability of a person to respond to God's initiative in religious conversion is also affected by this early experience. This is not to limit God, for nothing is impossible to God. It is speaking of the ordinary realm of God's action, wherein God attempts to touch, to pique an individual to become aware of God's love, or presence, or care, in the midst of ordinary everyday life. It is God's ongoing initiative, communication, and call to union.

A consolation without previous cause (*consolacion sin causa precedente* or CSCP) is initiated by God and is experienced as a quantum shift beyond anything the person could have prepared for or imagined.¹⁰⁰ It is purely God's initiative. Even for those aware of God, it is experienced as an unannounced gift, a quantum leap of grace, love, care, transformation, and freedom. A CSCP causes an automatic shift in the other areas of a person's interior life i.e. it leads to affective, intellectual and moral

¹⁰⁰ Harvey Egan. *The Spiritual Exercises and the Ignatian Mystical Horizon*. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources. 1976). 9.

conversion. Therefore, whether gentle or dramatic, a religious conversion affects the other conversions, and religious conversion remains in the domain of God.

It is also important to recognize that psychological health and spiritual growth are not necessarily on the same continuum. A person may be so stable that she may feel no need for God, and another may be suffering so much psychological woundedness that she is very aware of the need for God. This is why it can be claimed that religious conversion can be influenced by early life experience, but it is never limited to human experience. Religious conversion remains God's domain.

Conversion begins with God's invitation, and humans are moved to respond. As complicated, limited beings, the road of spiritual development is long and often convoluted. In this next section I have chosen to elaborate on one of the dynamics of spiritual growth (# 9) because it details an experience common to many individuals who start out on a spiritual journey, an ongoing journey of conversion, then hesitate, stop reflecting, and regress. John Wickham calls it "Backsliding".

Spiritual Development

John Wickham S.J. outlines twelve dynamics of spiritual growth¹⁰¹ that occur in early or first conversion. By 'first conversion' he means, "turning away from a life of

¹⁰¹ Wickham, 1984: 110 – 124. See Appendix IX.

serious alienation from God and entering into a new relationship with Him”.¹⁰² He defines a ‘dynamic of spiritual growth’ as “habitual sets of attitudes and behavior. Not only do individuals move from one dynamic to another, they experience consolations and desolations in the dynamic within which they presently function”.¹⁰³ Wickham lists twelve dynamics progressing from sinfulness through conversion to service. Of interest here is the dynamic of *backsliding* in which “one abandons the foolish dream of union with God and finds peace by returning to the ‘real world’ of one’s life as it was prior to renewal”.¹⁰⁴ The process of conversion is reversed. The person stops praying deeply, stops reflecting, and is left “picking up the pieces of older ways, returning to former activities, haunts, and satisfactions, trying to seal off the soul’s depths and to deny the validity of one’s new self.”¹⁰⁵

These individuals doubt their own experience, see spiritual growth as hopeless, and regard their conversion as an illusion. They are in the grip of a desolation that can impede conversion. This condition may occur because of some underlying unresolved issue upon which the person is afraid to reflect, face, and bring before the Lord. Once one has begun to grow spiritually, any denial or regression will bother one, for God continues to call one to union and to freedom. The best assistance can be provided by wise and reflective friends of integrity, a spiritual director, or the community of faith, all of whom are valuable assets on the journey of conversion, the journey to a closer relationship with God.

¹⁰² Ibid. 113.

¹⁰³ Ibid. 108.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 120.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. 120.

A spiritual director helps individuals listen to the movements of the Spirit of God in their depths calling them to live this relationship with God authentically in the world by helping them appropriate their personal value, not just their value as a person, but their value in the context of the vital, social, cultural, personal and religious values described by Lonergan.¹⁰⁶ Of particular interest are the personal values and the religious values. Personal value is the person in his self-transcendence, as loving, being loved, as originator of values in himself and in his milieu, as an inspiration and invitation for others to do likewise. Religious values are at the heart of the meaning and value of human living and the human world. This study focuses on the assists and impediments to conversion, and in this context, the assists and impediments to being able to live the sum of the above values with authenticity; which again is related to one's images of self and images of God.

Images of Self and Images of God

In this journey to a closer relationship with God a person who has not developed basic trust cannot transfer that trust to God. For that person, all human relationships are imbued with mistrust and with a level of fear, and so too is the relationship with God.¹⁰⁷ Fear that results from a basic lack of trust is painful and it affects a person's self image

¹⁰⁶ Lonergan, 1972: 31. The values respond to a scale of preference in an ascending order. *Vital* values are health and strength, race and vigour. *Social* values are related to the good of order which conditions the vital values of the community. *Cultural* values are related to the expression of meaning and value in a community's living and operating. *Personal* value is the person in his self-transcendence, as loving, being loved, as originator of values in himself and in his milieu, as an inspiration and invitation for others to do likewise. *Religious* values are at the heart of the meaning and value of human living and the human world.

¹⁰⁷ The Linns describe this phenomenon in their very readable book. Denis Linn, Sheila Fabricant Linn, and Matthew Linn. *Good Goats: Healing Our Image of God*. (New York: Paulist Press. 1994).

and her unconscious images of God.¹⁰⁸ These individuals fear closeness with others (even while they greatly need and desire it), and naturally fear closeness with God. Who can afford to be close when they are out of touch with their own feelings, their own selves? It is like an individual with burned raw hands, who tries to shake hands.

Religious conversion is, by definition, being grasped by God. It is attaching to God without reservation. It is easy to see the impediments that could arise from poor attachment in early life such that a person would resist being grasped by God when he or she feels so raw from the fear, the unconscious dread that accompanies a lack of trust, and accompanies false images of self and of God.¹⁰⁹ Healing can only take place by facing the issues in prayer, and through subsequent reflection on God's loving action. The healing of these false images of self and God is a conversion aided by the presence of someone who walks with the person and listens with compassion. So the effect of a reflective person of integrity who acts to assist conversion, continues to arise as an important factor in this study.

In the discussion of spiritual development and images of self and images of God, we have only touched on the themes in early conversion. It is important to examine the long substantiated movements of an individual further along the path in this journey of conversion and look at the ancient Christian model of spiritual growth called "*The Three Ways*". In the parallel of *The Three Ways* to the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola* (see Appendix X) posed by Wickham, the following terms are clarified: the true

¹⁰⁸ See Appendix X.

¹⁰⁹ I can remember the fear of facing something uncomfortable about myself. John Wickham would say, "God wants this to come to the light so that you can be healed of it".

and the false self, dying to self, the dark night of the senses, and the dark night of the soul. These are terms often used by individuals when talking about the spiritual life and religious conversion, and they are often used inaccurately. Not only is this an important contribution generally, these concepts are relevant to this thesis.

The Three Ways

The Three Ways are an ancient Christian form of explaining the dynamic movements in which one responds to God's loving gift of God's own self. In the Purgative Way, one withdraws from sin and false modes of living, in the Illuminative Way, one commits oneself to a deep relationship with God, and to ways of living that relationship in the world, and in the Unitive Way one persists in that relationship both through times of difficulty and times of joy. It is important for this study to consider these dynamic movements for they will offer insights on the elements that assist or impede conversion

The Purgative Way parallels the First Week of the Exercises¹¹⁰. In the first week, one faces the sin of the world and one's personal sin alongside God's love for all of God's creation. The ultimate grace of the First Week is to experience oneself as "loved sinner".

¹¹⁰ Puhl, 1951. The Exercises, as they are called, are divided into four "weeks" or themes with particular graces requested during each week such that the person can grow into a deep and loving relationship with Christ, and be able to live that relationship most authentically in the world.

Many people refuse to consider the objective fact of sin, preferring to live at Kohlberg's pre-moral level doing anything so long as it feels good, or they are not caught. Their lack of desire to reflect on their behavior impedes conversion. Others, who have begun to reflect, see sin as the disobedience of rules and regulations. Some begin to see sin as having an affect on the harmony of human interrelationships. Only those who have developed a relationship with God experience sin as having an effect on that relationship. Lonergan writes, sinfulness is "distinct from moral evil; it is the privation of total loving; it is a radical dimension of lovelessness."¹¹¹ John English proposes a definition of sin as the refusal of love such that one is reduced in his ability to love. This statement acknowledges that God acts first, and that a refusal to accept God's gift of love has an effect on one as well as on one's relationships. When one sins one is living unauthentically, falsely to oneself. The 'sin of the world', found in sinful structures in the world, is the sum of the refusals of love.¹¹² Thus personal and structural sin warp our ability to love. Sin clouds our insights, stunts our freedom to respond and to act with integrity, impedes our ability to choose wisely, and interferes with living authentically the people we were created to be. Sin impedes conversion.

The Purgative Way purges all that is false: false images of the world, false images of others, false images of self, false images of God, and false ways of acting, i.e. sin. False ways of acting is what is called, sin. When one sins, one is acting falsely to oneself – being untrue to oneself, to who God created one to be, thus one is false in one's relationship with God. Usually one lives this in human relationships, so one sins

¹¹¹ Lonergan 1972, 242.

¹¹² John English. *Spiritual Freedom: From an Experience of the Ignatian Exercises to the Art of Spiritual Direction*. (Guelph: Loyola House. 1986). 81.

when one acts falsely in relationship with others. When one acts untrue to oneself, one is acting unauthentically, and this behavior establishes an alienation, a breach, in the relationship with self and with God.¹¹³

This unauthenticity causes pain, yet it is a pain which many fear to face because it requires a change. It requires reflection on one's feelings that would lead to affective conversion. Reflection would require a change in viewpoint, intellectual conversion; and a change in the way one behaves, a choice of a true value over a satisfaction, a moral conversion. The religious conversion, the reorienting of oneself to God that takes place during the purgation of first week is distressing and painful, and often accompanied by fear and dread (more on this in Chapter III). However, it is freeing because the purgative way takes one from that which is false in one's life to that which is grounded and true. In other words, it is the movement from unauthenticity to authenticity.

The shift from the false self to the true self is the first "dying to self". It is dying to the false self, which leads to a discovery of the true self. The experience often feels like a dying, for it involves letting go of many perceptions as well as changing many

¹¹³ Father John English S.J., a former retreat director at Loyola House, the Jesuit retreat center in Guelph Ontario, described sin as the initial refusal of Love (God's love) such that we are subsequently unable to love. His brother Jesuit, Bernard Lonergan S.J., writes that sinfulness "is distinct from moral evil; it is the privation of total loving; it is a radical dimension of lovelessness. That dimension can be hidden by sustained superficiality, by evading ultimate questions, by absorption in all that the world offers to challenge our resourcefulness, to relax our bodies, to distract our minds. But escape may not be permanent and then the absence of fulfillment reveals itself in unrest, the absence of joy in the pursuit of fun, the absence of peace in disgust - a depressive disgust with oneself or a manic hostile, even violent disgust with mankind". Lonergan, 1972: 243. Essentially both agree that sin is a lack of loving, a way of acting falsely to our innate call to eternal and loving union with God. Religious conversion is being grasped by ultimate concern. It is otherworldly falling in love. Religious conversion is a total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, or reservations.

behaviors. The dying can be filled with dread. It is no wonder that people resist this process. The purgative way is never fully accomplished, and everyone needs to return to it many times throughout life. The self-reflection that is required is filled with fear. The movement forward, the conversion process, is assisted by others who can witness to the value of the journey.

According to the Christian tradition as expressed in the Three Ways, it is common for most of humanity to continue this purgation after their death. Sometimes, as with Alcoholics Anonymous, the supportive community establishes the safe space in which new behaviors can be tried out and a new vision tested. In purgation individuals are stripped bare so that they may rest in God without the trappings or the deceits of the world, yet this process of purgation leads individuals to their truest and deepest selves. Paul Wilkes, in reflection on his own journey of faith, provides a pertinent example of this process.

Try though we might to fight such a stark rendition of our humanity, it is, finally, who we really are. And that deepest self, when we can touch it, is not to be feared – for it is aflame with virtue, overflowing with wonderful talent and ingenuity and with goodness. It is the best of us; after all, it is closest to the place where God who made us dwells. And, if we think about it for an instant, if we honestly present that to God, what will he make of us? If we are still, coming forth in faith and with trust and confidence, the answer each of us must eventually hear is pure music. It is truly us. The night shrinks from the power of light.¹¹⁴

The Illuminative Way parallels the Second Week of the Exercises. In the illuminative way, one lives one's true self in the world. In the second week, one grows in one's relationship with Jesus, first as disciple (the follower, the student); then as

¹¹⁴ Paul Wilkes. *Beyond the Walls: Monastic Wisdom for Everyday Life*. (New York: Doubleday. 1999). 33.

apostle (the one who risks all to tell others through actions or words) that God loves them, their savior has come. This is a time of growth in lived authenticity and witness. The call to intellectual conversion and to the moral conversion of living the choice of values over satisfaction is ongoing. One is grasped more and more by God, - so the religious conversion is ongoing if one continues to say, "yes", to God. One becomes more and more a presence of God in the world by taking on more and more responsibility. This can be difficult and rather frightening. The temptation to regress to an apparently easier life with more worldly pleasures is always there. Again, friends of integrity and a supportive community support the ongoing conversion.

The Unitive Way parallels the Third and Fourth Weeks of the Exercises. In the second week, one has made a discerned decision, an election. One senses how God wants one to live most fully who one is, and to actively live most fully one's relationship with God in the world. The Unitive Way involves the total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, or reservations. It is religious conversion lived to the full.

The process unfolds. The Third Week involves an alignment with Jesus in his passion, and concretely, a willingness to live the pain and consequences of one's own election. There are many feelings of discomfort and fear to the point of dread. This experience is labeled the dark night of the senses, which is lived first in the active mode, and second in the passive mode.¹¹⁵ One is in touch with the physical sensations of

¹¹⁵ The dark night of the senses involves both physical and psychic pain. One may be beset by physical illnesses, or trials of loss – job loss, problems in relationships, depression, or deaths of those near and

Jesus' passion, and one is in touch with many experiences that can cause one physical and/or psychic pain. Many run in fear from this depth of relationship with Jesus. It is not yet over. Jesus dies, and so must each one who continues.

The pain of this dying is the dark night of the soul¹¹⁶. The dark night of the soul is a painful and fearsome process, and part of the pain is the sense of abandonment by others, even by God. Most often there are no human supports for the process. The true self dies, and a new self, a resurrected self is given. The pain is exquisite. For most individuals this happens only at the time of their physical death. Yet the end is ecstatic and eternal joy.

The Fourth Week parallels the culmination of the Unitive Way, the resurrection. The Exercises afford one an experience of this dying and resurrection. While many dip into the Unitive Way for short periods, few stay there long enough for the dying and the transformation to be complete. It is rare for anyone to remain in the Unitive way for a long time, but the one who does experiences a total oneness with God.¹¹⁷ Well-known examples of those who have lived this process for extended times are John of the Cross, Theresa of Avila, Ignatius of Loyola, and more recently, Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

dear. Along with prayer, one needs to use the human supports of medicine and therapy to help with overcoming this stage. It is called the dark night of the *senses* because the experiences are sensual in the physical or emotional understanding of the word. The Dark Night of the Senses may be experienced in the active mode or the passive mode.

¹¹⁶ The dark night of the soul is an experience of deep angst. It involves an inner emptiness, a loss of any sense of psychological consolation, and often entails a humiliation in one's field of endeavor, a loss of one's friends, and a loss of any sense of God, even a loss of belief in God. Yet the person remains faithful to prayer, to acting in a loving manner, and his or her life is filled with fruit. This is a 'dark consolation' taken to the *nth* degree. Please see Appendix XI.

¹¹⁷ When I write, 'oneness with God', I am not referring to the Eastern understanding, which is a oneness of undifferentiated union. I am referring to the understanding of the Western religions in which oneness with God is a differentiated union. God remains the transcendent One, and I remain myself, yet, the more I am myself, the more I am united to God.

Humans are created to be fully human, fully united with God, yet the process above details the trials, the pain and fear, as well as the ultimate elation. Perhaps the questions arise, is the process too difficult? Is growth really worth it? Why does one have to be united to God? Isn't it easier to search for immediate pleasures? Isn't it easier to live without reflection? In the next section Herbert Alphonso writes about discovering one's personal vocation - one's own name, and the joy of living the authenticity of oneself.¹¹⁸ For anyone who has attained a sense of oneself, to live any less than oneself is so painful as to make the above questions irrelevant. For anyone who has already awakened to God, to shut God out is so painful as to be impossible. Thus the questions and the reflections behind psychic, intellectual, and moral conversion remain alive and pressing, for God is calling each and every human person to religious conversion, to an authentic relationship.

The shortest and surest way to live with honor in the world is to be in reality what we would appear to be; all human virtues increase and strengthen themselves by the practice and experience of them.

Socrates

Called By Name

Throughout the Hebrew and Christian scriptures God says, "You are my people and I am your God, I have called you by your name, you are mine." What is this but a call to personal authenticity, and to authentic relationship? Alphonso claims that the single greatest grace of his life was his discovery of his truest and deepest "self", the

¹¹⁸Alphonso, 2001. My "name", my "personal vocation", is "love."

unrepeatable uniqueness God has given in “calling me by name”. He called this truest and deepest self, this God-given uniqueness, the “personal vocation”, and he discovered that the deepest transformation in any person’s life takes place in the living out of this very personal vocation.¹¹⁹ He believes that, “one’s personal vocation, one’s name, is the secret of unity and integration at the heart of a whole life precisely because it is the unique God-given meaning in one’s life.”¹²⁰ It is, he claims, what Victor Frankl was referring to when he wrote about “meaning”.

The personal vocation is not a separate and additional vocation to that of mother, grandmother, spiritual community animator, therapist, educator, or friend. Alphonso explains that it is the *spirit* that animates each of the above vocations, and that this is true for each person in his or her own situation. Each and every one has a unique way of giving and surrendering self in any human experience. The personal vocation is not on the level of doing. It is one’s name, so it is on the level of being,¹²¹ and once discerned, becomes *the criterion of discernment* for every decision in life.¹²² It relates to the uniqueness and specificity of a person’s qualitative mode of living out the “*magis*” (greater love)¹²³. It relates to how that person will respond with greater love in “greater service, praise and glory of God”.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. 2 – 3.

¹²⁰ Ibid. 21.

¹²¹ Ibid. 26.

¹²² Ibid. 43.

¹²³ The “*magis*” is a term used by Ignatius Loyola in the Spiritual Exercises. It means “greater or greatest”, and implies a response to God that is of the utmost in love, and outpoured fully in action.

Humans need a free heart to find God in all things, to love God in all creatures and all creatures in God. Attention to the God-given gift of one's personal vocation is the secret of staying free in the midst of any and every human experience.¹²⁴ Only if one is living the God-given meaning at the heart of one's life is one truly alive and able to offer one's unique way of opening up onto community – opening out onto social reality, social responsibilities and commitments.¹²⁵ That is why it is so important to discover one's own "name".

Alphonso claims finding one's name is at the heart of the "Election", that section within the second week of the Ignatian Exercises in which one discerns and chooses how to live an intimate relationship with God, concretely in the world. He attests that *knowing who one is* can then be made the foundational guide in discerning all that *one does*. Living one's "name" is living one's authentic being. It is living religious conversion.

Individuals need help to appropriate their authentic selves given by God. Yet in so doing, they will be able to identify God's action in their lives and to identify how to respond in the concrete situation. Their "name" becomes a sounding post for self-transcending action. For example, my name is "love". Any time I act in an unloving way, or in a way that diminishes the call to stretch in love, I am being untrue to who I am before God. Other names of friends are, "Awe", "Brother", "Compassion", "Bridge-builder", "Missionary", "Beloved of God". These names have particular significance to

¹²⁴ Ibid. 47.

¹²⁵ Ibid. 53.

each individual. "God utters me like a word containing a partial thought of Himself".¹²⁶

It is in living the authenticity of one's name that each one self-transcends.

Finding and living one's name requires much reflection, yet humans are so afraid to reflect because they fear what they will discover about themselves. Yet beneath their imperfections is their "name". In his inaugural speech, Nelson Mandela wrote that it is not just the uncomfortable aspects of one's false self of which one is afraid, but one's beauty, one's light.¹²⁷ As a child with learning disabilities I did poorly in school, just barely passing until the end of my first degree. I was thirty-seven before I discovered that I was actually quite bright. Over the years I had learned coping mechanisms (poor me, please help me) to manipulate situations, to survive. The day that both my spiritual director and my therapist challenged me and provided evidence that I was bright was a joyful shock. Yet I sat straight up in bed all that night partly in joy, and partly in fear. I had always wanted to be intelligent, but the reality meant I would have to let go of previous ways of relating. It meant taking a new responsibility for my actions. Just as Mandela describes, I was happy and at the same time I was afraid of this beauty, this new light that was, that is, me. Just as I was, other humans are notoriously lost and

¹²⁶ Merton, 1961: 37.

¹²⁷ Nelson Mandela. 1994. Inaugural Speech. "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us. It's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

confused, they need help to discover who they truly are. They need help to identify their “name”.¹²⁸ The Examen is one of the tools that can be used.

The Examen

I will bring this chapter on religious conversion to a close with a presentation of the Examen. Fundamental to the spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola is the concept of “finding God in all things”. He developed the Examen as a short reflective prayer to use at the end of the day to help identify God’s loving action in one’s daily life.¹²⁹ It clarifies our direction of response. Religious conversion is a total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, or reservations”.¹³⁰ For most of us, religious conversion is not accomplished once and for all; it is an ongoing process. The Examen is a short and prayerful reflection undertaken at the end of one’s day. It assists us, not just in the daily awareness of God’s loving action in our life; it aids us in the ongoing conscious self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, or reservations. It is an aid to spiraling ever deeper into Love, into oneness with the God of our ultimate concern.

In the text of the Examen proposed by George Aschenbrenner, a person enters the time of prayer,

1. Becomes aware of God’s presence,

¹²⁸ See Appendix XII.

¹²⁹ The Examen is also called the examination of conscience, the examination of consciousness, or the awareness examen.

¹³⁰ Lonergan, 1972: 240.

2. Asks for the grace of *light (enlightenment)* regarding the events of the day, and allows them to surface in consciousness,
3. Prays in *reflective thanksgiving* for God's loving presence in all the circumstances of the day.
4. The person takes a *practical survey of his own actions*, and responds with a combination of thanks, or *contrition, sorrow, and then thanks* (for God's forgiveness and love).
5. The Examen ends with a *hopeful resolution* to respond better the next day.

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Cathie Macaulay explains the thrust of the Examen and demonstrates the link between the Examen and one's "personal vocation":

If we are truly praying the Examen, rather than doing a general, vague reflection on our day's activities, we cannot avoid confronting the unique and special identity that God, our Creator, placed in us, affirms in us and asks us to act out of as we live faith-centered lives. This "personal vocation" or unique "religious identity" is as much about who we are as uniquely created by God as about what we choose to do with the particular set of gifts and limitations within which we operate.

As Herbert Alphonso S.J. points out, our personal vocation is the unique name by which we are called by God. This speaks to the sense of religious identity that Aschenbrenner emphasizes. The tool or the Examen can enable us to remain connected to the unique way that God chooses to call each of us by providing us with regular opportunities to become aware of moments when the Holy Spirit speaks to us through the ordinary moments of our life.¹³²

The Examen is a tool par excellence for reflecting on one's life and God's call, God's loving touch, and our response. Fear of reflection remains the salient factor impeding one's progress. Reflection, along with sharing our reflections with others, remain

¹³¹This is a summary of the Examen as elaborated in Cathie Macaulay. *The Ignatian Examen: A Contemporary Tool for Awareness and Discernment*. (Montreal: Concordia University. A Thesis in the Department of Theological Studies Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Theological Studies. 2004). 33 – 37, based on George Aschenbrenner's *Consciousness Examen*. "Review for Religious". (31) 1972. 15.

¹³² Macaulay, 44.

supportive factors in ongoing conversion, that unrestricted questioning and being in love without limitation, that is called religious conversion.

In the simplicity of the Examen there is no fear. In the reflection on God's action in our day, there is no fear. In the reflection on God's love and forgiveness for us, there is no fear. And since it is done in the silence of our own hearts, there is no need for support from anyone else. As such the salient impediment to conversion is eliminated, and the salient assists to conversion are not needed. The Examen helps us to stand alone before our God, and grow.

Summary

This chapter has focused on the means of Religious Conversion in spiritual development. I have shown that the features of both Religious Conversion and Faith Development were universal, cross-cultural, and common to all religious traditions. Conversion is a natural human process or within the realm of God. The apparent contradictions were resolved in a higher synthesis. Spiritual Development focused on one of the dynamics of spiritual growth, and then the ancient and medieval understandings of ongoing conversion were examined in the Three Ways and the Ignatian Exercises. These larger thrusts need to be lived by concrete individual, so the chapter turned to the benefit of discerning one's one name. One's name is one's deepest authentic identity, so attention to this name one is called becomes the signpost of ongoing discernment. The chapter ended with the Examen, a practical guide for any

individual in their journey of Conversion. I conclude that fear undermines the conversion process. This is significant in light of the conclusions of Chapter I which show that the presence of a supportive family, reflective friends of integrity, and a supportive community are the important factors that aid the ongoing reflection that assists conversion.

In the next Chapter, I will examine various theological constructs that address 'fear' or 'friends' as the salient factors impeding or assisting affective conversion, intellectual conversion, moral conversion, and religious conversion.

Chapter III

Theological Factors

The Assists and the Impediments to Conversion

Introduction

This chapter is composed of three sections: Part I will examine fear and dread, and ascertain the salient impediments to conversion and the salient assists to conversion, Part II will examine various modes of unreflective living that impede conversion, and Part III will present the assists to reflection that open the heart to conversion, to authenticity, and to a stance of intentional loving.

Conversion is fundamentally related to reflection, so the salient impediment to reflection blocks conversion and the main assists to reflection aid the process of conversion. In this study, conversion is considered a multidimensional process, affective and psychic, intellectual, moral, and religious. Although these various facets of conversion are different and may even be experienced separately, each one draws an individual to a new horizon, a deeper and richer integration. The ultimate goal of conversion is an authentic human being who is able to pour himself or herself out in other-centered self-transcendent loving, whether that be to other humans or towards God.¹³³ In moving from the infant to the child, to the adolescent, to the family, and including society as a whole, Chapter I showed the ways that fear could enter the psyche and have such a great influence on human beings over time immemorial. Chapter II

¹³³Kinberger, 1992: 53. Kinberger provides such a great synopsis of conversion, that I wish to quote it here: "Conversion involves a new understanding of oneself because, fundamentally, conversion brings about a new self to be understood. Intellectual conversion frees us from confusing the criteria for knowledge in the world of immediacy with the criteria for knowledge in the world mediated by meaning. Moral conversion frees us to become motivated primarily by values and not personal satisfactions. Religious conversion frees us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength; and impels us to love others".

demonstrated how these elements that initiate fear limit individuals in their ability to reflect, thus affecting human relationships as well as one's relationship with the Divine.

In Chapter III, I will focus on some theological issues involved with or affected by the salient factors that assist or impede conversion. However, ultimately, this chapter is going to show that conversion is advanced more intensively and successfully when a causal relationship between reflection and love has been made by individuals who then proceed to live a life of intentional loving. We observed in Chapter I how intentional loving relationships are a key component to psychological health. Intentional loving is exemplified in the gentle attentive behaviour of parents of newborns who foster trust in their infant, and in the loving involved parents who cultivate attachment with their children at all ages, and in the families who allow children to ask the multitude of questions that lead to and foster reflection.

These modes of relating, these forms of intentional loving provide the indispensable context for a Christian notion of conversion. Such a notion involves intellectual, moral and religious dimensions as discussed earlier. The emotional aspect of conversion is present in each of these dimensions and is central to the loving relationships that I argue are most salient in overcoming the fear response to reflection and existential questions. Intentional loving is not love as a feeling, but love as a choice of a value, an active lived choice in a personal relationship. Reflection is the difference between falling in love and intentional loving, and it is the pre-requisite for authentic self-transcending intentional loving.

Part I – Fear and Dread

As discussed in Chapter I, the common factor that flows through the trust versus mistrust issues of the infant, the attachment issues of the growing child, and dysfunctional family issues is “fear”. However, before fear can be claimed as the single most significant psychological factor that impedes reflection and conversion, the related notion of “dread” raised by Lonergan and McPartland needs to be examined.

Fear is a feeling expressing the anxiety and agitation felt in the presence of danger.¹³⁴ In its common sense meaning, “dread” may be defined as, “to anticipate with fear, misgivings, distaste; to fear intensely; fear mixed with awe and reverence”. Here dread is understood as an extreme form of fear. However, in the theoretical realm of meaning dread may be considered in a broader context. “In Lonergan’s seminal lectures on existentialism, the discussion of dread occupies a central position”.¹³⁵ Lonergan states one’s horizon, one’s “concrete synthesis of conscious living is anchored by dread”, for dread is the “conservative principle that offers a spontaneous, resourceful, manifold, plausible resistance” to a change in one’s horizon.¹³⁶ This means that if fear is an emotional impediment, then dread is the making of that impediment into the principle by which one lives one’s life. Counterintuitively however, the experience of dread is multivalent. As much as it is horrific existentially, it is also the spur to decision

¹³⁴ Fear is a feeling of anxiety and agitation caused by the presence or nearness of danger, evil, pain etc.; timidity; dread; terror; fright; apprehension.

¹³⁵ McPartland, 2001: 183.

¹³⁶ Ibid. 183.

making. The notion of dread as this conservative principle preventing self-transcendence and authenticity needs to be examined.

Thomas McPartland paraphrases Lonergan in saying,

Authentic human existence, that is, the effort of intelligent reasonable, free, fully responsible self-constitution, entails conversion, moving to a new horizon – and hence dread. Not only must one stand the dread, but one must cope with the spontaneous resistance.¹³⁷

Since dread is resistance to change, facing the dread becomes an educative experience tied to freedom and possibility. It can eradicate what it itself has produced.¹³⁸ I posit that one deals with dread at the level of *psychic* conversion. In the introduction to this study, I quoted Doran,

psychic conversion is a transformation of the subject, a change both illuminated and often mediated by modern depth psychology. It is a reorientation of the specifically psychic dimension of the censorship exercised over images and affects by our habitual orientations, a conversion of that dimension of the censorship from exercising a repressive function to acting constructively on one's shaping of one's own development.¹³⁹

One can resist development, or choose to self-transcend. Dread may be a part of either of these movements because dread includes feelings of fear, suffering, an attitude of resistance to change, aspects of generic guilt, generic shame, and *ressentiment* that are experienced existentially.¹⁴⁰ As an existential experience, dread functions at the level of psychic conversion.

Lonergan expands the notion of the dynamics of dread through considerations of self-transcendence. Authenticity calls us to live the dialectic, the tension of being

¹³⁷ Ibid. 183.

¹³⁸ Ibid. 184.

¹³⁹ Doran, 1990: 9.

¹⁴⁰ McPartland, 2001: 183.

oneself and of being constantly called beyond self; of living the concrete horizon of a particular time and place as a finite creature, the call of the good, of the infinite questions fulfilled only by the one who is infinite. “Who I am now?” and “who I am in the fullness of myself?” is a dialectical tension experienced as dread. Thus dread has a dual quality. It is both repulsive (the resistance to transcendence), and attractive (the call beyond).¹⁴¹

In our encounter with the known unknown through questioning, the unknown can be the sweet known unknown of mystery, beckoning us as equally as it can be the threatening unknown, evoking ‘uncanny feelings of horror, loathing, dread.’¹⁴²

Dread, whether as feeling or stance, whether as repulsive or attractive, is philosophically more complicated than the straightforward feeling of fear. It has a positive aspect as well as the negative aspect that is *prima facie* most obvious. Only reflection uncovers the “sweet pain” of ordinary human or spiritual growth. I call this positive aspect to dread “sweet pain” because it is painful and the first response is to avoid it, yet it entices one to a depth of relationship whether that be standing exhausted before sleeping children, or later saying good bye to one’s daughter as she heads off on a journey to Europe, or later still, watching her get married. Spiritually it may be feeling God’s love with an intensity that is painful, so painful that fear is manifest in facing the intensely known unknown of the mystery of God, not knowing where this will take one, who will understand one, or still be one’s friend afterwards.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. 186.

¹⁴² Ibid. 186.

The *sweet pain* of self-transcendent loving and the *stretching pain* of a quarrying¹⁴³ experience are two examples expressing the dialectical components of dread. McPartland posits Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence as the key to the complex affiliation of dread to the existential phenomena of suffering, guilt, shame and *ressentiment*. The relation of dread to *ressentiment* will be saved for the upcoming discussion on bias, however these other existential phenomena will be examined in relation to information presented in previous chapters.

Dread is a form of suffering. As an anticipation of possibility, it anticipates both loss and gain. If one desires authenticity, one experiences the dislocation and loss of self either as that which is not-chosen, or as what is left behind when one transcends. "This entails an ontological suffering, an enduring of discomfort, dissatisfaction, even pain".¹⁴⁴ The diagram of the process of transition presented in Chapter I is relevant here and a connection can be made to the sense of discouragement, disengagement, disidentification, disenchantment, and disorientation described therein as experiences of dread. To contemplate a radical change in our lifestyle is to invite an experience of dread. These experiences surfaced feelings of fear, and so too, the suffering of dread is accompanied by fear.

¹⁴³ At times the experience is slightly different. As a young adult and as a beginner in deeper prayer, I experience what I termed a "quarrying" experience, for it felt as if I were scratching at the rocks in the depths of a quarry, pulling them up to make the hole larger. Internally, I was the quarry, and I was filled with pain and dread as I clawed at the rocks in my aching hollow emptiness. Only later, did the quarry fill, and I felt filled with peace, or consciously filled with God while self-appropriating God's love for me, in me. Sometimes the quarry was a well. St. Teresa of Avila described a similar experience when she wrote about being in the bottom of a well waiting to be filled. E. Allison Peers. Trans & Ed. *The Life of Teresa of Jesus: The Autobiography of Teresa of Avila*. (New York: Doubleday. [1960] 1991). 128-129.

¹⁴⁴ McPartland, 2001: 187.

In relation to guilt, there is an aspect to guilt “that is not for this or that deed or omission but is a *generic guilt* of perpetual failure to be the incarnation of the good”. For “dread is not mere fear of this or *that* object within a horizon but is the generic apprehension of that which is beyond the present horizon as such”. Only the “fire of unrestricted love heals the gap of *generic guilt*”.¹⁴⁵ Herein is a link to Chapter II. There are times when God breaks into one’s horizon and presents the dreaded possibility of a major shift, a religious conversion which is experienced as a consolation without previous cause (CCSP) in which the grace is offered, yet it is up to one to receive it, to assent to the new way of being affectively, intellectually, and morally.

McPartland discusses the relation of dread to shame, using the word shame differently from the psychological understanding that is presented in Chapter I, in which the disturbing feeling of shame that develops in a dysfunctional family underscores and perpetuates the false image of self experienced as “I am a mistake”. Instead, he relates dread to *generic shame* which is linked to the otherness of social being, the otherness of cosmic being, the otherness of being itself, the otherness of the Wholly Other, accompanied by the interpreted experience that one is only a part of these. Generic shame arises from the awareness that one cannot achieve absolute transcendence nor be the absolutely Transcendent. The shame is founded in the imperfectness of self, in the lesserness of one’s own being. A comparison can be made to the shame endured in a dysfunctional family and this *generic shame*, for both are healed by the efficacious power of love to call one out of hiding, to carry one over the abyss of dread, and to call

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. 188.

one to self-acceptance as a partner in the community of being.¹⁴⁶ Thus the stated elements, a stable (loving) family of origin, loving and reflective friends of integrity, and a safe community that counter fear and assist conversion also counter the dread of *generic shame*.

We have seen how dread is “fundamentally tied to freedom and to possibility. It indeed is itself the possibility of freedom. It educates. It “saves”. It opens up to infinity. It can lead to faith, and only through it can there be genuine faith. It eradicates “what it itself has produced”.¹⁴⁷ This is dread that has been transformed through reflection and choice. In the face of the terrible discomfort of dread, one can become paralyzed, stuck; one can run away from the discomfort in endless activity; or one can reflect and use the dread as an activating force to enable one to move through the pain to a new light, a new horizon, a conversion. Dread has a dual quality of being both repulsive (the resistance to self-transcendence), and attractive (the call beyond). As a result of this dual quality, I claim that dread, which is experienced existentially and includes feelings of fear, suffering, an attitude of resistance to change, aspects of generic guilt, generic shame, and *ressentiment*, exists on the level of psychic conversion as described earlier.

In an examination of fear and dread, dread is a deep level stance and fear is a feeling; and however painful and pernicious, fear is an affect. Technically,

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. 190.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid. 184.

affective conversion is actually the *fruit* of psychic conversion, for psychic conversion releases from repression the underlying neural manifold oriented to images for insight and thus makes available materials that need to be transformed if one is to be in love in an unqualified fashion.¹⁴⁸

This means that when dread is the stance that needs to be healed in psychic conversion, any fear, which accompanies it at the level of affective conversion, is also healed, and in this transformation, one is open to religious conversion, “being in love in an unqualified fashion”. Fear can exist without dread, and as such it can be healed at the level of affective conversion.

Dread has the dual features of being attractive (the call beyond) and being repulsive (in its resistance to transcendence). In reference to the repulsive feature of dread, I claim that dread and fear each function at a different level of consciousness. Fear functions at the affective level, and dread functions at the psychic level, and as such each one can be named as the salient factor that impedes conversion, each at a different level of consciousness. If dread and fear are not resolved or healed, they set up a resistance to reflection, and impede or limit intellectual, moral, and religious conversion. In the next section I will elaborate on unreflective ways of living that impede conversion.

Part II – Lack of Reflection

Chapter I detailed various ways that the psychological development of a person influenced the development of trust or mistrust, and the development of a solid

¹⁴⁸ Doran, 1990: 9.

attachment to one's primary caregivers or its lack, and how these features were instrumental in the development of the capacity for a general stance of confidence, courage and curiosity, or an overarching stance of fear. Above I have clarified how fear and dread impede reflection, so it becomes imperative to elucidate various modes of unreflective living that impede conversion. Intellectual conversion is affected by ideologies, bias, worldviews, and fundamentalism. Moral conversion is impeded by a stance of inner moral impotence that is particularly exhibited by those who live as drifters.

A. Impediments to Intellectual Conversion

Ideologies

A human being is in an ongoing process of living, with the possibility of becoming more or less true to whom one truly is, more or less authentic. Authenticity is based in self-transcendence, and the way is by ongoing conversion. "Inversely, a man is alienated from his true self inasmuch as he refuses self-transcendence, and the basic form of ideology is the self-justification of alienated man".¹⁴⁹ Self-justification is a form of intellectual rationalization, so an ideology affects intellectual conversion, which is defined as "a radical clarification and, consequently, the elimination of an exceedingly stubborn and misleading myth concerning reality, objectivity and human knowledge".¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Lonergan, 1972: 357.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. 238.

Many individuals fear the reflection required to move beyond the comfortable world of myth, the sense world of the immediate, into the world of a world mediated by meaning in which “knowing is not just seeing; it is experiencing, understanding, judging and believing.”¹⁵¹ Individuals get caught in the ideologies of the “naïve realist”, the “empiricist”, and the “idealist”. Only the “critical realist” lives a self-transcendent conversion.¹⁵² This brings us back to Fowler’s stages of Faith Development. The naïve realist is a person living in Stage 3 (the Synthetic-Conventional Faith of the adolescent) who has begun to have a sense of the world mediated by meaning, but thinks he knows it by looking. Fundamentalists usually reject the world mediated by meaning because it involves differentiated thought, however fundamentalists in transition could live as empiricists or idealists. Since this study posits authenticity and self-transcendent loving as the fulfillment of each human, then it follows that everyone is called to live as a “critical realist” because a critical realist utilizes the transcendental principles to self-transcend. However, inasmuch as one backslides in the effort to reflect and to live the truly good, one can shift back and forth within these ideologies. That is why reflective friends of integrity are so important in the process of self-transcendent holiness.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. 238.

¹⁵² Ibid. 238-239. “The naïve realist knows the world mediated by meaning but thinks he knows it by looking. The empiricist restricts objective knowledge to sense experience; for him, understanding and conceiving, judging and believing are merely subjective activities. The idealist insists that human knowing always includes understanding as well as sense; but he retains the empiricist’s notion of reality, and so he thinks of the world mediated by meaning is not real but ideal. Only the critical realist can acknowledge the facts of human knowing and pronounce the world mediated by meaning to be the real world; and he can do so only inasmuch as he shows that the process of experiencing, understanding, and judging is a process of self-transcendence”.

Practically, these friends assist one to live the Transcendental Precepts of: Be Attentive, Be Intelligent, Be Reasonable, and Be Responsible. Those who resist reflection live the reverse. They live according to the following norms: Be inattentive, Be unintelligent, Be unreasonable, Be irresponsible. Appendix XIII highlights the relationship of the Transcendental Precepts to the various conversions. By being inattentive to their experience, to their feelings, and to the wisdom of others, these individuals impede affective conversion. Intellectual conversion is limited by their refusal to reflect on the issues of meaning and value with any rigor. Individuals impede moral conversion with an unreasonable moral impotence that limits their effective freedom through a lack of effective judgment in the choice of the truly good. Being irresponsible does not just include acting irresponsibly; it refers to being irresponsible in decision-making.

Bias

Individuals who persist in living the reverse of the transcendental precepts become destructive forces in society and add to societal decline. Lacking the impetus for conversion, many live a myopic view of life constrained by what Lonergan terms neurotic bias, individual (egoistic) bias, the bias of common sense, and join in group bias. In general, bias is a block or distortion in intellectual development.

The egoist acts out of self-interest or fear. The egoist, constrained by an internal individual bias,

has the boldness to strike out on its own, and thinks for itself. But it fails to pivot from the initial and preliminary motivation, provided by desires and fears, to the self-abnegation involved in allowing complete play to intelligent inquiry. Its inquiry is reinforced by spontaneous desires and fears; by the same stroke it is restrained from a consideration of any broader field.¹⁵³

Again Lonergan shows his Jesuit roots. In the dynamic of the Exercises (see Appendix XIV) the movement is “freedom from” (from all our sins, our limited desires and fears) to “freedom for” (service in the world for Christ), to “freedom with” (with Christ with a detachment that is willing to love, to act, even to suffering abnegation on his behalf). The Exercises includes five modes of prayer¹⁵⁴; pertinent here are the “meditations” which are intellectual exercises of cognitive reconstruction – intellectual conversion. Also pertinent is the dictate to reflect on all of the prayer experiences in the keeping of a journal. In contrast, the egoist is self-centered, unreflective, and intent on manipulating the world to meet his or her own wants and desires.

Neurotic bias is based on one’s desire to avoid the pain of past trauma. The consequence is that certain experiences do not get attended to, and therefore do not get understood, the truth is muddled, and appropriate healing is not enacted. One’s whole life or aspects of it may be lived askew.¹⁵⁵ It is this bias that is the focus of psychological counseling.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ Lonergan, 1958: 220.

¹⁵⁴ Puhl, 1951. The five forms of prayer are Ignatian prayers of petition, meditation, contemplation on the Gospel narratives, the colloquy, and formal prayers.

¹⁵⁵ Gregson, Vernon. “The Desire to Know: Intellectual Conversion”. In *Desires of the Human Heart: The Theology of Bernard Lonergan*. Edited by Vernon Gregson. 16 – 35. (New York: Paulist Press. 1988). 31.

¹⁵⁶ In my clinical experience I have noted that both victims of sexual abuse, and many who have had abortions, block the pain, yet act out of the pain, often re-victimizing themselves throughout their life. It is only in facing the pain and grieving their lost innocence that they can begin to heal. Refer to Appendix V for one view of the process of therapeutic healing.

Common sense deals with the concrete and the particular. The bias of common sense has people stagnate in the concrete and immediate, refusing to ask the questions necessary to develop a higher and broader viewpoint with a concern for long-term results.¹⁵⁷ The feelings of fear and the stance of dread impede the questions, the reflection. The bias of common sense impedes the development of a differentiated consciousness. Related to the bias of common sense is dramatic bias in which one excludes the insights and “the further questions that would arise from it and the complementary insights that would carry it towards a rounded and balanced viewpoint”.¹⁵⁸ One does this by blocking out the reality in the drama of human living and building an internal phantasy of the real. Doing this leads to misunderstanding and many difficulties in human relations. It leads to what Lonergan terms a scotoma, or a blind spot in which “considerations of contrary insights may not reach the level of reflective and critical consciousness; it may occur only to be brushed aside in an emotional reaction of distaste, pride, dread, horror, revulsion”.¹⁵⁹

Group bias leads to a bias in the generative social order. It operates at the level of common sense and is supported by inter-subjective feelings. Group egoism “not merely directs development to its own aggrandizement but also provides a market for opinions, doctrines, theories that will justify its ways and, at the same time, reveal the

¹⁵⁷ Lonergan, 1958: 226.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. 191.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. 192. This bias of scotosis is particularly relevant to me, for I can see that it is what I suffered throughout the thirteen years of my marriage. Lonergan writes, “Again there are the inverse phenomena. Insights that expand the scotosis appear to lack plausibility; they will be subject to scrutiny; and as the subject shifts to and from her sounder viewpoint, they will oscillate wildly between an appearance of nonsense and an appearance of truth. Thus, in a variety of manners, the scotosis can remain fundamentally unconscious yet suffer the attacks and cries that generate in the mind a mist of obscurity and bewilderment, of suspicion and reassurance, of doubt and rationalization, of insecurity and disquiet”.

misfortunes of other groups due to their depravity”.¹⁶⁰ This means that group bias interferes with any kind of reconciliation between peoples of different cultures and worldviews. “One of the most pernicious aspects of systems of domination, and hence deep-rooted conflict is the imposition of one worldview on another”.¹⁶¹ When a social or cultural group is caught by a bias, the individuals within are caught by a habitual view of another group of people. The limitations of this viewpoint are usually outside the conscious awareness of the majority of the group, and so they are not moved to reflect on their stance. For individuals who habitually approach life with a lack of reflection, this non-reflective habit interferes with any change of horizon that could open them to consider another’s worldview leading then to change their own views of other individuals or groups. Thus it is important to consider what is involved in a “worldview” to have a deeper appreciation of group bias.

Each of us will be tested by encounters with cultures and viewpoints not our own; all of us will be refined in the fires of genuine engagement.
Cardinal Bernardin¹⁶²

Worldviews, Group Bias, and Fundamentalism

In the Iceberg Analogy pictured below, the most visible and readily accessible aspects of culture

“such as language, dress, food, literature, and art – represent the tip of the iceberg, and only ten percent of the totality of a culture. Below the surface are the most significant

¹⁶⁰ Lonergan, 1972: 54.

¹⁶¹ Sutherland, 2005: 34.

¹⁶² Cardinal Bernardin in Coloroso, 2005: 101.

aspects of culture such as concepts of justice, gender roles, ideals of childbearing, notions about logic validity, power, leadership; and morality".¹⁶³

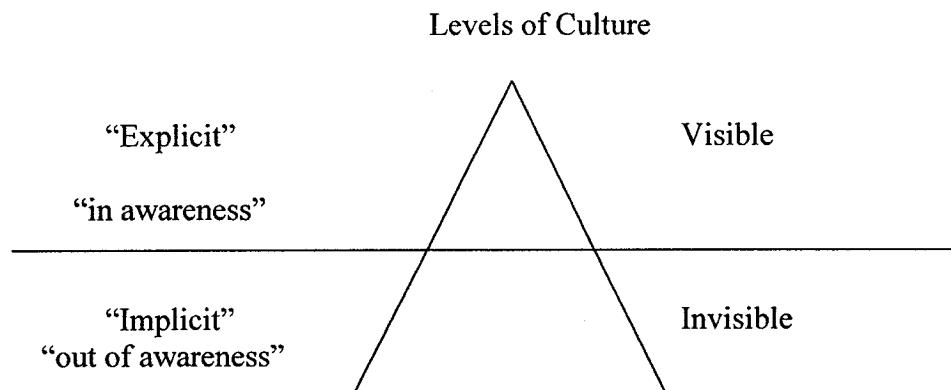


Figure 5: The Iceberg Analogy¹⁶⁴

Bias implies a lack of reflection. It is a lack of reflection based on a limited selection of questions taken into consideration. In group bias, the most significant aspects (those below the surface) of one's culture or of another's culture will be unclear, and so feared. Dread as resistance to change, as resistance to what is new, will support the bias of one group over another. The significant aspects of another's culture will be ignored and trampled upon.

McPartland raises the issue of *ressentiment* which belittles the value of a superior value and distorts the whole hierarchy of values. He posits,

The triad of dread, a flight into concupisence and collusion of *ressentiment* is an existential root of the bias of egoism, and has its unmistakable, ominous parallel in the histories of communities, where it conspires with group bias and the bias of common sense. For every society faces historical challenges to its horizon of cultural expressions, traditions, and social practices and many indeed experience dread at these

¹⁶³ Vachon, "Guswenta or the Intercultural Imperative: Towards a Re-Enacted Peace Accord between the Mohawk Nation and the North American Nation-States (and Their Peoples)" *Intercultural* XXVIII, no. 127 (1995): 73.p.52. in Sutherland, 2005: 35.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 35.

threats from beyond and the concomitant awareness of its own finitude, if not its possible demise.¹⁶⁵

A current situation will serve as one of many possible examples throughout history. Group bias and the bias of common sense surfaced in the United States following the attacks by the Al Qaeda on September 11, 2001. The American people perceived their way of life as under attack, and lived in dread of further attacks. Under the leadership of their Christian fundamentalist president, George W. Bush, they decided on revenge and initiated a war in Iraq on the grounds that this action would eliminate the Muslim fundamentalists of the Al Qaeda and their 'weapons of destruction', and bring democracy to Iraq.¹⁶⁶ No 'weapons of destruction' were found, the Al Qaeda has not been eliminated, and democracy has not been established in that land. Bush ignored the transcendental precepts, and when he advocated revenge, he set the United States on the road into a further decline. "As self-transcendence promotes progress, so the refusal of self-transcendence turns progress into cumulative decline".¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ McPartland, 2001: 190.

¹⁶⁶ While I acknowledge that there is much information in this regard that is not at my disposal, I am making a reflection that I have not seen elsewhere, and it is a reflection that may be extrapolated to other groups at other times. As such, although limited, it is a contribution in its own right. The film-maker, Michael Moore, who directed "*Fahrenheit 911*" presents information that is disturbing, for there seem to have been "absurdities that proceed from inattention, oversight, unreasonableness and irresponsibility", and the facts of the matter do not seem cogent with the theoretical premises presented by President Bush and his associates. For example, he allowed planes filled with individuals who should have been questioned before they left for Iraq, he declared the need for revenge (a very Christian stance!), he consistently proclaimed the presence of 'weapons of mass destruction' in Iraq, and he used the media to foster a climate of fear among the populace. In an interesting statement, Lonergan refers to a civilization in decline. "It cannot be argued out of its self-destructive ways, for argument has a theoretical major premise, theoretical premises are asked to conform to matters of fact, and the facts in the situation produced by decline more and more are the absurdities that proceed from inattention, oversight, unreasonableness and irresponsibility". (Lonergan, 1958: 55). These are important issues on which the American people need to reflect.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. 55.

Iraq is a country in which the tribal ethos still reigns supreme. The worldviews of the United States and these tribes are incredibly different. The United States still attempts to bring peace and democracy to a land using force as a method of change. It is not working. Iraq is not a land whose worldview includes equality of men and women, or the value of free choice. Each of these two countries demonstrates aspects of their worldviews that are influenced by bias. The leaders of the opposing groups are fundamentalists¹⁶⁸ who suffer from the bias of common sense, and I posit a fear of looking at their own culture, their business practices, and the influence of their own worldviews. In choosing retaliation and revenge over the efforts involved in discussion and reflection, President Bush demonstrates “an egoistic disregard of others, group loyalty hostile to outsiders, choosing the short over the long-term benefits, avoiding self-consciousness, considering virtue as an impossible ideal”.¹⁶⁹ The spontaneous and powerful resistance generated by dread defends the challenged horizon with logic rooted in its own meanings and values, and therefore unimpeachable on its own grounds.

When will our consciences grow so tender that we will act to prevent misery rather than avenge it?

Eleanor Roosevelt¹⁷⁰

Bush and his adversaries are fundamentalists. “The essential claim of the fundamentalist is that he knows the truth. It isn’t a proposition, held provisionally to be tested by further evidence. It isn’t something that is ever subject to change: what is

¹⁶⁸I discussed fundamentalists in Chapter II. Fundamentalists were seen as being caught by the bias of common sense, and limited in their thinking, stuck at Fowler’s Stage II (Mythic/Literal) childhood faith, or Stage III (Synthetic/Conventional) adolescent level of faith development, both levels lacking in differentiated consciousness.

¹⁶⁹Conn, 1988.

¹⁷⁰ Eleanor Roosevelt in Coloroso, 2005: 46.

fundamentally true now, by definition, must be true for all time”.¹⁷¹ This is an expression of classicism. It lacks an historical consciousness and any openness to reflective questioning.

In an elaboration on fundamentalism in Chapter II, we saw that as regards faith development, Fowler posits that fundamentalists are stuck in Stage 2 or 3, and Lonergan proposes that these individuals have not appropriated the realms of meaning of theory or of interiority. The realms of common sense and transcendence interpenetrate such that these individuals remain at the level of common sense, trapped in the literal interpretation of stories and myths. As regards Bush and his opponents in Iraq, their religious fundamentalism includes a lack of reflection on their varied worldviews. According to Andrew Sullivan, the role fundamentalism plays is to affirm faith, to abolish fear, and to offer a clear answer to the bewilderment of modernity.¹⁷²

The position that there are absolute and final answers to moral questions and dilemmas - leads to absolute intolerance and moral absurdities.

Barbara Coloroso¹⁷³

It becomes difficult to reflect, to question, to quest for personal authenticity, and to be open to another's worldview.

The tree analogy pictured below demonstrates and emphasizes the levels of stability and consistency in a culture, which incorporate both the benefits and limitations of a worldview. If the elements influencing and maintaining a culture are not reflected

¹⁷¹ Andrew Sullivan. *The Conservative Soul*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers. 2006). 23.

¹⁷² Ibid. 71.

¹⁷³ Coloroso, 2005: 83.

upon with a historical consciousness, then the classical consciousness that maintains the culture embodies a bias that impedes conversion.

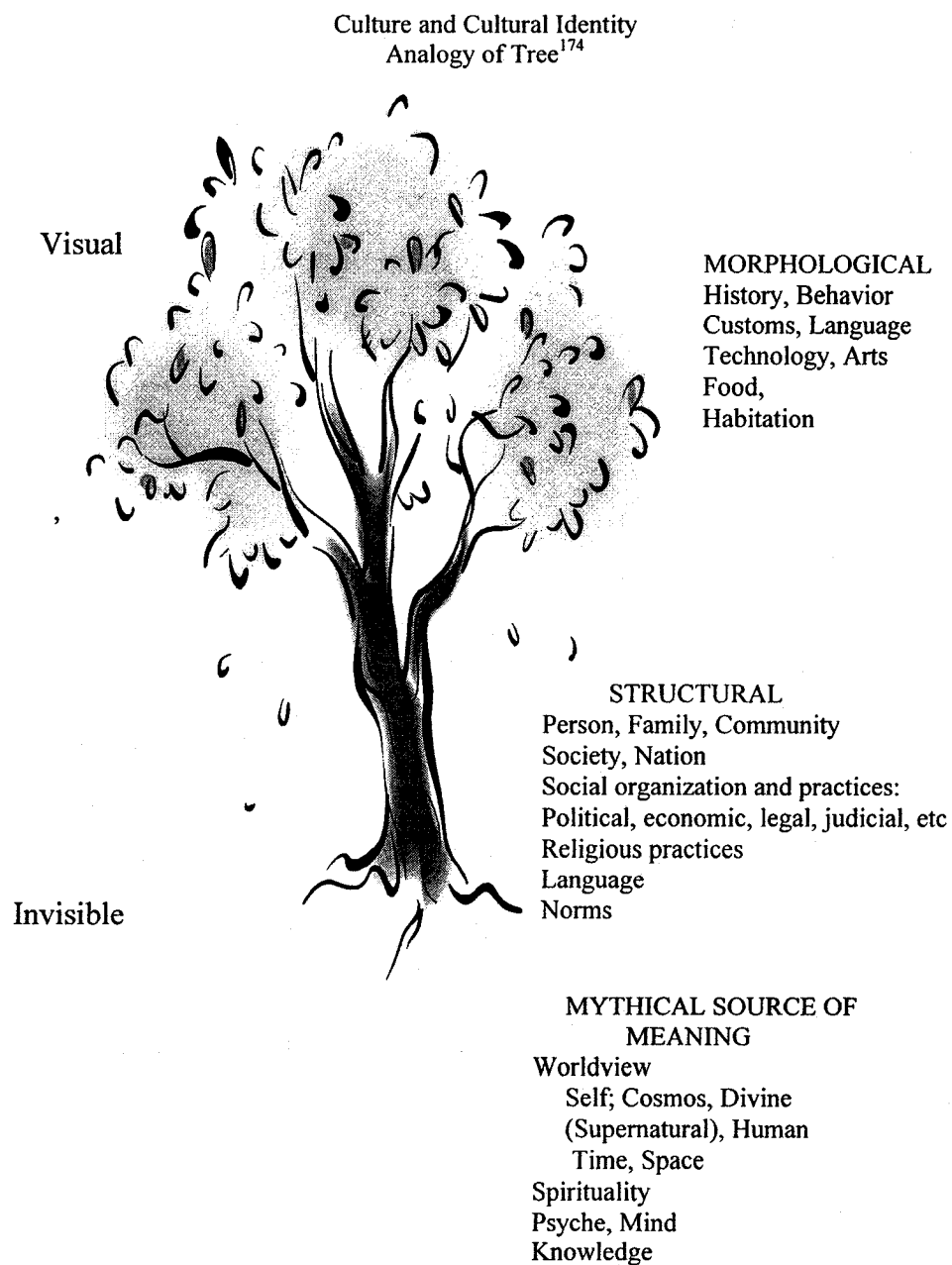


Figure 6

¹⁷⁴ Sutherland, 2005: 36.

The reconciliation between cultures, and the acceptance of another's cultural framework, one's worldview, is essential in our global village. Just as individuals need to be differentiated, and accept that they are separate unique human beings before interpersonal love is possible, so too, communities need to recognize and accept their differences, their worldviews, before the fear and dread that accompany group bias can be transformed into respect and reconciliation.

B. Impediments to Moral Conversion:

Fear and dread set up an interior resistance to conversion. The feelings of fear and dread and the accompanying lack of reflection permeate one's way of life. In the fear of facing one's ache¹⁷⁵, one's interior hole, individuals fill their lives with busyness, superficial pleasures, sinful pleasures, live on the edge, or achieve a high from 'extreme sports'. Some are weighed down by their pain, their fear, while others live a life of silliness or exist as drifters.

¹⁷⁵ Saint Augustine. *Confessions*. Trans. by Henry Chadwick. (New York: Oxford University Press. 1992). 3. When Augustine writes, "My heart is restless, Lord, until it rests in thee", he refers to the interior ache experienced by every human being resulting from the transcendental tug of God, God's call to relationship, God's call to union. Augustine is not referring to the deep interior ache, the deep experience of hollowness, the emptiness that results from the wounding related to primary issues of a lack of trust and attachment. This lack leads one to self-protective patterns because of the horrible feelings of dread that arise with reflection.

Drifters

Drifters are individuals who float through life never setting their sails nor taking the helm to chart a direction to a port of call. They avoid reflection, decision-making, and personally appropriated action.

Drifters have not yet found themselves. They have not yet discovered their own deeds or their own wills or their own minds, so they are content to do and choose and think what everybody else is doing and thinking and choosing. The point is not that drifters deliberately go about choosing evil; the problem, is rather that they do nothing very deliberately. Either they have never discovered the meaning of human authenticity in themselves, or, if they have, they have never summoned the courage to opt for it – to choose themselves as free and responsible.¹⁷⁶

Walter Conn is writing about adults. It sounds like he is writing about “adults” who are still at the adolescent stage of Identity verses Role Confusion described by Erikson, and at the stage of Synthetic-Conventional Faith described by Fowler as discussed in Chapter II. I concur with Conn and Lonergan that it is up to each of us to decide what we will make of ourselves. Only after many years of spiritual development does there emerge the sustained self-transcendence of the virtuous person.

In their lack of reflection, “drifters” are a group who exemplify those who remain at the level of common sense. They resist any effort to develop a differentiated consciousness. They remain in their bubble of fun, conquest, or the acquisition of material things. Other individuals think to some degree, yet protect themselves from reflection with obscuranticism.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ Conn, 1986: 115.

¹⁷⁷ Obscuranticism is a word used in this context by Lonergan. It refers to the process of being deliberately obscure or vague, in opposition to human progress or enlightenment.

Moral Impotence

Most individuals live at least some of the time as drifters, and many get caught by “moral impotence”. Moral impotence is “the gap between one’s potential effective freedom and one’s actual effective freedom”.¹⁷⁸ Potential effective freedom is rooted in the limitation of freedom due to one’s “incomplete development of the capacity to understand and to decide”. Throughout life one must “live and make decisions in the light of underdeveloped intelligence and under the guidance of incomplete willingness”¹⁷⁹. Moral impotence in this context is a lack of self-control, and weakness in taking on the responsibilities of choosing a value over a satisfaction.

In essence, this shortsightedness and immediate gratification interferes with the development of a self-transcending stance to life and results in an inauthentic personhood. Choices become rooted in warped capacities to understand and decide, and are corrupted by bias. Effective moral freedom, based on reflection, is limited by rationalization, and individuals get caught in various ideologies. Effective moral freedom becomes an active stance within a person when that person responds positively to a higher integration “effected by the power of transcendent love experienced in religious conversion”.¹⁸⁰ Human love effects a conversion from a self-centered to an

¹⁷⁸ Conn, 1988: 51.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. 51.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid. 51.

other-centered orientation in life. I will expand on this shortly for while the concept of the process is solid theologically, in practice, the process may be much more complicated.

Summary

In this section intellectual and moral conversion were shown to be influenced by certain unreflective modes of living. This lack of reflection, which necessarily impedes conversion, is based in fear and dread. The impediments to moral conversion were exemplified by drifting and moral impotence. The impediments to intellectual conversion could be observed in ideologies, and bias in its various forms. The effects of these biases on individuals and on groups were expanded with a consideration of “worldviews”, using a current example in which a lack of differentiated consciousness has a dramatic and disastrous effect in the contemporary world.

Part III – Reflection

The Assists to Conversion Open the Heart to Reflection

Given the great influence of individual experiences of attachment to primary caregivers, the attainment of basic trust, and other family of origin issues in impacting one’s openness to life, we have seen how a general stance of fear emerges. Fear and

dread have been shown to be the main impediments to conversion, so the assists to conversion need be those aspects in life that counter fear.¹⁸¹ I posit that the salient factors include a loving family, reflective friends of integrity, and the ongoing presence of a supportive community. Some people may discover the friends only after exposure to a supportive community for a supportive community provides a safe place to find out new information, to ask the confusing and threatening questions, and to test out new modes of living.

For individuals who grew up in a solid family, solid friends and a community life come more naturally than they do for those who have suffered in their family of origin. Love is the stance to which they naturally revert for they have absorbed the love and safety provided by their primary caregivers as outlined earlier by Bowlby and Neufeld. Bradshaw describes how many individuals from dysfunctional families were so embarrassed or afraid to bring friends home that they had difficulty forming or trusting friends. Others developed addictions of their own, and for these individuals, or others locked in their own pain, it may have been AA or Alpha, or Cursillo¹⁸² that were the first experiences of a safe community where one could finally question and tryout new attitudes and behavior. For them, the community came first, and the friends followed. Given these supports, one opens to reflections that underlie conversions of the mind and the heart. One opens to love.

¹⁸¹ The scriptures claim that "perfect love casts out fear"... and God is perfect Love. So the love of God experienced in a religious conversion is the counter to fear, and since God made humans to engage in a mutual and eternal love relationship, an ever growing "Yes" to God, a "Yes" to living authentically who God made each and every one to be, is a "Yes" to intentional loving.

¹⁸² AA refers to Alcoholics Anonymous. Alpha is a course lasting for many weeks, whereas Cursillo is a weekend experience with monthly support session called ultreya, for adults in the Christian faith tradition. Both Alpha and Cursillo are courses in spiritual development dealing with first conversion and either a renewal or a beginning understanding of the faith.

A Relevant Diversion

Leading to Authenticity and Self-transcendent Loving

This study is theoretical yet it has practical applications, so I am going to take a relevant tangent. A recent book, “The Law of Attraction” has been first on the best sellers list of the Montreal Gazette for eighteen weeks¹⁸³. This book proposes a universal intelligence that responds to our desires if one follows three steps: know what you want and ask the universe for it; feel and behave as if the object of your desire is on its way; and be open to receiving it.¹⁸⁴ Thus far, the proposals parallel the Ignatian method of prayer discussed in Chapter II: ask God for the grace you have determined that you need, believe that it will be given,¹⁸⁵ and be open to receiving it. Both maintain that what is received requires implementation. However where the proposals of this best seller and the insights of this study differ are significant.

First, the book is scientifically reductionist as it claims that one’s positive thoughts can maintain health. This is a denial of the biochemical aspect of our being and in this sense, our connection to the rest of creation. It is functioning at the realm of

¹⁸³ Michael J. Losier. *The Law of Attraction: The Science of Attracting More of What You Want and Less of What You Don't*. (Victoria, B.C.: Published by Michael J. Losier. 2006). It has been number one for eighteen weeks on the best-seller list of The Gazette in Montreal as of May 12, 2007. A DVD, called “The Secret”, related to the book is also selling well.

¹⁸⁴ Losier, 2006: 30.

¹⁸⁵ Mt.7: 7-11 Ask and it will be given to you; Mk. 11:24-25 Everything you ask and pray for, believe that you have it already, and it will be yours. Jn.15:16-17 In this passage Jesus is telling the disciples that he has chosen them to go out and bear fruit, and that God will give them anything they ask, if they love one another. So the request is tied to bearing fruit and loving. It is about acting for the community and doing it with love. This is very different from the self-satisfied “ask and get what you want” expressed in *The Law of Attraction*.

meaning of common sense, for it remains in “the realm of persons and things in their relation to us”.¹⁸⁶ The author is functioning as a “*naive realist* who knows the world as mediated by meaning but thinks he knows it by looking”.¹⁸⁷ So the author and those influenced by this book, by this mode of thinking limit themselves to a world of the immediate (of the infant and child), and miss out on the world mediated by meaning in which reality is not just what is looked at, but is given in experience, organized, extrapolated by understanding, and ultimately posited by judgment and belief.¹⁸⁸ Not only does the author remain in the realm of common sense, all the other realms of meaning are missing. Absent throughout is the self-transcendent aspect to authentic religious living. “As a critical response to value, self-transcendence rejects the illusion that narcissistic self-fulfillment constitutes self-realization”.¹⁸⁹

Second, the author is missing out on the fullness of the process of coming to deep connection and deep joy because he remains with judgments of fact which “purport to state what is or what is not so”¹⁹⁰, rather than make judgments of value which “purport to state what is or is not truly good or really better”.¹⁹¹ It would appear that the author is writing of something good and better, yet he remains self-focused on the level of what is better for oneself, whereas in a true judgment of value the “subject is constituting himself as proximately capable of moral self-transcendence, of benevolence and beneficence, of true loving”.¹⁹² In contrast to this book’s egocentric premises, I posit

¹⁸⁶ Lonergan, 1972: 81.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. 238.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid. 238.

¹⁸⁹ Conn, 1986: 22.

¹⁹⁰ Lonergan, 1972: 37.

¹⁹¹ Ibid. 37.

¹⁹² Ibid. 37.

that it is other-centered intentional loving that brings the greatest joy and the deep peace that the world cannot give. So many people are afraid, that they turn to horoscopes or simplistic books like this to try to find their way through life. The book in question does not deal with the difficulty of being authentic and loving others in a self-transcending manner.

Conversion is an ongoing process, and humans progress and regress throughout life, making themselves, forming their character through the choices they make. When individuals choose to live by the transcendental precepts, their self-creation and self-development comprise the personal realization of the human spirit for self-transcendence.

Self-transcendence is the call to go beyond self in other-centered love and other-centered actions through reflection on the true, the good, and the beautiful. Psychologists and many other writers promote the value and the need for humans to self-actualize, to realize and bring all the talents and giftedness that is present within one from potentiality to actualization to achieve a self-fulfillment in life. This understanding of self-transcendence expresses a deeper value. It posits that the *raison d'être* of the human person is greater than mere self-actualization. Not that self-actualization is bad, it is just inadequate if it is self-centered and does not include a drive towards

authenticity.¹⁹³ In religious conversion this drive towards authenticity is that transcendental tug, that “fateful call to a dreaded holiness”.¹⁹⁴

Self-transcendence is fundamentally different from self-actualization for the following reasons. Frankl claims “self-actualization cannot be attained if it is made an end in itself, but only as a side effect of self-transcendence”.¹⁹⁵ Conn writes that self-transcendence is a critical response to value, it rejects the illusion that narcissistic self-fulfillment constitutes self-realization, for self-transcendence is authentic realization, and authenticity is not arbitrary. “The *criterion* of human authenticity, therefore, is the very *self-transcendence* which is effected in the realization of value through critical understanding, responsible decision, and generous love”.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ Conn, 1986: 22-38.

¹⁹⁴ Lonergan, 1972: 113. Lonergan refers to “dreaded holiness”. I understand his use of the word “dread” in this context to mean the difficulty, pain, and effort that is involved in saying “yes” to becoming holy. In reference to *The Three Ways* in Chapter II, it means saying “yes” to the dying to self in the dark nights of the senses and the dark night of the soul. Although they lead to a deep holiness, even the thought of such experiences is enough to fill one with dread.

¹⁹⁵ Victor Frankl. *Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy* trans. I. Lash 2nd ed. (New York: Washington Square Press, 1963 [1959] 175). in Conn, 1986: 23.

¹⁹⁶ Conn, 1986: 19-32. Conn posits that despite the situation in one's object world, in one's subject world one is called beyond self-fulfillment, beyond self-actualization, to attend to that transcendental tug, and to live a life of holiness. I propose the following examples in support of this statement: to fulfill oneself at the cost to another, or to one's family is not the most loving thing to do, (It may not be the time to get a PhD. or to work for a low-paying charitable organization if one has children to feed); one may be in a situation of crisis or impoverishment, yet the needs of those under one's care require physical presence and active loving (The crisis of abandonment by a spouse, or the loss of a limb or a job, or a life of actual poverty in a third world), do not diminish the need for other-centered holiness; the objective world in which one lives may not support the development and actualization of one's talents and aspirations, (the status of women in so many situations in the Church or the world) yet subjectively, one is always called and graced to live a self-transcending holiness.

Reflection Opens the Heart

To Sensitivity, Thoughtfulness, Compassion, and Love

Authenticity involves two simultaneous processes: that of being oneself (being grounded in oneself, living one's unique name), and of moving beyond oneself in other-centered self-transcendence. Self-transcendence moves individuals beyond themselves towards the actualization of authenticity and holiness¹⁹⁷ because they are grounded in self, they are able to attend to others with sensitivity, compassion and love. An individual who is not in touch with his own feelings is unable to attend to the feelings of another.¹⁹⁸ Being in touch with oneself, being authentic, is so important for all human beings. No one lives the same life, and no one has the identical experiences, but all humans have feelings. Essentially, one relates to another in the recognition of another's pain, sadness, anger, anxiety, fear, happiness, joy, or love. Authenticity makes compassion possible.¹⁹⁹ Authenticity is a prerequisite for genuine loving. Only when

¹⁹⁷ Kinberger, 1992: 37.

¹⁹⁸ In therapy I listen to individuals who have been wounded by the insensitivity or cruelty of others. Often these 'others' are wounded persons themselves; persons who never dealt with their own pain and so did all they could not to feel. In so doing, they were unable to be present to the feelings of my clients. It is often a process for the clients themselves to get in touch with their own feelings. Once they have accomplished this task, they find themselves able to be present to others. One person had so many unacknowledged and unshed tears that the cry of a kitten touched his/her wound so deeply, that he/she was drawn to repeat his/her childhood abuse and abuse the cat to get it to stop the mewling cry.

In couple therapy, Sue Johnston recommends a passionate attention to the feelings of each member of the couple. This passionate attention allows each one to come in touch with their deepest pain, sorrow, joy, healing – his or her authentic self. This passionate attention can be carried out with empathetic listening in ordinary life, thus enabling conversion. (Susan M Johnson. *The Practice of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy*. 2nd ed. (New York: Brunner-Routledge. 2004). Walter Conn writes, "Feeling is the locus of value and it gives our conscious life its mass and momentum. The radical transformation of feeling in affective conversion gives the power of sustained self-transcendence, of authentic living." Conn, 1986: 36.

¹⁹⁹ All the studies over many years point to the authenticity of the therapist and his or her compassionate stance as the primary asset in therapeutic healing. Dr. Thomas Francoeur, in the Counselling department at McGill University, says, "If you know someone's pain, you can't help but love them". I'm glad God

“I” am myself, can I love “you” as yourself. The “I, Thou” relationship of love can only exist in the presence of two differentiated beings.

In the Muslim, Jewish, and Christian belief systems, each person is called to a differentiated union with God who is simultaneously transcendent and immanent. Teilhard de Chardin writes,

God reveals himself everywhere beneath our groping efforts, as a *universal milieu*, only because he is *the ultimate point* upon which all realities converge. ... However vast the divine *milieu* may be, it is in reality a *center*. It therefore has all the properties of a center, and above all the absolute and final power to unite (and consequently to complete) all beings in its breast. In the divine *milieu* all the elements of the universe touch each other by that which is most inward and intimate in them. There they concentrate, little by little, all that is purest and most attractive in them without loss and without danger of subsequent corruption. There they shed, in their meeting, the mutual externality and the incoherences which form the basic pain of human relationships.²⁰⁰

The basic pain of human relationships derives from living unauthentically, from living the incoherence of being false to oneself. In the concrete situation, Tad Dunne illuminates two features of love, benevolence and appreciation. In benevolence one truly desires someone else’s welfare and it is demonstrated in concrete acts of caring. Appreciation does not focus on the good that can be done, but rather on the good that the person already is (that which is most inward and intimate in them). Both benevolence and appreciation differ from transcendent love which “is the movement within one that seeks the absolute highest value for real men and women”,²⁰¹ yet both are innate features of transcendent love.

knows our pain. I’m also glad God knows us. Tad Dunne makes the point that even for humans, “someone who loves us has a better, more accurate judgment of value in our regard than we ourselves do”. Tad Dunne. *Loneragan and Spirituality*. (Chicago: Loyola University Press. 1985). 110.

²⁰⁰ Pierre Teilhard De Chardin. *Le Milieu Divin: An Essay on the Interior Life*. Trans. 1960. (New York: Harper & Brothers. 1957). 78.

²⁰¹ Dunne, 1985: 107-108.

Men and women live the highest value when they live out the great commandment and love God with their whole heart, with their whole soul, with all of their strength; and love their neighbour as themselves (as written in the Hebrew scriptures and restated in Mk. 12:30). While this dictum does lead one to self-transcendent loving, it is as yet lacking two features: God's love for each person; and one's responsibility to love others, not just as oneself, but to live in the image of God, and love others as God loves them

Human development is not only in skills and virtues but also in holiness. The power of God's love brings forth a new energy and efficacy in all goodness, and the limit of human expectations ceases to be the grave. ... **He made us in his image, for our authenticity consists in being like him, in self-transcending, in being origins of value, in true love.**²⁰²

Christians are not asked merely to love those who love them, but to go beyond and love even their enemies. They are not just asked to love others "as yourself", but as Christ loves. (Jn.15:1) This becomes possible in the prayer written by Paul in which he takes the person to the inner self, wherein the person is authentically transformed by love, transformed by this religious conversion, such that the gift of God's love floods one's heart and being. Christian conversion is making Christ the way and life of authenticity.

This then is what I pray, kneeling before the Father, from whom every family, whether spiritual or natural, takes its name.

Out of his infinite glory, may he give you the power through his Spirit for *your hidden self to grow strong, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith and then, planted in love and built on love*, you will with all the saints have strength to grasp the breath and the length, the height and the depth; until knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, *you are filled with the utter fullness of God*.

Glory be to him whose power, working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine; glory be to him from generation to generation in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.

Eph.3:14-21

²⁰² Lonergan, 1972: 117.

This prayer also implies that once filled with the love of God (God for us and us for God), we will be graced to love others, for God “working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine”. This prayer brings back the discussion on sin in Chapter II where sin was described as the refusal of Love such that one was unable to love.

Love is a word that includes feelings, an orientation toward a particular object of value, an interior choice to live orientated towards that object in a particular manner, and practical means to do that. Lonergan’s guide to decision-making is based on the movement from experiencing to understanding to judging to deciding, all for the purpose of acting in a self-transcendent loving manner. Its ultimate goal is loving God and all of God’s creation.

Feelings of love can be intense, absent, or dissipated in and among all the other experiences of a day.²⁰³ One may need to discern whether to orient oneself toward another object (person) as a valuable investment of one’s particular and concrete energy and expressions of love. Once the object has been chosen, love becomes a verb, an action to be lived concretely. When one makes love the intentional stance for our whole being, then it is religious. Loving is about religious conversion.

²⁰³ I am reminded of the story of the farmer and his wife. At the end of a long hot summer day in which the woman, tired from the demands of her little ones and from preparing large meals for her husband and the other workers, greets her exhausted husband at the back door. At her question, “Do you love me?” he nods and gives her a kiss. Did they feel love? No. All they felt was exhaustion, but the love was there.

Being-in-Love and Intentional Loving

Lonergan describes four levels of intentional consciousness. Reflection takes place on the third level which includes “the consciousness that accompanies acts of *reflecting*, marshalling and weighing the evidence, making judgments of fact or possibility.”²⁰⁴ Throughout this study I have claimed that reflection is a prerequisite for conversion, and so it is, for it prepares one for the transformation to the fourth level of intentional consciousness in which one can chose to concretely incarnate the value that I term “*intentional loving*”. The fourth level comprises a “consciousness that deliberates, makes judgments of value, decides, acts responsibly and freely.” A consciousness that deliberates is a reflective consciousness. In intentional loving one freely and responsibly considers the needs of another, and makes a judgment of value on how best to respond to those needs. At its core, intentional loving is a self-transcending act; and at its best, it is an act of one person acting from within their interior place of authenticity, calling the other to authenticity, or affirming the other in their authentic being. That is the task of intentional loving.

Intentional loving is different from Lonergan’s concept of “being-in-love with God”. The former is an act consciously chosen in time, whereas the latter is a state. ‘Being-in-love with God’, he claims is not a feeling, but a dynamic state of freedom in

²⁰⁴ The four levels of intentional consciousness: first, “the consciousness that accompanies acts of seeing, hearing, tasting, touching; second, the consciousness that accompanies acts of inquiry, insight, formulating, speaking; third, the consciousness that accompanies acts of **reflecting**, marshalling and weighing the evidence, making judgments of fact or possibility; and the fourth level, consciousness that deliberates, makes judgments of value, decides, acts responsibly and freely.” Lonergan, 1972: 106-7.

those who do good because they are in love²⁰⁵. Most certainly, it is easier to love with intentionality when one experiences “being-in-love”. However, further clarifications are required. Lonergan compares being-in-love to Ignatius’ consolation without previous cause (CSCP)²⁰⁶, and it takes over the peak of the soul, the *apex animae*. However, a consolation without previous cause, which is a quantum shift in a person’s horizon, and totally God’s intervention and initiative, does not happen daily. It tends to be a rare occurrence in anyone’s life.

Most often, a person is touched gently and invited to cooperate in God’s ongoing invitation to grow in relationship. To ascertain this gentle touch involves reflection and discernment. This invitation is called a consolation with previous cause (CCCP) because it is the result of an ongoing reflective and responsive relationship. One can love God directly, and one can live the relationship with God by valuing creation and by loving other human beings. As humans, we can live in a dynamic state, orientated to something or someone, yet we also live in time. We can live only in the present moment. To live and respond in love in each present moment requires reflection. It involves a conscious choice to love with intentionality: or, as I term it, “intentional loving”.

Earlier in this chapter, we saw that dread was an existential stance deep within the psyche (in the sense that it could only be healed through psychic conversion). I posit that being-in-love is also an existential stance that has developed deep within the psyche

²⁰⁵Lonergan, 1972: 107.

²⁰⁶Consolations with and without previous cause were discussed in Chapter II.

through experiences of consolation without previous cause; experiences of constant love within one's family, with friends, and in community; or through living an experience of the unitive way. Being-in-love is a stance, a state of being. Intentional loving is a reflected upon, chosen act. Although it is true, it would be limiting to say that the former is about being and the latter about doing, for in this case the doing arises from the being, and the being requires actualization for it to be real. No one can sit in a state of sublime love without pouring that love out on others. It is through acts of intentional loving that others experience the gift, the grace that inhabits the giver.

Also, "being-in-love", is a state achieved for short periods of time. For the most part, humans fluctuate between consolations (movements towards God in love) and desolations (movements away from God – usually as a result of apathy, sin, or fear). Generally, desolations can be overcome through intentional loving, for intentional loving changes the direction of movement.²⁰⁷ It assists conversion. Intentional loving is practical and concrete. It involves reflecting on the needs of others in the context of their lives, pondering what one can contribute, and reflecting on how one can love them on their journey of holiness, on the mutual journey to union with God. Intentional loving is the human action that is the key assist to conversion, for it is the basis of a supportive family, it suffuses the relationship of reflective friends of integrity, and it underlies the construct of a supportive community. Because they have received so much love in these places, some individuals love well without a conscious awareness of God, yet being in love with God changes one for it provides a vibrancy, a depth, and a radiance that is

²⁰⁷This is solid theologically, but practically, the process may be much more complicated.

based on an awareness that the key relationship that underscores all other relationships is one's relationship with God.

This relationship with God sets the goal and the context for one's life, "to be grasped by God and to respond with total and permanent self-surrender to God without conditions, qualifications, and reservations."²⁰⁸ In conclusion, *love* is the salient assist to conversion. God's love enables one's response. Humanly, 'intentional loving' is the way and the how!

I shall pass through this world but once; any good thing therefore I can do, or any kindness that I can show, let me do it now, let me not defer it, or neglect it, for I will not pass this way again.

Anon

²⁰⁸Lonergan, 1972: 240.

Conclusion

In this study I have brought together psychological, spiritual, and theological constructs to provide answers to my initial life question, “Why aren’t people more reflective?” I have shown how reflection is necessary for conversion: affective, intellectual, moral, and religious. Psychological dimensions provided information that explained both the development of the salient impediments to conversion, (fear and dread), and the salient assist to conversion: love, namely love of others and love of God. It is love that is found and fostered in a solid family of origin, reflective friends of integrity, and a supportive community. These salient factors were shown to be instrumental throughout the conversion processes in the spiritual dimension, and confirmed in the reflection of theologians, complemented by my own insights and reflections.

This paper began with questions about reflection, and the salient assists and impediments to conversion. Those questions have been answered. Besides the areas that I have brought to the fore, there are other areas that can be investigated that provide general assists to conversion, namely, life experience, education, therapy, and spiritual direction.

Conversion is a complex yet ultimately pertinent issue. It is about living the fullness of one’s humanity and it is about being filled with the utter fullness of God. What could be more important? Yet humans are filled with fear. “Do not be afraid”

is the most common statement in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. Humans are weak, wounded, loved, and called beyond. We need each other and we need God.

The disciplines of psychology, spirituality, and theology can apply the insights that have surfaced in this study, and they need to continue to inform and support each other in terms of reflection and conversion. Each discipline has its own contribution to add to the discussion. I would like to make these insights available to therapists, educators, parents, theologians, politicians, and those in ongoing adult faith formation. Each of these groups of caring people would have something to learn, and something to contribute to this topic of conversion.

In conclusion, we know that fear is limiting. Dread is divisive. Each group mentioned above could expand their knowledge beyond their particular horizon. Conversion may be impeded by fear and dread; but fear faced becomes a support to ongoing conversion. The assists to conversion coalesced around loving support: a supportive family, supportive reflective friends of integrity, and a supportive community. True support involves reflection and authentic self-transcendent loving. In conclusion, those who are already on the road to conversion are supports to others on the way, and those who engage in intentional loving are the best supports because “perfect love drives out fear”. (I John 4:18) In the words of Jean Valjean at the conclusion of *Les Miserables*,

“To love another person is to see the face of God”.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁹ A. Boubtil & C.M. Schonberg. Finale from the musical, *Les Miserables*. 1985.

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Appendix I

Maslow's hierarchy of needs²¹⁰

↑ **Self Actualization:** morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, acceptance of facts

Esteem: self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, respect by others

Love/belonging: friendship, family, sexual intimacy

Safety: security of body, employment, resources, morality, family, health

Physiological: breathing, food, water, sex, sleep, homostasis, excretion

The above lists Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which are usually represented as a pyramid with the more primitive needs at the bottom.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is often depicted as a pyramid consisting of five levels: the four lower levels are grouped together as *deficiency needs* associated with physiological needs, while the top level is termed *growth needs* associated with psychological needs. While *deficiency needs* must be met, *growth needs* are continually shaping behaviour. The basic concept is that the higher needs in this hierarchy only come into focus once all the needs that are lower down in the pyramid are mainly or entirely satisfied. Growth forces create upward movement in the hierarchy, whereas regressive forces push prepotent needs further down the hierarchy.

Note that these are different from

Lonergan's Hierarchy of Values²¹¹

Because Lonergan's Hierarchy goes beyond the needs of the individual.

The values respond to a scale of preference in an ascending order.

↑ **Religious** values are at the heart of the meaning and value of human living and the human world.

Personal value is the person in his self-transcendence, as loving, being loved, as originator of values in himself and in his milieu, as an inspiration and invitation for others to do likewise.

Cultural values are related to the expression of meaning and value in a community's living and operating.

Social values are related to the good of order that conditions the vital values of the community.

Vital values are health and strength, race and vigour.

²¹⁰ Abraham Maslow. 1943. A Theory of Human Maturation.

²¹¹ Lonergan, 1972: 31

Appendix II

Bowlby's Stages of Attachment

The development of attachment takes place in four phases:

1. ***The preattachment phase*** (birth to 6 weeks) Infants "recognize their own mother's smell and voice but do not mind being cared for by someone else.
2. ***The attachment in the making" phase*** (6 – 8 months) Infants respond more quickly to familiar caregivers and begin to develop a sense of trust, but do not exhibit distress when cared for by a stranger.
3. ***The phase of "clear-cut" attachment*** (6 – 8 months to 18 months – two years) Babies display separation anxiety when the known caregivers leave. They have mastered Piagetian object permanence for they have a clear understanding that the caregiver continues to exist even when out of view. The primary caregivers become the "secure base" from which the babies can move out and explore the environment.
4. ***Formation of a reciprocal relationship*** (18 months – two years and on). If a child has mastered these stages, he or she is able to withstand a time of absence from the primary caregiver.²¹²

The Strength of the Attachment

Secure attachment: These infants use the parents as a secure base from which to explore. When separated, they may or may not cry, but if they do, it is due to the parent's absence, since they show a strong preference for her over the stranger. When the parent returns, they actively seek contact, and their crying is reduced immediately.

Avoidant attachment: These babies seem unresponsive to the parent when she is present. When she leaves, they are usually not distressed, and they react to the stranger in much the same way as the parent. During reunion, they avoid or are slow to greet the parent, and when picked up, they often fail to cling.

Resistant attachment: Before separation, these infants seek closeness to the parent and often fail to explore. When she returns, they display angry, resistive behavior, sometimes hitting and pushing. In addition, many continue to cry after being picked up and cannot be comforted easily.

Disorganized/disoriented attachment: This pattern seems to reflect the greatest insecurity. At reunion, these infants show a variety of confused, contradictory behaviors. For example, they might look away while being held by the parent or approach her with a flat, depressed gaze. Most babies communicate their disorientation with a dazed facial expression. A few cry out unexpectedly after having calmed down or display odd, frozen postures." Except for German infants who demonstrate more avoidant attachment, and Japanese infants who demonstrate more resistant attachment, these patterns have been found to be similar for all infants cross-culturally.²¹³

²¹²John Bowlby in. Berk, 1996: 266.

²¹³Ainsworth et al., 1978; Main and Solomon, 1990 in Berk, 1996: 276 – 268.

Appendix III

Functional Families²¹⁴

F. Five Freedoms Expressed – In order to be fully functional; each human being needs to express freely the five basic powers that constitute human strength. These are the power to perceive; to think and interpret; to emote; to choose; to want and desire; to be creative through the use of imagination.

U. Unfolding Process of Intimacy – The marriage as the chief component of the family, needs to be in the process of becoming intimate. This process goes through the stages of: in love; working out differences; compromise and individuation; and plateau intimacy.

N. Negotiated Differences – Negotiating differences is the crucial task in the process of intimacy formation. To negotiate differences there must be the desire to cooperate. This desire creates the willingness to fight fair.

C. Clear and Consistent Communication – Clear and consistent communication are keys to establishing separateness and intimacy. Clear communication demands awareness of self and the other, as well as mutual respect for each other's dignity.

T. Trusting - Trust is created by honesty. Accurate expression of emotion, thoughts and desires is more important than agreement. Honesty is self-responsible and avoids shaming.

I. Individuality – In functional families differences are encouraged. The uniqueness and unrepeatability of each person is the number one priority in a functional family.

O. Open and Flexible – In a functional family the roles are open and flexible. One can be spontaneous without fear of shame and judgment.

N. Needs Fulfilled – Happy people are people who are getting their needs met. A functional family allows all of its members to get their needs filled.

A. Accountability – Functional families are accountable. They are willing to acknowledge individual problems, as well as family problems. They will work to resolve those problems.

L. Laws are open and Flexible – The laws in functional families will allow for mistakes. They are negotiable.

²¹⁴ Bradshaw, 1987: 58 – 59.

Appendix IV

Dysfunctional Families²¹⁵

D. Denial and Delusion – Dysfunctional families deny their problems. Hence the problems never get solved. Such families also deny their members the five freedoms.

Y. Yin/Yang Disorder – There is always an intimacy vacuum in a dysfunctional family. The intimacy vacuum creates the dysfunction.

S. Shame-based – Non-functional families are shame-based. The parents have internalized their shame and act shameless toward their children. The children often feel ashamed of the family.

F. Fixed, Frozen and Rigid Roles – Roles are created by the needs of the family as a system. Children give up their reality to take care of the needs of the system.

U. Undifferentiated Ego Mass – Members of dysfunctional families are enmeshed in each other's boundaries. If mom is scared, all feel scared. Members feel for other members.

N. Needs Sacrificed to the System – Members of a dysfunctional family cannot get their individual needs met. Individual needs are put aside for the needs of the system. There is almost always low-grade anger and depression in a dysfunctional family.

C. Confluence or Conflicted Communication – The communication style in dysfunctional families is either open conflict or the agreement never to disagree. (Confluence). There is rarely any real contact.

T. Togetherness Polarity Dominates – Individual differences are sacrificed for the needs of the family system. In dysfunctional families, the individual exists for the family. It is difficult to leave dysfunctional families.

I. Irrevocable Rules – In non-functional families, the rules are rigid and unchanging. Such rules are usually control, perfectionism and blame. The poisonous pedagogy set up these rules.

O. Open Secrets – The open secrets are part of the vital lie which keeps the family frozen. A propos of open secrets, everyone knows what everyone pretends not to know.

N. Non-changing Closed System – Everyone plays her role to control the controlling distress. But the more each plays his role, the more the system stays the same. The French proverb, "Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose" (the more something changes, the more it remains the same) sums up the dilemma of the closed family system.

A. Absolute and Grandiose Will – The major catastrophe of the dysfunctional family is that all members have their wills disabled. Control itself is a product of the disabled will. The denial of conflict and frustration creates a situation in which no one wills to will. This gives one the illusion of doing something about the problem. It is a way to feel whole when one is actually split.

L. Lack of Boundaries – Members of dysfunctional families give up their ego as away to maintain the family system. Giving up ego boundaries is equivalent to giving up one's boundaries identity.

²¹⁵ Bradshaw, 1987: 84-85.

Appendix V

Stages of Recovery For Adult Children of Alcoholics (And many others who have suffered emotional abuse)

1. Survival

The individuals involved demonstrate a façade of strength; yet seem to be sleepwalkers. Their emotional development is frozen at an early stage and they are prone to psychosomatic disorders, eating disorders, depression, and chemical dependency.

2. Emergent Awareness

Acknowledgment of past experiences is the key to self-validation. Breaking the shroud of secrecy and code of silence lead to hope and feelings of not being alone, yet can also lead to guilt for betraying the family secret. Anger and a sense of abandonment can also arise as the Adult child realizes that the alcoholism (or abuse) is not their fault. Then he/she mourns for the lost childhood.

Tasks:

- Learning to accept this experience as legitimate.
- Learning to listen to their inner voice.
- Learning to be gentle with self.
- Learning to ask for help.

3. Core Issues

They begin to become aware of the issues of control, trust, avoidance of feelings, over-responsibility, and denial of personal needs.

4. Transformation

They make connections between present behavior and past circumstances. "Chuckling it down" becomes the antidote to "all or nothing thinking". They begin to acknowledge their personal needs, establish the right to say no, change their minds, begin to say what they think, want, or feel, and begin to accept themselves and others as they are.

5. Integration

They begin to own parts of self and find an emerging unity between their thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Before they thought one thing, felt another, and did a third. They experience a new sense of relaxation and joy, and begin to live with their own history and vulnerability.

6. Genesis

This is the development of the spiritual aspect of the person. Many start recovery as atheists and now discover prayer/meditation, love, and forgiveness. They were divorced from their center and disappointed with God. The individuals establish a synergistic relationship with creation, realizing that the whole is greater than the parts. They see themselves as parts of a larger reality, in harmony with the universe. They experience an expansion of self, characterized by the development of a personal, specific, powerful and enduring relationship with a higher power or a higher self.²¹⁶

²¹⁶ Herbert Gravitvitz and Julie D. Bowden, "Therapeutic Issues of Adult Children of Alcoholics". *Alcohol Health and Research World*, (Summer, 1984, p 25 – 42)

Appendix VI

The lyrics from songs in the
musical, "Rent"

Another day

ROGER

Who do you think you are?
Barging in on me and my guitar
Little girl -- hey
The door is that way
You better go you know
The fire's out anyway
Take your powder -- take your candle
Your sweet whisper
I just can't handle
Well take your hair in the moonlight
Your brown eyes -- goodbye, goodnight
I should tell you I should tell you
I should tell you I should -- no!
Another time -- another place
Our temperature would climb
There'd be a long embrace
We'd do another dance
It'd be another play
Looking for romance?
Come back another day
Another day

MIMI

The heart may freeze or it can burn
The pain will ease if I can learn
There is no future
There is no past
I live this moment as my last
There's only us
There's only this
Forget regret
Or life is yours to miss
No other road
No other way
No day but today

ROGER

Excuse me if I'm off track
But if you're so wise
Then tell me -- why do you need smack?
Take your needle
Take your fancy prayer
And don't forget
Get the moonlight out of your hair
Long ago -- you might've lit up my heart
But the fire's dead -- ain't never ever gonna start
Another time -- another place
The words would only rhyme
We'd be in outer space
It'd be another song
We'd sing another way
You wanna prove me wrong?
Come back another day
Another day

MIMI

There's only yes
Only tonight
We must let go
To know what's right
No other course
No other way
No day but today
(Lights slowly fade up on the Life Support group.)

MIMI & OTHERS

I can't control
My destiny
I trust my soul
My only goal is just
To be

There's only now
There's only here
Give in to love
Or live in fear
No other path
No other way
No day but today...

ROGER

Control your temper
She doesn't see
Who says that there's a soul?
Just let me be...
Who do you think you are?
Barging in on me and my guitar
Little girl, hey
The door is that way
The fire's out anyway

ALL

No day but today
No day but today
No day but today
No day but today
No day but today

ROGER

Take your powder; take your candle
Take your brown eyes, your pretty smile, your silhouette
Another time, another place
Another rhyme, a warm embrace
Another dance, another way
Another chance, another day

Appendix VII

James Fowler Stages of Human Development: Optimal Parallels²¹⁷

<i>Eras and Ages</i>	<i>Erikson</i>	<i>Piaget</i>	<i>Kohlberg</i>
Infancy (0-11/2)	Basic Trust vs Basic Mistrust (Hope)	Sensimotor	
Early Childhood (2-6)	Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt (Will)	Preoperational or Intuitive	
	Initiative vs Guilt (Purpose)		<i>Preconventional Level</i> 1. Heteronomous Morality
Childhood (7-12)	Industry vs Inferiority (Competence)	Concrete Operational	2. Instrumental Exchange
			<i>Conventional Level</i> 3. Mutual Interpersonal Relations
Adolescence (13-21)	Identity vs Role Confusion (Fidelity)	Formal Operational	
Young Adulthood (21-35)	Intimacy vs Isolation (Love)	-----	4. Social System and Conscience
			<i>Postconventional Principled Level</i> 5. Social Contract, Individual Rights
Adulthood (35-60)	Generativity vs Stagnation (Care)	-----	
Maturity (60-)	Integrity vs Despair (Wisdom)	-----	6. Universal Ethical Principles

²¹⁷ Fowler, 1981: 52.

Appendix VIII

Psychosocial and Faith Stages: Optimal Parallels²¹⁸

Levinson's Eras and Erikson's Psychosocial Stages

Fowler's Faith Stages

.....

Era of Infancy, Childhood and Adolescence

Trust vs. Mistrust
(Infancy)

Undifferentiated Faith

Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt
Initiative vs. Guilt

1. Intuitive-Projective Faith
(Early Childhood)

Industry vs. Inferiority

2. Mythic –Literal Faith
(School Years)

Identity vs. Role Confusion

3. Synthetic-Conventional Faith
(Adolescence)

First Adult Era

Intimacy vs. Isolation

4. Individuative-Reflective Faith
(Young Adulthood)

Middle Adult Era

Generativity vs. Stagnation

5. Conjunctive Faith
(Mid-life and Beyond)

Late Adult Era

Integrity vs. Despair

6. Universalizing Faith

²¹⁸ Ibid. 113.

Appendix IX

The Dynamic Structures of Spiritual Growth²¹⁹

First Spiritual Dynamic: Sinfulness

Goal: Selfish pleasures, avoidance of pain
Means: Lying, stealing, quarreling, violence, fornication, adultery
Inner Habits: Vices: greed, lust, envy, sloth, anger, gluttony, ... (the seven capital sins).

First Conversion: *Turning away from a life of serious alienation from God and into a new relationship with Him.*

Second Spiritual Dynamic: Repentance

Goal: To reach a state of readiness to go to heaven and avoid going to hell.
Means: Turning away from sin, seeking God's mercy
Inner Habits: Fear of Divine punishment, hope of Divine rewards.

Third Spiritual Dynamic: Practicing the Faith

Goal: To live more easily in the state of grace
Means: Keeping the Ten Commandments and frequenting the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist
Inner Habits: Virtues: Faith, hope and charity; truthfulness, self-control, humility, respect for other persons, respect for the property of others.

Fourth Spiritual Dynamic: Searching for God

Goal: To attain some further clarity about the Divine mystery
Means: Asking questions of believers, reading books, inquiring rationally, pondering deeply
Inner Habits: (Short of firm faith, hope, love): Persistent desires for God amid curiosity about religious matters, together with a continuing sense of dissatisfaction with all else, but these are combined with a mysterious "suspension of belief" which holds the person in the searching mode.

Second Conversion:

This is a change from a mainly "conscious-self" way of knowing God and others to a mainly "inner-self" way of doing so.

²¹⁹ Wickham, 1984: 108-124.

Fifth Spiritual Dynamic: Routine Faith

- Goal:** To hang on, to survive as a believer, despite all the perplexing losses that are felt.
- Means:** Continuing to perform external duties, going through the motions, following dull routines, using willpower to act against a dragging spirit, trying (because of fear?) to ignore boredom and other evidence of loss.
- Inner Habits:** The individual is divided inwardly between external actions ("routines") into which effort is being put, and internal feeling which runs counter to them. Social actions, because of the cut off from inner regions of the spirit, are drained of all positive feeling (at earlier periods of one's life this was not so).

Sixth Spiritual Dynamic: Yearning for God

- Goal:** To know God in some new way, and thus to discover oneself afresh.
- Means:** Recognizing desires arising in one's depths, giving oneself to those longings, petitioning God to reveal himself and to free one from a seemingly hopeless condition.
- Inner Habits:** This is another "suspended" state – the person is caught between conflicting forces and unable to get free of them. But here one identifies with the positive desires even though they seem to remain ineffectual—no effort of will can bring them about—as long as this dynamic lasts. The soul's inner condition is "unformed" as yet, but at least the yearnings felt are acknowledged and owned, even though the older patterns, because they remain unbroken, continue to control the individual and hold her/him in their unwanted grip.

Seventh Spiritual Dynamic: Renewal

- Goal:** To allow the Lord to have full sway in one's inner being, and to stay with that gift.
- Means:** Accepting, rejoicing, surrendering oneself to what is made easy.
- Inner Habits:** This is a condition of "joyful brokenness". There is a new self amid the ruins of a former life which "simply doesn't matter any more".

Eighth Spiritual Dynamic: First Growth

- Goal:** To get rid of older habits and form a new way of life closely united to God.
- Means:** Overcoming blocks and obstacles by faithfully responding to the Lord's graces.
- Inner Habits:** Well-intentioned, if rather naive, desires and attitudes commonly propel the novice forward. Good will and eagerness to learn, but also expectations of a fairly swift advance may be present simultaneously.

Ninth Spiritual Dynamic: Backsliding

- Goal:** To abandon the "foolish dream" of union with God and find peace by returning to the "real world" of one's life as it was prior to renewal.
- Means:** Picking up pieces of older ways, returning to former activities, haunts, and satisfactions, *trying to seal off the soul's depths and to deny the validity of one's new self.*
- Inner Habits:** A settled doubt is accepted which says that spiritual growth is hopeless, *that one's conversion experience was probably an illusion, that it had been a*

mistake to turn to God in the first place. A doubt of this sort often protects the person from a deeper trouble, the humiliation of discovering one's old bad habits returning with a new vigor – as if there had been no renewal at all. (Note that this reveals an ignorance of the difference between a new basis and a new way of life built upon that basis.) But a structure of inner resistance to God (like a stone wall in the soul) can be stubbornly maintained for a remarkable length of time.

It is important to know that a dynamic of this kind, which seems so “realistic” to the one who is temporarily dominated by it, cannot actually work. *Once one is changed interiorly, one is simply unable to get rid of that advance – it remains to bother the person who tries to deny it or ignore it.* (Italics mine)

Tenth Spiritual Dynamic: Purification

Goal: To persevere in seeking inner union with God despite a lack of emotional satisfaction.
Means: Putting up with dryness or desolation, identifying with the inner self (*which Alphonso terms the “name” you are called by God*). Acting against comfort, and dealing with obstacles.
Inner Habits: A new detachment that involves a willingness to be purified.

Eleventh Spiritual Dynamic: Second Growth

Goal: To act regularly under the leading of the Spirit.
Means: Responding more frequently to God from the inner depths of one's being, seeking to please him, waiting and listening to the inner promptings of the Spirit.
Inner Habits: The struggle to receive, identify with and accept the reality of the inner self is now over, and the person begins to act more freely in relating to God. The relationship with God is interpersonal.

Twelfth Spiritual Dynamic: Service

Goal: To perform external tasks in one's community as an expression of the merciful love experienced within.
Means: Doing the humble jobs; finding in the local community work that is suitable for one's gifts and talents; and learning how to let one's experience of union with the Lord find an outlet in serving others.
Inner Habits: The habit of performing humble tasks as silent acts of loving service should be performed at this beginner stage of spiritual growth. The key here lies in acquiring a new skill that flows “from-within-the heart-outward” as a flow of self-giving expressed in ordinary tasks.

Appendix X

True and False Images of God and Self²²⁰

<i>Negative Feelings</i>	<i>False Images of God</i>	<i>False Image of Self</i>	<i>Prayer Themes</i>	<i>True Images of God</i>	<i>True Image of Self</i>	<i>Positive Feelings</i>

<i>Distrust</i> Weak hope	Cold, Aloof Father uninterested, uncaring	Neglected child unwanted uncared for	God Provides for Me	Father who Cares	Treasured Child surrounded with concern	<i>Confidence</i> Security felt deep down
<i>Self Hatred</i> Worthless "no good"	Insane Inventor mad scientist makes evil things	Flawed Being an accident, a mistake	God Choses to Make Me	Loving Maker	Beautiful, Holy Being goodness in depths of soul	<i>Awe and Delight</i> for all that exists
<i>Failure</i> Useless to try, fatalism	Relentless Judge demanding very high standards	Incapable Person weak or battered child	God Loves to Gift Me	Giver of Gifts	Gifted Person	<i>Hopefulness</i> powers will develop more potential
<i>Guiltiness</i> Defensiveness Resentment	Angry Policeman anxious to arrest	Criminal prisoner in a dungeon	God Desires to Forgive Me	Merciful Lord	Forgiven Sinner filled with graced with pardon	<i>Peace</i> ever-renewed forgiveness
<i>Deadness</i> blocked feelings, emptiness	Life-draining boss Bluebeard Dracula	Dull Subject zombie, lifeless	Jesus is my Personal Savior	Personal Savior	Receiver of of Divine Life new powers of soul	<i>Sense of Freedom</i> expanding life
<i>Stagnation</i> no forward movement, boredom	Cruel Taskmaster requires endless tasks	Forgotten Slave going through empty motions	Jesus Calls Me Beyond All Things	The One Who Calls	Chosen Person Hearer of God's Call	<i>Joyfulness</i> saying 'Yes' generously
<i>Misunderstand-ing</i> Manager self-doubt, lack of meaning	Cold-Hearted exploits and manipulates others	Used Person unlistened to, disregarded	Jesus Makes Me His Disciple	Intimate Lord	Beloved Disciple Jesus shares Himself	<i>Nearness of Divine Love</i> appreciation of beauty
<i>Isolation</i> not needed, unwanted by peers	Distant Tyrant Big Brother, suspicious of love	Rejected Person unconnected, unfulfilled	Jesus Joins Me to His Body	The Head of the Body	One Who Belongs participant in community	<i>Happiness</i> forgetting self in others

²²⁰ Ibid.157-158.

Appendix XI

Parallel of "*The Three Ways*" and "*The Ignatian Exercises*"²²¹

First Conversion

Second Conversion

The Three Ways

The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius

The Purgative WayFirst Week

Movement from what is false,
To what is true.
Dying to the false self
Coming in touch with the true self

The beauty of creation, corporate and
personal sin, receiving the grace of
"loved sinner"
"Freedom From" - sin

The Illuminative Way.....Second Week

Living one's relationship with God
Actively in the world – Doing God's work

Grace: to know, love and serve Jesus in this world
Establishing the alignment, the intimate relationship
Achieving a detachment from inordinate attachments
Election: on how to incarnate my relationship with
God in action - in and for the world – "doing God's
Work", not "working for God"
Confirmation
"Freedom For" – a relationship with Jesus

The Unitive Way.....Third and Fourth Weeks

The True self dies and a New self is born

Third Week

Dark Night of the Senses
Active Dark Night
Passive Dark Night

Living the Passion with Christ suffering

Living the difficulties of carrying out the Election

Dark Night of the Soul
True Self dies

Living the pain of the "Yes"
"Freedom With" Jesus

Ressurrection Fourth Week

New Self is given
For most people this happens only
after their real death

Resurrection – Living the Joy of/with Christ
resurrected
"Take, Lord, Receive" Abandonment and Union

²²¹ Wickham, 1978-88).

Appendix XII

How to Discern Your Personal Vocation²²²

1. The Privileged Way – Make the Ignatian Exercises

Listen to God moving in your depths.
Ask yourself: “How has it gone with me?”
Listen to your inner experiences.
Listen, prepare, and dispose yourself re meaning.

2. Ways for the Road

- A. Ask: Do you have a favorite scriptural passage? If several, gradually focus until you have the one with the greatest meaning for you.
- B. Ask: Have you had any key experiences in your life – either particularly joyful or painful?
Go to the primary one and listen to how it speaks to your heart.
What did you learn from it? How did you grow? What did it tell you about yourself?

3. Ask the Following Human Questions

- A. What appeals to you most in your life?
- B. What almost spontaneously gives you consolation?
- C. When you look back on difficulties, what motivation gave you the strength to get over it?

These answers signify the direction to look for the Personal Vocation (name).
Motivation flows from meaning, so when you find what motivates you, you will discover something about your meaning.

4. Pray on Jn.4: 5-42. Jesus’ Encounter with the Samaritan Woman.

Become the woman at the well. Note that Jesus is hot and tired. Jesus calls your name and says, “Give me a drink”. Do it, then say, “Lord, I have a few questions”.
Who are you for me here and now?
What did you come to do for me here and now?
How do you want to do it in me here and now?

The Personal Vocation (one’s name) is written into the inner dynamics of a person.
It is the inner force of one’s life.
It was there since one was a child.
It is what you are doing, and who you are, no matter what you are doing.

²²² Herbert Alphonso. *Discerning Your Personal Vocation*. (Workshop Notes. Ignatian Center of Spirituality. 2007).

Appendix XIII

Relating the Four Levels of Understanding, the Transcendental Precepts, and the Four Levels of Conversion²²³

Four Levels of Understanding {Transcendental Precepts}

Four Levels of Conversion

→ [Be Loving]

Decision ----- Religious

{Be Responsible}

A shift towards love in your decision
i.e. being grasped by God

Judgment ----- Moral

{Be Reasonable}

Is there enough data? Is it true?

A shift in action
i.e. choosing values over satisfaction

Understanding ----- Intellectual

{Be Intelligent}

Ask questions, check the data

A shift in perception by working
out conceptual systems

Experience ----- Affective

{Be Attentive}

To all the data

A shift in feelings according to how
a situation or idea is lived and
communicated.

²²³ My table outlining Lonergan's concepts in Method in Theology. Lonergan, 1972.

Appendix XIV

The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me
Body of Christ, save me
Blood of Christ, inebriate me
Water from the side of Christ, wash me
Passion of Christ, strengthen me
O good Jesus, hear me
Within thy wounds hide me
Permit me not to be separated from thee
From the wicked foe defend me
At the hour of my death call me
And bid me come to thee
That with thy saints I may praise thee
Forever and ever. Amen.

First Principle and Foundation:

Human beings are created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his/her soul. *[orientation to salvation]*

The other things on the face of the earth are created for human beings to help them in attaining the end for which he/she is created.

Hence, humans are to make use of them in so far as they help him/her in the attainment of his/her end, and he/she must rid him/herself of them in as far as they prove a hindrance to him/her.

Therefore, we must make ourselves indifferent to all created things, as far as we are allowed free choice and are not under any prohibition. Consequently, as far as we are concerned, we should nor prefer health to sickness, riches to poverty, honour to dishonour, a long life to a short life. The same holds true for all other things.

[Indifference as freedom from, to freedom for, to freedom with Christ.]

Our one desire and choice should be what is more conducive to the end for which we have been created.

[The More - the Magis - the pattern for discipleship and mission.]

PREPARATORY PRAYER:

I will beg God our Lord for the grace that all my intentions, actions, and operations may be directed purely to the praise and service of His Divine Majesty.

First Week:

Grace asked: Ask for shame and confusion - re my sins. **Freedom from.**
Examine: Evil in the universe; sin in human history, in social institutions; the destructive power of sin.
Choose: Intense sorrow for my sins, and a desire not to commit them anymore.
Give: A blank check to God.
Grace received: To know myself as a deeply loved sinner.

Kingdom of Christ:

Grace: To hear the call of God and not to be deaf to His call.
To say a generous "Yes" blank check.
To labour with Christ in his suffering to be with him in his glory.
Choose: **The Magis**

Second Week:

Grace: To know him more clearly, to love him more dearly, and follow him more nearly day by day.

Election: Begin to investigate and ask in what kind of life or in what state God wishes to make use of us.

Two Standards:

Grace: To be aware of the strategies and deceits of the rebel chief and the movements of Christ, a true life, and the grace to imitate him.
Riches, honour and pride verses poverty, chastity and obedience.

	Poverty	Chastity	Obedience/ humility
Christ:	spiritual freedom	respect for persons	discerning love
Darkness:	materialism	manipulation of others	exploitation of others
	Riches	Honour	Pride

Three Classes of Persons:

Grace: Magis ... choose what is more for the glory of God and the salvation of my soul.

1st class: Yes, not yet

2nd class: Wanting God to do my will.

3rd class: I desire to do God's will. Detachment **Freedom for**

Three Kinds of Humility:

- 1st kind:** No mortal sins
2nd kind: No venial sins
3rd kind: Magis ... Choose to be more like Christ...
Choose poverty with Christ poor rather than riches;
insults with Christ, rather than honours;
to be accounted as worthless and a fool for Christ,
rather than to be esteemed as wise and prudent in this world.

Election: Consider the end for which I have been created, that is, for the praise of God and for the salvation of my soul. **Magis**

- 1st time:** God's action is obvious.
2nd time: Attention to consolations and desolations ... Sentir.
3rd time: Tranquillity → Two Ways

Two Ways:

- 1st Way:** Four Columns
2nd Way: A. Give another advice
B. Death bed scene
C. Last judgment

Third Week:

Grace: To know that Jesus died willingly for me.

Grace: To be willing to suffer with Jesus suffering ... that in my life I too, am willing to live out what God is asking me to do - whatever pain, ridicule, or suffering might be involved - as long as it is for and **with** Jesus. **Freedom with.**

Fourth Week:

Grace: To be glad and rejoice intensely because of the great glory and joy of Christ our Lord - in his resurrection.

Contemplation to attain the Love of God:

Grace: An intimate knowledge of the many blessings received, that filled with gratitude for all, I may in all things love and serve the Divine Majesty.

Take, Lord, and Receive

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. You have given all to me. To you, O Lord, I return it. All is yours, dispose of it wholly according to your will. Give me your love and your grace, for this is sufficient for me.

Appendix XV

Method in Theology by Bernard Lonergan S.J.

