QUESTING IN THE IN-BETWEEN:

REVISIONING FAITH STAGE THEORY

by

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A thesis submitted to
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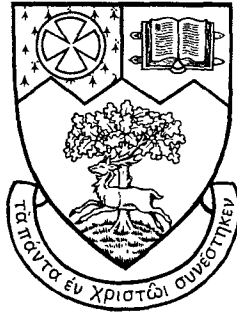Hamilton, Ontario
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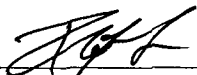
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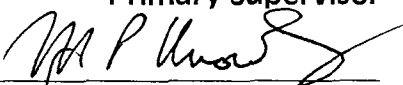
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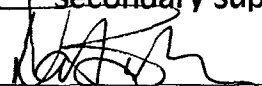is hereby accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
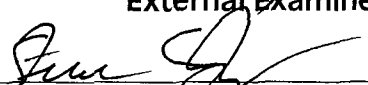
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ABSTRACT

"Questing in the In-Between: Revisioning Faith Stage Theory

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The central purpose of this work is to present an inter-disciplinary conception of faith development that honours the strengths introduced by James Fowler's Faith Development Theory, while simultaneously suggesting both paradigm and process correctives that seek to update it.

To that end, the following chapters present two main arguments:

1. Fowler's Faith Development Theory (FDT) is in need of revision. Although the three founding principles on which FDT is based (those of the importance of experience, the centrality of symbolic representation, and the grounding concept of knowing/construal) are considered cogent, they do not find sufficient operational expression within the exposition of faith stages. The elucidation of a *depth model* of faith development that corrects this gap in FDT is required, in order to provide the field of pastoral care a more coherent framework through which to pursue the growth of faith with their careseekers. It is for this reason that we state that FDT is in need of revision.

2. The required correctives to FDT are addressed and constructively resolved in the concept of Faith Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) – a depth model of faith development that is focused on questing and soul care while remaining integrous to current inter-disciplinary thought in ministry, ego psychology, and epistemology. Faith Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) presents a construct of relational, intersubjective balance that, while holding to the same three founding categories of concern as FDT, retains the strengths of Fowler's larger original intention while correcting the deficiencies inherent in FDT's formulation. Spiritual

leaders can use Faith Constitutive Pastoral Care as a practical guide in shepherding careseekers towards faithful maturity and growth.

Acknowledgements

This work would not have been possible without the permission, belief, and encouragement of three important people:

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SECTION 1

PROLOGUE

Questing: few words in the growth-related lexicon are infused with the dynamism and impetus that is conveyed in this simple term. Questing conjures images of movement, of valiance, of fortitude, of curiosity and inquisitiveness, and of tireless passion. It evokes the thrill of adventure as well as the security of purpose, the recompense of discovery as well as the duty of actualization. Questing implies a synergistic melding of the power of agency with the challenge of humility, the draw of internal fullness with the knowledge of personal limitation. It is a term that is uniquely suited to convey the movement, development, and maturation that acts as the source and engine of faith development. Thus, it is a term that is of great importance to the discussion that is laid out in the following pages.

The main topic of these pages is an elucidation of the questing that underpins the process of faith development – an investigating of the process and progress of faithful growth over the course of a lifecycle. Hence, the pages that follow work to *be* what in fact they labour to *do*: they sincerely quest in themselves to understand and explicate the very process of questing that touches the lives of post-modern humanity. In order to achieve this ambitious goal, the pages that follow contain a robust and interwoven inter-disciplinary discourse, intended to effect a more wholistic apprehension of the concepts of human spiritual progression. Within this inter-disciplinary matrix, however, conscious and concerted efforts have been made to avoid the dangers of blanket reductionism that often come with scientific and empirical biases, while simultaneously side-stepping the often wide-eyed and naïve optimism that accompanies some works of ecumenism. The pluralistic world of the twenty-first century opens the door to unprecedented epistemological opportunities, while simultaneously bringing forth its own unique blend of syncretic perils and pitfalls. Hence, this work attempts to walk the razor's edge: presenting material gleaned from the universal tenets of epistemology, psychology, and philosophy, and juxtaposing it with the honoured traditions and well-heeled tenets that undergird pastoral practice and ministry. The challenge of the following pages is a palpable call for refined discrimination and inter-disciplinary balance - creative venture on the one hand, and an accession to

perceived reality, on the other. All disciplines deal with reality; all helping professions devise and

evolve their own definitions of the nature of real problems. As Paul Pruyser points out, however,

each of these disciplines simply approaches the puzzle of human growth from its own unique

perspective: each one partial, limited and specific.[1] Consequently, the following pages will work to

synergize the artful perspectives of the fields of ministry, psychology, philosophy, and epistemology

into a balanced tapestry that seeks to bring a small and humble pocket of order into what William

James called "one big blooming, buzzing confusion."[2] It is the contention of these pages that there is

no better exemplar of this buzzing confusion than the very involved and intricate concept of faith

development.

A topic that has been the subject of particular interest and concentrated debate for over 60

years, faith development and its mechanics came to the fore with the work of James Fowler, in the

early 1980s.[3] In his work, Fowler set forth an ambitious definition of faith and supported this

definition by describing what he believed were universal stages of faith maturation. These stages

were the result of the conflation and interrelation of the seminal works of Jean Piaget, Erik Erickson,

and Lawrence Kohlberg. The result was the elucidation and introduction of Faith Development

Theory (FDT). Since the time of Fowler's original proposal, a multi-disciplinary and boisterous

debate has toiled to clarify and distil the tenets of universal faith development – a debate that

continues to this day with no accepted resolution. The work to be presented in the following pages

finds itself at the centre of this debate and seeks to make its albeit humble contribution to an already

robust discourse. As such, the central purpose of the chapters to follow is to present an inter-

disciplinary conception of faith development that honours the strengths introduced by Fowler's

original construct, while simultaneously suggesting both paradigm and process correctives that seek

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[1] Pruyser, *Minister as Diagnostician*, 16.
[2] James, *Psychology*, 29.
[3] Fowler, *Stages of Faith Development*.

to update Faith Development Theory (FDT), thereby garnering it greater incisiveness and relevance in the current post-modern epistemological culture.

To that end, the following chapters present two main arguments:

1. Fowler's Faith Development Theory (FDT) is in need of revision. Although the three founding principles on which FDT is based (those of the importance of experience, the centrality of symbolic representation, and the grounding concept of knowing/construal) are considered cogent, they do not find sufficient operational expression within the exposition of faith stages. The elucidation of a *depth model* of faith development that corrects this gap in FDT is required, in order to provide the field of pastoral care a more coherent framework through which to pursue the growth of faith with their careseekers. It is for this reason that we state that FDT is in need of revision.

2. The required correctives to FDT are addressed and constructively resolved in the concept of Faith Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) – a depth model of faith development that is focused on questing and soul care while remaining integrous to current inter-disciplinary thought in ministry, ego psychology, and epistemology. Faith Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) presents a construct of relational, intersubjective balance that, while holding to the same three founding categories of concern as FDT, retains the strengths of Fowler's larger original intention while correcting the deficiencies inherent in FDT's formulation. Spiritual leaders can use Faith Constitutive Pastoral Care as a practical guide in shepherding careseekers towards faithful maturity and growth.

Although this work, as an exponent of Christian pastoral care, unwaveringly asserts the reality of a living and historically involved God, the language throughout this volume will mirror the elucidative and multimodal tone of Fowler's original conceptions. In this way, it is expected that the conclusions held in these pages will serve as an appropriate counterpoint to Faith Development Theory (FDT), as well as a congruent corrective in the field of pastoral care.

Donald Joy, in his essay *Life as a Pilgrimage*, states that one of humanity's greatest gifts is its ability to transcend itself by being able to reflect on its own experience, existence, and meaning.[4] Should Joy's assertion be accepted, this work, in its concerted elucidation of the structures of meaning, its investigations of the complexities of experience, and its probing of personal existence, represents an act of self-transcendence: an innocent reflection, an honest evaluation, and a proposed conclusion on the processes and progressions of faith development, intended to further assist spiritual leaders in their work of guiding themselves and their careseekers toward an increased connection, a living relation – in effect, a deeper faith. Thus, the content in the upcoming paragraphs represents a call, made in all humility, to pastoral ministers and spiritual leaders, philosophers and humanistic psychologists, and spiritually sensitive counselors and educators to engage in a conversation that further elucidates the actual nature of human faith development. It is, therefore, a quintessential call to a collective dialogue, a participative investigation, and a soulful questing.

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[4] Joy, *Moral Development Foundations*, 17.

SECTION 2

PRELIMINARIES

Chapter 1

Where Have We Been?

A common Eastern adage states that 'what is' stems from 'what was'; and 'what will be' stems from' what is'. In agreement with this pithy saying, it is not believed that it would be wise to embark on a critique and correction of FDT without first outlining the nature of the field within which FDT finds itself and out of which it was developed. It is the purpose of this chapter to provide a background for the original development of FDT, an explication of FDT itself, and a brief discussion on its current uses. This information will serve as the backdrop against which the subsequent sections of this work will be framed.

Part 1

A Snapshot of the Developmental Field

Over the course of the last hundred years, a great deal of scholarly and clinical energy has been poured into the elucidation of basic human developmental stages, in order to better understand the processes by which we develop ever-more complex abilities and insights. The fascination with developmental structures and psychological progressions began most earnestly in the early twentieth century – with its characteristic culture of Scientism as well as its decidedly empirical epistemology. Psychological researchers in this early era, deeply influenced by the contributions of Freud, were steeped in a discussion of reality as a graspable mixture of biological drives and influences. Thinkers of the day presented hypotheses of human functioning as though they could seclude themselves in an ivory observation tower and describe phenomena as they actually occurred in reality. The Hegelian notion that the very grasping of a concept by the human mind, in and of itself, alters the perception of the grasped object from its objective or non-observed reality, was not admitted into the scope of the investigative method until decades later. In other words, although the concept of personal

apprehension and meaning construction was fertile ground for discussion in the philosophical field since the rise of the British Empiricists, its emergence as a *bona fide* discourse of investigation in the field of psychology was not clearly evident until the advent of one very important figure – Swiss epistemologist Jean Piaget.[5]

Piaget's approach to reality provided a refreshing counterpoint to the atomism and associationism rampant in his day. According to him, a simple parallel was operative in scientific investigations: since physical and biological realms were best understood through the use of regulatory structures (a decidedly post-Enlightenment bias), psychological realms of functioning would equally be well-understood through the knowledge of their underlying *cognitive* structures. Thus, a confluence of the structures of cognition with the structures of the physical world would, according to Piaget, result in an apprehension of ever-more abstract concepts (such as number, language, reversibility, causality, and objectification), ending in the ultimate ability to meta-think.[6] His four-stage model of development, which addressed the time-span from birth to late teenage, was the first to provide a regular, empirically verified (albeit with a small sample size), and predictable sequence of developmental complexification that was reliable enough to serve as the basis for a system of psychological analysis. His fourth and final stage, that of Formal Operations (wherein the concept of meta-thought is introduced), opened the door to the possibility of a meta-thought – a veritable objectification of the apprehending self, resulting in the ability to perceive that one is perceiving. In this way, Piaget was not simply positing a theory of child development. Rather, he was principally positing a universal theory of personal epistemological growth. The driving mechanism of this evolution was the developing psyche's ability to differentiate from its environment (thereby developing faculties of agency and possibility), while simultaneously integrating newly found objects

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[5] See Boden, *Piaget* and Piaget, *The Epigenetic Stages of Cognitive Development.*
[6] Heywood, "Piaget and Faith Development," 156.

(thereby further entrenching the psyche in relations to the environment).[7] As such, Piaget is often referred to as an interactionist who believed in the construction of knowledge, through the indissociable interaction between sensory experience and cognitive process.[8] As a result of this broad and penetrating insight, his studies drew his conclusions beyond the realm of the cognitive and brought about extrapolations in the fields of perception, morality, and socialization. So seminal was Piaget's contribution that scholars such as Gabriel Moran, one of America's leading voices in religious education, conclude that Piaget did not simply provide a development in epistemological apprehension. Rather, Moran believes that Piaget was responsible for a fundamental shift in the *philosophy* of psychology – a shift that began to pave the way toward the relativism that eventually found expression in post-modern concepts of human thought.[9] This roaming and influential system, however, being restricted to the area of biological and cognitive elements, did not address the development of the more subtle and learned aspects of the human condition. Thus, the door was left open for other thinkers and clinicians to enhance this unique line of inquiry. One of these thinkers was German Freudian psychotherapist Erik Erickson.

In an ironic progression considering his Freudian roots, over his lifetime, Erickson slowly developed his beliefs and infused his writings with elements that were overtly spiritual in nature. Erickson's great contribution to the discussion of stages of growth was his elucidation of eight stages of psychosocial development – stages that, unlike Piaget's seminal work, did not stop at late teenage (or at cognition), but rather spanned the entire life cycle of a human being.[10] These psychosocial stages treated the development of such grounding and crucial elements of the human condition as trust, will, power, love, guilt, competence, autonomy, generativity, and wisdom. Erickson's basic claim was that, in the presence of mindful balance in the nurturing environment, a person could

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[7] Piaget, *Biology and Knowledge*, 356.

[8] Kamii, "Applications to Piaget's Theory," 234.

[9] Gabriel Moran, *Religious Education Development*, 48.

[10] See Erickson, *Childhood and Society*.

develop the essential ability to express and experience such states and motivations, and can use these states as the ground from which to develop ever-more complex and relational aspects of the social self. Whereas a healthy self for Piaget was one who could engage in meta-thought (the highest level of his developmental scheme), a healthy self for Erickson was one that, having worked its way with relative success through the negotiations of the crises of epigenetic schedules, could express and experience such important personal affects as trust, will, power, competence, and intimacy within a social sphere, while simultaneously working toward the attainment of generativity and wisdom. Erickson's vision of maturity invoked the image of an adult who has formed strong foundations of trust as expressed in a grounded philosophical confidence that life has meaning; who has a sense of personal boundaries and interdependence as well as an ability to stand alone on matters of principle and import; who has a capacity for initiative and purpose in the development of a 'life project'; who has evolved a personal conscience beyond the heteronomous patterns of childhood; who has developed a degree of competence that allows him/her to take on appropriate social roles and to be a productive and constructive contributor to society; who can assimilate the knowledge gleaned from relationship into an integrated whole, and reflect that knowledge back into the environment through generative activities of leading, mentoring, or guiding; and who has a deep and consistent ability to take part in intimate relations, along with the personal willingness to risk the developed self in the closeness one fosters with others.[11] Therefore, as one moves along Erickson's paths to maturity, one develops an increased capacity for creativity, openness, productivity, and wisdom. Attempts to stop or detour along the development road in order to reclaim, rectify, or correct a loss or deprivation from earlier stages of life is akin to a tragic stagnation, and a developmental trap that seduces affect while stifling growth. Therefore, a mature person, according to Erickson, would be someone who has reached a level of discernment and integration in the psychosocial sphere, so as to be able to grasp

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[11] For more, see Fowler, *Adult*, chapter 1.

and contribute constructively to interdependent human relation, while extending the ramifications of this relation to the next generation.

Erickson's stages, then, took Piaget's work into account and went several steps further, increasing its breadth of influence as well as its usefulness in a therapeutic, social and affective developmental context. Also, Erickson's stages worked to integrate the internal and external dimensions of the human condition, resulting in a novel attempt at a wholistic conception of human growth, in a climate otherwise dominated by reductionism. Yet, although Erickson's work was a touchstone of psychosocial health research, it left certain areas unattended (or, in some cases, unaddressed). One of these areas was that of moral development.

Although Erickson and Piaget dominated the fields of development for years, Lawrence Kohlberg entered the fray and proposed a framework of stage-like growth that was concerned with the development of moral outlook and practice.[12] Using Piaget as a basis of cognitive ability, Kohlberg drew some substantial conclusions about the nature of moral development. According to him, a few seminal concepts colour the epistemological landscape: pure cognitive constructions could result in nothing other than cognitive growth, thereby introducing the need for a more comprehensive systematization of holistic human development; human beings know their environment well and experience that environment only through constructions of knowledge derived from experience; in agreement with Piagetian biases, Kolhberg believed that the process of re-equilibration (which comes after a disequilibrating crisis) is the primary driver for movement through stages of maturity. From this foundation, Kohlberg extended the model to attend to moral development – in effect, he felt that moral development was another facet of growth which mirrored and was based on cognitive development.[13] Thus, Kohlberg believed that both cognitive and moral development follow sequential and universal (cross-cultural) processes, where each stage in the

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[12] For more, see Kohlberg, *Moral Stages* and *The Adolescent as a Philosopher.*
[13] Joy, *Moral Development*, 21.

progression (there are seven stages in all) represented a particular (yet regular) way of interpreting

reality. The ultimate test of any given stage of moral reasoning is its ability to process and adequately

attend to the greatest number of presenting problems, resolving them in harmony with the

overarching principles that hold sway in that stage. As such, development is based on the sequence of

presenting problems and thereby cannot be artificially hurried or accelerated.

Thus, whereas Piaget was concerned with intellect, and Erickson was concerned with

balanced social interplay, Kohlberg, a self named rationalist and humanist, put his finger on the field

of ethics and the determination of a universal and sequentially-progressing sense of right and wrong,

as that determination is guided by both, the underlying cognition of each person, and the confluence

of cognition with the presenting problems of experience.[14] Conducting comprehensive and intensive

research through interview-style interactions, Kohlberg concluded that the trajectory of moral

development involved a reasoning about rules – a veritable movement from a more heteronymous

stance to conduct, toward a more autonomous one, culminating in a life outlook that is coloured with

transcendental apprehensions. Thus, Kohlberg combined the insights from Piaget and Erickson and

proposed a framework of development that transcended the psychosocial and addressed the moral,

the motivational, and the deeply personal. But, although in itself a further refinement of the

developmental stage movement, the work was not considered complete enough by many.

Throughout the decades of this thought development, pastoral care and counseling followed

its own trajectory and engaged in the psychological and research techniques that were being

innovated and introduced throughout each era of the twentieth century. It had remained clear of the

structuralist debate until Kohlberg sparked the movement's imagination. Responding to the

Kohlberg's proposal of moral growth, pastoral care and counseling practitioners engaged in the

developmental conversation. One of the primary proponents of this work was James Fowler.

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[14] Kohlberg, *Adolescent as Philosopher, 9.*

Fowler's main concern was in furthering the work of Piaget, Erickson, and Kohlberg, by elucidating a framework of development explicitly related to the growth of faith.[15] Fowler, intensely concerned with bringing a practical and pastoral focus to the conversation, proposed a similar seven-stage construction of growth that, he believed, dealt with elements of meaning, narrative, and morality[16] As a result of his pastoral bias, Fowler's conception was based on three formative foundations as well as four assumptions on the functioning of these foundations.

Fowler's three formative foundations are defined as the key areas of focus on which Fowler conferred particular and specific elucidative emphasis. It is these three main categories that laid the directional foundation on which the pastoral philosophy of FDT was built. The first of these foundations is Fowler's insistence on the importance and inevitability of personal experience. Deeply swayed by the empiricist tradition, this foundation of FDT asserts that we cannot know anything outside of the presentations of our experiences; it is out of the raw materials of experience and humanity's relation to it, that human beings perceive and interpret the meaning of life's events. Thus, our ability to assimilate and relate to our experiential encounters is crucial to any developmental framework.[17] This apprehension of experience, however, both comes about through and leads to (in a dialogical relation) epistemological abilities that can be placed into two additional formational categories: 1) the faculty of symbolic representation (including relating to internal images, semiological apprehension and internal sensitivity), a harkening to the internal processes of human mythic representation, as well as to one's assimilation of that process in the development of one's faithful journey; and, 2) the faculty of knowing (including one's engagement in a logic that works to make the world cohere) – a tenet harkening to the centrality of understanding, meaning-making, and interpretive construal through which humankind comes to know itself, its world and its

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[15] Fowler's full model can be found in Fowler, *Stages of Faith* and *Faith Development and Pastoral Care.*
[16] Fowler, "Proposals for Faith Development Theory," 482.
[17] Fowler, "Faith, Liberation, and Human Development, " 15.

God.[18] By invoking these three seminal faculties (all natural outflows of the works of Piaget, Kohlberg, and Erickson), Fowler closely followed the lead of his predecessors and conflated their presented tenets in a model of engagement that orients a person to his/her conception of the ultimate. It is in this orientation to the ultimate that Fowler continues to name his basic assumptions on the functioning of these foundations.

Fowler set out four basic assumptions. First, he believed that humanity is "genetically potentiated for partnership with God" – by which he meant that human beings are "pre-structured to generate the capacities necessary for us as a species to fulfill our vocation as reflective-responsive members of creation."[19] Second, he believed that, although we are potentiated for certain transcendent activity, a potentiality is not the same as a realization. Hence, deep rooted potentialities that "are part of our destiny and freedom" can be thwarted and distorted toward a distanced relationship with God, rather than our destined rapprochement with him.[20] Consequently, openness to our experience and to God's guidance is crucial. Third, the fundamental context for true development of the self cannot be an entirely intrapersonal affair – that is, there is no apprehension or growth outside of relationship, social meaning, institution, and myth. Thus, any pastoral ministry would have to take account of the relational aspects of being at the expense of individual biases. And fourth, Fowler believed firmly that the process of maturation, awareness, and reflection that results in closeness to God can only come about through a "gradual and difficult sequence of developmental constructions."[21] Hence, a movement of differentiation and integration, akin to that outlined by Piaget, Erickson, and Kohlberg is the driving process through which we move through the various (and universal) stages of his model of faith apprehension.

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[18] Romney et al., "Stages of Faith," 42.
[19] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 54.
[20] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 54.
[21] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 54.

As a result of his bases in the scientifically respected disciplines of his predecessors, Fowler presented his framework with a universalist claim. His model (FDT) moves through stages of heteronomy, simple narrative, and fantastical thinking through to the higher stages of autonomy, questioned beliefs, and convicted practice. The highest level of faith development presented by Fowler's model was that of persons, holding 'universalized principles' as expressions of inclusion and morality, with fully understood and accepted beliefs, mustering the courage to live whole-heartedly and completely by the tenets of what they believe.[22] In this conception, Fowler's attempts to move beyond the psychosocial and the moral, and point toward the transcendent, incarnated in activity and conviction. It is important, however, for the remainder of our discussion in these pages to have a good sense of what Fowler proposed. Such knowledge will ground the reader's understanding and serve as a crucial counterpoint to the arguments that follow. As such, the next section is a brief outline of Fowler's definition of faith, as well as a description of his postulated stages of faith development.

Part 2

Fowler's Definition of Faith

Fowler was very influenced by the work of Wilfred Cantwell Smith, an insightful religious writer and the founder of Harvard's Centre for the Study of World Religions. It was Smith's influential, active, and universalist formulation that led Fowler to claim that faith is not be understood as a discrete set of revealed truths that some individuals or communities possess (and therefore others lack). Such a definition would render faith as a static entity, a thing outside, an other – in effect, a noun. Rather, Fowler passionately believed that faith should be defined as a verb – a distinctly human process of "reposing trust, aligning a sense of self, formulating a map of existence

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[22] Fowler, *Stages of Faith,* 198.

to guide and direct one's life."[23] Therefore, it is not faith, but rather *faithing* that is a central notion in

Fowler's scheme. Fowler bases himself on the definition of Smith, who stated that faith is

> a quality of the person not of the system. It is an orientation of the
> personality, to oneself, to one's neighbor, to the universe; a total
> response; a way of seeing whatever one sees and of handling whatever
> one handles; a capacity to live at more than a mundane level; to see, to
> feel, to act in terms of a transcendent dimension.[24]

Thus, according to this definition, faith is a kind of knowing – a form of construal. In the

words of Fowler, "faith is a construing of the conditions of existence. It is a special kind of

construing, however for it attempts to make sense of our mundane everyday experience in the light of

some accounting of the ultimate conditions of our existence" (a concept reflective of the 'knowing'

foundation of FDT).[25] This construal comes to be "systematically integrated" into a single body of

knowledge, and thereby comes to produce "certain kinds of behaviour".[26] But, as is obvious, this

knowing and behaviour must take place in the presence of and in response to others (since no one is

so deeply isolated as to not have contact with the elements and dimensions of the external world).

Thus, Fowler states that the presence of our relations to others is mediate of our interactions with

existence.[27] Essentially, this notion of relational dependence is the more adult-oriented version of

Winnicott's holding environment, a transpersonal space that is determinative of the ability to thrive

in pre-cognitive periods.[28] In effect, Fowler is building his model on the premise that the

development of transcendent imagery within human beings is deeply reliant on the nature of the

experience to which we are subjected with our primary caretakers (a notion that is deeply influenced

by Erickson's thoughts on trust development in infancy and its relation to religious and spiritual

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[23] McDargh, "Faith Development Theory," 188.
[24] Smith, *Faith and Belief,* 135; see also Smith in Fowler, *Stages of Faith,* 11.
[25] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care,* 56.
[26] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care,* 57.
[27] Fowler, "Perspectives on the Family," 328.
[28] Winnicott, *Maturational Processes.*

apprehension).[29] Hence, from its very inception, *faithing* involves participation in "tacit covenantal fiduciary relationships", in which our responses to and interpretations of experience and the ultimate conditions of our ontologies are formed in the "the company of co-interpreters and co-respondents, in whom we trust and to whom we are loyal."[30] As such, "faith is an irreducible relational phenomenon," thereby transcending the subjective and entering the shared and dialogical.[31] In other words, according to Fowler, the interpretive images by which we make sense of the conditions of our existence, and which have decisive impacts on forming our notions of the nature of life, inevitably implicate our companions. Hence, our image of the ultimate environment, which effectively is the final arbiter of value and power, is derived from the "centre of value and power" to which persons of faith are attracted and committed.[32] Thus, *faithing* "is a matter of composing an image of the ultimate environment, through the commitment of the self to the centre of value and power giving it coherence".[33] And these interpretations concretize in personal commitments which eventually form the bases of vocational activity, for the re-ordering of our lives, and for the re-directing of our energies.

Therefore, we can say that faith, according to Fowler, is a disposition of the total self, in which trust and loyalty are invested in the centre of value and power which orders and gives coherence to the force field of life, which supports and sustains our mundane commitments, giving purpose and hope to our lives.[34] Therefore, "we are creatures who live by faith".[35] Consequently, faith is both conscious and non-conscious and is a *universal* feature of human ontology.

Thus, in a Tillichean move, by unhinging it from an uniquely cultural bindings and making it universal, Fowler untangles faith from its moorings in religious belief, sets it apart as a separate

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[29] For more on internal representation and object relations, Chapter 9.
[30] Fowler, "Perspectives on the Family," 329; see also Rizzuto, *Birth of the Living God.*
[31] Fowler, *Life Maps*, 134.
[32] Fowler, "Perspectives on the Family, " 329.
[33] Fowler, "Perspectives on the Family, " 329.
[34] Fowler, "Perspectives on the Family," 330.
[35] Fowler, *Adult,* 50.

entity, and thereby lays the groundwork for his theory of faith development as being one of concern to every human being. In the words of Fowler, "the activity of being and becoming in faith takes the form of a struggle for integrity and direction other than through cultic or institutional religion."[36] As such, there are secular forms and objects of faith. There are secular communities of faith. Each person, group and sub-culture struggles to form and maintain a shelter of shared value and lifestyle, which will provide sufficient protection against meaninglessness and the terror of cosmic aloneness. Therefore, *faithing*, according to Fowler, is a form of pilgrimage – a constant evolution of interpretation, challenging humanity to achieve ever-greater levels of inclusiveness and solidarity. This pilgrimage ultimately leads to our destiny of genuine identification with our centre of value and power. Consequently, faith development theory is the story by which incarnations of faith (or models of personal interpretations of life) come to be transformed into other models, which in themselves lead us to greater understanding of experience, care for others, inclusiveness and openness. This model, however, was not developed in a philosophical mode; rather, Fowler and his team, imitating the scientific method of Piaget and Kohlberg, interviewed 359 subjects in order to ascertain the incarnation of each of their permutations of faith. As they toiled to interpret the mass of information they collected, they came to an interpretation and extrapolation of the data that categorized the interview material into seven main categories. It was these categories that they later concretized into the stages of faith development.

Part 3

The Stages of Fowler's Faith Development Theory

Donald Joy, in discussing development from a Judeo-Christian perspective, states that there is a clear Christian summons to avoid developmental arrest and to live in constant renewal and

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[36] Fowler, *Adult*, 51.

transformation.[37] Faith Development Theory (FDT) takes this injunction very seriously, as it charts

its postulated course of human growth through seven stages of development. According to FDT, a

human being experiences changes and shifts in his/her faith structure several times over the course of

life. In addition, since faith itself is a universal aspect of human ontology, the movement of faith (its

very development) is also postulated to be normative and universal. Thus, FDT, basing itself yet

again on the seminal work of Piaget, Erickson, and Kohlberg, stipulates several assertions regarding

the normative growth process that are seminal to understanding the course for developing faith: first,

harkening to the work of Piaget, growth is considered to be unidirectional, leading unilaterally to

greater levels of apprehension and complexity; second, in line with all proponents of structuralism,

faith development progresses through a specified and unwavering sequence of hierarchical

permutations; third, although growth is contingent upon a certain degree of biological ripening,

biology alone does nothing more than allow for the potential of certain abilities – it does not

guarantee the development of greater maturity; fourth, for any number of psycho-socio-religious

reasons, a person may arrest development at any given time, choosing stagnation over continued

movement; fifth, growth is the distinctive process of dealing with the stress that arises from our

encounter with mundane experience, and not simply through the cognitive apprehension of tenets,

doctrines, or principles; sixth, movement from one level to the next seems to involve a qualitative

disjunction with one's past epistemology; and seventh, the turbulence that introduces level changes

in consciousness tends to be riddled with doubt and questioning, the impetus from which is meant to

move people to the next stage of construction. Irving Sigel and his colleagues call the disequilibrium

of doubt 'a discrepancy'.[38] According to them, a discrepancy is a dynamic state of disequilibrium,

which produces tension that can only be resolved through the creation of a new state of being or

epistemological equilibrium (or in Fowler's scheme, a stage). Thus, where no discrepancy exists, the

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[37] Joy, *Moral Development, 51;* see also 2 Cor. 3:5-8;, 12-18.
[38] Sigel, "Social Experience," 208; see also, C.S. Pierce's notion of the 'Irritation of Doubt' in Chapter 9.

need for internal or external change is not perceived and, as a consequence, the status quo (dynamic

balance) is retained. Discrepancy, therefore, is the impetus for the promotion of transformation – for

the movement through the stages of FDT.[39]

According to Fowler, a stage is a formally describable way of "composing an ultimate

environment, of committing the self to centers of value and power, of symbolizing and expressing

those commitments, and of relating them to the valued perspectives of others."[40] As such, each stage

of faith development construes the world in a particular way, while by very definition *not* construing

the world in a different way. We select in and we select out. We can only construe what we know, in

the form in which we can construe it, at this moment in time, at this point in our developmental

trajectory. Therefore, since no construal is complete or perfect, there is always an element of

movement, a 'not-yet', that is inherent in every stage. The 'not yet' unseen is a form of relational and

spiritual blindness; the 'not yet' perceived is the impetus for movement to the next developmental

stage – to the next equilibrium, through Fowler's four primary founding principles of the faculties of

experience, representation, knowing, and cultural interaction. But what exactly are these seven levels

of growth – these stages – that make up Fowler's FDT proper? It is the purpose of the next few

paragraphs to outline this very topic.[41]

Stage 0

Fowler begins his story of faith development in the first encounters of life – in the nursery,

the seat of sensorimotor cognition. In beginning his scheme, Fowler's supports Erickson's

conceptions of co-created infantile trust development and Anamaria Rizzuto's ideal of pre-cognitive

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[39] Later, we will discuss the concept of doubt, and its seminal role in abductive reasoning. Suffice it for now to point out the basic and creative role discrepancy and doubt play in creating the energy to push through a stage transformation.

[40] Fowler, "Perspectives on the Family, " 336.

[41] In this summary of the stages of growth, Fowler's own presentation will be liberally drawn upon in *Stages of Faith,* 117-214.

imprinting of the divine image, by stating that the primary care-giving relationship provides the

developing infant's countenance with the fundamental framework for its conception of a divine pre-

image.[42] Specifically, Fowler believes that the elegance and extent of divine pre-imagery is based in

the Ericksonian concept of parent-infant mutuality (a concept based in the development of

trustworthy relationship). Hence, as the nascent subject grows over the first year of life, it develops

an understanding of object permanence. At this point in development, Erickson's concept of

mutuality provides the rudimentary awareness of a needful subject that is separate from and

dependent upon an immensely powerful other. This other (the parental other) was present at the

subject's first consciousness, and, should it have behaved in a trustworthy way, encouraged the first

steps out of the sensorimotor reasoning with recognizing eyes and re-confirming smiles (a concept

reminiscent of Donald Winnicott's work on transitional space). In agreement with Rizzuto, Fowler

believes that such interactions of mutuality create the pre-images of the divine – representations

formed before the appearance of language, concept, and symbol. They are *pre*-images because they

create the spiritual containers into which more developed images will one day be placed. In addition,

these pre-images define the very intensity and extent of the power these eventual images will hold.

Consequently, Fowler calls these pre-images the foundations of an undifferentiated faith

(undifferentiated due to its lack of specific content).[43] Because infants are at the mercy of their

caretakers, within undifferentiated faith are contained the very seeds of courage, hope and love as

well as the budding apprehensions of abandonment, inconsistency, and deprivation.[44] Thus, an

economy of spiritual oppositions develops in this stage and forms the basis for the course of future

faith development, as the individual moves through progressive stages of growth.

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[42] Fowler, *Stages of Faith* , 121; Erickson, *Childhood and Society*; Rizzuto, *Birth of the Living God.*
[43] Fowler, *Stages of Faith* ,122; Rizzuto, *Birth of the Living God.*
[44] Fowler, *Stages of Faith* , 120.

Stage 1

Over the course of maturation, an infant with sensorimotor cognition and pre-image

representation develops the capacity for Pre-Operational thought (a Piagetian concept), a state of

mind characterized by fluid and often magical thinking, completely heteronomous approaches to

authority and experience, and virtually no capacity for grasping reversibility (either concrete, or

relational). Consequently, an important question arises: how does such a child, with this budding

awareness, exhibit and experience personal faith? In answering this question, Fowler states that the

episodic and magical associations which flow fluidly into one another within the Stage 1 child's

psyche are mediated by the child's imaginative process. [45] Therefore, children at this stage take

fragments of stories and images provided by their caretaking surround and combine them to form

their own significant associations dealing with God and the transcendent. According to Fowler's

research, even children from non- or anti-religious cultural surroundings show similar tendencies,

although their repertoire of stories and images may be significantly limited. [46] In fact, Rizzuto's

research into the development of divine images at the age associated with Stage 1 cognition (around

2 or 3 years of age) demonstrates that despite the widespread secularization of common culture and

religious fragmentation, religious symbols and language are so widespread in society that no child

reaches school age without having constructed – with or without religious instruction – an image of

God and the ultimate environment. [47] But, although conceptions and images are imaginatively

internalized in the Pre-Operational, willful Stage 1 mind, they are not ordered in a connected or

coherent manner, thereby opening the door to fantastical beliefs and unbridled wonder.

As a consequence of this, Stage 1 children are not yet able to faithfully retell narratives that

could provide a sort of order and connectedness to their various experiences or image clusters.

Furthermore, coupling this internalization of narrative with the Stage 1 deference to authority results

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[45] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 124.
[46] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 124.
[47] Rizzuto, *Birth of the Living God.*

in the toddler's proclivity at accepting and fully incarnating (often literally through ritualized play)

the stories and directives of the parental influence. In addition, although conceptual abstractions are

not entirely absent, only concrete images and symbols really address the child's epistemology.[48] It is

this heteronomous prescription and basis in concreteness, in conjunction with the 'magical thinking'

of Pre-Operational cognition that lead the Stage 1 child to extrapolate his or her daydreams and fairy-

tales into a form of representational reality.[49] Bruno Bettleheim stipulates that Stage 1 children draw

on stories, fairy-tales, and archetypal images to incarnate and express experiences such as emotions

and drives.[50] Consequently, the full realism of narrative (as opposed to the overly sunny narratives of

some children's tales) provides a direct and effective way for children to externalize their inner

experiences. In addition, they can use these narratives to help them define ordering images and

stories by which they can begin to temper their developing wills. As such, children will often grasp

onto particular fantasies of narratives and characters as they proceed through a practice of a

'ritualized play' in which they can conquer fears, define willfulness, reduce shame, feel autonomous,

and foster personal worth and esteem, all within the safe confines of a prescribed and other-

controlled relationship.[51] Therefore, the power of imagination arises in Stage 1 as a strong intuitive

force by which a child composes an ultimate environment and decides how best to orient himself or

herself to it.

Stage 2

As Stage 1 evolves into Stage 2, Pre-Operational cognition develops into Concrete

Operational thought – a Piagetian mode of apprehension that is focused on the concrete and

externally real. Children at this stage become consumed with gaining an understanding of the

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[48] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 126.
[49] Bettleheim, *Fairy Tales*, 58.
[50] Bettleheim, *Fairy Tales*, 63.
[51] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 127.

mechanics of how things function, and developing within themselves a sense of direction and

purpose (an Ericksonian concept). In addition, the confluence of Concrete Operations and purpose

with the realization that one has more power over the course of events than first understood in Stage

1 leads to a form of instrumentalism in relationship (where a child will do whatever he/she can to

best benefit out of a given situation or circumstance). Kohlberg names this instrumental pattern of

Stage 2 moral development the 'Morality of the Marketplace'.[52] When such cognitive and moral

states are applied to faith apprehension, we observe some important novelties. According to Fowler,

children at Stage 2 of growth generally take the stories, images, and symbols, which have been

internalized, in their most concrete incarnations - one-dimensional, and uni-definitional in meaning

and application.[53] Thus, Concrete-Operational cognition curves and re-orders the imaginative

apprehensions of former stages, thereby producing a linear narrative construction replete with

coherence and concrete meaning.

While the Stage 1 child fuses fantasy, fact, and feeling, the Stage 2 child works hard to sort

out the real from the 'make-believe'. It is not uncommon for a child at this stage to ask for proof of

the facts and claims represented in individual narratives. This does not indicate, however, that Stage

2 children cease to be imaginative or fanciful. Rather, it means that the products of the imaginations

of these people are confined more to the world of play, and in that contained sphere, will be

submitted to more logical forms of scrutiny before being admitted as a part of the child's

epistemology. Thus, the buzzing and confused egocentrism of Stage 1 is largely replaced by the

Concrete-Operational ability to experience a more predictable and patterned, if more prosaic, world

in Stage 2.[54]

As a result of the combination of this prosaic approach to experience and of the Concrete-

Operational stage of cognition, the evolving person will develop the capacity to narratize his or her

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[52] Kohlberg, *Moral Stages*, 61.
[53] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 141.
[54] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 143.

own experiences. Consequently, the Stage 2 child's faith capacity brings forth the ability to relate one's personal narrative to the meaning of moral and traditional stories. Thus, the convergence of the cognitive development with the ability to assume a more social perspective, combined with an improved grasp of cause-and-effect relationships means that the elements are finally in place for a self-generated re-telling of stories, and an appropriation of those stories to the personal experiences of the evolving spirituality. As such, through the social process of friendly interaction, Stage 2 children can assimilate each other's stories, narratize their own, and juxtapose the narratives in order to achieve greater levels of meaning, inclusion, and understanding. This method of social interaction, thus, makes Stage 2 children particularly sensitive to stories that ring true and set forth a strong example of behaviour, self-sufficiency, and inclusion. Therefore, stories of the origins of familial units or communal groups, stories of lives lived and of great adventure ascend to a place of primacy within the Stage 2 epistemology because they supply the evolving consciousness with assimilatable experiences of inclusion, history, origin, strength, competence, purpose, and understanding. Stage 2 cognition, however, carries with it a limitation. Although the narratives are assimilated and utilized in the growth process, the Stage 2 psyche is nonetheless embedded in the narrative. In other words, the ability to step outside the flow of narratives and create an overarching analysis of their usefulness (meta-narration) is left to future stages of growth.

The Stage 2 child's abilities and proclivities, as a result of his or her inability to meta-narratize, tend to be unilaterally applied to the images and attributes of God.[55] Consequently, God, for this level of faith development, is often seen as an anthropomorphic representation, able to take the role of others, taking intention and struggle into account, able to find compassion within himself, not necessarily in agreement with the consciousness or choices of the child, and most importantly, engaged in a sort of marketplace authoritarian relationship with His followers. Consequently, the image of God is less like the ephemeral ubiquity of Stage 1, and more like the concrete parental

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[55] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 146.

figure, with distinct preferences and powerful abilities to recriminate and retaliate. Thus, conscience

is seen as a sort of moral police that is instilled in all people by God. Conscience is meant to foster

the development of a naturally constituted (since it is based in the concrete world), divinely inspired

(social space and social time with God) lawfulness. Consequently, for a Stage 2 child, God binds

Himself to the structures of moral and instrumental reciprocity built into the order of the natural

world.

Stage 3

According to Fowler's scheme, faith at all levels must provide a coherent orientation in the

midst of more complex and diverse involvements, while filtering information and synthesizing

values. Faith, then, must have a seminal hand in the basis for identity and personal outlook. This is of

particular import in Stage 3 (typically associated with teenage) where, as a result of the emergence of

Formal Operations, with its commensurate abilities of meta-thought, meta-narration, and dual

perspective taking (Piagetian concepts), a developing child transcends the world of the strictly

concrete and enters a realm consumed with social interaction and the maintenance of relationships. In

fact, at this stage, it is not that social interaction simply receives a new level of emphasis; rather, it is

that the maintenance of social relations is considered to be seminal to the integrity of psyche's

identity. Therefore, alignment with the social group and the integrity of individual relations are

drives that define Stage 3 reasoning (a concept that draws on the work of both Kohlberg and

Erickson). Such a development has strong ramifications for the child's constructions of faith.

Hence, the Stage 2 child, on the one hand, constructed the world of the divine in fairly

impersonal terms. Lawfulness and reciprocity were the principal characteristics of such a world. The

Stage 3 child, on the other hand, in his/her constructions of God and the ultimate environment,

introduces the mysterious elements of personality and relationship into the interplay with the

divine.[56] God becomes steeped in independent personhood – inexhaustible depth, personal knowing, compassionate acceptance, and an unseen dimension full of mystery and adventure. Much of the religious literature describing adolescent faith can be greatly illuminated by the realization that Stage 3 people hunger for a God who knows and confirms them personally, and who can serve as an eternal guarantor of their forming myths of meaning and identity (a concept akin to Erickson's notion of fidelity). Thus, this image of God is an image in which the various values and powers derived from interpersonal perspective taking (a Piagetian concept) are consolidated and unified. It is, therefore, a conformist stage (a Kohlbergian concept) even in its conception of the divine, since it strives to remain acutely attuned to the expectations and judgments of any significant other. Still heteronymous in its base functioning, however, Stage 3 faith holds deep-seated beliefs – although in the absence of an autonomous self, these beliefs remain mainly a tacit affair.

A tacit system is one which is part of one's knowing, but of which one has no account. The Stage 3 person has no account of these value systems because, for the most part, they are deeply ingrained and infused into the Stage 3 subjectivity. Thus, according to Fowler, a person at this stage of development is aware of having values and normative images. He or she can even articulate and defend them, feeling deeply invested in their truth. The Stage 3 mindset, however, has not reached the stage in which it can take these particular values and images, and subvert them as the objects of internal reflection.[57] Therefore, as a result of the heteronomous bias and tacit mode of conviction, many people at this stage of development refuse or avoid the presented opportunities to move to the next level of development (one in which autonomy and conscious belief is demanded) by reaffirming their convictions in their reliance on external sources of authority. How does this heteronomy relate to the Stage 3 incarnation of faith development? According to Fowler, the answer is found most

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[56] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 154.
[57] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 160.

clearly in the area of symbolic apprehension and manipulation (one of the three main foundations of Fowler's FDT).

For a Stage 3 persons, as a result of the deep need for relational fusion and their largely passive and tacit system of meaning-making, the symbols and ritual representations expressive of faith are organically tied to the full realities of their meaning systems. In other words, the symbols expressive of their deeper meanings and loyalties are inseparable from the image represented by the symbols themselves.[58] At later stages in development, symbols may be separated from the forms they represent. At Stage 3, however, this ability has not yet developed. Therefore, as a result of this fusion of symbol and meaning, the demythologizing of important symbols (the conceptual equivalent of the severing of a relationship) is interpreted as a fundamental threat to the meaning system and faith identity. It is not so much that these people are locked into a kind of symbolic fundamentalism. Rather, it is that one relates to the symbols of the sacred in ways which honour them as inseparably connected to the sacred. Thus, the Stage 3 preoccupation with acceptable behaviour and relational integrity is made manifest in this fusion of form and content. Symbols themselves are seen as sacred. Any strategy of demythologization, therefore, threatens the integration of the symbol with the symbolized and, thus, is perceived as an attack on the sacred itself.

The great hallmarks of this stage of faith then are twofold: first, Stage 3 faith is conformist in that it is interpreted by the relationally-identified psyche as the faith of the proverbial 'everybody' in the community; second, Stage 3 faith is conventional in that it remains non-analytical and comes to consciousness in a sort of unified and globalized whole.[59] For a more considered and deliberate acceptance of the tenets of faith, we have to turn to Stage 4.

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[58] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 168.
[59] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 170.

Stage 4

Erickson, in the elucidation of his psychosocial stages of development, identified the movement beyond the heteronomy and social fidelity of Stage 3 as the primary driver in the development of a sense of personal autonomy and self-possession. He believed that no sooner could an individual conceive of him/herself as a consolidated and separate whole, than one could, for the first time, enter into a truly intimate relationship with any other. This growth, however, is difficult as it is often hindered and frowned upon by the reigning social group that dominates the psyche of Stage 3. Stage progression at this juncture, then, is nothing less than a prying of the self away from the social surround that was once considered nurturing, in order to find a self that is independent and self-sufficient.

Building on Erickson's work, Fowler suggests that a developing person's ability to move into Stage 4 from Stage 3 relies heavily upon the ideologies held by the critical groups in which a person is engaged.[60] Often, many institutions, including religious institutions, discourage the movement away from Stage 3 through certain elements inherent in their cultures, such as the heavy-handed reliance on external authority, the discouragement of autonomous thought, and the threat of expulsion for 'aberrant' behaviour. According to Fowler, then, a convicted movement into the Stage 4 level of faith development involves the veritable burning of the Stage 3 bridges. For a genuine transformation to occur, there must be an interruption of the reliance on external sources of authority and a relocation of the source of authority to the internal order of being.[61] It is through this transition that Fowler describes the emergence of a personal 'executive ego' – an entity that undergoes a qualitative transformation in its handling of symbols and images.

Stage 3 faith was unable to distinguish between the symbol and the symbolized, resulting in a fusion of apprehension and a fundamental grasping of an illusory wholeness. Stage 4 faith, however,

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[60] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 175.
[61] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 177.

reassesses the nature of true wholeness, rebalances its needs and undertakes a pointed and comprehensive investigative interrogation of those very symbols and meanings that were so sacred to Stage 3.[62] Thus, in its critical reflections and reformulations, Stage 4 faith becomes capable of perceiving symbolic media as separate from the symbolized element. Thus, in the face of ritualized practices and religious symbolism, a Stage 4 person becomes fascinated with the underlying meaning of symbols, and believes that, should the meaning be truly salient to today's daily life, it should be fully translatable into propositions, definitions and conceptual frameworks that illuminate internal meanings and spiritual direction. Therefore, a significant demythologizing strategy, which is subjugated to the rules of order governing the proper construction of a perceived reality, takes place.

For evolving persons at Stage 4, however, the demythologizing of symbols provides yet another road to the validation of the authority and power of the newly formed autonomous self. Since one of the greatest emergent capabilities of this level of epistemology is the ability and desire to think critically, demythologized symbols create a transcendent world that is accessible to the ordered and probing mindset. As a result, further development in the interpretation and conception of God and the ultimate environment falls within the purview of this self-disciplined and self-responsible epistemology. A crucial stage in religious development, it is in the Stage 4 mind that reason, category, predictability, and objectivity enter the field of the transcendent. Thus, higher levels of understanding in the realm of the ultimate environment cannot take place unless Stage 4 faith is welcomed and weathered.

Stage 5

In Stage 5 faith, according to Fowler, perception of the sacred moves far beyond explicit ideological systems and clear boundaries of identity that dominate the Stage 4 mindset.[63] Whereas

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[62] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 179.
[63] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 186.

the former stage's outlook focused great effort on equating itself with its own conscious awareness, Stage 5 faith becomes fascinated with its own unconscious – the archetypal elements embedded in the spirit of every person which partially determine actions and responses. In this way, Stage 5 faith comes to terms with the fact that the conscious mind is not necessarily the master of its domain, and therefore sets out to reconcile the powers of the conscious with the influence of the unconscious. Consequently, people at this stage of development tend to view truth as a multi-dimensional and organically interdependent set of realities, which comes to terms with the idea that the symbols, stories, doctrines, and liturgies offered by its own system of belief (or by any other systems of belief) are inevitably partial incarnations of an overarching truth. These incarnations of truth are limited to a particular experience of God and are, by definition, incomplete.[64] Stage 5 faith, however, is not interested in relating the relativity of differing traditions with each other. This would be nothing other than a veiled throw-back into Stage 4 construal. Rather, this advanced state of faith apprehension is concerned with relating the relativity of differing traditions to an overarching reality to which these traditions must cleave. Thus, Stage 5 faith is ready for significant, growthful, and respectful encounters with other traditions, because of its deep belief that truth has and will disclose itself in differing traditions and may therefore act as a corrective to personally held beliefs. According to Fowler, this stage of development is the first stage to achieve an expression of true ecumenicalism.

Fowler stresses, however, that this emergent ecumenicalism does not in any way imply a lack of commitment to one's own tradition. Rather, the Stage 5 openness to other traditions stems precisely from a powerful confidence in its own heritage.[65] As such, one's personal experiences within one's historical tradition serve as the principle through which other experiences are tested and assimilated. This degree of openness and inclusion, however, does not leave one's treatment of the symbolic unaffected.

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[64] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 189.
[65] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 190.

Having muddled through the reason-driven demythologization of Stage 4, the Stage 5

mindset can no longer accept the sterile demythologized world of symbol.[66] Whereas the former

stage's mindset was content to bring symbolic representations into a sphere of light and work upon

them in order to extract meaning, Stage 5 faith, while retaining a stringent level of scrutiny and

critical reflection, perceives the limitations of the former balance's productive interpretations, and,

turning its attention to the organic and interconnected character of reality, engages in what Ricoeur

calls a 'second naïveté'.[67] This is a chosen naïveté and effectively amounts to a willful submission of

oneself to the initiative of the symbolic. A learned and laborious practice, Stage 5 persons allow the

power of the symbol to speak to them, through their filters of critical reason, universalism, and

stringent moral adherence. The symbols that once were harbingers of uninspired proposition and

definition now return to an elegant state of communication, steeped in mystery and intuition, yet not

devoid of critical reason or tested moral apprehension. Thus, the Stage 5 person allows the text to

speak, and gleans knowledge from that text through a concerted consultation with a developed,

interdependent, diversity-accepting, and dialectical self.

Stage 6

Not surprisingly, as exceedingly rare as is Stage 5 faith, so much more rare is the appearance

of Stage 6. The rarity of this occurrence, according to Fowler, rests partially in the development

within Stage 6 of an intuitive felt sense of an ultimate environment, which is inclusive of all levels of

Being.[68] These unique and inspiring people have become veritable incarnators and actualizers of the

spirit of the moral law, understood in the challenges of Stage 5 faith. Throughout their endeavours at

incarnating the manifestations and revelations of a universalizing morality, they are often observed

creating zones of liberation from the social, political, economic, ideological limits we place on

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[66] Fowler, _Stages of Faith_ , 191.
[67] Ricoeur, _The Symbolism of Evil_, 351-352.
[68] Fowler, _Stages of Faith_ , 205.

ourselves in the name of a prolific human futurity. Living with this felt participation in a power that

unifies and transforms the environmental surround as well as the various selves and spiritualities

within that environment, Stage 6 persons are often experienced as subversive of the structures

(including religious structures) by which mainstream society and culture maintains corporate

survival, security, and meaning. As such, Stage 6 persons, in Fowler's scheme give daily and bodily

expression to the highest tenets of spiritual growth and attenuation. They are the true confluence of

wisdom (an Ericksonian concept), of meta-ethical principle apprehension (a Kohlbergian concept),

and of inspired and universalized spirituality.

Part 4

Faith Development Theory: A Brief Comment

As can be seen from the above discussion, Faith Development Theory (FDT) draws heavily

on the work of foregoing developmental theorists and draws the line of developmental conversation

into the realm of values and symbol apprehension. Fowler believes that his model is a comprehensive

and adequate construct through which to understand the nature of faith-related maturity in human-

kind. According to him, "Faith Development Theory offers a characterization of faith that combines

the phenomenological account of what faith *does*, with a conceptual account of what faith *is*."[69] Thus,

FDT suggests the implications of faith, as it toils to add purpose to our everyday activities. Fowler

believes that FDT allows us to understand faith without resorting to reductionism or devolving into

an account of the unfathomably mysterious. In addition, the theory allows for the apprehension of

varying assumptions and premises to be the result of fundamentally different sets of interpretive

operations – thereby opening the door to a hermeneutical understanding of both religious and

interpersonal interactions.[70] This hermeneutic offers formal criteria for evaluating the appropriation

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[69] Fowler, "Faith Development at 30," 412
[70] Avery, "A Lutheran Examines James W. Fowler," 131.

of religious traditions by persons and groups. Thus, Fowler believes that his scheme is of particular

import to pastoral counselors and teachers, who spend the vast majority of their time delving into the

interpretive structures of their learners and careseekers. Sharon Parks, following this line of thought,

states that Fowler's FDT, through its defense of personal meaning-making, is less preoccupied with a

person's past than with the potential inherent in a system of meaning toward the progression of

human life – a preoccupation with direction and growth rather than with pathology.[71] Consequently,

FDT serves as synergistic space within which religion and psychology can converse - a structure

upon which religious discourse can find footing within a pluralistic world.

Fowler himself goes to great lengths to point out the relevance of FDT to religious educators.

He believes that the stages described in his model assist religious educators in assessing the

cognitive, moral, and emotional operations of their learners in order to determine individual readiness

for particular stimuli or interventions.[72] In addition, the structuralism in FDT, Fowler believes,

provides religious educators with a scaffold upon which to develop educational aims and exploratory

exercises within a particular faith tradition. Hence, stage theory makes a significant contribution in

its ability to direct educators in their work of matching individual competencies of learners at each

stage of development with directed exercises intended to foster symbolic apprehension and reflective

internal inquiry. But on this dangerous point, Fowler stipulates a strong caveat: "It should never be

the primary goal of religious education simply to precipitate and encourage stage advancement.

Rather, paying attention to stage and stage advancement is important in helping us shape our

teaching and involvement with members of religious traditions. Movement in stage development,

properly understood, is a *byproduct* of teaching the substance and practices of faith."[73] In this way,

Fowler backs away from the arrogance of some therapeutic and pastoral traditions that see

themselves as the very creators of, and the sources of impetus for the development of the faith

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[71] Parks, "Faith Development in a Changing World," 95.
[72] Fowler, "Faith Development at 30," 416.
[73] Fowler, "Faith Development at 30," 417.

apprehensions of careseekers and learners. Rather, his own retrospective comments on the nature of

FDT highlight his belief that the model evokes personal involvement on the part of the subject who

encounters it. To that end, Fowler states his conviction that dialogue with FDT activates and engages

those who hear or read it to retrieve their own memories, convictions, and intuitions, in order to

better adapt to the complexities of experienced life.[74] Hence, in a paradoxical turn to the assertion

made above regarding the primary goal of religious education, Fowler claims that a deep and soulful

engagement with FDT and its tenets would result in a process of continued development through the

stages of faith. Therefore, Fowler's commentary on his own FDT brings to light an intentional

paradox in philosophy: on the one hand, no stage is "better" than another – each stage is imbued with

its own sense of dignity and integrity; yet, on the other hand, movement to ever-higher stages of faith

is the very process of maturation, and therefore, is of particular import and spiritual desirability.[75]

As a consequence of this seemingly untenable paradox, several scholars have begun to

question the relevance and salience of FDT, claiming, after many intensive rounds of probing

analysis, that its fundamental tenets are unclear, its methodological underpinnings are questionable,

its spiritual orientation is suspect, and its placement as a stand-alone theory is dubious.[76] Heinz Streib

even goes so far as to say that FDT should take its place among the psychological disciplines, as

these sciences turn their attention ever-more to religious and spiritual phenomena.[77] In that capacity,

it would be subject to rigourous empirical testing, as well as to integration and correlation with a host

of other psychological tenets and frameworks that would modulate, intensify, and fundamentally

consume FDT's original form. The movement of scholars decrying FDT's weaknesses and

inconsistencies is growing with every passing decade, and yet, the whirlwind of criticism and

dissatisfaction has failed to produce a corrective model that retains the considerable strengths of

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[74] Fowler, "Forward," xii.

[75] Fowler, "Forward," xi.

[76] Streib "Extending our Vision"; Dykstra in Parks, "Faith Development in a Changing World," 96; McDargh, "Faith Development Theory"; Piper, "Faith Development".

[77] Streib "Extending our Vision," 429.

Fowler's FDT while rectifying and resolving its weaknesses and contradictions. It is the main purpose of this work to do that very thing: to humbly and respectfully propose a corrective model to Fowler's seminal work.

Final Thought

The Prologue stated that this work believes that Fowler's FDT is in need of significant revision. It is the central purpose of these pages to elucidate the terms of that refresh by introducing the tenets of questing through Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC). The foregoing chapter was a necessary detour on the road to our ultimate goal, as it would not be feasible to embark on corrective arguments without offering an account of the very state we will try to correct. By presenting the material laid out above, it is hoped that a now-normalized set of definitions will aid the reader in interpreting the scope and direction of the chapters to come. Proposing a corrective, however, requires that we identify elements that require correction. The foregoing chapter presented the positive highlights of Fowler's FDT as well as its main strengths. The next chapter will focus on the main weaknesses that will serve as the basis for the remainder of our narrative.

Chapter 2

The Problem with Faith Development Theory

In the last chapter, we undertook a scan of the current structural-developmental landscape, in order to help us better place Faith Development Theory (FDT) in a larger developmental conversation. We undertook to outline the three main foundations of FDT:

1. The faculty of experiential apprehension (the ability to perceive, interpret, and integrate the vagaries of experience),

2. The faculty of symbolic representation (including notions of internal images),

3. The faculty of knowing (construing, making meaning).

These three founding tenets are going to serve as the main guide for our elucidation of Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC), in the chapters to come. In order to explicate these tenets, as well as FDT's growth philosophy further, however, we undertook to describe some of the strengths of FDT, as presented by Fowler (primarily) as well as by other scholars in the field. FDT was acclaimed for its placement of faith as a central feature of human epistemological ontology; for its elucidation of a model that seeks to illuminate a feature of universal human epistemology; for its assumption that all humans are naturally potentiated for relationship with God; for its ability to integrate the phenomenological aspects of faith (what faith *does*) with the conceptual aspects (what faith *is*); and for its presentation as a balanced framework in its ability to act as a synergistic confluence of the psychological and the noumenal.

Herein lies an impressive list of attributes, to be sure. These tenets represent positive and constructive aspects of the FDT model – aspects that ground FDT in the complexity of internal development and interpretation. And yet, a closer look at FDT reveals some rather serious difficulties and challenges – negative aspects of the model that all but threaten to cancel the positive. As we proceed on the elucidation of Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC), as based on the three

founding tenets of FDT, we cannot proceed without delineating the weaknesses held in Fowler's

conception. These weaknesses will serve as the primary impetus for the correctives proposed by

Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) to FDT, in its eventual model elucidation (Chapters 7 - 10).

It is the purpose of this section to outline just such challenges – fundamental flaws in the conception

and construction of FDT that must be addressed, should the task of re-visioning faith development

studies be taken seriously. As such, this section focuses on the main weaknesses in Fowler's FDT: its

fundamental confusion of 'faith' (as defined by Fowler) and the process of meaning-making, its

developmental and methodological confusion with the discipline of ego psychology, its deep and

unquestioned individualist bias, and its limited scope of use in the actual practice of ministry. Our

discussion on how to bridge the gap presented by these weaknesses will be left for the next chapter.

Thereafter, we will provide a presentation of Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (the model proper), as

it is based on the foundations of FDT. We begin our discussion with a treatment the confusion

between 'faith' and meaning-making.

Part 1

When Meaning Is Meaning

Throughout his discussion, Fowler repeatedly highlights the comprehensive aspect of what he

terms as 'faith'. He expresses admiration for the integrated aspect of the work of Piaget and Kohlberg

– an integration that states that whatever the nature of the situation or stimulus with which we are

dealing, our apprehensions are constantly and consistently applied to a framework of meaning

through which all events are understood.[78] Taking his cue from the foundational approaches of these

theorists, Fowler goes on to stipulate that human beings must, by their very make-up, come to know

and express their knowledge of the various elements of existence through the filter of internal

meaning. Thus, Fowler, in explicating the nature of faith, states that "faith is an active intention to

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[78] Fowler, *Trajectories*, 19.

bring this way of relating to the task of giving order and coherence to the multiplicity of our experiences."[79] To have faith, then, is not primarily to hold certain beliefs about reality. Rather, to have faith, according to Fowler, is to engage all of life "in relation to a unifying centre of meaning and value".[80] Faith is ultimately "a mandate, as it were, for interpreting all of experience in the world."[81]

Thus, this conception of faith concerns itself not so much with what we believe, but rather with *how* we believe, *how* we construe the whole of experience, *how* we grasp what we grasp – the very ground of construal, an effective focus of form over content. It pinpoints the universal human habit to employ structures of interpretation for gaining and furthering understanding of the perceived external world. Hence, such a conception of modality extends itself to any act of assimilation, learning, or construal that affects the human psyche – from its humblest origins in the proverbial nursery to its highest sophistication. In this way, Fowler stipulates that his definition of faith emphasizes the concept of a lifelong process in which advancement and transformation take place through our encounter with stimuli that are interpreted by the grasping psyche.[82] To that end, Fowler goes so far as to state that "faith development theory is not concerned with the construction of knowledge but for the construction of meaning. The latter is an imaginative activity that cannot be determined by simply identifying a genetic sequence of structural stages."[83] Thus, Fowler is attempting to delineate that his definition of faith transcends the rather logico-mathematical constructions of knowing set forth by Piaget and Kohlberg, and enters the realm of the hermeneutical. In his own words, "faith development has to do with interpreting the relative stability of human self-understanding."[84]

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[79] Fowler, *Trajectories*, 19.
[80] Fowler, "Perspectives," 329.
[81] Fowler, *Trajectories*, 19.
[82] Fowler, *Trajectories*, 19.
[83] Fowler et al., "Stages of Faith," 30.
[84] Fowler et al., "Stages of Faith," 30.

This concept of self-understanding as based in faith development, however, presents some definitional challenges that threaten to render the concept unclear and diffuse. It introduces the question of the relative primacy of 'faith' over against understanding. As a form of construal, Fowler's faith positions itself at the root of knowing and thereby serves as the foundation of both interpretation and self-understanding. But does this conception of faith, although appealing to the religious sentiment, conform with accepted notions of epistemology? Is there really no prior and equivalent concept in the epistemological lexicon that renders the notion of interpretation and understanding? A scan of the psychological and philosophical literature related to faith development, going back as far as William James, indicates that there is indeed a prior concept.

William James took great pains to present the notion of human understanding as an integrous and unified whole. According to him, there is no such thing as a mode of religious reasoning as over against a mode of non-religious thinking. There is no such thing as a separate rationality, a discreet apprehension, or a particular grasping of religious notions. Rather, James, a prolific thinker and scientist himself, extolled the notion that rationality and thought are integrated, unified, and homogenous. Therefore, it is not that we think differently about religious things. It is rather that we apply our common notions of reality (our interpretations, our made meanings) to spiritual concepts. Hence, there is no such thing as religious fear, religious love, or religious hope. There is rather a panoply of affect (such as fear, love, and hope) that is *directed towards* religious objects. Hence, James states that "religious fear is only ordinary fear, the common quaking of the human breast, insofar as the notion of divine retribution may arouse it; religious fear is the same organic thrill that we feel in a forest twilight, or in a mountain gorge, only this time, it comes over us at the thought of our supernatural relations."[85] Ronald Goldman, writing in the 1950s and 1960s, intimates the same notion as James. In his elucidations of the stages of religious attenuation (which bear a striking resemblance in number and content to those of Fowler), he highlighted the view that human knowing

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[85] James, *Varieties*.

is a hermeneutical undertaking and comes through the actions of a unified and wholistic psyche.[86]

Thus, according to Goldman, there is but one mind that turns itself toward the various dimensions of

existence, one act of grasping that defines what is understood, and one interpretive scheme that

shapes the nature of what is apprehended. Following this line of thought, Goldman lays out his seven

stages of religious development, and bases them on the universal effect of human meaning

construction. A more contemporary example of this thinking can be found in Paul Pruyser, who

points out that attitudes held in the human psyche are intertwined with all other attitudes contained

therein, and that apprehension is undertaken in such a manner as to satisfy internal drives (libidinal,

aggressive, esteem, competence, adaptation, conscience and gratification, among others).[87] Pruyser's

conception, however does not assert the primacy of one form of thought over another. Rather, his

work approaches all thought as expressions of a uniform mind, structures of a constant faculty of

meaning-making, through which all aspects of life, the spiritual included, are assessed and

understood. Thus, it is not so much faith that undergirds knowing as "a quality of the person not of

the system… an orientation of the personality, to oneself, to one's neighbor, to the universe; a total

response; a way of seeing whatever one sees and of handling whatever one handles."[88] Rather, it is

the very process of meaning-making that is the source of human construal and apprehension. As

such, the definition of faith presented by Fowler in his scheme represents a fundamental confusion

between the soulful process of connecting with the ultimate, and the total response and perceptual

faculty indicated in his work. It is the process of meaning-making that undergirds the development of

what Fowler calls identity formation, self-assertion, and understanding of the complex patterns of

adult life.[89] It is the process of meaning-making that provides the epistemological content inherent in

the work of Piaget and Kohlberg (in fact, they each named it as such), and it is the made meaning in

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[86] Goldman, *Religious Thinking*, 4.
[87] Pruyser, *A Dynamic Psychology*, 254.
[88] Smith in Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 11; Smith, *Faith and Belief*, 135.
[89] Fowler and Lovin, *Trajectories*, 42.

itself that is described in the formal structures of each of their schemes. Consequently, it is the belief of this work that Fowler's desire for universality and foundationalism, although admirable on an epistemological front, resulted in a re-casting of the concept of meaning into the concept of faith, and the process of meaning-making into the process of faith development, without presenting the underlying exigency for just such a conflation. By confounding faith with meaning and never defining meaning as separate in any way, Fowler unwittingly empties the spiritual epistemological landscape of a discrete and impactful notion of faith that is, in and of itself, relevant to one's connection and relationship with self, other, and God. In other words, if human faith is defined as human meaning, what concept can then be used to describe the application of that meaning to relational, existential, and spiritual elements and relations? Fowler proposes no such term. Hence, it is the purpose of these chapters to clarify this confusion and propose a definition of faith that maintains the strengths of Fowler's conception, and yet reverses this confusion. The first step, however, would lay in the actual defining of meaning as an entity in itself. Only thus can we extricate a growthful and developmentally relevant notion of faith from its unfortunate equation with meaning. We will now turn our attention to this matter.

Part 2

The Meaning of Meaning

Charles Smock, in a discussion on the complexities and applications of Piagetian theory, points out that we, as humans, are in the epistemological habit of regarding the object as existing unconditionally, as if we could look upon objects from a secure observatory and somehow apprehend their natures in their non-observed state. But, he continues, such a conclusion is but a mental illusion – a construction in itself. He believes that the concept of a thing existing in and of itself has no

intelligible meaning.[90] Albert Einstein exclaimed that even science is nothing other than the creation

of a human mind, forming linkages to the outside world through impression.[91] And the constructive

pastoral theologian Anton Boisen stated that, as finite creatures, we have nothing but subjective

realities, working to make meaningful interpretations of the world, and of ourselves, so as to find

direction and agency.[92] All of these thinkers are explicating and attempting to grasp a similar

phenomenon: that, in the words of Pruyser, "reality is not the undisputed king to which all have equal

access."[93] Rather, reality is selectively taken in by each person through a differential capacity for

assimilation, thereby producing a sense of unity and integration that is deemed to be universalized by

the apprehending subject. This is the concept of meaning-making – a self-referential, intensive and

universal aspect of human knowing; a way of handling what is to be handled; of seeing what needs to

be seen; a total apprehensive response of psyche; a complete orientation of oneself to all aspects of

experience.

Thus, in contra-distinction to Fowler's notion of faith, meaning-making is defined as the

construction of information that informs psyche; the individual assimilation and synergy of

biographical and personal dimensions of being, that form a filter through which life's stimuli

combine to have supraordinate significance.[94] Thus, in trying to grasp the concept of meaning-

making, one directs one's attention to the space between the occurrence of a stimulus and a person's

response to it. This is the arena in which a stimulus is internally apprehended, interpreted, and made

sense of – the place where it actually becomes, or fails to become, a salient event for that person. So

important is this concept, that practically every personality psychology and insightful theology that

influences counselors, care-givers, and ministers directs itself in some way to the "zone of mediation

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[90] Smock, "Constructivism and Educational Practices," 51.
[91] Einstein in Pruyser, *Belief*, 210.
[92] Boisen in Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode*, 48.
[93] Pruyser, *Between Belief*, 222.
[94] Vela, "Pastoral Ministry," 89.

where meaning is made."[95] How we grasp what we apprehend will be settled in this zone of mediation, where a person interprets his or her world and makes personal sense of stimuli.

Robert Kegan uses the word 'meaning' to refer simultaneously to an epistemological and ontological activity.[96] According to him, meaning is about knowing *and* being; it is about theory making on the one hand (construal), and investment and commitment to the self, on the other (development). Thus, information presented to the psyche is filtered, taken up and assimilated. It is interpreted through the filter of present assimilation (meaning-making). Finally, it informs psyche and promotes the attenuation of coherence and unity. Developmentalism, an area of central importance to Fowler's FDT, insists on a recognition that behind the form of objects, there exists "a personal process which creates it."[97] In agreement with Kegan, it is the contention of these pages that it is through this creative and imaginative activity of meaning-making that each person proves himself or herself to be the author of personal response.

William Perry, writing in the 1970s, believed that meaning-making is an essentially ontological characteristic of humanity. In other words, our very nature is to make meaning; meaning-making is one of the defining and fundamental markers of what it means to be human.[98] We conclude from this that there cannot be an experience, an apprehension of a stimulus, or a relational action of any kind that is somehow separate from, or independent of the inexorable processes of personal meaning-making. Thus, meaning-making is a total response of authorship: we *create* the sense we perceive in our lives. As Kegan says, "Human being is the composing of meaning."[99] This notion that we constitute our very apprehensions through meaning-making cuts across the domains of philosophy, psychology, and ministry. In the words of Viktor Frankl: "[Humanity's] search for

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[95] Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 2.
[96] Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, 8.
[97] Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, 13.
[98] Perry, *Development in the College Years*, 32.
[99] Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, 11.

meaning is the primary drive in [its] life and not a secondary rationalization of instinctual drives. This meaning is specific and unique in that it can be fulfilled by [human beings] alone."[100]

The story of meaning-making starts at infancy and progresses throughout the entire lifecycle, gaining levels of abstraction and sophistication as it progresses. The development of meaning-making takes us out of the infant's world of universalized subjectivity (a Piagetian and Kohlbergian concept, that is reflected in Fowler's Stage 0), moves us through levels of progressive stability and disequilibrium, and places us squarely in the adult world, which is explicitly mediated by meaning. The world of the infant is no bigger than the proverbial nursery. It is a world of physiology, instinct, impression, and reaction. Bernard Lonergan states that it is a world of immediate experience, of the given as given, of image and affect without the distractions of concept, judgment, deliberation, or choice. Therefore, it is a world of pleasure and pain, hunger and thirst, food and drink, rage, satisfaction, and sleep. As the psyche develops, however, one's world expands exponentially. Symbols, such as language, come to represent not only what is present, but also what is absent, what is past, and what is future.[101] In fact, theorists such as Charles Pierce and John Seobock believe that all human communication is fundamentally semiological – a semiology that develops from sensorimotor to formal operational capabilities.[102] In the formal operational mode, symbols are manipulated to reflect not only the factual, but also the possible, the theoretical, the ideal, and the normative (the hallmarks of Piaget's Formal Operations, Kohlberg's and Fowler's Stage 3 and beyond).[103] In other words, these communications express not only what we have found to be of personal import, but also all we care to learn from the memories of our neighbors, from the common sense of the community, from the pages of literature, from the labors of our teachers, from the investigations of scientists, from the experience of saints, and from the mediations of philosophers

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[100] Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*, 32.
[101] Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 78.
[102] Peirce, *Collected Papers*, and Seobock, *Signs*; Piaget, *Constructions of Reality*.; we will deal with the thought of Pierce in Chapter 9.
[103] Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 80; Boden, *Piaget*, 63; Seobock, *Signs*; Piaget, *Constructions of Reality*.

and theologians. In light of this, it becomes clear that meaning-making is inexorably intertwined with the selective, interpretive, and executive capacities that have been associated with personal agency and apprehension, and in fact, stands at their roots.[104] Therefore, it is not faith that stands as the basis for construing the world, but the executive function inherent in the application of meaning.

In relation to this executive function of meaning-making, Lonergan states that the essence of meaning-making is held in the context of questioning and is determined not only by experience but also by personal understanding and judgment.[105] The full act of meaning-making, then, is also an act of judging. This judgment is invoked in the settling of the status of an object of thought – whether an object is merely an object of thought, a mathematical entity, an actual thing lying in the world of human experience, or a transcendent reality beyond the perception of the empirical. In other words, active meanings come with judgments of value, power, decision, and action. Lonergan states that it is this addition of the layer of judgment that makes possible a world mediated by meaning. It is this judgment, which gives meaning its structure and unity, which arranges it in an orderly whole partly known and familiar, partly surrounded in shadow.[106] Hence, we are left with the elements of a construction that lead to a compelling conclusion: as a construal, an apprehension, a mediated understanding, and a judgment, meaning-making is the process *par excellence* though which we infuse stimuli with significance and relevance. Thus, the process of meaning-making is the mechanism through which human beings come to know their life's encounters so as to orient themselves to their many facets and exigencies. Thus, it is not faith that determines meaning; rather, it is meaning-making that sets the groundwork for all manner of commitment and belief – including faithful grasping. As such, meaning-making is the very seat of construal. It is therefore, the pre-requisite on which faith development is based. It is asserted therefore that meaning-making is a

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[104] For more, see Kegan, *The Evolving Self,* 29; Boden. *Piaget,* 46; Kohlberg, *Moral Stages* ,72; Lonergan, *Method in Theology;* Lonergan, *Insight;*, Perry, *College Years,* ch. 1
[105] Lonergan, *Method in Theology,* 74.
[106] Lonergan, *Method in Theology,* 81.

fundamental and universal organizing principle that is the prior ground of faith development, and therefore is also the prior ground of the resultant thoughts, affects, and relations that are associated with it.

With this assertion, we come to a crossroads in our discussion of FDT. Having transposed Fowler's definition of faith into a definition of meaning-making, what correctives can we apply to the concept of faith – a concept of the utmost importance to any notion of spiritual development?

The answer to this question lies in the movement from structural concerns to existential concerns, what Paul Philibert calls the 'motors of faith development'.[107] Paul Pruyser points out that, as modern society progresses ever further, its structural complexifications increase, resulting in ever new and more specialized fields of study. As a consequence of this happenstance, disciplines that were once contained under the aegis of other disciplines split off and produce discourses, theories, contributions, and professionals of their own, resulting in the emergence of ever-more purified and narrow streams of study. The effect on the already existing disciplines is a veritable denuding of these fields of specialties that were once held as important.[108] This very progression is at play in the world of practical ministry. Once a bastion of assistance, education, and social intervention, the church's role in society found itself pared away, as psychology, philosophy, sociology, social networks, secular counseling, and education found their own paths and began growing their own roots. The reaction to this development is two-fold: on the one hand, some ministry professionals rebel against the flowering of the secular analogs of what they considered the minister's purview, taking the stance that, devoid of the considerations of the religious, such disciplines would be rendered vacuous and misguided; on the other hand, and this is the point of view that this work champions (in agreement with Pruyser), ministry professionals are exceedingly challenged to find their unique place in this new and swirling landscape of service and study. Consequently, Pruyser

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[107] Philibert, "Motors of Morality," 87.
[108] Pruyser, *Minister as Diagnostician*

asserts the great importance of ministers laying claim to their particular field of expertise and remaining there as the sole guardians and exponents of the specialized functions of their unique field. According to Pruyser, the field that remains for ministers is that of the attenuation of existential meaning and relatedness. Thus, what Pruyser is saying is that as experts in the nature of human relation and existential conditioning, pastors and ministers must remain in tune, not with the aspects of structuralism and linear causality (which he believes, as a result of the hyper-specialization taking place in the academy today, have predominantly fallen into the hands of psychologist, psychiatrists, and philosophers), but rather with the complexities of the noumenal, the relational, and the existential.[109]

It is the opinion of this work, then, that the existential aspects of faith development are not the *how* question with which Fowler's FDT is consumed. Rather, it is believed that the minister's main purview lies in questioning the *why* of these very same developments. Therefore, following this assertion, practical ministry would focus, not on the construction of meaning *per se*, but on a careseeker's *relationship to that meaning*, as it creates drive and impetus within him or her for greater relatedness with the world and with God. There is no doubt that a firm understanding of the mechanics of meaning-making is essential to the constructive and soulful undertaking of this mandate. The elucidation of the structures of meaning-making, however, is best left to those disciplines that dedicate themselves to the ontology and phylogeny of epistemology. Consequently, faith development becomes the elucidation and expansion of a particular *style* of relatedness and meaning construction, as that construction comes to know its existential placement in the world. Although Fowler often extols the benefits and necessities of such pastoral orientations, FDT and Fowler's conception of faith do not retain the characteristics or mechanics involved in such relational pre-occupations. As such, whereas the processes of meaning-making described above present us with the *how* of personal development and apprehension, it is believed that faith development (through

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[109] Pruyser, *Minister as Diagnostician*; Doninger, *Religion,* 120.

Faith Constitutive Pastoral Care) should provide us with the *why:* the impetus for relational

progression, the energy inherent in a balanced connectedness, and the questing involved in relating

made meanings to supraordinate narratives of significance and direction. Such a focus, however,

requires that we propose a new definition of faith, to replace that of Fowler. A definition of faith

from the perspective of Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care will be presented in Chapter 10 of this work.

In the last few paragraphs, the confusion in Fowler's FDT between his definition of faith and

the concept of meaning-making was outlined. It was asserted that Fowler fundamentally linked his

notions of faith with the basic mechanism of construal inherent on the construction of meaning. In

addition, it was asserted that the place of faith development studies is not in the fields of structural

and mechanistic elucidations, but rather in the arena of the relational and existential. And yet, a

cursory look through Fowler's scheme highlights the lack of existential focus in his stages. Thus, we

have come around to the second major weakness in Fowler's FDT: its confusion with the discipline

of ego psychology. It is to this topic that we turn next.

Part 3

Faith Development or Ego Development?

In *Faith Development and Pastoral Care,* Fowler says, "with developmental change, we have

in view change as the process of construction and formation of the self. If development occurs, in our

experience, it happens as a complex pattern of alternation between times of equilibrium and times of

disequilibrium."[110] Development, then, is a transformation and reconstruction, a breakdown and a

rebuilding, a restoration, perhaps even a healing, where a personal conversion of internal meaning

structures changes or re-orients the direction of life. As such, FDT claims to "focus on the underlying

structures and operations of human thought and belief. It tries to understand the laws and patterns the

mind employs in constructing ideas, concepts, and beliefs that constitute the contents of thinking and

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[110] Fowler, Faith Development and Pastoral Care, 101.

valuing."[111] This transformational rebuilding, however, according to Fowler, rarely is undertaken on the force of selective choice alone, but is very often the result of our response to some deeply affective experience of struggle.[112] Harkening to the Kohlbergian and Ericksonian concepts of triumphing over crisis in order to navigate each stage of moral or psychosocial development, Fowler states that his FDT functions by utilizing the exact same principle, and thereby holds identity formation and ego development as inherent within itself.[113] In addition, Fowler claims that the stages of FDT fall in a particular sequence because they represent a series of tasks for the developing person in which new challenges arise "in part from the limits of previous faith solutions."[114] What is being implied here is that each stage in FDT's invariant cycle resolves some conflicts that have arisen to defy the current state of the psyche, but also simultaneously introduces new questions and maturational challenges that require supra-stage resolution. Thus, the system of development holds within itself an ineluctable impetus toward the attenuation of ever-greater levels of faith, where this faith takes on a regular and universal manifestation. The process of development and maturation, however, although ineluctable in its sequence is not inevitable in its undertaking. As such, it is possible for a person to choose stagnation over movement, immobility over progress, arrest over impetus.

The difficulty introduced by this approach to growth through FDT is that its definition is the very conceptions that define and underpin the discipline of ego psychology. Ego psychology is a psychological discourse dedicated to the elucidation of the processes underlying the meaning constructions, development, and evolution of the human psyche, as it encounters its challenges through experience. In its purest manifestation, ego psychology follows the fundamentally Hegelian concept of Thesis-Antithesis-Synthesis – a concept employed most saliently by Piaget himself (the

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[111] Fowler, "Forward," 3.
[112] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 103.
[113] Fowler and Lovin, *Trajectories*, 22.
[114] Fowler and Lovin, *Trajectories*, 23.

Piagetian concept of assimilation-accommodation-decentration-recentration is the modern

psychological analog of Aristotle's original scheme).[115] In addition, ego psychology asserts that the

emergence of the self is undertaken by moving through a hierarchical and invariant sequence of

developmental stages (seven in total). Movement to subsequent stages is the result of the resolution

of any challenging stimulus resulting in a qualitative re-definition of the structures of apprehension,

thereby producing a new world view, a new equilibrium, and a novel meaning frame within which to

encounter experience (in effect, a new stage). Such a movement through stages and resolution of

challenges is an ineluctable process, although it is not inevitable. Therefore, just as in the case

described by Fowler, a developing person can choose to hold growth and development at bay. As

such, ego psychology is concerned with understanding and telling the tale of the transformation and

maturation of human kind, as it progresses through its various stages of reality grasping. In addition,

ego psychology delineates its sequence of growth through recurring cycles of equilibrium and

change, where the disequilibrium associated with change is the product of a destabilizing experience

(or set of experiences). What we have in the foregoing, therefore, is a striking parallelism between

Fowler's mechanisms of growth (employed to explicate FDT) and ego psychology's fundamental

mode of operation. In light of the near identical definitions of each model of study, we come to an

understanding of the second major weakness of FDT: the confusion of FDT with ego psychology.

Ego psychology is a discipline that has been in existence for over a hundred years, and has

continually striven to understand the process through which a person comes to be, comes to mature,

and comes to connect with his/her environment. The study of ego psychology always takes on a very

wholistic tenor, where modes of thought and apprehension are not artificially distinguished.

Consequently, ego psychology studies human emergence through the study of meaning-constitutive

orders of psyche – the various ways that human beings come to understand. Ego psychology, then, is

inextricably linked with the study of meaning-making (as described above), and focuses its efforts on

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[115] Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, 246; Piaget, *Epigenetic Stages*, 179; Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 48.

elucidating the factors that go into the successive modulations of meaning, which in turn affect

personal being in the world. Spiritual apprehension and commitment, religious affiliation, and

faithful commitment, therefore, are all sub-components of the wholistic notion of meaning-

constitutive orders of psyche. It is not that faith development as described by Fowler is a discreet

process in and of itself; it is rather that ego development, through its understanding of orders of

psyche, delineates the basic psychic substrates through which faith development progresses.[116] In

other words, faith development as proposed by FDT is nothing other than the application of the tenets

of ego psychology to the field of faith and spiritual attenuation. Thus, it is believed that FDT does not

bring forth a novel, cogent, or depth-related conception of growth in itself. Rather, it relies so heavily

on the fundamental tenets of ego psychology as to produce a confusion between itself and ego

psychology. As we shall see in a later chapter, even the seven stages of FDT coincide directly with

the epistemological structures presented by ego psychology. This work contends that this confusion

of FDT with ego psychology produces an unfortunate result: by focusing in an already developed

area, FDT does not go far enough in addressing the existential and noumenal aspects of growth and

development (essentially, its unique place in ego psychological discourse). Although Fowler tries to

counteract the equation of his FDT with ego psychology by appealing to his belief in grace and

revelation, evidence for operational usage of these tenets within his scheme is lacking. Scholars such

as Walter Conn, appealing to the seminal works of Lonergan, go so far as to fault Fowler for being

methodologically sloppy, and insufficiently respectful of the irreducibility of the spiritual character

of his subject matter.[117] Conn believed that FDT provided a unique opportunity to combine and

synergize developmental psychology with spiritually motivated self-transcending subjectivity – an

opportunity that it did not take. John McDargh, carrying forward from Conn's points, states that

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[116] James, *Varieties;* Goldman, *Religious Thinking,* 4; Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology,* 254; Kegan, *Evolving Self,* Chapter 2; Kegan, *In Over Our Heads,* Chapter 1. A more detailed discussion of the primacy of ego development is offered in Chapter 3 of this work.

[117] Walter Conn, *The Desiring Self,* 1998.

FDT, in its confusion with ego psychology, has lost its claim to solid foundations, thereby producing a construct of growth that cannot be labeled or clearly apprehended.[118] Whereas Fowler might interpret such an ambiguity as a positive aspect of his theory (since he might claim that it resists the tendency to be overly reductionistic), its actual effect serves to unhinge the theory from a developed theoretical base and makes it redundant in the face of the tenets of ego psychology. Hence, there appears to be a discontinuity between Fowler's intent and his execution in the presentation of his model. It is to address this discontinuity that we propose correctives to FDT in relation to ego psychology.

The correctives proposed seek to extricate FDT from its confusion with ego psychology by delineating the differences between the two disciplines in two main areas: philosophy and theology. We will begin by dealing with the issue of philosophy.

In this context, philosophy refers to the underlying tenets that support the undertaking of a particular endeavour in a particular manner. Process-oriented philosophy outlines assumed methodological underpinnings and orientations that work to define the approach and subsequent findings within a specific discipline of thought. In the last section, we have already stated that FDT would do well to focus on the noumenal and existential, while leaving the structural to other disciplines (such as ego psychology). In this section, we continue on that line of thought. We will be outlining corrective differences between FDT's current philosophy and its proposed re-aligned construction. The two areas that are of significance in our discussion of philosophy are those of naturalistic extrapolation and quasi-reductionism.

All endeavour that presumes to study human mechanics in a regular fashion must be aligned to some degree with the philosophies of the scientific model. Within that model, researchers put together hypotheses based on the perceptions of the observed phenomena, and then proceed to undertake studies that work to disprove these hypotheses. And yet, herein lies a basic drawback of

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[118] McDargh, "Post-Modern Problem of Foundation," 187.

the scientific model that often goes unattended: hypothesis formation, far from being an accidental or

random act,[119] works on the premises of current constructions of meaning-making through meaning-

constitutive orders of psyche in delineating a new hypotheses. Hence, harkening to Thomas Kuhn's

work on paradigm formation and paradigmatic shifts, the scientific model, by its very nature, locks

us into constructing theories based on a current order of knowing (what Kuhn calls a paradigm).[120]

Consequently, it becomes exceedingly difficult to formulate and postulate cogent extra-paradigm

theories and hypotheses, as these are often outside of conscious apprehension and reasoning. To

apply this concept to ego psychology, we can assert that the discipline assumes that to study human

beings is to develop notions of what human beings ought to be; to observe a particular phenomenon

of human interaction is to extrapolate a continuum of the possible expressions of that same

phenomenon; human perception is taken as valid and truthfully authoritative; and finally, theories

and hypotheses, based on reified human perception, become concretized in a form of disciplined

dogmatism, that acts as a yardstick for future investigations of knowledge.[121] In the field of a

reductionist science such as ego psychology, these hazards may be inevitable and even necessary.

The current construction of FDT, however, follows this model very closely and thereby falls prey to

the same fundamental assumptions.

The assertion here is that, these complexities of the scientific model introduce the well-

known 'naturalistic fallacy'. This fallacy can be stated as a question: is 'what is' truly the basis of

what 'ought to be'? Does this fallacy not trap us into a continuous swirl of current epistemology and

made-meanings, rather than allowing for freer association and inspired thinking? When it comes to

FDT, can we truly say that present manifestation of observed orientations to the ultimate are the sole

bases out of which we can extrapolate the later, and infrequently observed, stages? In concert with

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[119] See the chapter 9 on Abductive Knowing.
[120] Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 1962.
[121] For more, see Joy, "Kohlberg Revisited," 42.

Donald Joy and Edward Piper, it is not believed that this is a useful or constructive approach to the field of faith development.[122]

These pages believe that, since it should concern itself primarily with the noumenal and existential (rather than the structural and mechanical), a theory of faith development needs to open itself to the possibilities of inspiration, imagination, and devotion, to the actions of a living God. One's orientation to the ultimate and its behavioural and cognitive expressions need not, nor should not, follow a path of predictable regularity, as set out by a series of observations. The notion of relationship with God, in and of itself, implies a fluidity and uniqueness of purpose that cannot be pre-envisioned by a regular model. Therefore, an approach to faith development that focuses on the attenuation of relations, rather than on the development of structural capabilities, is called for. FDT's close link with ego psychology has caused it to exhibit mechanistic traits, and thereby fall prey to this 'naturalistic fallacy'. And yet, harkening to Pruyser's words regarding the specialty of disciplines, it is because of the presence of ego psychology in the developmental field that FDT can afford to loosen its grasp on the structural and turn its attention toward the relational and noumenal. Thus, it is believed that FDT would do well to relinquish the quasi-reductionism that it has customarily exhibited for a more organic construct.

The quasi-reductionism evident in FDT is the second philosophical challenge that needs to be addressed. Fowler praises FDT for not being reductionistic in its nature, and also, of not falling into the trap of dredging the depths of human mystery. As such, his claim amounts to the belief that FDT is a balanced approach to faith development studies. And yet, several voices in the field have criticized this claim and stated that FDT is more reductionistic than Fowler perceives it to be, and engages in a form of quasi-reductionism (a reductionism that is pronounced enough to have an effect

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[122] Joy, *Moral Development Foundations*; Piper, "Faith Development."

ın the overall model. but not pronounced enough to answer seminal questions that it raises).[123] Piper

ıoints out this quasi-reductionism in his discussion of the components of FDT. He claims that FDT is

ündamentally a reductionistic construct since it is based on the tenets of ego psychology (a 'hard'

cience) and can be broken down into three separate founding faculties of construction (experiential

ıpprehension, internal representation, and knowing). Piper's concern is that, in trying to break apart

he pieces of FDT, Fowler enters a world of reductionistic analysis, and through his use of this world,

ıroposes sub-components to his theory that are never synergized or integrated into a unified

vhole.[124] In addition, according to Piper, the model itself does not pay attention to the permeability

ıf the boundary between apprehending person and apprehended object, individual agent and

ommunal identity, thus rendering FDT as unhealthily uni- (rather than bi-) directional. Also. Piper

ıelieves Fowler's aversion to engaging in too much reductionism has led to a series of stage

ıroposals within which all components are of equivalent importance.[125] Thus, Piper asks his readers

ɔ contemplate whether faith development is truly nothing other than the sum total of the separate

ıarts of FDT. Following this line of thought, Norbert Hintersteiner claims that FDT's components

ıave excellent heuristic value, but are too segmented and underdeveloped as a consolidated whole to

ıo far enough in delineating faithful and religious growth throughout the lifecycle.[126] It is in response

ɔ such charges that Susan Nelson asserted that FDT, rather than being a model of faithful

ttenuation, is really nothing other than a recasting of the whole maturation and socialization process

ɔcquisition of a set of values (Stage 2), acquisition of a world view (Stage 3), formation of a self

nage in relation to faithful surround (Stage 4)). As a consequence of her assertion, she concludes

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[3] McDargh, "Faith Development Theory"; Piper, "Faith Development"; Dykstra in Doninger, *Religion*. 52;
lelson, "Does Faith Develop?" 88.
[4] Piper, "Faith Development," 13.
[5] Piper, "Faith Development," 8.
[6] Hintersteiner, "Stages of Life," 41.

that FDT should properly be called ego development, and should be viewed as yet another aspect of that particular discipline.[127]

It is the belief of this work that Fowler, as a consequence of his chosen method of elucidation and choice of sub-components, was forced to engage in a form of reductionistic thinking. After all, it is very difficult to explicate the terms of any normative theory without resorting to a reductionistic model of development and measurement. That being said, however, Fowler's desire not to engage in reductionistic discourse beyond a certain point has resulted in the confusion of elements of his model, and a relative devaluing of the tenets of each developmental stage. As a result, FDT exhibits an insufficient level of concept definition, component correlation, and model integration to serve as a useful tool for pastoral ministers in today's complex environment. It is our assertion that a corrective to Fowler's scheme needs to address this lack of integrated clarity. Consequently, it is proposed that reductionistic tenets of construction should be pursued to their natural and complete end by the proponents of ego psychology. Faith development, therefore, would engage in a wholistic and integrated discourse around the building of meaning, the finding of significance, the forging and relation, and the determination of a personal orientation toward the ultimate. In this manner, a corrective model of FDT would avoid the trap of quasi-reductionism by proposing a model of existential apprehension rather than mechanical presentation.

This mechanical presentation brings us as to the second main area of difference between ego psychology, and what is believed should be the purview of faith development: the area of ministry. Many scholars have criticized FDT for its seeming lack of clarity in its methodology.[128] Of primary concern seems to be the rigour with which Fowler presents his stages. In his elucidation and explanation of the tenets of FDT, Fowler appeals to methodological stringency, scientific cogency,

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[127] Nelson, "Does Faith Develop?" 71.
[128] McDargh, "Faith Development Theory"; Piper, "Faith Development"; Hintersteiner, "Stages of Life," 42; Streib, "Extending our Vision"; Nelson, "Does Faith Develop?" 72.

and statistical relevance in his extrapolation of FDT as universal.[129] Thus, he positions himself along

other models of ego psychology in the 'hardness' of his stage formulations. Prominent thinkers in the

field of development such as Helmut Reich, however, have disagreed with Fowler's self-assessment

and have, as a result of the quasi-reductionism outlined above as well as the insufficient scope of

scientific investigation, categorized FDT as a 'soft' model of development.[130] Some scholars have

labored to reverse this assertion by modifying the approach of supporting FDT's tenets in order to

make them come more in line with scientific convention,[131] and yet these endeavours have been

called counterproductive by other more theologically-oriented scholars. These theological scholars

make a simple point that is salient, cogent, and challenging: how can we be sure that by increasing

the 'hardness' of empirical investigations related to FDT, we do not simultaneously sacrifice exactly

those elements of faith growth that are most pastorally and clinically serviceable?[132]

Herein lies the first theological corrective being proposed to FDT. By appealing to scientific

'hardness' in order to prove universality, we have to turn our backs on the more noumenal and

relational aspects of pastoral guidance – the *why* questions set out above. A cogent system of faith

development must take into account the psychodynamic, the relational, the interplay of meaning, and

the hermeneutic – all factors that are crucial to relationship with God as well as antithetical to the

pursuit of scientific hardness. Hence, the pursuit of scientific hardness eclipses an apprehension of

what McDargh calls an "irreducibly personal and peculiar mode of living," which is the very seat of

a personalized relationship with self, with other, and with God.[133] Nelson, speaking in the same vein

as McDargh, proposes that FDT introduces a theological challenge, in that it does not sufficiently

attend to the relational aspects of faith attenuation. According to Nelson, the notion of stages

undermines the relational and noumenal, and should be modified to address faith as a general

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[129] Fowler, *Stages of Faith*.
[130] Reich in McDargh "Faith Development Theory," 189.
[131] See Efans et al., *Structures*, 1999.
[132] McDargh, "Faith Development Theory," 189.
[133] McDargh, "Faith Development Theory," 189.

condition of being, a style of relation, an overall meaning-laden response to God's call.[134] This is a

theological challenge because, as we toil to understand our God, the realm of the divine, and our role

in that order, a model of faith development that tries to straddle both poles (structural, on the one

hand, and relational, on the other) threatens to sway the meaning filters through which the divine

relationship is viewed (in effect, downplaying or even eradicating the affective elements of faith).[135]

Hence, such as model would recast the God-human relationship in more or less mechanistic terms

and thereby move away from the more Biblical notions of personal relationship and communal unity

with God.[136] In response to this significant challenge, Piper has proposed that we come to view faith

development in a *horizontal* (relational, noumenal, existential, and meaning-laden) rather than a

vertical (structural, mechanistic, and regular) fashion. In so doing, he believes that the conceptual gap

in relation, scriptural harmony, and existential content introduced by the current FDT can be

addressed constructively.[137] Following the same line of thought, Michael Barnes and his associates

point out that different beliefs held by different people inevitably result in differing manifestations of

symbolic apprehension and divine relating. Thus it is not that symbolic apprehension has reached a

certain level of sophistication that matters, according to Barnes (this would be a matter for ego

psychology and epistemology); rather, it is that one's response to that symbolic knowing, one's

relation to belief, and one's ability to integrate knowledge and construal at a particular stage of ego

development that form the foundations of growthful faith development, as well as the core area of

concern for pastors and ministers.[138] In agreement with Piper, Barnes proposes that impactful notions

of faith development that are practically cogent and scripturally sound should take *styles of relating*

into account, and not structures of knowing. In FDT, the vertical, which is being addressed by ego

psychology anyhow, needs to be replaced by the horizontal; ego develops upward as faith develops

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[134] Nelson, "Does Faith Develop?" 72.
[135] Nelson, "Does Faith Develop?" 74.
[136] For more, see Steckel "Emergence of Morality,"168; Ford-Grabowsky, "The Journey of a Pilgrim," 112.
[137] Piper, "Faith Development," 12.
[138] Barnes et al, "The Formulation of Fowler Scale," 247.

outward.[139] Concept is replaced by relation; reduction is switched with integration, perception is

combined with intuition, knowledge is linked to insight, self-mastery yields to self-surrender, self-

determination is united with self-transcendence, and development is coordinated with relationship.[140]

It is this coordination and emphasis on relationality that brings us to the second theological

corrective for FDT: the required emphasis on something lasting. Ego psychology (as well the current

form of FDT) focuses on the development of a person's epistemology from more subjectively fused

stages, to more subjectively pure stages.[141] Thus, the focus of these disciplines is on the progressive

and regular movement through differing and qualitatively unique apprehensions of reality. Each of

these apprehensions is referred to as a 'stage'. Hence, ego psychology and current FDT work on the

basis that, as a person progresses through life, challenging stimuli cause disequilibrium to the

reigning epistemology and thereby precipitate an exercise of fundamental qualitative re-definition: in

effect, subjectivity is transformed, epistemology emerges in new clothes, and a new version of the

self is set forth. Each subsequent stage description is an account of the internal rebirths of

epistemological states, with each stage boasting ever-more sophisticated abilities of self-definition,

meaning-construction, and identity apprehension. As such, ego psychology and current FDT (even

the works of Piaget and Kohlberg for that matter) concentrate on the mutable, the transitory, the ever-

changing, and the continuously re-defined. Fowler does not question this progression, nor does he

postulate modifications to the approaches and processes of ego psychology. Consequently, he opens

the door to a serious question: in light of the fact that Fowler is dealing with faith development (a

concept that, by its very nature, should be steeped in the existential), what entity in his scheme is

lasting, continuous, and permanent? What intra-model object can we point to that retains its existence

and identity throughout life, and that could satisfactorily act as the agent of life-long existential

concern? As it stands, Fowler's scheme offers no such entity. All intra-model objects of FDT are

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[139] Piper, 'Faith Development," 11.
[140] Anthony et al., *Spiritual Choices*, 270.
[141] More on the mechanics of ego psychology will presented in Chapter 3 of this volume.

related to subjectivities that are held in particular stages – stages achieved through fundamental

qualitative redefinitions. But something qualitatively redefined is something different, a notion

suggested by the work of Piaget, Kolhberg, Kegan, and by Kuhn's ideal of the incommensurability of

stage paradigms.[142] As such, a serious corrective is suggested by this important omission: a

redefinition of FDT for our times must, in order to retain its essence as an existential and relational

matter, concern itself with a dimension of being that addresses continuity, presence, and constant

active influence throughout life. The corrective presentation of Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care

(FCPC) that follows (in upcoming chapters) will endeavour to do this very thing.

Part 4

Being Alone

Western popular culture is off balance. We are constantly bombarded by messages that

glorify the agent, aggrandize the personal, and revere the individual. In moments of setback, our

culture influences us to reason through the situation as if it were an individualized issue, rather than

one that had communal or collective dimensions and ramifications. We are frequently plagued by

news stories where individuals, having suffered a misfortune, do not report that misfortune as a

warning to neighbours, do not pursue lines of collective action (presumably because they did not

perceive the situation as a collective matter), turning a blind eye to negative situations in order not to

disturb the equilibrium of the self, and even refusing assistance to others, in order not to suffer

inconvenience. Scott Peck described these patterns over 20 years ago, claiming that unhealthy

individualism is increasing and that Western culture will find itself at a crossroads before long.[143]

Ironically, this negative deep-seated and seemingly ingrained individualism is a relatively recent

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[142] Piaget, *Epigenetic Stages*; Kegan, *The Evolving Self*; and Kuhn, *Structures*.
[143] Scott Peck, *A Different Drum*.

development, when viewed through the lens of communal language development.[144] Industrialization

fostered cultural artifacts that promoted the notion of human beings as sovereign (albeit replaceable)

units. As a consequence, a world of license, competition, and aloneness slowly infiltrated culture, and

began to influence the very meaning-structure of citizens.

This sovereignty and agency, however, have not been entirely negative in their appearance.

As a result of this self-centered way of reasoning, several disciplines were able to refine their

approaches to understanding human behaviour and interaction. There is no doubt, for example, that

this added layer of sovereignty and self-determination was one of the primary drivers underlying

psychotherapy's ability to assign accountability and responsibility to each individual person in

society. Where before, the collective sentiment could work to diffuse the allocation of personal

responsibility, the current individualism in our culture has the exact opposite effect.[145] So pervasive

and seminal is this individualist bias, that the very works of Piaget and Kohlberg used it as a means

of bolstering their belief in the moral and cognitive responsibility of each developing human. This

does not introduce a significant challenge to faith development discourse in itself, as the Biblical

account is replete with accounts of personal responsibility and accountability in the face of behaviour

and choice. Problems *do* arise, however, when this bias of personal responsibility eclipses the notion

of shared responsibility and relation (also a notion of great biblical import).

John Wilson and his associates, in discussing the relational, claim that an appropriate,

growthful, and scripturally cogent metaphor for understanding the interplay between self and other is

that of covenant.[146] Covenant, according to Wilson, transcends notions of instrumentalism and

utilitarianism, and points toward a synergistic integration and interpenetration of self and other.

Michael Cowan highlights the long history of communalism and its relation to covenant, in the

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[144] Efran et al., *Language Structure, and Change,* 104.
[145] Joy, *Moral Development Foundations,* 53.
[146] Wilson et al., *Moral Education,* 44-45.

Biblical tradition.[147] According to him, the growth of Judaism came through a shared sense of responsibility before God, a notion that is the fundamental inheritance of the Christian paradigm. The advent of industrialization, which forced this sense of common devotion out of the cultural repertoire, was a breach of the fundamental covenant forged between God and His people. As a consequence of this breakdown, Cowan continues, people in Western culture today feel, value, think, and act as if they exist somehow separately from others, and that relations that they forge are nothing other than voluntary ties they choose to maintain. Thus, notions of the shared and intersubjective have taken the back seat to notions of agency and personal power. And nowhere are the effects of individualism more powerfully felt than in Western humanist studies – an entire discipline of research dedicated to elucidating mechanisms and personal processes particular to the individual.

It is in this humanist tradition that Fowler finds himself. Fowler, a scholar deeply taken with the notion of covenant, himself freely admits that his conceptions of FDT focuses primarily on "the human side of the phenomenon of faith," although he takes care not to preclude the importance of one's response to grace and revelation. Fowler claims that it is his wish to have his sequence of stages understood so as to inform a person's ways of relating to, and connecting with others, as he/she orients him/herself to the ultimate.[148] This claim, however, cannot come to fruition in his FDT, as it is so heavily based on the humanist notions of ego psychology and personal meaning-making.[149] What we have in Fowler's stages is a depiction of a developing individual who, in responding to the challenges presented by experience, converts his/her epistemology in order to better attenuate personal construal with presented challenge and contradiction. In agreement with Cowan, this work asserts that such a construction and point of view amounts to a vision of the

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[147] Cowan, "Emerging in Love," 49.
[148] Fowler, "Forward," xiii.
[149] Ego Psychology's mission is to come to an understanding of the internal machinations of psyche as it comes to apprehend the complexities of experience. As such, it is, by its very nature, an individualistic endeavour. One of the critiques lobbied against the field of study regards its lack of bi-directionality between ego and environment. Fowler's FDT, basing itself heavily on tenets of ego psychology, has inherited the same bias.

powerful self, receiving packages of experience and converting them into stimuli for personal

movement. What we have, then, is the creation of a system of growth that is predominantly uni-

directional in its impetus, leaving out the dialogical aspects of intersubjective apprehension. Thus, we

have come to yet another proposed corrective to FDT: the movement from the unidirectional to the

dialogical, from the individualist to the intersubjective integrationist.

Psychologists, philosophers, and theologians have long propounded an integrationist view of

individual-other interrelation.[150] In these fields, there is a strong belief that the interrelation between

the individuals is one of inter-dependent definition, reification, contradiction, and identity.

Intersubjective interaction, then, is not simply an apprehension of and participation in immediate

norms. Rather, it is a ubiquitous matrix of influence and definition that is concretized in the current

relationship as well as in the subjectivity of each person in that relationship. Whiteheadian process

philosophy has much to inform this complex notion of dialectical intersubjective interaction.

According to Whitehead, all actual entities are the concrescence of the extraordinary array of

interrelated affects that find a common synergy. He stipulates that the driving force of actual-ness in

the universe is affect itself – where the affect from all possible sources combine in particular arrays

of coordination in order to bring an actual entity into being and definition. In other words, entities

only exist because of their relations (affections) to other entities.[151]

Whitehead's conception of entities is analogous to this complex image. All entities exist

because they are the concrescence of complex and interdependent, determinative and affective

relationships. Thus, the ontology of the existence is utterly complex, relational, and interlocked. It is

to this conception of integration that we appeal when we refer to the concept of dialogical

intersubjective interaction. Dialogical intersubjective interaction, then, is an intricately woven matrix

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[150] Searle, *Construction of Social Reality*, Distin, *Selfish meme;* Riceour, *Symbolism of Evil;* Kegan, *In Over our Heads;* Whitehead, *Process and Reality;* Buber, *Knowledge of Man;* Antony, *Psychotherapies;* Winnicott, *Maturational Process,* Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode.*
[151] Whitehead, *Process and Reality.*

of forces that shapes the very fabric of personal attenuation, while simultaneously shaping the form of relation itself. We make, yet we are made; we cause, yet we are caused; we shape, yet we are shaped; we are agents, yet we are contingent; we are independent, yet, to call on Schleiermacher's well known phrase, we are utterly dependent. It is this dialogical dimension of interrelation that proposes a corrective to FDT.

As focused in the noumenal and relational, a concept of faith development cannot but take account of the complexity that is introduced by external interaction. Dimension of intersubjective affection, experiential influence, and mutual definition must form one of the bases from which faith development, as an existential focus on growth, must rest. Therefore, it is proposed that a corrective to the current form of FDT is an intensive apprehension and application of the dynamics of shared identification. Such an identification would focus on the growing subjectivity's relation to all manner of things external, and would work to help pastors and ministers diagnose gaps in self-other definition and well as in relational openness. Only in this way can a faith development scheme attend to the integrated and whole person, rather than to quasi-reductionistic components. Only in this way can a faith development scheme address the actual complexities of every day encounter, rather than modulate proxies of experience. And only in this way can a faith development ensure that God remains unfettered and transcendent, and that the ultimate does not degenerate into worldly notions of idealized humanity.[152]

But this notion of dialogical intersubjective interaction brings us to another seminal concern: does FDT give pastors and ministers the tools they need to navigate the complexities of external relation, as well as internal definition? Is FDT, as a scheme of development, robust enough to meet the needs of the various types of pastoral professionals as they each work with faith development in their own way? It is to this question of pastoral application that we now turn.

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[52] I am indebted to Paul Pruyser for the term 'idealized humanity', *Changing Views*, 21.

Part 5

Using and Generalizing: Pastoral Use of FDT

Fowler was very concerned throughout his writings to ensure that his FDT was useful to his fellow pastors and ministers. He believed that, having a firm grasp of the proclivities of faith progression would help pastors and ministers better assess the epistemology and growth potentials of particular careseekers. His belief was that, by having a grasp in a careseeker's abilities in the three foundational areas of FDT (symbolic apprehension, moral reasoning, and cognitive rationality), a pastoral professional would be better able to devise and implement an intervention that presents appropriate stimuli, growthful contradiction, and connecting impetus to the careseeker's psyche. To this end, deliberate and focused intervention and interactions could produce a healing relationship and environment, that would help the careseeker find a degree of peace and equilibrium. As we have seen, however, Fowler warned that, although it is true that higher stages of development are considered to be more mature than lower ones, pastoral professionals are not to present stimuli to careseekers in such a way as to promote the movement through the stages.[53] Thus, FDT presents a paradoxical face of presenting models of maturity and then requiring practitioners *not* to pursue them. But, a basic question arises from this paradox: does FDT in its current form provide pastoral professionals with the tools they need to walk with careseekers in the hopes of effecting healing, *without* seeking to promote stage progression?

These are the bones of an old controversy that continues to dog FDT. In its mechanistic and structural approach, FDT does little else than provide information of the aspects of stage iterations. Consequently, FDT is limited in its ability to guide pastoral professionals in the determination of a careseeker's stage, or to help the pastor prepare for the complexities of interrelating with these same careseekers. In other words, there is no way for a pastoral professional to effectively assess stage levels, without resorting to theory-laden language and meaning biases. In addition, after thirty years

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[53] Fowler, *Stages of Faith.*

in the pastoral marketplace, FDT does not offer strategies through which to better meet the needs of growing subjects on the road of faith development. As a result, pastoral professionals are not given the tools they need to learn how to apply FDT throughout the complexities and variations of their daily encounters. Hence, only sub-segments of the pastoral landscape, those segments that have recourse to practical tools of intervention, can potentially use the general guidelines presented in FDT. In these pages, we will categorize the sub-segments of the pastoral field into four main areas: education, counseling, and praxis. We will deal with each of these components separately and discuss their relation to FDT.

The field of pastoral education has most benefited from the contributions of FDT. In this field, educators, who are concerned with planting the seeds for cognitive and epistemological development within the minds of their students, can use the basic tenets of FDT's stages to guide the complexity and shape of the content of their lessons. Consequently, faith educators can now build curricula that span several developmental stages, and thereby synergize their knowledge of subject matter with their new found appreciation for stage-specific capabilities. And yet, the application of FDT to faith education presents some difficult challenges. To begin with, FDT would imply that, as a result of the particular developmental stage of psyche, extra-stage understanding is impossible. In other words, as a consequence of the incommensurability of the orders of psyche, a person at Stage 2 can never understand the outlook of someone at Stage 4, regardless of the intensiveness or comprehensiveness of the explanation. As such, the first main challenge to faith educators is to determine how to teach and guide learners who are in fact at higher stages of faith development than they are themselves. How can a minister guide someone through a course of education, when that learner has a more comprehensive, connected, and integrated view of circumstances than the minister? How can a pastoral educator know how to devise problems and challenges that are

appropriate for a level of consciousness they allegedly cannot fathom?[154] FDT, in its mechanistic and structural approach to faith development, cannot provide an answer to these daunting questions. Without recourse to what we have termed as the 'horizontal' aspects of faith growth, a pastoral educator cannot be of use to students who exhibit a more developed faith stage. This presents an issue of practical and theoretical concern, as it threatens a world in which faith education is not available to exponents of Stages 4 and 5. In addition, taking a 'horizontal' approach to faith development rectifies another observed and confounding problem: the occurrence of seemingly higher-stage behaviour from the innocence and openness of children.

Carl Streib points out that, in his studies and observations, several children exhibit an openness, understanding, and compassion akin to a higher-stage conception of faith development. These children are inquisitive about the beliefs of others, engage in a true form intersubjective understanding, are deeply aware of their reliance on the environment, and demonstrate staggering forgiveness and loving care.[155] This poses a severe challenge for faith educators who use the current incarnation of FDT as an apprehension filter. The current vertical structure of FDT would select out apprehensions of interaction, whether labeling it as aberrant, recasting it to fit a particular and expected stage attenuation, or worse yet, not registering its existence altogether. Current FDT, then, carries a second critical failure risk for pastoral educators: the proper and effective diagnosis of a unique person's faithful capabilities. As with the incidence of teaching higher-stage level learners, a solution to this problem can be found in the use of a horizontal approach to faith development. In the horizontal modality, elements of the noumenal, relational, and existential are viewed as primary over questions of stage. Thus, whereas a child at Stage 2 can be known to have concrete operational cognition and mercantile morality, he or she does not have to be labeled as similarly immature and limited in *relational* connection and interpersonal apprehension. Horizontal emphasis propounds the

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[54] Fowler, *Stages of Faith;* Kegan, *The Evolving Self.*
[55] Streib, 'Extending our Vision," 432.

possibility that, within Stage 2 cognition, there is a wide range of relational behaviour that is seminal to faith apprehension. By separating the vertical from the horizontal, and by allowing the horizontal to stand on its own as a viable mode of personal engagement, we release ourselves from the simple equation of interrelation with cognitive limitations, or worse yet, with univocal expectations to multi-layered issues. And yet, if there are challenges in using FDT in the field of pastoral education, the situation is even starker in the field of pastoral counseling.

The field of pastoral counseling is an arena of eclectic practice. Counselors are forever upgrading their skills and seeking novel and effective techniques to connect with their careseekers. Counseling is not only a pastoral, and psychological undertaking, it is also a very practical discipline, where frameworks, interventions, and behaviours are practiced, perfected and applied to various circumstances in order to better connect with careseekers, and walk with them as they toil to achieve the healing they seek. FDT, in its present form, does not provide pastoral counselors with a useful roster of approaches and frameworks. Although a framework in itself, FDT is a meta-theory of development, rather than a *bona fide* theory of practice, thereby leaving pastoral counselors with a functional gap to be filled in by other approaches. As a meta-theory, FDT helps counselors think about the coordination of theories and allows them to make discriminations between them. Counselors can use FDT to help them understand the potential progression of a careseeker, but they cannot use its tenets to devise actual interventions, interact in intersubjective space, or maintain particular forms of holding environments. In addition, in order not to engage the hubris of moving the careseeker to places the counselor desires, practitioners cannot use the framework to help careseekers move to higher stages of faith understanding. Thus, the challenging paradox of FDT makes itself known yet again: counselors can come to understand FDT as a meta-theory but are not to use it to bring about its telos. Hence, FDT is an interesting construct for pastoral counselors to use in their educative discourse, but has limited use as a practical tool of healing.

The field of pastoral praxis is the third field of practical ministry that has a relationship with faith development. By pastoral praxis is meant all activities of a pastoral nature that are intended to shepherd persons and congregations through the complexities of faith and life. Activities such as preaching, worship, liturgy, ritual, social activism, and ceremony fall into the category of pastoral praxis. Praxis, however, is an extremely complex field: its daily activities involve the engagement of all manner of congregant, at all levels of development, with all manner of hopes. Therefore, and to use Fowler's phrase, pastoral praxis involves the encountering and guiding of an 'ecology of faith' – a panoply of phenotypic incarnations as well as a multiplicity of meaning biases and understandings.[156] Yet although ministers spend hours, days, and weeks planning sermons, exercises, and religious observances, they can find little help in the tenets of FDT in dealing with this ecology of multiplicity. Fowler claims that every congregation has a minimum expectable level of development to which its congregants aspire and adhere, and that ministry can take stock of that faith apprehension when planning observances and presentations.[157] Yet, FDT provides no way of assessing the state of an ecology of faith apprehension, let alone providing tools for optimal engagement of that apprehension. Thus, as with pastoral counseling, FDT remains as an interesting meta-theory that has limited applicability in the world of praxis.

We have worked through the three main categories of practical ministry: education, counseling, and praxis. In each case, FDT has found limited use in the carrying out of specific functions, and has in some cases, been relinquished to the status of 'object of curiosity'. Even in pastoral education, where FDT has received the most acclaim and use, FDT's structuralist approach brings out some serious challenges that have not yet been addressed by Fowler. Therefore, it is concluded that FDT is in need of revision by moving away from the vertical axis of growth and

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[156] Fowler, *Weaving the New Creation.*
[157] Fowler, *Weaving the New Creation.*

concentrating on the horizontal. Only in this approach to faith development can a new faith

development model render itself useful and practical to practitioners in all four categories.

A Final Thought

In the foregoing section, we covered several important weaknesses of FDT: the confusion of

FDT with meaning-making, the confusion of FDT with ego psychology, the emphasis on vertical

structures of development over horizontal structures of relation, the effects of FDT's individualist

bias, the lack of an identified subject of development that is lasting ad permanent, and the limited

uses of FDT in the field of practical ministry. These weaknesses are strong, salient, and challenging.

Their very nature precludes the participation of FDT in a constructive form of existential questing.

Should we take the task of proposing correctives to FDT seriously, they cannot be taken lightly or set

aside.

We have repeatedly stated that our ultimate purpose is to propose a re-visioned conception of

faith development as based in a model called Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) – a form of

pastoral and horizontal intervention focused on aiding the developing careseeker through his/her own

personal quest. FCPC will model itself on the three founding tenets of Fowler's FDT (experiential

apprehension, symbolic representation, and knowing/construal). Yet before we could engage in the

elucidation of FCPC, we first had to take account of its methodological, philosophical, and

theological strengths and weaknesses, in order to better align FCPC's framework toward FDT's

considerable strengths while being able to resolve some of its most criticized weakenesses. As such,

the purpose of the next chapter is to propose methodological, philosophical, and pastoral correctives

to Fowler's FDT. These correctives, in conjunction with FDT's strengths, will then be used to

illuminate the three primary components of FCPC (Chapters 7 – 9), based as they are on the three

founding tenets of FDT. In effect, what Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) provides us is a

pastorally useful framework of relational apprehension that provides the basis for a re-visioned

model of faith development. It is to the question of FDT correctives that we now turn our attention.

SECTION 3

Re-visioning the Basics

In the last section, we undertook to outline the background of Fowler's Faith Development Theory (FDT) and its tenets, as well as highlight some of the positive and negative aspects of the theory (and Fowler's approach to it). As such, summarizing our conversation to date, we found that Fowler's conception of FDT was based on three main categorical foundations:

1. The faculty of experiential apprehension (the basis of all knowing and a primary driver of the remaining three faculties)

2. The faculty of symbolic representation (including internal image representation)

3. The faculty of knowing (the basis of construal and meaning-making).

In addition, FDT is found to be constructive and desirable because of a few key points:

1. Fowler assumes that humans are ontologically potentiated for partnership with God,

2. Fowler's definition gives faith a central role in human understanding,

3. Fowler offers a model of faith development that is universal,

4. Fowler believes that FDT would not be effective unless it could be assimilated as a personal experience within the questing person,

5. FDT does not succumb to hardcore reductionism and therefore, provides a synergistic space for psychology and ministry to converse.

Finally, we found that, upon careful scrutiny, Fowler's conception of FDT is plagued with a few important weaknesses:

1. It fundamentally confuses faith with the process of meaning-making,[158]

2. It unilaterally emphasizes a vertical approach to development, at the expense of a horizontal one,

3. It conflates its own principles with the tenets of ego psychology,

4. It does not name a lasting and permanent entity that is the subject of change,

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[158] We proposed a solution to this in Chapter 2, in our presentation of the definition of meaning-making.

5. It displays unidirectional individualist bias that counteracts intersubjective

   interaction, and

6. It has found limited use in the field of practical ministry.[159]

As a consequence of the salience of these weaknesses, it was proposed that a new model of

faith development be put forth: one that focuses on the existential and relational (the horizontal)

elements of being rather than the structural and sequential (the vertical), and one that retains the

significant strengths introduced by Fowler's FDT, while simultaneously resolving the important

weaknesses proposed in these pages. The notion of Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) will be

presented as the answer to this delicate task. In this chapter, we will discuss correctives to FDT's

weaknesses, that will then serve as the background against which Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care

will be built. In subsequent chapters, we will then turn our attention to the elucidation of the

components of FCPC based on the three founding tenets of FDT, build a revised approach to faith

development, and relate the presented tenets to Fowler's FDT.

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[159] For more, see Chapter 2.

Chapter 3

The Role of Ego Psychology

Ego psychology is a discipline that undertakes to elucidate the mechanisms and structures of

human growth and development over the course of a lifecycle. It is fundamentally a depth

psychology that works to understand the underlying structures of consciousness that result in the

phenotypic aspects of personhood (thought, affect, relation, behaviour). Fowler relied very heavily

on the tenets of ego psychology in the elucidation of FDT. In fact, Fowler himself acknowledges an

almost exact parallel between FDT and the stages of selfhood presented in ego psychology,

especially in the work of one of its most prolific proponents, Robert Kegan.[160] The purpose of this

chapter is to delineate the close relationship between ego psychology and FDT, and to propose a

constructive role for this coupling within Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC).

Part 1

The Bases of Ego Psychology

Robert Kegan, working in the field of ego psychology, is a current day exponent of the

structuralist school of human development. Standing at the confluence of the fields of structural

psychology, European philosophy, and epistemology, Kegan's concepts present a framework of

meaning apprehension and growth that are both cogent and compelling. The originality of Kegan's

work lies not in the fundamental mechanisms proposed by his growth model, nor in the behavioural

tenets of his stages. Rather, his considerable originality lies in his probing exposition of ever-deeper

layers of epistemological apprehension – layers that, in and of themselves, cause the phenotypic

incarnations of stages to arise. Before we can come to a fuller appreciation of the constructions of his

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[160] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care,* 53; Kegan, *The Evolving Self.*

model, however, it is useful to briefly explore the foundations on which Kegan built his model. Not

surprisingly, Kegan's framework of epistemological function is based on the work of Piaget,

Kohlberg, and Erickson.

Piaget's research in cognitive development was of particular importance to Kegan. This

research explicated the stages of cognitive ability from birth to mid-teens. In Piaget's framework, a

newborn, displaying the abilities of Sensorimotor cognition (a state in which reasoning is actually

conducted through the use of one's physical body), slowly develops through the stages of Pre-

Operational and Concrete Operational cognition, until this newborn becomes a teenager and reaches

the apex of cognitive ability – Formal Operations (a refined cognition steeped in the ability to meta-

think and meta-represent). It was not until decades later that Herbert Koplowitz, a psychologist and

brain researcher, proposed a further Post-Formal Operations stage to Piaget's work – a stage that

transcends the duality of logical discourse and begins to understand the world in dialogical and even

paradoxical ways – a more existential and relational orientation.[161] These stages are crucial to

Kegan's ego psychology because they outline the fundamental cognitive capabilities of children at

various ages – capabilities that arise from the very development of the growing brain.

Kegan's work, however, although it relied heavily on the tenets of Piagetian stage theory,

found an even deeper grounding in Piagetian mechanics. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Piaget extended

the Hegelian concept of Thesis-Antithesis-Synthesis, thereby proposing a model where a current state

of cognition (thesis), interprets the world in a particular way, until an unexpected and powerful

experience throws epistemology into disequilibrium (antithesis). In order to resolve this dilemma and

dispel the inescapable tension related to this state, the groping consciousness devises a new and

fundamentally re-defined way of constructing reality – a way that retains all the truths from the

former state of knowing, while simultaneously resolving the challenges presented by the antithesis

(synthesis). Piagetian vocabulary, however, had its own terms for this process. The ability of a

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[161] Koplowitz, *A Projection Beyond Piaget,* 272.

current construction of meaning to take in a new experience without undergoing disequilibrium was referred to as 'assimilation'. In the case where the current cognitive construction of reality is unable to assimilate a new experience, it is thereby thrown into a disequilibrated confusion that Piaget called 'decentration'. While decentered, a person seeks to find a construction of the world that makes significant sense in light of dissenting experiences, and eventually finds a way to synergize knowledge into a new construction. This synergy is referred to as 'accommodation'. Finally, having accommodated new information, the groping subjectivity settles into a new equilibrium, that now acts as the ground of further cognitive construction. This is the process of 'recentration'.[162]

In this way, Piaget extrapolated an Hegelian concept and devised a psychological construct that became seminal to structuralist ego psychological investigations to follow. This construction is of critical and central importance to Kegan's work (as well as that of Fowler); it is in fact transposed into Kegan's model as the very driver of growth and development. Yet, whereas Piaget was investigating the tenets of cognition, Kegan was not satisfied with stopping there. He was convinced that there is in fact a level of being beneath cognition from which cognition springs. Hence, in search of this deeper level of being, Kegan worked to assimilate the thought of Kohlberg.

Kohlberg's work finds significant harmony with Piagetian epistemology as it bases its growth impetus on the ideal of assimilation-decentration-accommodation-recentration. Kohlberg's work, however, sought to elucidate a deeper level of being expressed in moral reasoning. As a psychologist and epistemologist in his own right, Kohlberg based his theory on the notion that moral development is a form of reasoning – a reasoning about rules, and the authority they evoke in one's life. Thus, Kohlberg's work undertook interviews with subjects in which perplexing moral questions were asked. Based on the answers given, Kohlberg and his team were able to slot individuals into one of six (and later in his career, seven) stages of moral apprehension. This work, acting in concert and synergy with Piaget's scheme of cognitive development, became another pillar to Kegan's

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[162] Piaget, *Epigenetic Stages*, 126.

framework. In Kegan's elucidation of the deep-seated mechanisms of human understanding,

Kolhberg's meta-cognition and exposition of principled development provided an affective and

social dimension to Kegan's model, that was lacking in a strictly Piagetian construct. Thus, Kegan

toiled to subsume Kohlbergian tenets into a Piagetian framework of growth as he constructed his

depth psychology.

But a depth psychology would not be complete without including a social element.

Developmentalists such as Barry Zimmerman aptly and cogently warn against models of

development that underplay the contributions of the shared dimension of being, accusing such

conceptions of being unbalanced and one-sided.[163] Looking for a useful model of social interaction

and growth, Kegan turned to the Ericksonian stages of psychosocial development. In Erickson's

theory, psychosocial roles and exigencies are presented to the growing consciousness at various

times in a human's lifecycle. These exigencies make cognitive, behavioural, and affective demands

upon the growing psyche, and thereby present unique challenges. In order to mature, subjects have to

construct, understand and navigate these exigencies and emerge as somehow successful in the

accommodation, balance, and expression of the requirements of each of these exigencies. Over time,

a more generative and wise social identity emerges through these psychosocial challenges, and acts

as a basis through which relational interaction could proceed. Kegan was especially fascinated with

Erickson's notions of psychosocial maturity as they implied the ability of a person to construct and

apprehend his/her experiences in a particular and unique way, within a social matrix. Thus, Kegan

combined Ericksonian tenets of psychosocial interaction and meaning-making with the cognitive

principles of Piaget and moral constructions of Kohlberg, in order to produce a new and

comprehensive framework of human *being*.

According to Kegan, then, the notions of Piaget, Kohlberg, and Erickson cannot simply exist

alongside one another as separate paradigms of growth – such disintegration is anathema to the

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[163] Zimmerman, "Social Learning Theory," 40.

concepts of a unified self. As such, he fully believed that there must be some level of being, some

conception of epistemology that could account for all three models of maturation, while somehow

standing as their root. In other words, Kegan sought to find a construction of human epistemological

ontology that acts as the ground from which cognition, affect, and relation all stem. It was to address

this challenge that he proposed his notion of the 'order of consciousness'.[164]

In Kegan's scheme, an order of consciousness is the deepest and most effectual level of

human apprehension. Deeper than cognitive knowing, prior to moral reasoning, and determinative of

social interaction, an order of consciousness is a person's basic, complete, and often non-conscious

orientation to the encounters of life. Thus, the concept of order of consciousness is inextricably

steeped in the notion and mechanics of meaning-making and is the very basis on which a person's

understanding is based. Therefore, an order of consciousness is the most basic, most fundamental,

and deepest level of human consciousness that can exist – a level that goes so far as to define

identity, subjective apprehension, personal orientation, and the nature of one's grasping. As the

deepest level of human consciousness, the order of consciousness is the ground from which

cognition, affect, relation, moral reasoning, and behaviour all spring. It is literally the state of one's

consciousness, at a particular moment in time. According to Kegan, then, it is not that one's

knowing, cognition, morality, or environmental interaction develops over time; it is rather that one's

order of consciousness develops, and as a result, the contingent levels of being (cognition, affect,

etc.) change as well. Hence, Kegan identified a dimension of human grasping that stands at the

deepest level of being – at the constitutive and ontological level of meaning-making. And yet,

although he postulated a novel apprehensive entity that defines human consciousness, Kegan was

able to retain the fundamental Piagetian mechanics of development in his elucidation of

consciousness growth. The concept of the development of consciousness through Piagetian

mechanics was effectively explained by Kegan through his notion of Subject-Object Theory. What

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[164] Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 73.

follows is a quick summary of the tenets of this theory. It is important to have an understanding of

subject-object theory in order to be able to fully appreciate the direction and comprehensiveness of

Kegan's ego psychology as well as our eventual conclusions and correctives, regarding FDT.

Part 2

Subject-Object Theory

Subject-Object Theory is the depth psychology construct that undergirds Kegan's model of

development. In essence, the model states that our subjectivities, apprehending and understanding the

world of objects around themselves, develop and transform through the re-alignment of subjective

understanding. In other words, subjects develop as they come to recognize their subjectivities in

novel ways. And yet, this definition carries within itself the assumption of a complementary process:

a change in one's understanding of subject must by definition come with a concomitant change in

one's understanding of object. In order to explicate this concept further, a few definitions are

important.

According to Kegan, 'object' refers to those elements of our knowing or organizing that we can

"reflect on, handle, look at, perceive, be responsible for, relate to each other, take control of,

internalize, assimilate, or otherwise operate on."[165] All these characteristics highlight the fact that the

elements of current knowing are not the whole of who we are. They are elements that are distinct

enough from us that we can recognize them and do something about them.

'Subject', on the other hand, refers to those elements of our organizing or grasping with which

we identify ourselves, to which we tie ourselves, with which we are fused, in which we are

embedded.[166] In other words, whereas 'object' refers to any entity (material or non-material) that can

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[165] Kegan, *The Evolving Self,* 32.
[166] Kegan, *The Evolving Self,* 32.

be named or acted upon by our order of consciousness, 'subject' refers to all other (hidden) entities in

consciousness. In Kegan's words:

> Object speaks to that which some motion has made separate or
> distinct from the Self. In addition, 'object' is separate and distinct
> from its own motion. . . We cannot be responsible for, in control of,
> or effectual upon that which is subject [since it is fused with our
> identity]. Subject is immediate; object is mediate. Subject is ultimate
> or absolute; object is relative.[167]

Subject-Object Theory, however, is not meant to depict a static state of object apprehension. Rather,

the point of this theory is the explication of the *development* of an order of consciousness. According

to Subject-Object Theory, then, an order of consciousness develops through the process of

decentration, where a disequilibrating stimulus causes subjectivity to take notice of a part of itself.

Yet, by that very act of noticing, that once-unnoticed or hidden piece of subjectivity moves from

subject and becomes a new object to the now-refined subjectivity (since it can now be apprehended).

This process is developmentally desirable because, by this line of reasoning, growth is inextricably

linked to our ability to develop a more refined and pure apprehension of our very subjects – literally,

to come to discover ourselves more and more, as we truly are. Thus, development has to do with our

relationship to those elements that the movement of development, through decentration, has un-fused

from our subjectivity, has made separate from us, and has therefore added to our repertoire of

external entities (objects).[168] Our experience of growth is held within the process and dynamics of

this separation itself. Therefore, as Kegan states, objects are known only through the lens of the

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[167] Kegan, *The Evolving Self,* 12.
[168] Kegan's Piagtian construct draws heavily on the work of Von Glaserfled, who stated that cognitive and biological systems continue to exist as long as they are *viable* – able to get by despite the constrains of the current environment. Von Galserfeld believes therefore that human knowing is not the result of matching some external reality, but rather the consequence of being able to adequately assimilate the vagaries of an external environment. As such, Kegan would say that an order of consciousness continues to exist as long as it is viable. Once it is no longer viable, it will undergo Subject-Object rebalancing. Von Glaserfeld, "Concepts of Adaptation," 90-93.

subject, and the subject can come to know itself only by acting on objects, whether the action is material, cognitive, affective, social, or spiritual.[169]

Thus, what Subject-Object Theory provides us is a unique and incisive Piagetian structure for understanding development: in essence, our subjectivity is the very core of our identity (we believe that we actually *are* our subjects); our conceptions of ourselves (our subjectivities) are always confounded with psychic, personal, relational, and existential elements that are meaningful to the current state of our life project; as a decentering stimulus makes itself known, however, portions of these fused psychic, personal, or existential elements come to be known as 'not' part of one's subjectivity; the now fragmented piece of subjectivity, by virtue of its cleaving from one's very subject, comes to be seen as separate, and thereby, because it can now be consciously apprehended and/or worked upon, enters the realm of 'object', leaving in its wake a revised notion of *who* we are. Therefore, the movement of Subject-Object Theory is in itself the movement of identity formation. According to practical theologian Eugene Mischey, identity achievement is the backbone to higher forms of understanding, including the understanding that is inherent in faith development.[170]

According to Kegan's Subject-Object Theory, then, the process of human development involves an increase in vision through the refinement of the subject, and *the very creation of new objects*.[171] In this creation, we distance ourselves from the object and stand apart from it and therefore undergo a transformative differentiation (subject refinement). In other words, by separating from that which we now perceive as 'not me', we refine our sense of subject, emerge from a fusion with externals that once confounded our perceptions, and develop a purer, more integrous, more cohesive, and better apprehended subject. In contradistinction to this process, by creating the object and standing apart from it, we have created a strange duality in our understanding. This duality is not a tenable state, since holding something at a constant distance from consciousness requires the outlay of

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[169] Kegan, *The Evolving Self,* 77.
[170] Mischey in Mosley, "Forms of Logic in Faith Development," 173.
[171] Kegan, *The Evolving Self,* 77.

considerable energy. As such, in light of the fact that we can now literally perceive that which was once hidden to us (the new object), we can choose to incorporate this new object into our conceptions of reality, and therefore, for the first time, enter into a relationship with it and integrate it into our new worldview (hence, Subject-Object relations). Consequently, this creative process brings together the two poles of person and other, of differentiation and integration.[172] Such a notion of development as the interplay of differentiation and integration has been propounded in several discourses. Martin Buber stated that it is a unique quality of humankind that it can stand apart from its intra-personal discoveries and simultaneously enter into a dialogical relationship with them.[173] He goes on to state, however, that differentiation and integration are not to be viewed through the lens of temporal succession. Rather, the very act of differentiation creates the fundamental presupposition for the act of integration, and thereby brings about an interrelation where the two dimensions relate to one another in dialogical and dialectical terms. As such, Buber calls the differentiation/integration dyad a 'synthesizing apperception', by which we establish a relationship, not with the individual object that has been created, but rather with the whole of existence, as that whole has now been affected by the addition of the new object.[174] Hence, development can be said to be the movement of one wholistic apprehension of the entire person (or what Kegan might call the order of consciousness), to a different and more interrelated wholistic apprehension of the whole person. In the words of Buber, "The conception of wholeness and unity is in its origin identical with the conception of the world to which man [sic] is turned."[175]

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[172] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 34.; Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 8.
[173] Buber in *The Knowledge of Man*, 51.
[174] Buber in *The Knowledge of Man*, 52; to further this point, in examining the roots of personality, Bakan suggests two fundamental modes of human existence: one is agency which represents the self-asserting existence of an individual organism; the other is communion, which represents the participation of the individual in a mutual and interpersonal reality. Bakan, "Coming to Terms with Death," 206.
[175] Buber in *The Knowledge of Man*, 52.

Part 3

Orders of Consciousness as Cultures of Embeddedness

To this point in our discussion, we have covered the bases of Kegan's ego psychology; we have

also discussed the fundamental definitions of Kegan's Piagetian construct of development, as that

construct is mediated through Subject-Object Theory. And yet, one last question remains in our

elucidation of this important theory. Does Kegan's conception of the development of orders of

consciousness contain a claim of universalism, and if so, how is this claim substantiated? To answer

this question, we have to delve a little more deeply into the ontology of orders of consciousness.

It should clear from the foregoing that, ego psychology, basing itself on the mechanics of

personal apprehension and experience, intimates a brand of relativism that threatens to call its

universality into question. Such an eventuality, however, would denude the theory of its incisiveness

and relinquish it to the status of 'object of curiosity' within the developmental lexicon. And yet,

Kegan's construction transcends this danger by positing the notion of a 'culture of embeddedness'.[176]

According to Kegan's research, cultures of embeddedness arise as the natural outflow of Subject-

Object Theory. Subject-Object Theory states that each person experiences an array of subjective and

objective apprehensions that, together, form the basis of one's conception of self-identity. In other

words, one constructs who one is, through the apprehension of one's relation to the array of objects

grasped by subjectivity. And yet, this array of subject-to-object relation is not constructed randomly,

but rather is governed by the experiences and capabilities that underlie development throughout a

lifecycle. Hence, an infant, reasoning through Sensorimotor cognition and having an extremely

limited experience with any objective world, would only be able to assimilate objective

apprehensions at a particular level of sophistication.[177] For the infant, this level of sophistication is

confined by the reality that infants begin with no understanding of external existence, and are

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[176] For more on cultures of embeddedness, see, Kegan, *Evolving Self, In Over Our Heads.*

[177] Note that in this context, 'assimilation' is meant in the Piagetian manner.

effectively ruled by their physical needs and reflexes. Since they have no experience with these reflexes, the reflexes themselves go unnoticed by the new subjectivity, and thereby are considered to be fused with subjectivity. As a consequence, an infant is thought to view reality through the lens of a self-identity that is inextricably interlinked with personal reflex. Describing this state, Kegan stipulates that the infant is *embedded* in an order of consciousness that deems reflexes to be immediate and absolute, the very incarnation of one's identity. Over time, however, these same infants develop a rudimentary understanding of personal reflexes as somehow separate from themselves (for example, in the eventuality where a child perceives that her arm is not part of her identity, but rather a separate and distinct entity that she can now control). This ability to understand the control of her reflexes results in a Piagetian subject-to-object rebalancing. Thus, the fused subjectivity of the infant, having come to know her reflexes (e.g. arm) as separate, has created an objective distance between herself and her reflexes. She has refined her subjectivity to exclude the notions of reflex, and increased her apprehension of objectivity by adding the concept of reflex. In other words, she has come to see reflexes as something other, and therefore can now exert control over them.

And yet, the story of development does not stop there. According to Kegan, this movement of subjective refinement does not only move an infant out of a particular culture of embeddedness, but also deposits the growing infant into a new culture of embeddedness. In other words, the movement out of a prior culture of embeddedness (through the process of subject-object rebalancing) leads to the development of objective apprehension, but also to the subsequent embeddedness of the new subjectivity in a novel culture of embeddedness. As such, an infant that grows out of a culture of embeddedness defined by reflexes will develop into a culture of embeddedness now steeped in perceptions (i.e. the subjectivity that was once fused with reflexes, becomes unfused with them, and finds itself fused with the next layer of complexity on the scale of objective apprehension – perception). Therefore, Subject-Object Theory, working at the level of orders of consciousness,

creates a recurrent and inescapable cycle of release from a particular subjective fusion, to embeddedness in another. Freeing ourselves from one 'absolute' environment, we find ourselves placed squarely in the clutches of a subsequent one. We are continually challenged throughout life by the incompleteness of our culture of embeddedness, and the very movement of self-development, according to Kegan, is the *creation of objects that results in subjective movements through ever-more sophisticated cultures of embeddedness* – through the creation of ever-more sophisticated orders of consciousness.

And the culminating feature of this theory comes with Kegan's final assertion: through intensive rounds of study and research, Kegan and his team have concluded that the sequence of cultures of embeddedness experienced by growing subjectivities is regular, generalizable, and (as a result of standing as the prior ground of cognition, affect, and relation) is universal. All manner of cultural and personal diversity is nothing other than the particular expression of the forms contained within the regular progression of orders of consciousness, throughout life. Orders of consciousness, therefore, are a unifying construction for understanding human grasping. They focus, not on the *what* of apprehension, but rather on the *how*. The universality of the tenets of Kegan's ego psychology have found scientific corroboration by other scholars, and therefore stands as a compelling and robust theory of human epistemological development.[178] And yet, Kegan's conception does not stop at the level of macro-constructions of consciousness. As part of his research, Kegan postulated a series of growth stages that provide an exposition of the very iterations of these universal orders of consciousness, as they appear throughout the various stages of the lifecycle. Our final task is to briefly outline the content of these developmental stages, and compare them with those of FDT.

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[178] See Furushima, "Faith Development," 215; Kwilecki in Sigel et al., *New Directions.*

Part 4

Comparing Stages

To date in our discussion, we have outlined the key elements of Robert Kegan's ego psychology

model, and summarized its key theoretical underpinnings. Although we have not explicitly stated it

up to this point, what becomes clear when a comparison is undertaken, is that Fowler's conception of

FDT is nearly identical to what Kegan has proposed as a corroborated mechanism of development. In

fact, in certain areas, Kegan's theory provides definitions that are lacking in FDT. Table 1 provides a

snapshot of the similarities and differences of these two theories, as seen through the lens of model

construction.

Table 1: Comparison of Model Construction of Kegan's ego Psychology and Fowler's FDT

Model Construction		
Conceptual Item	**Kegan's Model of Development**	**Fowler's FDT**
Basis of theory	The work of Piaget, Kohlberg, and Erickson	The work of Piaget, Kohlberg, and Erickson
Driving mechanism of growth	Piagetian construct of assimilation-decentration-accommodation-recentration	Piagetian construct of assimilation-decentration-accommodation- recentration
Sphere of influence of subject of development	The ground of meaning, cognition, affect, and relation	Phenotypic expression of faithful relatedness
Driver of developmental movement	Viability of the order of consciousness	Viability of faith apprehension
The focus of the theory	The *how* of apprehension and development	The *how* of development
Subject of development	Order of consciousness	Unspecified
Process of development	Subject-Object Theory	Unspecified

What we can conclude from Table 1 is that Kegan's conception is more complete, in terms of

its theoretical underpinnings, and is mirrored very closely by Fowler's FDT. The extent of this

mirroring only increases as we take a look at the details of each stage (Table 2).

Table 2: Comparison of stages of Kegan's ego psychology and Fowler's FDT

Stages of Growth		
Stage	**Kegan's Model of Development**[179]	**Fowler's FDT**[180]
Stage 0	• Embedded in reflexes • Sensorimotor cognition • Development of pre-imagery • Fully subjective • Seat of psychosocial trust	• Sensorimotor cognition • Development of pre-imagery • Seat of psychosocial trust
Stage 1	• Objectified reflexes; embedded in perceptions • Pre-Operational cognition resulting in magical thinking and inability to synthesize coherent narratives • Unable to hold more than a single perception at once • Fundamentally heteronymous morality • Need for repetition	• Pre-Operational cognition resulting in magical thinking • Inability to synthesize coherent narratives • Fundamentally heteronymous morality • Need for ritualized play
Stage 2	• Perceptions objectified; embedded in needs and wishes • Concrete Operational cognition, deeply concerned with concrete and physical world • Ability to master cognitive reversibilities, resulting in greater internal integrity • Development of reciprocity and the morality of the marketplace	• Concrete Operational cognition, deeply concerned with concrete and physical world (God conceived in concrete images; symbols interpreted as concrete and unidimensional) • Increased internal integrity resulting in ability to narratize experience and further understand narrative • Morality of the marketplace expressed in a police-like conscience
Stage 3	• Needs and wishes objectified; embedded in interpersonal and mutual • Formal Operational cognition, with ability	• World of the divine constructed in interpersonal terms • Formal Operational cognition resulting in

[179] Kegan , *The Evolving Self.*
[180] Fowler, *Stages of Faith.*

	for meta-thought and social perspective taking • Susceptible to vagaries of environmental surround • Morality defined by what is sanctioned by one's group, resulting in role-taking and the need to be loyal; breaches of interpersonal are anathema; forms of unquestioned tribalism	ability to meta-narratize • Reciprocity and mutuality introduces a personal God into consciousness • Social perspective taking results in conformist stage of group loyalty • Morality determined by group acceptability • Unquestioned acceptance of underlying spiritual beliefs, expressed in unification of symbol and symbolized
Stage 4	• Interpersonal objectified; embedded in personal authorship • Separation from interpersonal results in emergence of individuality • New individuality undertakes intensive investigation in order to maintain a reasonable worldview devoid of unquestioned forces; self is conceived as an institution requiring administration • Emergent capacity for independence and need for order result in ability to formulate and accept ideology • Morality based in the order required for proper administration; therefore, rule of law is supreme	• Separation from the interpersonal and development of an individualized 'executive ego' • Executive ego undertakes large scale investigation of symbolic content in order to maintain a reasonable and owned worldview (i.e. time of demythologization) • Movement to a stage steeped in ideology • Base of morality of stage 4 not addressed
Stage 5	• Personal authorship objectified; embedded in inter-individual • Emergence of Koplowitz's Post Formal Operations, defined by dialectical cognition • Develops capacity for managing paradox and contradiction • Ability to transcend the needs of the	• Transcends individualism and becomes fascinated with unconscious and human universals • Truth is conceived as dialectical and multi-dimensional • Symbols of and membership in groups relativized and seen as culturally bound

	• particular self arise, resulting in larger social communion • Membership to any social group is relative in the light of inalienable human rights • Emergence of new simplicity in apprehension • Morality based on a 'prior to society' construction; acceptance of universalized principles; preoccupation with justice, authority questioning, and courage • Seat of true inter-culture dialogue	• Subsumes law and order to higher standards of 'prior-to-society universalized principles' • Emergence of 'second naïveté' and re-mythologization of symbols • Seat of true ecumenism
Stage 6	• Intuitive sense of unity, being, life and the sacred • Sets itself free from logistical requirements experienced in Stage 5 in order to be able to fully pursue convictions; congruent actualization of universalized principles • Ultimate visionaries	• Expends self in the transformation of present realities • Intuitive sense of the ultimate • Subversive to existing structures that denigrate 'prior-to-society universalized principles'

The comparison of FDT with Kegan's model of development results in a striking conclusion – one that affects the very direction of Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC): FDT in its current construction can be subsumed under the aegis of ego psychology. In light of the near identical foundational tenets (Table 1), as well as the almost exact correlation in the stage coonstruction of developmental abilities (Table 2), it is the contention of this work that FDT can be related to Kegan's ego psychological construct, as a specialized module of development, extending Kegan's tenets into the realm of the explicitly symbolic and religious. It is concluded that this solution is most desirable, since Kegan's conception deals with deeper levels of consciousness apprehension, and provides a more robust and congruent set of definitions and principles from which to approach growth. In dealing with the very ground of consciousness, Kegan's model literally accounts for expressions of cognition, affect, relation, and behavior, in all aspects of life, by definition including one's

orientation to the spiritual and religious. FDT, on the other hand, although useful in its exposition of the phenotypic expressions of particular orders of consciousness as these orders are directed to the ultimate, does not sufficiently attain the theoretical rigour or completeness found in Kegan's tenets. Therefore, it is the proposal of this work that Kegan's model be taken as a founding theory of ego development, while FDT be interpreted as the aspect of ego development that provides phenotypic information regarding one's orientation to and interplay with the symbolic and religious aspects of life. Thus, FDT is given a stable seat within the structuralist/humanist school of thought, and informs Kegan's conception of development by delineating the complexities of the more vertical and individual aspects of faith development.

In contrast, Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) seeks to propose a corrective to FDT's weaknesses, while retaining its strengths. In this way, FCPC honours the structural and vertical elucidations of Fowler's model, as these constructions provide an important framework for understanding individual epistemological development. FCPC, however, endeavours to go beyond the current limits of FDT by proposing a conception of faith development that, while it retains its connection to and respect for vertical growth, works to delineate a corrective construct steeped in the horizontal, the existential, and the relational. Hence, FCPC resolves the confusion between FDT and ego psychology by combining the two disciplines into a single discourse, thereby unblocking the way toward developing a horizontally-focused corrective construct. As it pursues the goal of proposing this horizontal construct, however, FCPC cannot proceed without first addressing another intimately interrelated weakness of Fowler's FDT, its unidirectional individualist bias. It is to this topic that we turn next.

Chapter 4

The 'In-Between'

In the last chapter, we outlined the details of Kegan's developmental theory and pointed out

the striking similarity between it and FDT. In the course of the discussion, it was stated that, in order

to resolve the confusion between FDT and ego psychology, Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC)

would regard Fowler's current construction of faith development as a phenotypically-focused module

of Kegan's paradigm, that deals specifically with expectable behavior in the realm of the symbolic

and spiritual. As such, FDT has been named as a subcategory of ego psychology and has been

acclaimed for its ability to provide a structural and vertical account of the development of symbolic

and spiritual apprehensions throughout the lifecycle. As a consequence of this categorization,

however, it was stated that the door is now open to ground a revised and corrective framework of

faith development in the horizontal dimensions of interaction (relationism, existentialism). As

outlined in Chapter 2, such a focus would resolve many of the apparent inconsistencies presented by

FDT (such as its investment in the 'naturalistic fallacy', its quasi-reductionism, and its insufficient

ability to address intersubjective interaction and experiential apprehension). As we progress through

our elucidation of the foundations of FCPC, it is to the task of formally exploring these horizontal

underpinnings that we now turn our attention.

Part 1

Being in the In-Between

Relationalism held a place of deep importance for Fowler. Many years after publishing his

stages of faith, he intimated his strong belief that human beings are fundamentally potentiated for

partnership and relationship with God.[181] Carrying on from this important claim, McDargh, harkening to the mass of psychoanalytic literature on the importance of relationship, stated that Fowler's conviction is reflective of a fundamental truth of human existence: the human drive for growth comes about through an intermixing of persons with the exigencies and influences of a matrix of relationships (interpersonal, and systemic).[182] Authors as seminal to the discourse on development as Buber, Pruyser, Gerkin, and Winnicott have accounted for human formation as irreducibly motivated by the experience of self-in-relationship. Yet, as discussed in Chapter 2, this important aspect of human ontology and growth is not sufficiently developed in Fowler's current conception of FDT. In fact, Fowler's FDT, steeped as it is in the biases and tenets of ego psychology, falls prey to a unidirectional individualist bias that is customary of humanistic elucidation projects. And yet, the role of the relational in human development cannot be understated. It is the purpose of this chapter to outline another foundation of Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC), as it works to provide a corrective to FDT's individualist bias. As always, our discussion will go back to the basic building blocks of FDT: the work of Jean Piaget.

Throughout his development of cognitional stages, Piaget postulated the notion of a child that grows and differentiates through his/her actions upon the world. But, since actions engage other entities and agents (such as parents, siblings, or an object of infantile desire), the child's conception of the world must begin as a dualistic affair.[183] In other words, if the child is truly a source of action, the other (whatever the other might be) is yet another source of action. Thus, if an ordered apprehension is to be created, then this apprehension must take stock of both sides of a relational duality. Therefore, according to Piaget, a child cannot come to know an object as an object in itself (a concept that goes as far back as the works of John Locke); rather, all that the child can know is his/her *relation* to that object. Meaning construction, therefore, is fundamentally an act of social

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[181] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 54.
[182] McDargh, "Faith Development Theory," 194.
[183] Youniss, "A Revised Interpretation," 192.

relationalism, where all interaction is constituted by shared existence. As such, knowledge of all

aspects of the world, including knowledge of the self-as-object, must be mediated through one's

relation with an other. Notions of the seminal importance of the relational were also discussed by

thinkers such as Freud, Jung and Edgar Pierce. In the works of each of these prolific thinkers, the

very notion of meaning construction is saved from the dangers of solipsism only by virtue of its

relation to other meaning systems.[184] In other words, the only discourse that can be called upon to

remove the danger of an autistic world construction is that of the relational, expressed in the meeting

and general agreement of disparate minds. In line with such arguments about the importance of

relational, Piaget's scheme proposes four main tenets: that neither self nor Other are known in an

absolute fashion but rather are referents of one another, in a relational act of apprehension; that

eventual autonomy requires interpersonal dependence;[185] that standards of personal preference are

constructed in a shared matrix; and that external objective apprehension is required for subjective

validation. It is not therefore that human beings come to understand the world through the faculties of

subjectivity alone; it is rather that human beings come to grasp the complexities of their worlds

through a transitional and intersubjective psychic space.[186]

The notion of transitional space was championed by D.W. Winnicott in his intensive study of

the growth cycle of infants.[187] In his work, Winnicott postulated a space that exists between the infant

and the caretaker, an intersubjective area of interaction in which the confluence of both subjectivities

combine to create an overarching relational culture – a liminal culture which defines and represents

that very relationship. It is to this notion of transitional space that Erickson appealed when he spoke

of the development of basic trust *between* an infant and his/her parents - a trust that is furthered by

the repetitive reliability and positive affect that is presented by the daily rituals caretakers present to

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[184] Freud, *Complete Works;* Jung in Dougherty and West, *Matrix and Meaning;* Pierce, *Philosophy of Character.*
[185] So long as that dependence is not allowed to degenerate into subjective indebtedness.
[186] Youniss, "A Revised Interpretation," 196; for more on psychic space, refer to Chapter 9 of this work.
[187] Winnicott, *Maturational Processes.*

their respective infants.[188] Thus, for both Erickson and Winnicott, as it was for Piaget, reality is not simply split into an internal and an external sphere; rather, reality is a matter of joint practice and action, taking place within the container of an intermediate space between two agents. And yet, that space is not ephemeral or devoid of physicality. As relationships progress, certain objects (often physical but sometimes psychic) come to represent a moment of relating that is of particular import to a growing subjectivity. As such, these objects have within their very existences the ability to carry relational conditions and affect into extended and often externalized spheres. These are what Winnicott called transitional objects.[189]

Transitional objects, the agents of transitional space, derive from transformations in subjective or objective spaces, and are created in order to represent and maintain something that is relationally important and subjectively cathected. Hence, a child could cathect a plush toy or security blanket, an adventurer could cathect a particular piece of stone, or a lover could cathect a locket or photograph – all of which would get infused with the affect of proximity that is determinative of an intersubjective experience. The maintenance of this intersubjective experience is intended to garner further strength and resilience in the face of challenge. Thus, the security blanket comes to provide the very affect of confidence and comfort experienced in the intersubjective space between the child and his/her caregivers, and is of particular importance in maintaining that affect when the actual caregivers are not immediately available for relational discourse. Consequently, Pruyser defines the transitional object as a psychic phenomenon that belongs neither to inner nor to outer reality, but rather to the liminal sphere of constructed illusion and intersubjective play.[190]

This intersubjective play is a crucial element in the creation of affective and social knowledge that acts as the basis for reality testing (a concept akin to Piaget's constructions above), and to the dissemination of shared norms and expectations. As a world of illusion, the transitional

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[188] Erickson, *Childhood and Society*; Erickson, *Ontogeny of Ritualization*
[189] Winnicott, *Maturational Processes*.
[190] Pruyser, *Between Belief and Unbelief*, 198.

sphere deals with symbols, interpretations, thought, and action, and by virtue of its relational

character, counteracts dangers of creating a purely autistic, solipsistic, and fantastical world

construction.[191] In addition, as a co-constructed entity, the transitional sphere works to balance an

overly empirical approach to experience, in which only what is sensually available and externally

stipulated is labeled as real, downplaying all manner of subjective reality. It is thus "an infinite

playful relationship between mind and world,"[192] an area of mental apprehension that is both

imaginative and concrete, a relationally constructed stepping stone to ideation and idealization.

Thus according to both Pruyser and Winnicott, it is inherent and endemic to the human mind

that it constructs and creates idealized images in the transitional sphere – images (transitional

objects) that undergird security and meaning, while simultaneously orienting thought and

understanding toward the ultimate environment. It is these very idealized and liminal images that

form the fundamental background against which personal construal and meaning-making are

constructed, compared, and valued.[193] In other words, it is not only that liminal idealizations come

about as a result of our intersubjective experience and shared encounters; it is also that these very

images, in forming the basis of our understanding of a transcendent dimension, come to act as the

very authors and influencers, in fact the very qualifiers of meaning constructions throughout the

lifecycle. It is to this notion of meaning qualification that Johann Fichte appealed in his description of

the integrous psyche. According to Fichte, a mind cannot conceive of itself as finite without

simultaneously measuring up its finite-ness against a background of conceptions considered to be

infinite. In his words, "a self cannot posit itself as a finite self without simultaneously positing an

Absolute Self or World Spirit" – an infinite and idealized conception against which the finite finds

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[191] For more on this, see Pierce, *The Philosophy of Character;* Pierce presents a fascinating explication of the nature of meaning as relationally mediated. According to Pierce, it is our engagement in the agreement of external minds that leads us out of the dangerous notions of solipsism, and into a world of intersubjective corroboration. It is thus not intensity, permanence, meaning, nor substance in conception that is determinative of its 'realness': rather, it is its presence in *relational* space.

[192] Pruyser, *Belief,* 112.

[193] Rizzuto, *Birth of the Living God,* 154; Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology,* 221.

identity.[194] This conception is congruent with the assertions of Rizzuto, Pruyser, and Winnicott

(regarding the importance of human idealization) and points out that the human mind naturally seeks

to ground its apprehensions and actions in a relational sphere of understanding that is simultaneously

worldly and ultimate, particular and idealized. In other words, in agreement with the holistic

epistemological notions of James, Goldman, and Pruyser regarding the irreducibility of human

apprehension (Chapter 2), our very nature as human beings is to judge our actions in a nested

relational matrix, in which we are concerned first with our own actions, second, with how our actions

compare to those of our peers and social groups, and third, with how our actions can be construed

against the background of some implicit absolute or standard (Fichte's Absolute Self). According to

Fichte, it is this very complexity of human epistemology that brings about the centering of the

phenomenological self on the infinite, a conception echoed by Stanley Grenz in his postulation of the

world-constructing self.[195] In fact, according to James Forsyth, such a tripartite construal is an

ontological feature of human epistemology, wherein spiritual identity builds on personal identity (in

psychological terms) and personal identity builds on spiritual identity (in theological terms).[196] Going

forward on Forsyth's thought, William Meissner believes that spiritual and personal identities are

perfective of each other, through an ontological link.[197] We are, therefore, ontologically and

epistemologically relational – made for and from connection, constituted through and constitutive of

the intersubjective, the shared, the relational. So strong is this link of epistemological layers that

William Astley calls it the fundamental covenantal relationship of human existence, mediated

through each person's interpretive mechanism, wherein we develop our vision of the excellence of

being itself.[198] It is this very conception of the multileveled and covenantal approach to epistemology

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[194] Fichte, *Vocation of Man*, 133

[195] Fichte, *Vocation of Man*, 95; Grenz, *Social God*, 118.

[196] Forsyth, *Faith in Human Transformation*, 3.

[197] Meissner, *Life and Faith*, 82.

[198] Astley, *Christian Perspectives*, 10. By covenant, Astley means a binding of persons/entities in mutual trust and loyalty before and with each other, and the transcendent centre of value and power.

that, in the succeeding paragraphs and chapters, we will refer to as the 'tripartite construal'. Hence, through our presentation of the 'tripartite construal', we have come around to elucidating Fowler's primary assumption in his construction of FDT: that humans are potentiated toward the relational, and particularly toward relationship with God.

Thus, the transitional sphere, the seat of idealized and transcendental play based in an Ericksonian notion of trust that is built in the relation between child and caregiver, is the ground from which one's relation to the symbolic, the noumenal, and the existential springs.[199] As such, every instance of positive relational play introduces a semiological discourse, and a fundamental conviction that transitional constructions and illusions are trustworthy, inasmuch as they elicit serious response, validation, and corroboration from the external world of agents and objects.[200] This semiological discourse takes part in the primary process of fantasy and wish fulfillment, on the one hand, as well as in the secondary process of naturalistic observation and reality testing, on the other.[201] Idealized play, therefore, is a balanced concretization of personal hopes and generalized relation; an interweaving of the desires of the self with the actions of externals and exigencies of ultimates; a true holistic confluence within the sphere of the relational.[202]

It is this sphere of the relational that W.H. Van der Marck refers to in his critique of structuralist models of faith development when he states that intersubjectivity (the relational sphere) is the openness and confluence of one's humanity with the humanity of the other.[203] To phrase it in Whiteheadian terms, the contact between knower and known, subject and object, is a mutual prehension that interweaves both poles of the dyad into an organic marriage of enrichment and definition. And yet, it is this inescapable quality of prehensive mutualness and interpenetration that

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[199] According to Freud, both religion and art are not representations of reality; rather, they are the thoroughgoing transformation of stimuli that come together in the confluence of internal and external worlds; Freud in Strachey, *Complete Works.*

[200] Pruyser, *Belief,* 202; Hence, and as we shall further discuss in the next section, play has its own dimension of seriousness.

[201] Pruyser, *Belief,* 199.

[202] Pruyser , *Changing views,* 106.

[203] Van Der Marck in Philibert, "Motors of Morality," 100.

does not find adequate expression in FDT. Harkening to the work of Piaget, Kohlberg and Erickson, FDT remains ingrained in the world of the quasi-reductionistic, where relations to caretakers in transitional space are related only to the pre-images of divine apprehension (in Stage 0). At no point does FDT extend the concept of intersubjective relationalism into the iterations of higher levels of development, thereby creating a hole in the pastoral fabric of the model. Charles Gerkin, a prominent pastoral theologian, in his discussion on the interpretive functions of pastoral care, goes a long way to filling this relational hole.

According to Gerkin, the work of Piaget, Winnicott, and Pruyser that relates the experience of the neonate to the caregiver has much to inform a pastoral understanding of a person's relationship to God.[204] Gerkin believes that, just as the fetus starts its life symbiotically fused with the mother, so did humanity begin its existence as inextricably grounded in a relationship with God. Yet, in order to help humanity maintain its status as God's vice-regents on earth, God ensured that humanity retained a degree of separateness, agency, and differentiation. In this separateness, however, humanity must, by definition, experience God as also separate (as the Divine Other), the One who, like Winnicott's 'good enough mother', asserts humanity's individuation as well as its deep need. As a consequence of this state of otherness, a relational gap is introduced into human spiritual ontology – a gap that creates an impetus for a relational coupling with the Godhead in order to better sustain the life of the self and the care of the soul. Thus, in a Biblical sense, the self is not something that is self-contained but rather is activated in and through its relationships – especially its relationship with God (echoing the 'tripartite construal').[205] Humanity, therefore, is dependent for its life-conception and development on relations beyond itself. Thus, unlike FDT's reductionistic image of an individual taking in experience and relation in order to fortify, transform, and grow the self, both psychological discourse and Biblical underpinnings point to an ontology of human *being* that is, in and of itself,

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[204] Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode*, 94.
[205] See Grenz, *Social God*, 15. This is in fact one of the primary messages of Genesis, the Wisdom writings, the Psalms, and the Great Commandment.

relational. Martin Buber goes so far as to say that it is only in knowing the I-Thou relations of the self with all other entities that humanity can so much as glimpse its wholeness.[206] It is only through an I-Thou orientation that humanity can experience its relation to all that is over against it, rather than an objectified conception of the sum of the parts. I-Thou relationships, then, are the primary mode of growthful relationship, characterized by mutuality, directness, presence and intensity. They are also, according to Buber, the only mode of being in which "personality and a personal dimension really exist."[207] Thus, whereas the typical dualistic terms of a subject-object relationship are but an abstraction of mind, the true orientation of humanity's ontology is that of the relational, the intersubjective, what Buber calls, the 'in-between'.[208] Harkening to the Biblical images of humanity in relation to God, Buber's confluence of the in-between illustrates the nature of humanity's participation in both the finite and infinite realms of existence. Thus, according to Buber, no sooner do we recognize humanity's finitude than we are beholding its infinitude, not as a two-fold and juxtaposed inter-ontological split, but rather as the very confluence of essences that unite in synergistic harmony within the world of the in-between.[209] Thus, in a discourse that matches the psychological and epistemological concepts of Winnicott, Piaget, and Pruyser, as well as the pastoral postulates of Gerkin, Buber concludes that the uniqueness of humanity lies not in its individuality or agency (aspects of existence that can only be activated by stepping into living relations with others), nor in its collectivity or communalism (which are nothing other than the vast interrelation of individuals), but rather in its ontological confluence of the I and Thou, the very essence of living relation, a mutual definition, and complementary 'making present'. As such, the in-between - the relational, the intersubjective – is the approach *par excellence* of conceiving of human ontology in such a way as to avoid confounding unity, on the one hand, and meaningless relativity, on the other.

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[206] Buber, *The Knowledge of Man*, 10.
[207] Buber, *The Knowledge of Man*, 2.
[208] Buber, *The Knowledge of Man*, 23.
[209] Buber, *The Knowledge of Man*, 6.

It is also the very foundation of FCPC's model of pastoral engagement. We are relational beings, who come to know our meaning only in relation, who come to understand our powers and proclivities in relation, and most importantly to our discussion in these pages, who come to understand our development relationally. Thus, according to Buber's elegant and poetic ontological elucidation, "Man [sic] is to be found in between man and man [sic]."[210]

Part 2

Relationalism and Faith Development

We have established that Fowler's FDT is steeped in the concepts and philosopy of ego psychology, and thereby stands as a spiritually-oriented exponent of that science's proclivities and preferences. These preferences include the focus on the individual progression of construal, the singular focus on structural aspects of growth, the elucidation of phenotypically-oriented stages, and a steeping in the reductionistic philosophy of scientific enquiry. To a great extent, the works of Kegan and Fowler had no choice but to engage in this philosophical discourse, since their very purpose was to elucidate a stage-like progression based in observable tenets of scrutiny. It is the contention of this work, however, that the vertical and scientific model relied upon by FDT is inadequate for the task of undergirding a model of faith development. One of the main pillars of criticism levied against current FDT surrounds the notion of unidirectional individualism – the investigative bias with which FDT was designed and disseminated. Throughout this individualistic bias, FDT, acting as would any humanistic endeavor at construct elucidation, framed the sequence and progression of growth from the point of view of the developing person – the growing subjectivity. And yet, as we discovered in the last section, the very nature of human *being,* according to psychologists, philosophers, and theologians is relational. As such, the works of Kegan and Fowler provide an extremely useful foil against which to understand subjective discourse and evolution, but they do not go far enough in

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[210] Buber, *The Knowledge of Man,* 5.

treating the world of the interpersonal, the relational *qua* relational, the very nature of human epistemology – the 'in-between'. It should be stated, however, that Kegan's work was never intended to explore anything other than a humanistically-oriented transformation of the subjectivity. It was FDT that set forth the claim to an elucidation of stages focused on the spiritual and the ultimate. Consequently, the correctives provided below are respectfully suggested to re-align the tenets of faith development model, and not to fundamentally re-vision the nature of ego psychology. We begin our discussion by focusing on the notion of 'relational gap'.

It is not uncommon to hear people define their passionate quests for particular ends as a means through which they seek to fulfill a small yet palpable gap within their subjectivities. Often, this gap is experienced as an existential longing, a need, a yearning, or an impetus that propels subjectivity toward the achievement of certain goals, or the fulfillment of certain ends. So ubiquitous is this gap that popular notions of personal satisfaction and questing revolve around the discovery of that one 'thing/person' in the world whose presence and influence satisfies the yearning and restores a sense of completeness. And yet, as we saw in the thought of Gerkin and Pruyser (above), this gap is both psychologically and pastorally thought to be the result of a supra-ordinate relational need that goes unattended or unnoticed. In other words, the unidirectional individualist bias that forms the basis of ego psychological studies must, by definition, focus its lens on subjectivity - one half of the relational dyad. According to Buber, Western modern culture, in its inheritance of the Enlightenment paradigm, focused so powerfully on the tenets of the logical, measurable, and quantifiable, has lost its connection to notions of the relational and intersubjective.[211] The Western paradigm of thought, obsessed as it is with naming and knowing the details of the world, has shifted culture toward a unidirectional object-creating bias (and therefore, by definition, a subject refining bias). As a consequence of this shift, Western culture has denuded itself of the more mystical conceptions of

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[211] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 41.

interrelation and interconnection thereby failing to provide an adequate answer to address the existential longing – the gap – left behind by this post-Enlightenment outlook.

Fowler's FDT, being an unquestioned product of this cultural milieu, reflects the same post-Enlightenment bias expressed in Buber's warnings. It is concerned primarily with the elucidation of a regular sequence of events, pieced together through verifiable and reproducible interview evidence, and focusing exclusively on the growth and transformation of a budding subjectivity, as it comes to know its environment. Fowler's more structural and vertical approach to faith development, however, is insufficient in its ability to address the source of this experienced gap – what Gerkin defined as the relational distance between humanity and God.[212] This relational distance is not one that can be fully mended over the course of a lifetime; rather, it is the faithful quest of each person to come to know the nature, extent, and direction of the gap, as he/she seeks to find further connection with God. The works of Goleman, Malone and Malone, Antony, Oden, Gerkin, Capps, and Pruyser all point to the notion that an increase in relatedness to the world around us results in an increase in relatedness to the divine (and vice-versa).[213] In fact, many of these thinkers' definitions of the concept of spirituality and soulfulness revolve around the ideal of interconnectedness, or a felt sense of connection, ontologically built into us through the 'tripartite construal'. It is the contention of this work that FDT, focusing not on connection and interrelation, but rather on structuralism, is in need of revision in order to address the sizeable and significant omission in its ranks – the omission of the notion of the in-between.

To correct the omission, Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) seeks to re-align notions of faith development with this pastoral, psychological, and sociological concept of intersubjectivity. Hence, FCPC looks to the works of Kegan and Fowler to describe the vertical features of growth, while it itself focuses on the apprehension, analysis, and furtherance of the relational. FCPC, then, in

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[212] Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode,* 94.
[213] Goleman, *Social Intelligence;* Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode;* Malone and Malone, *Art of Intimacy;* Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology;* Antony, *Psychotherapies;* Oden, *Kerygma and Counseling.*

addressing the ontology of human spiritual epistemology, sets its eyes on the psychic space between a person and an other, a knower and a known, a beholder and a beheld, between "man and man [sic]" – that liminal space that is determinative of both subject and object, as well as connective to all named and perceived entities in the apprehending psyche's world. Hence, FCPC's prime focus will be on the elucidation of the nature of the in-between, as well as on the preferred state in which the in-between should find itself, should optimal intersubjectivity be sought. FCPC does not seek to replace or negate any aspects of the works of Kegan and Fowler; rather, this work is considered to be of seminal importance as it provides corroborated information about the *how* of personal development. FCPC, however, in its impetus to refine the tenets of FDT, seeks to stand alongside ego psychology's vertical conceptions, and provide a countervailing and complementary horizontal viewpoint, one of particular relevance to faith development, that orients us to the *why* of faithful growth.

Yet, as we saw above, meaning construction and growth are naturally carried out through a 'tripartite construal' of relational construction and validation. This conception is more than a mere heuristic device; it is in fact the expression of the relational and transcendental nature of humanity. In its impetus to compare actions, thoughts, emotions and drives to a greater relational matrix, this 'tripartite construal' is interpersonal; in its drive to assess acceptability and adequacy, it is self-corrective; in its drive to understand and self-correct, it is energetic; in its drive to relate the mundane to an absolute standard, it is integrative; and in its drive to reach beyond its very self, it is transcendental. Thus, the 'tripartite construal' of relational validation is representative of the holistic nature of the in-between - a liminal space in which all three considerations intermingle, an intersubjective arena of integrated apprehension, and a transitional moment of holistic grasping.

It is this type of grasping that FCPC strives to effect. By focusing on the intersubjective, FCPC works to transcend the ontological split introduced by subject-object knowing, thereby ushering in an investigative space of integration and interpenetration. Thus, whereas the works of Kegan and Fowler focus on the very creation of the object (a crucial and seminal discourse in our

understanding of human development), FCPC focuses on the complementary arena of interrelation with current apprehensions. In this way, FCPC is seeking to provide correctives to FDT in order to propose a model of growth that is truly focused on the transcendental components of human existence – the very bases of faith development and the confluence of finitude and infinitude.

Hence, whereas FDT could not sufficiently find space within its tenets to take stock of this ontological paradox (finitude/infinitude), FCPC's concentration on the in-between ushers in a paradigm of apprehension that addresses the holistic and transcendental nature of human *being*. As such, it is the contention of this work that FCPC truly provides a view of the fundamental unity of the human person, and works to interrelate that unity to the various connected elements of the world. Hence, FCPC's focus on the in-between sets forth a relational orientation that transcends the vagaries of the 'naturalistic fallacy' (Chapter 2), the differentiation of subjective knowing (Chapter 3), and the danger of an autistic and quasi-solipsistic meaning construction (Chapter 2). FCPC, then, provides a relational counterbalance to the reductionism of ego psychology, an integrative counterbalance to FDT's naming of apprehensive components, and a transcendental counterbalance to the very worldly biases of the vertical and structural. FCPC, by basing its outlook on the in-between, crosses the epistemological line from the vertical to the horizontal, and thereby corrects FDT's unidirectional individualist bias, as well as its theological and philosophical weaknesses (quasi-reductionism, 'naturalistic fallacy', and the hardness of its stages). It does, however, leave one question open for discussion: the question of permanence. If the works of Kegan and Fowler focus on the transforming and impermanent, and the focus of FCPC is on the in-between, what is the permanent agent to which FCPC appeals that, in and of itself, does not unseat the relevance and centrality of ego psychology.

This work proposes that this entity is the human self-soul nexus. It is to a discussion of this topic that we now turn.

Chapter 5

Self and Soul

In the foregoing discussion, we have so far worked through several important points:

1. We have argued for a revision of Fowler's notion of faith from that of meaning-

    making (Ch. 2)

2. We have subsumed Fowler's FDT to Kegan's ego psychological construct (Ch. 3)

3. We have grounded Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) in the relational

    (horizontal) sphere, having elucidated the seminal importance of the in-between (Ch.

    4), and

4. We have stated that the works of Kegan and Fowler can stand in useful juxtaposition

    to FCPC, where the former provide an understanding of the vertical notions of

    growth and the latter, an understanding of the horizontal development of faith (Ch. 4)

As a result of the foregoing, we have already come a fair distance in the retention of some

strengths of FDT and the resolution of some of its weakness. Namely, we have retained Fowler's

emphasis on the universal human need for relation with God, we have emphasized the role of

intersubjectivity, we have grounded the tenets of FCPC within a person's deepest quest for

fulfillment, and we have built a framework for investigation that synergizes the contributions of

psychology and ministry.

In contradistinction to the retention of these strengths, our discussion to date has resolved

some of the weaknesses of FDT: by providing a comprehensive definition of meaning-making, we

have uncoupled the definitional confusion of faith; by elucidating the striking similarity between the

works of Kegan and Fowler, we have eliminated the confusion of FDT with ego psychology; and, by

outlining the seminal importance of the in-between, we have countered the unidirectional individualist bias of structural models.

And yet, our discussion is far from over. Having uncoupled the definition of faith from that of meaning-making, we are yet to define faith as it is understood in FCPC; having subsumed FDT to ego psychology and grounded FCPC in the in-between, we are yet to extrapolate an engagement for pastoral intervention that would usefully address faith development; and most importantly, having identified the subject of FDT as being the mutable and transforming self, we are yet to identify the very the agent of faith development, the dimension of personal being that is both relational and permanent, dynamic yet continuous.

As such, we shall progress in the presentation of FCPC as follows: in this chapter, through a postulation of definitions for 'self' and 'soul', we will arrive at an explication of the proposed integrated subject of faith development - the self-soul nexus. In the next section, we shall take the re-visioned basics of FCPC (presented in this section) and apply them to the three main foundations of FDT, in order to elucidate a useful framework for pastoral work in faith development. And, in the final section of this work, we shall synergize the presented information and propose a re-aligned definition of faith that continues to honour the groundwork laid by Fowler, while correcting FDT's weaknesses. We now turn our attention to the notion of the self-soul nexus.

Part 1

The Self vs The Soul

Modern psychological and counseling discourse, having been birthed in the crucible of the empiricist tradition, has customarily (and generally unconsciously) taken the seat of personal transformation as the core of consciousness. The vast majority of psychological, philosophical, and pastoral-oriented counseling has been focused on the entity within the human psyche that grows,

that transforms, that changes, and that develops.[214] In general. the focus of these disciplines has

been on the health and healing of careseekers, and thereby requires a view of interaction that is

successful if it is transformative. As a consequence, a full roster of robust and insightful therapeutic

interventions have been postulated – interventions that have received much attention and acclaim in

pastoral counseling fields.[215] And yet, this approach to careseekers presents a daunting problem: in

the treatment of the person as a growing subjectivity, with the requisite levels of internal change and

redefinitions, how do we account for that very real aspect of personhood that is experienced as

lasting? In other words, since the process of healing generally implies the transcendence of a current

state of affairs that is causing pathology, and since that transcendence focuses on making something

different within the psyche, how can we maintain that a person has not been fundamentally

redefined in his/her entirety, and that he/she somehow retains a sense of personal sameness? This

question is of particular importance to the field of faith development, as it is highlighting a key

aspect of personal ontology that is the very focus of the existential and relational. How can we speak

of a lifelong journey of faith, when we do not speak of an internal entity that maintains continuity

throughout life? How can we understand the story of faith development of a constantly transforming

entity. when those very transformations are explained as fundamental redefinitions? Herein lies a

conceptual problem that plagues FDT. Whereas Kegan's ego psychology never presumed to explain

anything other than the developing subject, the work of Fowler, dealing with faithful apprehension,

tacitly implied that underneath the shifting shades of symbolic and religious apprehension, there is a

constant and integrous entity that is the very subject of faithful relation. In other words, Kegan's

work, deeply rooted in the empirical and scientific traditions of structuralism and constructivism,

was explicitly focused on the sequential development of that part of human consciousness that

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[214] See the works of Freud, *Complete Works;* Jung in Dougherty and West, *Matrix and Meaning;* Fairbairn, *Psychoanalytic Studies;* Bowlby, *Attachment;* Winnicott, *Maturatioal Process;* Mahler, *Psychological Birth of the Infant;* Rizzuto, *Birth of the Living God;* Capps, *Living Stories;* Rogers, *On Becoming a Person;* Couture and Hunter, *Pastoral Care and Social Conflict;* VanKatwyk, *Spiritual are and Therapy.*

[215] For example, see the works of Rogers, Bowlby, Gendlin, Minuchin, DeYoung, Satir, VanKatwyk.

experiences change, transformation, and maturity, and was successful in its bid to present a robust

conceptual framework of the movement of orders of consciousness through successive cultures of

embeddedness. In its reductionistic and specialized sphere, Kegan's work did not presume to

address any level of being besides that of the 'evolving self'.[216] Yet, being so closely linked with

the concepts of Kegan as well as rooted in the same ethos of structuralism and constructivism, FDT

did not venture beyond the methodological proclivities of ego psychology. As such, FDT did not

name a lasting and faith-filled entity to which its tenets apply, nor did it define its characteristics. In

addition, the seminal focus on the in-between as the seat of human meaning cannot be addressed in

a disconnected sequence of self-manifestations, as the very nature of the in-between lies in an over-

arching existential relation to life. Thus, the omission of a treatment of this fundamental

underpinning in FDT is akin to a conceptual gap in the theory that needs to be addressed, should

serious and growthful correctives be proposed for the course of faith development. It is the purpose

of this chapter to address this weakness in Fowler's FDT by proposing that human ontology is made

up of two confluent and dialectical phases - the self and the soul, and that these two phases of

human *being* are integrated in the concept of the self-soul nexus.

The elucidation of the various elements of consciousness must work to maintain a fine and

disciplined balance. We must endeavour to set forth a construction that fosters and permits the

existential while it simultaneously retains the important learning gleaned from the areas of

psychology and counseling. In other words, our approach in the coming paragraphs must maintain a

focus on the primacy of the human agent without falling into an explication of the self-indulgent

tenets of *idealized man* [sic] on the one hand, or annihilating humanity in social construction, on the

other.[217] Hence, the discussion of the relationship between 'self' and 'soul' would do well to stem

from the tenets of the phenomenological tradition, which focuses on nameable and concrete aspects

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[216] This is in fact the title of Kegan's best-known book.
[217] Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology*, 256.

of being, as they are related to the more numinous. Such an approach represents an investigative orientation that has been extensively used in psychological, philosophical, and pastoral worlds, and therefore finds rooting in a very wide repertoire of scholarly exploration.[218] In addition, notions of ontology and development derived from a phenomenological enquiry bridge the gap between the concrete and empirical, on the one hand, and the relational and epiphenomenological, on the other. Therefore, this choice of methodology seeks to *be* what it attempts to *do*: by grounding ontological exploration in the world of phenomenon, it seeks to provide universality and rigour to a discourse that cannot in its nature be fully corroborated by objective measurement. Hence, the discussion that follows works to synergize the worlds of science and faith, of empiricism and artfulness, of transformation and permanence, of the mutable and the steadfast.

In brief, our synergistic phenomenological approach begins by stating that there are two dimensions of being: the 'self' and the 'soul'. The 'self' component is the phenomenological factor, living in the present world, struggling to incorporate meaning, and working to maintain equilibrium. William James, referring to this empirical aspect of human *being,* states that it is sum total of all a person can call his/her own. It is the dimension of being that arouses emotions of reflexive appreciation and prompts actions of personal seeking and preservation.[219] Thus, James' notions are echoed in the work of E.J. Lowe, who defines the 'self' as the "subject of consciousness, being capable of thought in experience and able to engage in liberative action.[220] Thus, the 'self' is the dimension of being that can entertain thoughts of action in the first person, and that is in itself a system of ideas, values, and commitments. In the words of A.T. Jersild, it is "a person's total subjective environment" and the distinctive centre of experience, which constitutes one's inner

[218] See Grenz, *Social God*; James, *Principles;* Taylor, *Sources of the Self;* Malone and Malone, *Windows;* Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society;* Pruyser, *Changing Views;* Ryu, "Human Self"; Jersild, *In Search of Self;* Capps and Fenn, *Losing the Soul*
[219] James, *Principles,* 195.
[220] Lowe, *Oxford Companion to Philosophy,* 817

world.[221] The 'self' is therefore the individual as he/she comes to be known by the individual, and the element of personhood that is dynamic, changing, and developing.[222] 'Self', then, is the centre of being, when viewed through the lens of psychodynamic psychology. The 'self' is the dimension of human existence that finds itself awash in conflicting and introjecting forces stemming from the confluence of the sum total of phenomenological relationships.[223] According to Gerkin, 'self' is a term best used to point to the core of individual human functioning, at which the confluence of forces that shape human understanding and conflict come together and are mediated.[224] Thus, 'self' is the responding and interpretive core of experience that forms the centre upon which external forces act. According to Malone and Malone, the 'self' is the component in which the evolving constructions of consciousness reside.[225] It is the most externally identifiable dimension of being, and as such, is the dimension of existence most naturally associated with intra-societal personal identity.[226] According to Michael Cowan, 'self' is the basic unit of identity formation from which one relates to others , the most natural agent of separateness, independence, and existence, the very unit that is acted upon by societal and communal conventions and pressures.[227] Therefore, it is the subject of feelings and actions, the apprehender of experience, the seat of rational agency, and the juggler of wish fulfilment and reality testing. The 'self', then, is akin to Winnicott's notion of the central self and Heinz Kohut's conception of the nuclear self: it is an innocent and deep-going concrescence of a personal form of authenticity, ontologically interpretive, and executively able to balance the influences of meaning-making and external force.[228] In light of the foregoing, FCPC defines the 'self' as the identity that is transformed, the awareness that develops, the conscious

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[221] Jersild, *In Search of Self,* 9.

[222] Taylor, *Sources of the Self,* 111.

[223] Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology,* 210.

[224] Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode,* 98.

[225] Malone and Malone, *Windows,* 41.

[226] Ryu, "Human Self," 127.

[227] Cowan, "Emerging in Love," 48.

[228] Winnicott, *Maturational Process,* 85 ; Kohut, *Analysis of the Self,* 142.

motivator of choice, and the seat of the personality. As an element grounded in occurrence and

phenomenon, 'self' is mutable and malleable.

It is this mutability that makes the 'self' the very subject of development as described in the

works of Kegan and Fowler. 'Self' is the very aspect of being that undergoes qualitative redefinition

of structure and thereby comes to interpret the world in novel and emerging ways.[229] It is the 'self'

that undertakes to rebalance subject and object apprehensions, as it comes to a more refined

awareness of its very subjectivity. According to Catherine LaCugna, it is the 'self' that is the one

who decides, weighs, and acts - steeped in the dualistic perceptions of experience that so completely

form the basis of empirical understanding, while maintaining an emphasis on development and

personal mastery, and reductionistic modes of knowing.[230] Hence, the 'self' is the compiler and

weaver of experience into a cohesive narrative, that in turn, affects future meaning-making and

narratizing.[231] Although executive and energetic in function and separate in identity, 'self' maintains

a deep sense of social construction and interaction as well as an interlinked relation to the array of

representations and experiences held within one's internal ecology.[232] As a consequence of this

considerable ability, 'self' can take a historical and developmental perspective on experience – an

understanding matrix that is therefore locked within time, and defined by space, directed to step-like

movement, bound to perception, and innately differentiated.[233] Thus, 'self' can be defined as the

discreet and observable entity that is the subject of ego psychology, counselling, and many

disciplines of pastoral care. It is the representation of the person we believe we have met and the

natural label by which we refer to our identities. And yet, as can be seen from the foregoing

discussion, 'self', in its continual development, is lacking in the dimension of unwavering existence

and ontological permanence. In addition, the work of developmental psychologists such as Kegan,

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[229] Kegan, *Evolving Self,* 8.
[230] LaCugna, *God for Us,* 60.
[231] Gerkin , *Hermeneutical Mode,* 91.
[232] Ryu, "Human Self." 129; see also the work of Piaget and Winnicott in Chapter 4 of this essay.
[233] Ford-Grabowsky, "The Journey of a Pilgrim," 109.

Piaget, Fowler, Winnicott, Kohut, Bowlby, Sullivan, and Mahler go so far as to suggest that one

can, through pathology, misguide or under-develop the 'self'. In some cases, it is suggested that

individuals in need of healing can be encountering experience through the 'false self' – an artificial

construction of identity designed to defend the core subjectivity from perceived threat.[234] As such,

the notion of 'self' introduces a precariousness into human ontology, an instability that indicates

rebirth from life phase to life phase. Although such a variable conception of self-being is useful to

developmental sciences and transformative investigations (as it allows for the possibility of model

effectiveness and teleological success), it is not, on its own, useful for the apprehension of notions

of faith development, as it does not give a clear view of what it means to be fully self-identical, fully

existing, fully questing from life phase to life phase.[235] It is the belief of these pages that, in addition

to the notion of a transformable identity, faith development requires the naming of an over-arching,

supra-experiential centre that maintains continuity throughout a lifecycle. It is this concept that we

are referring to as the 'soul'.

In contradistinction to the 'self', FCPC defines the 'soul' as the epiphenomenological

dimension of human ontology; it is that which at any moment has relation and consciousness, and

which includes the 'self' as one of the many things of which it is conscious and to which it is

related.[236] In other words, 'soul' is the relational element of personhood that resides in the prior

ground of phenomenon.[237] According to Doninger, 'soul' refers to the basic essence of human

relation, the aspect of being that endures, the aspect of consciousness that seeks connection with the

transcendent, and a faculty of understanding that integrates and interweaves apprehension.[238] In

addition, 'soul', according to Richard Fenn, accords significance to humanity beyond that which can

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[234] Kegan, *Evolving Self;* Kegan, *In Over our Heads;* Piaget, *Epigenetic Stages;* Winnicott, *Maturational Processes;* Kohut, *Analysis of the Self;* Bowlby, *Attachment;* Mahler, *Psychological Birth of the Infant.*
[235] Nachbahr, "Embodied Self," 191.
[236] Ryu, "Human Self," 124.
[237] Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society,* 175.
[238] Doninger, *Religion and Human Behavour,* 32.

be conferred by reductionistic disciplines. It is a postulated point of human existence that toils to make a notion of essential being possible.[239] In this way, 'soul' intimates the ideal that there is something about humanity that cannot be subsumed within either nature or society, something that transcends initiative and vitality, some active agent of human *being* that interrelates experiences and aligns the made meanings of the 'self'.[240] 'Soul', then, does not reside in the dimension of appearance, nor does it reside in the complexities of personal equilibrium. Rather, according to Gerkin, Ryu, and Pruyser, it is the central core of one's being, undivided, constant through time, continuous and connecting.[241] Both Ryu and Emil Brunner state that 'soul' focuses on the relational and transcendental aspects of existence – especially those dealing with meaning and coherence. It struggles not to incorporate meaning, but rather to effect newer and more inclusively differentiated forms of meaning.[242] Rather than working on maintaining the present equilibrium, 'soul' pushes forward to find equilibrium in ever increasing communion with the elements of existence.[243] In the words of Brunner, "man [sic] cannot be man by himself; he can only be man in communion."[244] According to Buber, 'soul' provides the impetus to interrelate with the aspects of being and to maintain a presence in the liminality of the in-between.[245] Thus, whereas the 'self' was defined as the seat of subjective identity, 'soul' is the principle of singularity (the awareness that 'I am one, that I am a unit, that I am integrous, that I cohere').[246] Whereas 'self' is explicit (able to be named and identified with), 'soul' is implicit (outside of phenomenon).[247] Whereas 'self' experiences progressive redefinitions and transformations (as outlined in the works of Kegan and Fowler), 'soul' introduces a dimension of continuity (that there is a linked and indissoluble stream of being from one

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[239] Fenn, "Why the Soul?" 2.
[240] Fenn, "Why the Soul?" 3.
[241] Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode*, 98; Pruyser, *A Dynamic Psychology*, 291; Ryu, "Human Self," 124.
[242] Ryu, "Human Self," 127; Brunner, *Doctrine of Creation*, 98.
[243] Zizioulas, *Human Capacity*, 52.
[244] Brunner, *Doctrine of Creation*, 106.
[245] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 74.
[246] Zizioulas, *Human Capacity*, 59.
[247] Grenz, *Social God*, 3.

moment to another, from one experience to another).[248] And whereas the 'self' represents the

empirical faculty of human ontology (seeking to understand the existing and apprehending identity),

the 'soul' is rendered as the transcendental postulate (seeking to understand what is possible and

apprehending wholeness).[249] Thus, according to FCPC, 'soul' is the driving force behind the

interconnection and renewal of being. It is the pure essence of humanity in the in-between. It is

relation for the sake of relation, constantly prompting the 'self' to internalize another stimulus, and

answer another question. The 'soul' is the 'self' transformed, the consciousness that drives

connection, the intuition that nudges action, and the non-conscious motivator of integration.[250]

Hence, 'soul' carries an irreducible meaning and envisages neither multiplicity nor diversity of

content, but rather unity of form, which is prior to content.[251]

The juxtaposition of the notions of 'self' and 'soul' brings into stark focus the dyadic

relationship between these concepts. It is believed that 'self' without 'soul' would be an

individualistic, differentiating, autistic, and alone state of utter stagnation. 'Self' needs 'soul' in order

to remain connected to an external order, to touch the depths of intersubjective reality, to come to

know the relational and transcendental factors that define oneself, one's neighbor, and one's God. In

other words, 'soul', as the epiphenomenological dimension of human ontology, connects 'self' to a

vast array of liminal relations, thereby increasing the potential for the 'self' to encounter

disequilibrating experiences that provoke the transformative growth cycle.[252] Therefore, 'soul' is the

fundamental driver of the development of the 'self', the engine of personal evolution.

At the same time, 'soul' without 'self' can be seen as engulfment, annihilation, an

immobilizing enmeshment. In its drive for separateness and agency, 'self' presents an energetic

[248] Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology*, 215; Ryu, "Human Self," 128.

[249] Capps, "Melancholy Soul," 142.

[250] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 49.

[251] Grenz, *Social God*, 192.

[252] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 51; Malone and Malone, *Art of Intimacy*, 98.

impetus to pull away, to self-define, to grasp subject-object distinction, and to live in duality.[253]

Consequently, it is believed that 'soul' relies on the 'self' for rationality, observation, and

understanding. 'Soul' requires the mechanisms of the 'self' in order to enhance experiential

apprehension and personal congruence.[254] Thus, according to Malone and Malone, 'self' provides

'soul' with an exploratory drive, and supplies a constant stream of new found objects with which

'soul' can connect. In other words, 'self' lives in plurality and presents that plurality to 'soul's'

relational faculty.

Therefore, it is the contention of FCPC that 'self' is the seat of transformation. It is the very

dimension of being that is addressed in the works of Kegan and Fowler. Living in a dualistic world of

what is named and what is grasped, 'self' is the focused centre of subject-object understanding and

rebalancing.[255] It is the very agent that differentiates itself from subjective fusion, on the one hand,

and reintegrates that now-separated object, on the other.[256] It is an ever-reaching faculty of

understanding, and, as such, is that which undergoes Piagetian recentration and transformative

redefinition. It is thus the very aspect of human consciousness that comes to know the world through

the *very creation of objects* and the concomitant integrating of the newly created object into a revised

world of relation. It is no surprise, then, that Kegan named his seminal book *The Evolving Self.*

It is believed that 'Soul', on the other hand, is humanity's faculty in the in-between. Its prime

impetus is to seek further and more integrous interrelations with experience, to come to an

understanding of connection through the lens of intersubjectivity, and to frame knowledge and

relation within the aegis of the liminal.[257] Whereas the growth of the 'self' is the concerted and

protracted activity of differentiation (since it is based in the very creation of objects), 'soul' is the

supra-rational and epiphenomenological drive toward integration. Thus, the complementary

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[253] Kegan, *Evolving Self.*
[254] Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society,* 178.
[255] Kegan, *Evolving Self.*
[256] Kegan, *Evolving Self,* Ch. 2.
[257] Buber, *Knowledge of Man,* 74; Ryu, "Human Self," 127.

relationship of differentiation and integration of objects within the sphere of the 'self' now finds

itself mirrored on a supra-personal plane in the interplay between 'self' and 'soul'.[258] 'Self' moves

toward differentiation, 'soul' moves toward to integration; 'self' moves toward separateness, 'soul'

moves toward unity; 'self' is steeped in duality, 'soul' is found in singularity; and 'self' is the subject

of transformation, whereas 'soul' is the proponent of continuity. Thus, according to FCPC, whereas

'self' creates objects and enters into a relationship with them, 'soul' focuses on the relations of the

'self' and its apprehensions: thus, 'soul', in its liminal dimension, deals with one's *relation* to the

relations of the 'self' (it is in this way that the 'self' is phenomenological and the 'soul' is

epiphenomenological).[259] Thus, whereas the 'self' is the focus of ego psychology (and FDT), it is the

congruent and harmonious balance of 'self' and 'soul', the liminal space between the 'self' and 'soul'

– the *relation of the relational entities,* that is the focus of our revised vision of faith development,

Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC). This balance of 'self' and 'soul' is referred to by FCPC as

the self-soul nexus.

The term self-soul nexus is meant to refer to the counterbalanced wholeness that is our

dynamic state of consciousness.[260] According to Malone and Malone, Gerkin, Zizioulas, Ryu and

Pruyser, human ontology, by virtue of its deep interconnectedness, demands that it be viewed and

treated as a whole, rather than as constituent parts.[261] In the words of Zizioulas, "personhood implies

a movement toward communion which transcends the boundaries of the self, while at the same time

remaining *hypostatic* – i.e. the bearer of its nature in its totality."[262] Grenz develops Zizioulas'

thoughts further by stating that there is no dual or pluralistic personhood; rather, there is only

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[258] Kegan, *Evolving Self,* 51.

[259] Buber, *Knowledge of Man,* 76; Ryu, "Human Self," 129.

[260] Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society,* 178.

[261] Ryu, "Human Self," 126; Malone and Malone, *Art of Intimacy,*86; Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode;* Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology,* 111; Zizoulas, *Human Capacity,* 52..

[262] Zizioulas, *Human Capacity,* 408.

integration and totality.[263] Thus, according to FCPC, the self-soul nexus is that which strives to find coherence, relation, and connection in daily living, that which makes up our internal construction and orientation, our external representation and interaction, as well as our orientation to and connection with those very relations. Our self-soul nexus is the sum total of what we *mean*, how we *relate*, how we conceive of our *identity,* and how we choose to *be* in the world. John Macquarrie harkens to such a notion when he states that personhood can only be actualized through an open-ended process of communion, decision, and commitment.[264] It is the confluence of our drive for change and our need for security, our push for development and our comfort in identity. The self-soul nexus, then, is the seat of our ability to be different throughout our lives, while still retaining a conviction of our unity and sameness. In such a conception, the self-soul nexus transcends its individual parts; it is so much more than mind, environmental surround, meaning filter, relation, connection, or identity embeddedness. It is the combination of all these aspects as well as the resultant *relational emergence* that can only be referred to as wholeness (a liminal concept).[265] Therefore, the self-soul nexus is our wholeness; it is the presence of all our being's dimensions into a concerted moment of apprehension. In its permanence, the self-soul nexus is the very subject of FCPC; in its deep relationalism, it mirrors and extends the basic model of FCPC; and in its completeness (wholeness), it is the focus of faithful development through FCPC.

What we are beginning to experience in these pages is a slow separation between and distillation of the realms of ego psychology and the revised vision of faith development. Thus, whereas FDT confused its definition of faith with a definition of meaning-making, FCPC has clarified the definition of meaning; whereas Kegan's work closely matches Fowler's work and transcends it (in terms of paradigm completeness), FCPC views FDT as a specialized module of ego psychology – one focused on the symbolic and religious; whereas the nature of human knowing was

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[263] Grenz, *Social God,* 134.
[264] Macquarrie, *Principles,* 76.
[265] Malone and Malone, *Art of Intimacy,* 52.

found to be in the in-between, FCPC replaces FDT's focus on meaning and step-like growth with the concept of horizontal attenuation and personal relationalism; whereas FDT's focus was on the more humanistic apprehensions of growth mechanics, FCPC focuses its attention on the liminal; and whereas FDT's underlying epistemological proclivity was one of individualism and quasi-reductionism, FCPC, by focusing on the in-between and the notion of self-soul nexus, moves beyond the individual and enters the realm of the permanent and existential. Thus, we are beginning to see a split between the discourses of traditional FDT and the re-visioned model of faith development found in FCPC. FDT, coupled as it is with ego psychology, focuses on the developing 'self' as it seeks to interact with the symbolic and religious; FDT, coupled with ego psychology, focuses on the 'self' as it provides a humanistic and individualist account of symbolic development; FDT, focusing as it does on transformative growth, works to account for the development and evolution the 'self'. In contrast, FCPC focuses on the in-between and thereby deals with the promotion and enhancement of one's fundamental relation to all experience; FCPC provides an interwoven impetus for integration and meta-relation; and FCPC's intention is to focus fully on the betterment of in-between apprehension and expression. Thus, FCPC deals with the realm of the self-soul nexus.

It is the contention of this work that faith development, as a discipline dealing with one's relations to self, other, and God, would do well to focus its scope to the sphere of influence of the self-soul nexus. Thus, it does not seek to compete with, replace, downplay, or avoid any cogent incarnation of developmental psychology. On the contrary, FCPC, by focusing on the self-soul nexus and its relational development, enters the therapeutic, educational, and practical landscapes as a peer part of the ecology of disciplines. What FCPC boasts, however, is a specialized focus on the furtherance and development of one's very relational core: the self-soul nexus. Therefore, whereas the very notion of FDT furthers the conception of the developing and complexifying 'self', the notion of FCPC elucidates the motion of faith development through a very focused process: we refer to this process as 'caring for the self-soul nexus'. It is to this notion that we next turn our attention.

Chapter 6

Faith Development as Caring for the Self-Soul Nexus

We have reached a point in our discussion where the basics of Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) and the nature of the proposed re-visions to Fowler's Faith Development Theory (FDT) are beginning to come clear. We began our argument by outlining an agreement between FDT's founding tenets (those of experiential apprehension, symbolic representation, and knowing/construal), and FCPC, with the intention of extending those very foundations into the construction of FCPC itself. Yet, before we could embark on an elucidation of the components of FCPC based on FDT founding tenets, we had to discuss and resolve some of the conceptual weaknesses inherent in FDT's construction. To this end, we have stated that Fowler's FDT had conceptual weaknesses in that it presented definitional confusions with notions of meaning-making and ego psychology. In addition, FDT set forth philosophical, pastoral, and methodological weaknesses in its unidirectional individualist bias as well as in its rather limited usefulness in the practical applications of ministry. Therefore, the foundations of FCPC have begun to resolve these weaknesses by subsuming FDT to ego psychology, focusing the scope of faith development to the realm of the in-between, and seeking to foster faith development by concentrating on the growth of the self-soul nexus. Hence, it can be said that the artful pursuit of applying the tenets and foundations of FCPC to a careseeking or questing relationship amounts to caring for the self-soul nexus. This term is meant to address a particular style of careseeker engagement – a style that is of particular constructive use in the pursuit of the attenuation of the in-between. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the practical foundations of caring for the self-soul nexus from the perspective of the foundations of FCPC. It is postulated that pastoral care for this context is comprised of three main ministerial goals: being with, engaging dialogue, and making present. These three tenets of

interpersonal engagement are meant to lead careseekers toward the main modality of FCPC, a

concerted and intentional drive to 'quest-in-the-in-between'.

Part 1

Being With

Interactions involving ministers and careseekers must, by their very nature, be engagements of

interpersonal intensity, where deep-seated, fundamentally meaningful, and sometimes disavowed

affects and orientations are discussed in order to reach a new state of heightened equilibrium and

spiritual insight. In pursuing these relationships, however, we cannot but recognize the reality that

each member of the relation gives meaning and altered existence to the other (the very action of the

in-between). Thus, according to Doninger, pastoral care is not the art of creating relationships –

relationships themselves are taken as givens by virtue of the presence of two persons. The issue at

hand, rather, is one of a mutual participation in the creation of a particular kind of relationship – one

that manifests an understanding of the depth of intersubjectivity, a relation that is nurturing and

connected in the in-between.[266] It is at this level of interpersonal discourse that mutual authenticity

and recognition is fostered. It is by engaging in 'soul'-ful intersubjectivity that we activate the

vagaries of the in-between. And the first requisite for the activation of this intersubjective discourse

is a particular type of presence, an intentional relating, an active receptiveness, an open *being with*.

According to McDargh, this 'being with' is an experience of separate minds sharing the same

affective state, an experience of communion and connection that is a crowning moment in

interpersonal discourse.[267] Thus, we are not intimating a moment of enmeshment, a reversion to a

pre-Oedipal state, but rather, we are talking about a developmental accomplishment along a

trajectory of transitional apprehension that is fundamental to relating as I and Thou. In the words of

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[266] Doninger, *Religion and Human Behaviour*, 79 .
[267] McDargh, "Desire and Domination," 222.

Benjamin, "experiences of 'being with' are predicated on a continually evolving awareness of the differences, and on a sense of intimacy felt as occurring *between* the two of us."[268] The very fact that self and other are not naturally intersubjectively merged is precisely what makes the experience of merging have such a high emotional impact. The externality of the other makes one feel truly nourished and supported, while simultaneously confirming one as a living, worthwhile, and seen entity.[269] Hence, it is in the mutuality and simultaneity of the in-between that reciprocal activation and validation is effected. In the case of standard non-mutualized conversation, speaker and listener take turns and rotate roles of passivity and action, engage in rounds of sequential objectification, and risk to take part in activities of definitional distancing that never furthers the development of the self-soul nexus. Interconnection in the in-between, in contrast, is experienced as the confluence and nurturing of authentic being, devoid of control, replete with compassion, deeply connecting without compromising difference and agency. As such, true 'being with' effectively addresses the common human paradox of simultaneously needing independence and recognition, union and separateness, social inclusion and social identity, unshackling participants from the habitual cycles of self-protection and opening them to a supra-personal level of discourse, a plane of genuine freedom, a shame-less encounter of mutual validation and acceptance.

Thomas Oden recalls this notion of intersubjective acceptance when he notes that open interpersonalism concretely mediates expressions of divine acceptance, through experiences of liminal relating.[270] Oden warns against the implicit preaching inherent in practical ministers creating experiences for careseekers, or worse yet, pointing out to them the source and their (the ministers') inspiration of acceptance. Such actions would constitute a breach of the mutual definition of I and Thou and result in an objectified mental construct that could detract from the course of healing and self-awareness. Thus, according to Oden, an intersubjective 'being with' is an incarnational kerygma,

[268] Benjamin in McDargh, "Desire and Domination," 222 (emphasis added).
[269] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 46; McDargh in Fenn and Capps, *On Losing the Soul*, 222.
[270] Oden, *Kerygma an Counseling*, 28.

that acts as a liberating non-verbal language of its own in the task of walking with careseekers.

Hence, the first task of walking with careseekers in the FCPC mode is to engage them such that a

relational intersubjectivity is fostered and extended. By engaging in intersubjective connecting,

minister and careseeker enter the realm of the in-between and begin to relate to each as complete,

separate yet communed, worthy and authentic beings. It is only on the acceptance and surrender of

such a mutual state that true dialogue can occur.

For our purposes, dialogue is defined as the language of the in-between, a balanced and soulful

discourse, a communicative act of deep mutuality where both parties are safe and deeply affected.

This dialogue far transcends the capacity to understand standard speech and to engage in message

dissemination. Rather, according to Schleiermacher, dialogue requires a novel level of interpretation,

a level that is both psychological and divinatory, requiring intuition, imagination, and affective

interrelation.[271] Therefore, dialogue transcends subject-object differences, engages in contextual

insight and hermeneutics, and is constitutive of experience. Gadamer goes so far as to say that, since

one always stands in the flow of historical space, it is erroneous to engage in subject-object

conversation, as that conversation would be rendered as nothing other than a reflection of one's own

meaning filters.[272] Rather, he advocates for a dialogical process in which meaning and understanding

horizons are interlaced and interfolded, thereby rendering transparent the very defensive, repressive,

and narrow structures with which we approach others. In other words, we cannot avoid the

neuroticism and proclivities of our personal meaning filters, but we can lay these proclivities bare

and engage in I-Thou interrelations when we speak to one another in the realm of the in-between.

This type of intersubjectively committed and reflective speech is the very definition of FCPC's

approach to dialogue.

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[271] Schleiermacher in Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode*, 41.
[272] Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 271.

The very nature of dialogue, according to Buber, is that it wants to reach out into the space between 'man and man [sic]', oscillating between the spheres of the dialogical participants, and transcending the language formation and speech apprehension that comprise the lower dimensions of the act.[273] This transcendental component is the very aspect of dialogue that resides in the in-between and that distinguishes it from all other forms of interaction and communication. In general, in non-dialogical encounters, speakers speak with an already conceived notion of what their statements mean; and listeners listen with an already developed sense that they are accurately apprehending a well-constructed speech event. In both cases, speaker and listener are bound in their positions, and converse with one another through objectively ratified roles. In this state, it is often forgotten that events do not only occur within, but also *between* participants. In contrast, in dialogue, it is not the goal to have a common pre-supposition for the meaning of terms and concepts, it is not the goal to engage in tension-filled elucidations to avoid misunderstanding, and it is not the goal to engage in probing rounds of objectified tenet definition in order to present a complete and cogent narrative of a particular stimulus. These are the hallmarks of an I-It relation and a distanced conversation. Rather, dialogue is an act of communication wherein both careseeker and minister encounter one another, in an intersubjective activation, in a confluence of personal essence, in a mutual validation and recognition of both 'self' and 'soul'. In the in-between, the growth of dialogue and the growth of humanity are one.[274] In dialogue, humanity speaks to humanity, 'self' perceives 'self', 'soul' recognizes 'soul', reason is protected, affect is shared, truth is generated, freedom is unleashed, power is created, safety is promoted, and increased *relation to relation* is enhanced.[275] Therefore, dialogue is the communicative act *par excellence* for the promotion and furtherance of faith development, as seen through FCPC, as it inaugurates an intersubjective culture of deep mutuality. It

[273] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 102.
[274] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 62.
[275] There is a great deal here that is reminiscent of Habermas' concept of the idea speech situation. Habermas in Griffith and Griffith, *Encountering the Sacred*, 234; see also the works of Bakhtin.

is therefore the very seat of horizontal faith development. The in-between, however, is but the sphere of dialogue; we are left with a question of the purpose of dialogue. The answer to this question is reflective of our quest for furthering faith development: the purpose of dialogue in the in-between is to promote the concerted commitment of careseekers – literally, to make them present.

FCPC defines 'making present' as an imaginative act of relational realization that takes place in the confluence of dialogue. It rests on the capacity, possessed to some extent by everyone, to invoke imagination and hold before one's self-soul nexus a reality arising out of this moment, but that is just out of reach of personal experiential validation. Thus, making the other present through dialogue is imagining that the other is completely real and imagining also that the other is quite concretely wishing, feeling, perceiving, and thinking all that is shared. Consequently, it is a bold reaching out of the one's 'self' for the 'self' of the other, along with a daring swinging of one's 'soul' into the 'soul' of the other, an intense action of one's being, an invocation of the other, and a drive toward communion.[276] This imaginative act does nothing less than confirm the other as relationally whole, accept his/her proclivities, and bring out a multi-layered apprehension of integrated meaning. This act creates a liminal culture of validation, acceptance, insight, and attraction that literally draws the self-soul nexus of the other to the fore of intercourse. Hence, what began as an imaginative exercise ends as a very real extraction of the presence of the careseeker into the in-between. It is literally an act of self-investment that results in the drawing out of genuine being and authentic relating.

As such, the imaginative act of making present increases until both participants are embraced by a combined living situation, where the pain one may inflict on the other surges up in both of them, where the paradox of agency and communion is transcended, and where a supra-ordinate apprehension of the horizontal comes into being. In other words, through the act of dialogue and the incidence of 'making present', the separation and agency of a member of a dyad that is perceived as

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[276] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 19.

'object' is transcended; 'self' can perceive 'self', and 'soul' can join 'soul'. Hence, making present is

an imaginative act of sheer integration, of mutual interfolding, and of ontologically informed

encounter. It is process whereby two separate spheres of experience come to be beheld by disparate

subjectivities; it is the process whereby internal representations and symbols come to carry impactful

meaning to both witnesses; it is a process whereby the construction of knowing is shared and

validated as cogent by authentic agreement; and it is a process whereby the cultural matrix in which

relation is embedded is perceived as an ultimate force of influence and definition. It is a moment of

mutual meeting in which the conditions required for horizontal development are concretized, in

which 'self' and 'soul' consciously interconnect, and in which the pre-disposition for faithful growth

is nurtured. Thus, according to Buber, true making present is akin to true becoming, since inmost

growth is not accomplished solely in humanity's relation to itself ('self'), but rather in its relation to

the self *and* the other (a balanced self-soul nexus).[277]

Thus, pastoral efforts at making careseekers present entail the very creation of the transitional

holding environment postulated by Winnicott. By engaging in dialogue and imaginatively making the

other present, pastoral professionals set forth the pre-supposition for a synergized culture within

which the 'self' can find footing and the 'soul' can find insight. It is a trustworthy transitional space

that is reminiscent of Oden's incarnated kerygma, where making present allows for grace,

acceptance, affirmation, and confirmation. The creation of a growthful transitional space through

dialogue and making present allows each member of a dyad to fully experience the other in his/her

entirety, as a whole without abstraction, as concrete without reduction, as a separate centre without

losing communion; and as a precious 'soul' without losing agency ('self'). As such, dialogue and

making present are the phenotypic orientations proposed for pastoral professionals seeking to engage

careseekers in the development of faithful apprehension and interconnectedness, in an encounter with

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[277] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 61.

the underpinnings of meaning, and in an openness for a meeting with the God. Thus, in the words of

Buber, "If all real life is meeting, then true healing also takes place through meeting."[278]

Part 2

The Goal of Pastoral Care

We are thus left with a final question in our discussion of caring for the self-soul nexus. If

'being with', engaging in dialogue, and making present are the basic orientations conducive to faith

development, what is the goal of undertaking these techniques?

In the foregoing discussion, we presented a case for viewing the ontology of human

apprehension in a relational mode, and have pointed out that such a horizontal approach to

development resolves many of the difficulties introduced by Fowler's FDT. In the horizontal mode,

relation and interconnection is supreme as is the proclivity to conceive of action and thought in a

'tripartite construal' that is steeped in the transcendent. Horizontal constructions connect us to the

world around us and to God, in a way that vertical constructions cannot do. In addition, the subject-

object rebalancing that is the very seat of the developmental engine in the vertical mode was

transcended by the horizontal mode, which emphasized the existential and the in-between. Thus,

whereas the works of Kegan and Fowler emphasize the role of relation to the 'self', the horizontal

mode of FCPC emphasizes the *relation* to those very same relations. Hence, it is not that a horizontal

approach to development seeks to move persons from one level of development to another (that

would be an arrogant usurping of the sacredness of client-centered pastoral care). It is rather that the

horizontal approach invests in forging, maintaining, and fostering as many current and new

relationships as possible. Thus, whereas the vertical model outlines transformation and step-like

change, the horizontal model outlines the making present of an ever-complexified world of others. In

such a making present, the apprehending self-soul nexus is brought to the fore and enriched, as its

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[278] Buber, *Knowledge of Man* ,21.

construal and interrelations increase its connectedness to the created and divine orders of the world. Horizontalism, then, is a developmental perspective on knowing by being; it is a liminal construal of the world that opens the self-soul nexus up to experience, to inspiration, and to further liminality. Consequently, the role of pastoral professionals is the *very infusion of energetic impetus in the in-between, such that the careseeker can further quest for deep and abiding interrelation.* Pastoral professionals, then, engage in 'being with', dialogue, and making present in order to evoke a self-soul presence in the careseeker, with the explicit goal of encouraging questing of the very terms of the in-between.

By questioning the very terms of the in-between, pastoral professionals are effectively leading their careseekers toward a level of discourse that re-aligns relationship (with all levels of being), and thereby comes to understand its place further in the created order. Thus, questing-in-the-in-between is a deeply spiritual pursuit, wherein the very narratives of meaning and relation are cast in an altered and scrutinized relation to the transcendent. As a consequence, questing-in-the-in-between is an action that refines one's very approach to all of life, at any point in the lifecycle. It is an approach that increases the scope of construal and the apprehension of identity. Hence, whereas FDT focused on stages of faith development, FCPC focuses on *styles of faith expression*; whereas FDT focuses on abilities and limitations at each stage in a lifecycle, FCPC focuses on maximized and invigorated relations within each level. In other words, to frame the argument from a more religious standpoint, FDT focuses on the capabilities of particular ages to understand the symbolic and the divine (mature character), whereas FCPC focuses its efforts on fostering a maximized and energized relation to the divine, at *whatever stage a person finds him/herself.* Thus, it is not the purpose of FCPC to define a careseeker's placement on a continuum of growth; it is rather to introduce a questing into the consciousness of the careseeker – a questing that seeks to better relate to the Other (divine and otherwise), a more mature character.

As such, questing-in-the-in-between is very much a model that represents a lifelong pilgrimage of understanding and growth. As Gerkin stated, pilgrimage is not simply about the overcoming of internal fragmentation (FDT/ego psychology); rather, it is about the maintenance, furtherance, and maximization of a robust and inspiring ecology of relationships.[279] Therefore, questing-in-the-in-between is a pilgrimage of self-soul nexus toward ever-greater wholeness.[280] In this way, questing-in-the-in-between leaves open the possibility of inspiration, personal motivation, and divine grace; it leaves open the possibility of an immanent as well as a transcendent God, whose actions cannot be spoken for. Therefore, questing-in-the-in-between counteracts the notions of the 'naturalistic fallacy'. In addition, this form of questing focuses on the existential, relational, and liminal thereby introducing a balanced discourse of psychology and ministry that does not need to resort to a quasi-reductionism to maintain definitional cogency. Also, by focusing on questing-in-the-in-between, FCPC does not engage in a discussion of stage-like progression and thereby transcends considerations of empirical hardness and softness that risk denuding faith development of soulful orientations. Moreover, questing-in-the-in-between sets the arena for faith development in the sphere of the intersubjective, thereby addressing the very seat of meaning-making, while simultaneously counteracting the epistemological proclivity toward individualism and personal agency. And finally, questing-in-the-in-between affirms the integrated self-soul nexus within each of the dialoguing participants. As such, the appeal to a lasting, permanent, and continuous entity, that seeks to refine relations with all others is answered, and placed firmly at the centre of pastoral discourse.

Therefore, questing-in-the-in-between evokes conceptions of and participation in historical time and eschatological time; it fosters notions of possibility and hope; it emphasizes the interplay of the 'already' and the 'not yet'; it engenders a pilgrimage through life in a state between a promise made and a promise fulfilled. Rather than define complexity, it removes blocks to wholeness and

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[279] Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode*, 146.
[280] Thus, whereas ego psychology and FDT focus on ever greater subjective differentiation, FCPC focuses on the development of a relational prehension of self that is the very basis of human wholeness.

seeks to increase integration; it is both a secure system and an openness to divine grace; in the words

of Cowan, it is a "capacity and commitment to let the emerging stories of others matter to us as if

they were our own stories."[281] It is thus a meeting of self-soul nexuses where perception is enhanced,

a continual movement toward a horizon of grace, and most importantly, a fundamental driver in the

re-visioned story of faith development.

So, Where Are We Now?

When FDT first appeared on the pastoral care landscape, it had a powerful impact on the

proponents of the field. In its promise, pastoral professionals found a regular, step-like progression of

phenotypes and behaviours that seemed to bring order to the swirling possibilities at play within

careseekers. Coming both from a time and an environment where structuralism was in ascendance,

FDT undertook to elucidate a series of faith-related apprehensions and behaviours, all set within a

seemingly wholistic and dynamic definition of faith. Very shortly after its dissemination however,

FDT began to experience resistance and probing questions from various sectors in the pastoral field –

questions aimed at the theory's cogency, reliability, and practical uses. As articles and books came to

be published on the topic, however, FDT retained its original form and, as time passed, became less

and less able to address the significant concerns set out by its critics. The re-visioning of faith

development theory proposed in these pages is a response to this growing gap between the state of

FDT and the needs and experiences of careseekers and pastoral professionals.

This work has argued that Fowler's Faith Development Theory is in need of revision and

corrective. Curatives required of FDT involve the clarification and alteration of some of the

fundamental tenets of the theory as well as a more detailed and precise definition of the concepts that

undergird it. To that end, Chapter 1 outlined the three main foundations of FDT:

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[281] Cowan, "Emerging in Love," 63.

- the faculty of experiential apprehension, the only faculty available to humankind through which to gain knowledge and interact with all the dimensions of existence,

- the faculty of symbolic representation (including relating to internal images, semiological apprehension and internal sensitivity), a harkening to the internal processes of human mythic representation, as well as to one's assimilation of that process in the development of one's faithful journey;

- the faculty of knowing/construal (including one's engagement in a logic that works to make the world cohere) – a tenet harkening to the centrality of understanding, meaning-making, and interpretive construal through which humankind comes to know itself, its world and its God.

It was stated in Chapter 1 that FCPC stands in agreement with FDT on these three founding tenets. It was also stated, however, that before we could engage in the explication of the components of FCPC (as based on the three founding tenets of FDT), we had to resolve some of the implicit weaknesses in FDT's construction. As such, the foregoing chapters have addressed the main weaknesses of FDT and have proposed correctives to these weaknesses in the elucidation of the foundational tenets of Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC), a model of re-visioned faith development that is focused on the relational and existential, rather than on the structural and vertical. As such, the weaknesses of FDT that have been addressed and the interventions taken to correct their impacts is found in Table 3.

Table 3 Weaknesses of FDT and Interventions undertaken in FCPC

Weaknesses	
Fowler's FDT	**How Is This Addressed in FCPC**
FDT fundamentally conflates *faithing* with meaning-making	FCPC provides a definition of meaning-making thereby uncoupling the notion from that of faith
FDT unilaterally focuses on vertical structuralism in its approach to development	FCPC, being concerned with the relational and liminal, focuses on the horizontal dimension of connection

FDT confuses faith development and ego development	FCPC subsumes FDT to ego development and views it as a specialized module related to the symbolic and religious
FDT contains a unidirectional individualist bias	By focusing on the in-between, FCPC does not lose sight of the importance of the individual, while it centralizes the relational
FDT falls prey to the 'naturalistic fallacy'	FCPC transcends the 'naturalistic fallacy' by emphasizing the free agency of poles in the in-between. God can be both immanent and transcendent and thus allow for faith development to take place in novel ways
FDT expresses a quasi-reductionism that diffuses the cogency of many of its definitional tenets	FCPC shifts focus to the horizontal, liminal, and relational, and thereby transcends the need for empirically-oriented reductionism
FDT seeks to maintain an empirical 'hardness' to its stages	FCPC transcends determinations of hardness by focusing in questing and pilgrimage
FDT does not appeal to an entity of personhood that is lasting, permanent and continuous	FCPC conceives of the agent of faith development as the self-soul nexus – a lasting, permanent, and continuous entity

It has been the contention of this work that Fowler's FDT proposes some seminal and growthful tenets that must essentially be retained in order to effect an impactful and relevant notion of faith growth in human beings. The list of FDT's strengths is impressive and works to extricate the direction of FDT from the traps of in-depth philosophizing and a strict focus on the psychology of religion. Therefore, it was concluded that the strengths of FDT must be retained in a re-visioned model of faith development. In some cases, however, identified strengths were biases and opinions set forth by Fowler that did not find operational footing within the scheme of FDT. For the purpose our discussion in these pages, however, where the focus is on building a revised and cogent model, it is being assumed that Fowler's stated intention for FDT should be regarded as equally relevant, since it presents significant contributions to the work of faith development. Table 4 provides a list of the strengths found in Fowler's FDT as well as a juxtaposed outline of how FCPC has retained them.

Table 4: The Strengths of FDT and How FCPC Has Retained Them

Strengths	
Fowler's FDT	**How Is This Retained in FCPC**
FDT secures a central place for the role of meaning	FCPC retains this strength and enhances it by providing a specialized definition of meaning-making
Fowler assumes that all humans are potentiated for partnership and relationship with God	FCPC centralizes this assertion by its focus on the in-between and the 'tripartite construal'
Fowler believes that FDT cannot be effective unless it could be assimilated as a personal experience within a questing person	FCPC names the central agent of its approach to faith development 'self-soul nexus'. This term is meant to represent the inmost level of being, and therefore is the seat of personal experience
FDT resists hardcore reductionism and provides a synergistic space for psychology and ministry	FCPC integrates the tenets of psychology, philosophy, and ministry to bring about a balanced interplay of disciplines.
FDT provides faith with a central role in one's understanding of life	FCPC re-defines faith and places it at the centre of a dynamic model of development (we will deal with this issue in Chapter 10).

As can be seen by this summary, we have come a long way in our quest for re-visioning FDT

through Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC). In our foregoing discussion, we have set out

several intra-model tenets that correct many of the weaknesses, as well as retain many of the

strengths of FDT proper. Most importantly, we stipulated that a re-visioned notion of faith

development must focus on the horizontal aspects of relation, rather than on the vertical aspects of

structure, thereby moving careseekers to engage their spiritual pilgrimages by questing-in-the-in-

between. In this way, the foundations FCPC provide the beginnings of a model of faith development

in conjunction with a palpable pastoral directive, whereas FDT provides only the former. FCPC has

clarified founding definitions and has therefore removed blocks to definitions of faith that are cogent

to all disciplines in pastoral ministry, whereas FDT conflates notions of epistemological import. And,

by focusing on the relational, FCPC provides the basis for a model of faith apprehension that focuses

on *styles* of relation that can be deeply attuned at any age, whereas FDT provides structural analyses of incremental abilities.

In should be noted, however, that, to this point, we have only discussed the theoretical underpinnings of FCPC. There is an entire discourse around the actual construction of the operational model that is yet to be undertaken. In this construction, we will base ourselves on the original three founding tenets that grounded Fowler in his construction of FDT: these are the grounding tenets of the faculty of experiential apprehension, the faculty of symbolic representation, and the faculty of knowing/construal. In so doing, FCPC retains the fundamental and cogent spirit represented by Fowler's work as the basis from which to view faith development. As a result of the foundations of FCPC (that re-align the basic features of FDT), however, the actual developed elucidation of each of these faculties will take a novel turn. As such, our argument will proceed in the following way: the next section will elucidate the operational components of FCPC by engaging Fowler's four faculties of faith development in a probing discussion of elucidation; it will approach each of these explorations through the notion of questing-in-the-in-between in order to enhance the health and integration of the self-soul nexus; and, thereafter, it will synergize the findings of the three faculties in order to provide a definition of faith that places faith squarely at the centre of life's concerns.

By the end of our discussion, a model of our horizontal approach to faith development will be proposed and compared with Fowler's FDT.

SECTION 4

FAITH-CONSTITUTIVE PASTORAL CARE, THE MODEL

Chapter 7

Experience: The Engine of Faith Development

John Patton once said that, "Christian ministry involves not only understanding what we do in light of faith, but also understanding faith in light of what we do."[282] In this statement, Patton is calling for the recovery of and respect for our very experiences, the events of our lives that shape who we are and what we know, the encounters that are constitutive of and affected by our meaning-making. Fowler's FDT, based as it is on the tenets of ego psychology, cannot but affirm the centrality of experience in the lives of human beings. In the Piagetian construct of assimilation-decentration-accommodation-recentration by which qualitative subjective redefinitions take place in FDT, disequilibrating stimuli can result from nothing other than experience. As such, it is not simply experience that is of central importance, but rather the notion of experiential *apprehension*. In other words, we can only know what we know through experience (an epistemological notion that goes back to the medieval thought and reached its apex with the work of the British Empiricists), and yet, we can only assimilate experience if we first come to apprehend it. In fact according to Patton, it is the ability to apprehend and retain experience that is determinative of developmental health, throughout the entire lifecycle.[283] And yet, despite the centrality of experience in the motion of faith development, Fowler does not undertake to elucidate its mechanics, nor the nature of its fundamental contribution to faith apprehension. In his focus on the phenotypic aspects of faith, Fowler extols the importance and indispensability of experience, yet does not go so far as to engage its effect, its ramifications, or its place in the panoply of affect that is faith development. Following the example of many epistemological writers before him, Fowler took experience as a given of life, and developed a theory of growth around it. Consequently, a conceptual gap in the fabric of FDT was set out, one

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[282] Patton, *From Ministry to Theology*, 12.
[283] Schactel in Patton, *From Ministry to Theology* 15.

that has yet to find a resolution. Hence, it is to this gap in FDT that FCPC directs itself in its

elucidation and explication of the dynamics and importance of experience. Our discussion of FCPC

in the subsequent pages will focus on an element of stated criticalness to Fowler's FDT (experience),

while remaining an element that is insufficiently developed and elucidated in relation to FDT. To that

end, FCPC will be engaging in a synthetic dialogue with the disciplines of ministry, psychology, and

philosophy, so as to introduce tenets that clarify the role and scope of experience in its relation to

faith development. The importance of this focus is not illustrated anywhere more clearly than in the

thought of Patrick Mullahy who said that the genuine ability to grow in wisdom rests on a person's

ability to genuinely apprehend and integrate experience. It is this experience, Mullahy claims, that

will form the basis for cogent and impactful system of practical ministry.[284]

It is in fact the purpose of these pages to delineate a model of faith development that is both

theoretically sound and practically useful. As such, experiential apprehension and understanding is of

central importance to our construction of the components of the FCPC model. In this chapter, we will

add a missing dimension to FDT's discourse, arguing that an ability to relate to *fuller experience* is

seminal to one's openness to life. Honouring the foundations of Fowler's FDT, FCPC postulates that

one's relation to experience is a critical path by which development can proceed, a basic vector to

growth. To that end, our discussion will proceed from a definition of experience, through an

elucidation of the paths to greater experiential apprehension, and end with a presentation of a

relational growth vector that is central to FCPC's re-visioning of faith development: the Experiential

Vector.

Part 1

Experience

Experience is a concept that has been expounded upon by generations of philosophers,

psychologists, scientists, and theologians. It is a ubiquitous idea that undergirds many conceptions of

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[284] Mullahy, *A Study of the Interpersonal*, 23.

developmental reality. It is thought that this is so because experience is the only gateway human apprehension has to understanding the complexities of everyday living, and using those very apprehensions in the attenuation and re-construction of meaning.[285] Piaget himself extolled the importance of experience, claiming that as a confluence of person and world, experience is a supreme act of integration, capable of linking past to future, and holding it together by the slippery strands of the present.[286] Experience is predominantly seen as the actualized filter through which we can know all that we can know, and through which we can choose to change what we deem needs to be developed. James Poling and Donald Miller have pointed out that, so central is experience to the human condition, no act of epistemological or theological significance can proceed without first finding grounding in the richness of historically-lived experience.[287] Hence, these scholars are echoing the assertion of Gerkin who states that experience is the very ground from which reflection and theorizing stem, thereby acting as the very basis for human encounter with and transcendence of the internal and external worlds.[288] As such, being an exponent of the liminal, experiential apprehension is an attenuation of the in-between, and is consequently inextricably linked with humanity's notions of faith and existential placement, according to FCPC. In agreement with the existentialism of Kierkegaard, Patton expresses his belief that experience bridges the gap between external stimulus and personal imaginative processes of meaning development, and thereby finds links to one's mundane and transcendental orientations.[289] By being an active and somatic presence in the in-between, experiential apprehension cannot be reduced to a listing of parts (such as perception, intuition, or feeling) – a division that would empty the experiential of potentiality.[290] Rather, experience is a relational witnessing, with a depth that moves beyond its mechanics, and into

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[285] Locke, *Essay on Human Understanding*, Patton, *From Ministry to Theology;* Gendlin, *Focusing;* Malone and Malone, *Windows;* Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology;* Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode.*
[286] Piaget in Sigel, *New Directions,* 203.
[287] Poling and Miller, *Foundations for a Practical Theology of Ministry,* 64.
[288] Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode,* 25.
[289] Patton, *From Ministry to Theology,* 21; this is a concept this is intimately linked with our prior discussion of the *tripartite construal* of human action (see Chapter 5).
[290] Sadler, "Religion and Personality," 7.

the realm of the transcendent.[291] Harkening back to Fowler's assertions, in its transcendental mode

('tripartite construal'), experience is constitutive of and inextricably interlinked with faith, because it

imaginatively intimates apprehensions of the Divine as immanent.[292] Therefore, experience is a

seminal and spiritually crucial aspect of life. It is a pragmatic principle, the phenomenological

reflection on development, and a grounding in relationality. It is ideally the process through which

life events and reactions are understood to be constitutive and determinative of faithful growth. We

have used the term "ideally" in this context, however, because, within FCPC, it is postulated that that

there are two distinct types of experience relevant to faith development: common experience and

fuller experience. In our quest to augment faith development with a developed notion of experience,

we will define each of these terms, in turn.

Common experience is defined as the apprehension of any encounter. By apprehension we

refer to grasping, observing, defining, analyzing, or exhibiting of that encounter. Apprehension is

therefore a non-directive receipt of the functions and actions of life, whether these functions and

actions are internal, external, or liminal. Apprehension, therefore, is not an intentional and sought

after reaction to a particular impetus; rather, it is the natural and immediate result of being a witness,

of being there, of simply noticing. As such it is the delivery of stimulus to psychic space.[293] It does

not account for the workings of psychic space on what is delivered; only that what is delivered is

recorded in consciousness. This conception of apprehension, then, forms the basis of the Jungian

classically defined concept of the unconscious – wherein all memories, activities, and happenings are

recorded and held, whether or not they are worked upon. Apprehension in common experience is

reception without direction; it is the receipt of encounter.

In this context, encounter is defined as the moment in which the 'anything' of life confronts

the self-soul nexus. An encounter, therefore, is any moment in which the subject is beholding an

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[291] Patton, *From Ministry to Theology*, 23.
[292] Meland, *Suffering and Being*, 174.
[293] For a discussion and definition of psychic space, see Chapter 9.

object (whether that object is internal or external). An encounter is a coming face-to-face with any event or stimulus of daily living – objectively or liminally. It is the non-directive stumbling upon and witnessing of anything that is considered 'object' or 'other'. The apprehension of any encounter, then, the notion that any stimulus or event that is stumbled upon is received in consciousness, is considered by FCPC to be a *common experience*. This is the definition of experience that accounts for the psychological notion that nothing apprehended is ever forgotten; rather, the sum total of what one has lived is stored in consciousness through some process.[294] This is the process of common experience.

Common experience, however, carries within it a fundamental weakness with respect to any notion of faith development: it is the weakness of non-direction. In other words, simply accepting a common experience into consciousness does not imply that that experience has been assimilated, has had any important effect on understanding, or has introduced any movement toward a notion of development. It is because of the inert dimension of common experience that FCPC calls it non-directive. It is possible, therefore, to be privy to some experience and to have that experience leave 'self' and 'soul' untouched and unaltered; it is possible to go through the events and routines of daily life and find no driving force toward personal development or spiritual growth. The reception of experience can therefore be a developmentally result-less affair, a developmentally neutral occurrence, or a directionless accretion of psychic material. It is thought that, although this type of experience is not escapable (it is in fact a process lived by all human beings daily) and is indispensable (since without it, we would suffer an unbearable existence of psychic overload), it is not the type of experiential interplay that fosters growth and enhances the contributions of meaning-making and development. For the constructive (as opposed to neutral) sense of experience, FCPC turns its attention to *fuller experience.*

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[294] Dougherty and West, *Matrix and Meaning,* 148; Bollas, *Shadow of the Object,* 69.

FCPC postulates that 'fuller experience' is the acceptance of encounter into liminal dialogue with one's self-soul nexus. It is worthwhile to parse out this admittedly dense definition.

By acceptance is meant an internal process that vastly supersedes and transcends reception. By acceptance is meant an intentional, deliberate, and welcomed embrace; an intended assimilation, a purposeful reception, a directed intake.[295] It is an act of applying one's 'self' and 'soul' to the co-mingling of oneself with the presenting object, without first being apprised of potential ramifications. Acceptance, then, is non-defensive, innocent, and participatory.[296] It is fundamentally a psychic act of grace, where encounter is welcomed into subjectivity, based solely of the fact that it is encounter; herein lies its non-defensive dimension. It is an act of openness, since it brings forward stimulus that can act as fodder for the developmental process; herein lies its innocence. And it is an act of relation since it presents to the 'soul' a new entity with which to connect; herein lies its liminal and participatory dimension (in-between). Acceptance, therefore, is an application of one's self-soul nexus to presenting consciousness what is apprehended from daily living. It is therefore an act of courage and a challenge to equilibrium; it is a process of supporting meaning construction on the one hand, and finding its flaws on the other. It is the process of sustaining relational wants on the one hand, and providing light to name these wants, on the other. Acceptance (and its implied intentionality) in this context, is the defining difference between common experience and fuller experience. It is the prerequisite to the intimate dialogue that is so crucial to the in-between.[297]

The two terms in the phrase 'intimate dialogue' are chosen very deliberately. As discussed above (Chapter 6), by dialogue is meant a transitional, liminal, open, and willing discourse between subject and object, and between the self-soul nexus and other, where ideas and notions are shared, examined, supported, contradicted, maintained, or transformed. It is not a kind of conversation where each side jockeys for position and competes for the limelight; rather, it is an attuned listening of

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[295] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 42.
[296] Randall, *Stories We Are*, 103; Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 45.
[297] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 47.

'self' with 'self', and 'soul' with 'soul' to the novelties and wisdoms presented by the other. It is an

openness to learn and to further *know*. It is a process of internal measurement (sizing up our meaning

and relations against encounter), of faithful evaluation (comparing presented information with

current epistemology), and of challenge (where every equilibrium seeks to find corroboration or

obsolescence). It is the relational prerequisite to achieving intimacy.

Intimacy, in the context of FCPC's notion of fuller experience, refers to an allowance of

entry into the deepest levels of 'self' and of 'soul' – a very real surrender to the presentations of

objectivity and the other. By being intimate one allows the presenting encounter to enter the

foundations of 'self' and 'soul', to affect every resultant level of being, and to introduce aspects of

growth and attenuation hitherto un-entertained.[298] Most importantly, the surrender of intimacy is the

willingness to be transformed, the eagerness to be developed, and the desire to acquire an attuned and

aware vision.[299] It is the ability to be close to, harmonious with, and loving of encounter and its

ramifications. As such, it is an act of connectedness, of reciprocity, of attentiveness, of liminal

nourishment, and of congruence. It is only by being intimate that we can open the gates to our self-

soul nexus. Thus, FCPC's *fuller experience,* as an acceptance of encounter into intimate dialogue

with the self-soul nexus, is an intentional act of orientation; it is a deliberate drive toward

interconnection and a fundamental longing for wisdom. It is the pragmatic dimension of

apprehension and thereby illuminates and inter-relates with meaning, symbolic representation,

knowing, and cultural interaction (the founding categories of Fowler's FDT).

What then is the relation between common experience and fuller experience? What are the

components of self and apprehension that cause common experience to be converted into instances of

fuller experience? The answer to this query invokes our seminal concept of the in-between. Since

common experience is the result of encounter, some faculty of grasping and relating must apply itself

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[298] Cowan, "Emerging in Love," 54.
[299] Buber, *Knowledge of Man,* 49; Mead, *Mind, Self and Society,* 79; Ryu, "Human Self," 128; Pruyser, *Belief,* 149.

to the vagaries of common experience in order to deepen relation and inaugurate the openness

required for intimate dialogue. This is the very process of experiential apprehension, and is therefore

a fundamental act of self-extension (the components of this self-extension will be discussed later in

this Chapter). Common experience is the ground from which fuller experience stems, the pool from

which the cup of fuller experience is drawn, and the relational flow from which the intensity of the

in-between is reached. Common experience is the source of fuller experience, and thereby, is the

very target toward which actions and orientations of relation, and therefore development, are to be

directed.

The current construction of FDT does not seek to delineate and name various levels of

experiential apprehension. It proceeds through its discussion of development, taking the existence

and centrality of experience as a given within the matrix of faith development. Piagetian,

Kohlbegian, and Ericksonian tenets are fundamentally linked with a person's ability to perceive

experience, apprehend experience, and make meaning through experience. By derivative extension,

the same fundamental bias is found in the work of Fowler. A quick scan of the structural literature of

Fowler's day, however, indicates that conceptions of experiential apprehension were not considered

central to the discipline of elucidating vertical frameworks. It is the contention of these pages,

however, that FDT, by virtue of straddling the divide between the psychological and pastoral, is

compelled to take account of and propose intra-model definitions for the more numinous and

existential linkages of personal apprehension and especially meaning-making. As such, FCPC works

to address this gap in FDT by engaging in a delineation of liminal relations as they are related to the

fundamental components of apprehension and meaning-making.

To that end, there is a very strong relation between experiential apprehension and meaning-

making. Meaning-making can be defined as a construction of mind that reduces the manifold of

perception into a coherent and cogent unity (for more, see Chapter 9).[300] As a constructed product of

mind, meaning structures can be articulated, defended, and corroborated. Additionally, we, in

conjunction with Fowler, have frequently stated that all that can be known can be known only

through experience. Experience, then, provides the framework for nourishing meaning-making and,

most importantly, the means through which the abducted hypotheses of life can be tested and

corroborated.[301] The abducted hypotheses do not form part of the meaning matrix of a questing

individual until economic corroborations take place (through the faculty of experiential

apprehension) that convince the groping self-soul nexus of the cogency and relevance of a putative

hypothetical structure.[302] Also, once accepted and taken on as meaning structure, experience is the

foil against which the meaning system is sustained or contradicted. Hence, meaning is continuously

being corroborated by experiential inputs.[303] Should experience support meaning structures,

equilibrium and belief are retained; should experience present an unmistakable contradiction to

belief, doubt (or Sigel's concept of 'discrepancy') is introduced and the process of dispelling this

confusing state is invoked (decentration).[304] Hence, in the relation between apprehension and

meaning-making, experience plays a primal and critical role: it is the basis upon which hypotheses

are formed, corroborated, and admitted; it is the stabilizer through which current meaning structures

are maintained and protected; it is the force through which obsolete meaning structures are identified;

and it is the mirror against which new abductions take form.[305] Depth of experience is seminal to

epistemological attenuation, symbolic apprehension, cultural interaction, and meaning-making

viability (the very bases of FDT). In other words, an ability to understand, assimilate, and categorize

experience is basic for the construction of cohesion-promoting hypotheses. Thus, common

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[300] Pierce, *Collected Works*, 269; Fitzgerald, *Theory of Signs*, 111.
[301] For a discussion on abduction, see Chapter 9.
[302] See Von Glaserfeld's notion of viability (Chapter 3); Von GlaserFeld,"Concepts of Adaptation," 91.
[303] Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 31; Piaget, *Epigenetic Stages*, 58; Erickson, *Childhood and Society*, 213.
[304] The very circle of Piagetian transformation; also see C.S. Pierce's notions on epistemological disequilibrium in Pierce, *Collected Papers*; [304] Sigel, *New Directions*, 208; for more on discrepancy, see Chapter 2.
[305] Pierce, *Collected Works*, 274; Fitzgerald, *Theory of Signs*, 121; Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 36.

experience is not sufficient to growthfully support meaning-making and development. Common experience in this context would amount to nothing other than the accumulation of disconnected and dismissed memories and impressions. Rather, it is the process of *fuller experience* that must be invoked to inform meaning-making and development. The acceptance, intimacy, and wholeness associated with fuller experience, as well as its liminality and relation, is the seed from which stable meaning structures and refined meaning-making germinate – the ground from which faith development springs.

It is proposed that this discourse retains and furthers one of Fowler's seminal arguments. In his explication of FDT, Fowler presented a definition of faith that was framed as central to all aspects of personal living and apprehending. In addition, this conception of faith (now defined as meaning-making) was said to be furthered by personal engagement and informed by the vagaries of personal experience. As such, it is felt that FCPC is furthering and honouring Fowler's ideas by investing in the importance and truth of meaning-making, and by therefore, relating the seminal concept of experience to it (a faculty of deep personal engagement). What FCPC is adding to the discourse, however, is a depth account of the nature and dynamics of experience itself, as it comes *to affect* meaning-making, as well as a further explication of experiential apprehension in its relation to the in-between (Part 3 of this Chapter, below). And yet, although we have discussed and defined elements of experience, we have not gone so far as to relate it to the other founding categories of Fowler's thought: symbolic representation and knowing.

For the purposes of FCPC, symbolic representation is defined as the process through which a subjectivity learns to perceive of itself in relation to a world of objects, as those objects come to be symbolically represented within the person's psychic space (i.e. object relations).[306] Through such a perception, subjectivity learns to relate to those items that are object, and uses those relationships to

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[306] Bollas, *Shadow of the Object*, 74; Fowler, *Weaving*, 96; Dougherty and West, *Meaning and Matrix*, 102; Seobock, *Tell Tale Sign*, 38.

seek out fulfillment of particular affective and spiritual needs. As a process that is begun in pre-cognitive states of development, symbolic representational interplay generally does not form part of conscious knowledge; rather, it is hidden in pre-cognitive impressions that exert a powerful force over the subjectivity's actions.[307] Maturity through symbolically relating to objects is achieved through an increased capacity to name object-relational preferences and their effects on subjectivity (more on this in Chapter 8). In so doing, a person takes control over otherwise hidden internal agencies and removes him/herself from the vagaries of other-controlled motivation. Thus, it is in this process of self-awareness that one finds growth through relating to objects.

In contradistinction to this process, it is in the very naming of object that the 'soul' can now find relations with it, and integrate it into a holistic worldview. Thus, whereas self-awareness reveals the nature of represented objects, 'soul' relations determine what orientation one will take toward these very symbols. Whereas 'self' develops through its perceived and managed relationships to symbolic representations, 'soul' unconfusedly merges with these representations through its *relation to the relation* to the symbolic objects. Hence, true object relations contains a mundane and an existential dimension, and both of these dimensions are mediated through the ubiquitous agency of experience.[308]

With respect to object-relating, then, FCPC states that fuller experience provides the impetus and information required to mirror our relational preferences, as moderated through our everyday encounters. In other words, as we progress through daily life, we relate to the 'other' in particular ways (object-relating); fuller experience affords us the ability to intimately dialogue with our apprehensions of the relationship and thereby come to know, categorize, name, and perceive them more completely. Through this act of perceptive naming, we break the cycle of the hidden yet effectual preference of symbolic interaction, and come to literally *know* our relational preferences

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[307] Bollas, *Shadow of the Object*, 85; Fairbairn, *Psychoanalytic Studies*, 198; Kumin, *Pre-Object Relations*, 157.
[308] Bollas, *Shadow of the Object*, 128; Maslow, "Peak Experience," 172.

even within our very thoughts. Thus, through the pursuit of fuller experience, we come to take control over the unseen preferences in psychic space, and thereby transform them into experienced meaning preferences.[309] These meaning preferences, in turn, come to inform our capacities and desires in liminal space, as well as our impetus in the in-between. In other words, not only do meaning structures determine *how* we know what we know, they also determine that nature of relationship we afford to the other, as well as the very energy we choose to invest in bettering, transforming, or enhancing it. When we combine this notion with the 'tripartite construal' discussed in Chapter 4, we come to the conclusion that meaning structures, in and of themselves, exert an indelible influence on the course of divine relations. And, as we have elucidated, these relations are fundamentally linked to the attenuation of fuller experience. Therefore, it can be said that one's ability to achieve openness in fuller experience is constitutive of one's relation to the mundane *and* the transcendent, and as such, is critical to faith development.

This is a crucial element of personal orientation and faithful apprehension that goes unattended in FDT. Thus, whereas FDT goes to great lengths to describe formal semiological capabilities of particular levels of 'self' construction, it does not deal with the interrelation between symbolic representation and personal experience. Since the interplay between semiological capabilities and the very source of these symbols is not addressed, FDT renders a model of faith development that risks unhinging itself from the pragmatic dimensions and influences of the regular flow of life. As a result, basic questions regarding the cogency of FDT as a model of faith-development arise: can faith development proceed devoid of the integrated influences of experience? Is it possible to attain a mature and vibrant relationship with God, outside of a grasping of experience? And if the answer to these questions is negative, what correctives can we propose to FDT to align the theory with more fulsome tenets of an aware and attuned faith development?

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[309] For more on psychic space, see Chapter 9.

In fact, in answering these questions, our argument is evolving into a self-referential one. Awareness and attunement, two aspects of being that are essential to faith development, are also two important factors of symbolic representation by fuller experience. Self-awareness (literally, knowing the 'self') makes us know what is *not me* whereas self-attunement makes us know what is or is not between us. Fuller experience, through its accepting, non-defensive, and innocent character brings us face-to-face with the true nature of ourselves; hence, it is the basis for the development of self-awareness.[310] Similarly, fuller experience, through its intimate commingling of self with other, brings us face-to-face with the preferences, impressions, and desires that make our inner core; hence, it is the basis for the development of self-attunement.[311] Therefore, in FCPC's conception, it is impossible to attain a mature and vibrant relationship with God without in fact partaking in and pursuing fuller experience. The omission of the treatment of experience in FDT comes into starker focus. Fuller experience is an overriding aspect of living that roots spirituality in the pragmatism of everyday life. As such, it informs meaning-making, illuminates symbolic apprehension, and grounds inspiration. It brings the full power of psychic space (both abductive and relational) into the phenomenological and thereby provides the handle through which personal agency can control development and destiny. It is thus the fullness of what is known, what is grasped, what is encountered, what is believed – it is the concrete driver of the in-between. Experience without the liminal application of meaning is nothing other than the tedious and confusing parade of disconnected events. Knowledge construction without the influence of experience is an ephemeral construct, which lacks applicability. In the confluence of the known, the in-between, and fuller experience, humanity finds its transformative engine and can proceed through the processes of faith development.

It should be noted, however, that the modulating interplay is not a one-way street: it is not simply that experience affects meaning and relation, and remains itself somehow immune and

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[310] Malone and Malone, *Intimacy*, 177; Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology*, 64; Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode*, 121.
[311] Patton, *From Ministry to Theology*, 115; Randall, *Stories We Are*, 201.

unaltered. Rather, experience itself is, inescapably and by default, interpreted and encountered through the filters of meaning and relation that are present within self-soul nexus. Presenting experiences are not perceived in some detached way, but rather are known through the vagaries of existing meaning structures, the continuity of the 'soul', and the subtlety of object-relating biases.[312] The relationship between experience, meaning, and relation, therefore, is a dialogue of lived construction, a constant interplay of the known, represented, and apprehended. In order to break free of the cycle of self-promoting meaning and relation construction, then, experience has to bring to consciousness a significant impact and a destabilizing stimulus. It is for this reason that FCPC stipulates that common experience is never enough to promote development. It is only through the wholeness of fuller experience that an input can have the momentum to rock equilibrium and spark internal re-definition (decentration and accommodation). Hence, the pursuit of true fuller experience becomes even more crucial, as one endeavours to circumvent sophisticated self-deception, and move toward maturity and emergence. Fuller experience, then, is not a state that necessarily comes easily or automatically to human consciousness. It is something that must be sought after, wanted, and intentionally cultivated. It is a practiced art, a fine way of being in the world, and an attenuated faculty of apprehension and assimilation. As the primary means of interacting with the eventualities and encounters presented to one's self-soul nexus, fuller experience is a founding driver of faith development, and therefore finds itself at the theoretical base of FDT, and the practical and tactical base of FCPC. It is thus worthwhile to undertake a discussion of the proposed components of fuller experience, as well as the liminal, relational, and existential complexity held therein. By so doing, it is hoped that readers will get a snapshot of the practices and disciplines entailed by a life devoted to fuller experience. Thereafter, the paths to fuller experience will be related to the notion of questing-in-the-in-between as we present the first vector to faith development in FCPC: the Experiential Vector.

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[312] Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 55; Piaget, *Epigenetic Stages*, 141; Malone and Malone, 99.

Part 2

The Paths to Fuller experience

According to Malone and Malone, the pursuit and attainment of fuller experience is not a

monolithic psychic activity, but rather an integrated multiplicity of movements and orientations.[313]

In other words, fuller experience is the synergistic collusion of a series of internal states and actions

that together open the door to internal intimate dialogue. Hence, fuller experience is a multi-

dimensional approach to phenomenology in which the various elements interact to enhance,

illuminate, and inform the self-soul nexus.[314] Each experiential element therefore opens psychic

space to fuller effects of aspects of any given stimulus. Experiential elements, then, are not goals to

which questing epistemologies can aspire; to call them goals would be to imply that there is an end-

state that is attainable and definable. Rather, each elemental component of fuller experience is a

pattern of belief, an orientation of the 'self', a relation to the 'soul', and a life-long struggle of

understanding based in desire for personal maturity.[315] Each component of fuller experience listed

below is but one dimension, one way, one *path* toward the fullness of apprehension held in

constructive experience. As we shall see, in the framework of FCPC, each path to experience poses a

daunting challenge to the apprehending person. Each path sheds light on a particular dimension of

experiential grasping. And each path cultivates the development of a particular facet of human

spiritual growth and epistemological ontology. In fact, so great is the breadth of each path that each

one, in and of itself, can serve as the primary basis for a rich and challenging venture of spiritual

fulfillment and wisdom.[316] In combination, the paths synergize to result in explosive insight,

apprehension, intimacy, dialogue, and therefore, development. It is well beyond the scope of this

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[313] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 26.
[314] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 39.
[315] Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology*, 195; Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode*, 121; Randall, *Stories We Are*, 187.
[316] Walsh, *Spiritual Resources*, 44; Griffith, *Encountering the Spiritual*, 62.

work to explicate the fullness of each experiential path. Rather, in the context of elucidating the

Experiential Vector, a main component of faith development through FCPC, we will engage only in a

cursory definition of each – a snapshot that will give readers a strong grasp of the concept of fuller

experience apprehension. As such, for each experiential path we will discuss, we will render its

definition, its relation to and participation in apprehension and faithful growth, as well as its

fundamental psychological and pastoral underpinnings. Together, the experiential paths will then be

used to illuminate the role of fuller experience in the in-between: the attenuation of FCPC's

Experiential Vector.

Before proceeding to the definition of the paths to fuller experience, it should be noted that

these paths, by virtue of the distinctions in their very natures, function in palpably differing modes.[317]

FCPC postulates that the paths can themselves be categorized into three inter-related groups:

Readiness, Being, and Expression.

Readiness-paths are defined as those that relate to existence; they are basic features in the

ontology of the self-soul nexus. In other words, these are paths to experience that relate to a

fundamental and *a priori* orientation to all the experiences and stimuli encountered in everyday life.

Although they have a powerful and transformative external manifestation and influence, they are

essentially relational aspects of one's orientation to living, manners in which one holds one's

meaning-filter up to perception, and fundamental facets of openness and reception to the ontology of

human life. As such, they are those paths that undergird other paths, the ground from which

constructive experiential manipulation can spring, and the irreducible markers of experientially-

orientative beauty. They are the experiential floor on which *being* can stand.

Being is the second category of experiential pathways. This set of pathways relates to the

orientation a person takes toward activity and self-management throughout the complexities of

living. These paths are elements of participation, attentiveness and engagement; they are the basis of

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[317] Malone and Malone, 33; Randall, *Stories We Are,* 49.

practiced attunement. Although readiness-paths have a powerful enhancing effect on being-paths, they are not direct outgrowths of one another. Rather, being-paths are irreducible in their own right, even though they contain within themselves the shades of readiness-paths.[318] We cannot have being-paths without first having some semblance of readiness-paths, yet (as we shall see), we cannot reduce being-paths into a collection or combination of readiness-paths. It is for this reason that they are called irreducible, and it is also for this reason that they are given equal importance in this construction of the concept of fuller experience. In contrast to readiness-paths, being-paths relate to both subjective and soulful aspects of one's orientation to living. They are an outgrowth of the liminal and have an explicit and purposeful manifestation in life's interplay. They are the level of experiential know-how that bridges the move of apprehension from the spiritual to the environmental. They are fundamental orientations from which the possibility of expression arises.

Expression is the third category of experiential paths. This is the category of experiential apprehension that is uniquely expansive and external in its orientation, sending pulses of powerful creativity into the world we are apprehending. It is a unique and congruent form of engagement in life's surround and into one's order of consciousness – an engagement that expands upon and breathes further meaning, reflection, depth, and connection to one's apprehension of experience, and therefore, one's faith development. It is therefore predominantly the category of experiential grasping through which we make ourselves known in, have an impact on, and interact constructively with our environment and culture (the core of Fowler's conception of experience). In a similar fashion to being-paths, expression-paths are irreducible in their ontology – it is not possible to parse out individual sub-components of expression-paths, yet, the relative existence of readiness- and being-paths are necessary for a full representation of expression-paths. Expression-paths, therefore, are the most visible, most obvious, and clearly demarked paths to experience; they are the thrust of the self-

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[318] A similar construct is presented in Chapter 9 in our discussion of 'knowing'. As such, what we find is that FCPC identifies parallel processes of epistemological ontology that point toward a unity within the Self/Soul matrix. Pierce, *Collected Works*, 214; Fitzgerald, *Theory of Signs*, 131.

soul nexus to interact with and make a contribution to the presenting constructions of living. FCPC

postulates that it is through readiness-paths that we find ultimate reception of lived experience; it is

through being-paths that we find ultimate capacity to commingle with lived experience; and it is

through expression-paths that we find ultimate ability to affect experience, as well as its source.

Thus, all three categories are irreducible, necessary, and contributive dimensions of fuller experience

– the phenomenological grounding of faith development. In addition, these are three modes of

experiential apprehension that, in their deeply interdependent modes of action, highlight the

importance the in-between, the horizontal. Therefore, fuller experience is sought after, not through

vertical and structural constructs (such as FDT), but rather through the liminal pre-occupations of

FCPC.

Having presented some definitions regarding the paths to experience, we can now turn our

attention to explicating each path in a little more detail. These paths to fuller experience are personal

modes of engagement through which FCPC develops its notion of the Experiential Vector. Thus,

each path, in and of itself, represents a significant and interrelated challenge to pastoral professionals

working toward fuller experience and faith development, both within themselves and with their

careseekers. We will use the three categories of fuller experience as a guide in this discussion. There

are 9 paths to fuller experience: the readiness-paths are 'acceptance', 'innocence', and 'presence'; the

being-paths are 'self-responsibility/soul-discipleship', 'surrender', and 'play'; and the expression-

paths to fuller experience are 'congruence', 'freedom', and 'connectedness'.

The Readiness-Paths[319]

'Acceptance', 'innocence', and 'presence' comprise the readiness-paths to fuller experience.

They form the ground from which experiential readiness can arise. Experiential readiness is critical

to our understanding of faith development as it is an implicit condition of human knowledge and

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[319] In what follows, we are drawing on the seminal work of Malone and Malone in the field of experiential
apprehension and openness, *Windows of Experience* and *Art of Intimacy*.

relation. Readiness dimensions of experiential apprehension reflect the status of a person's self-soul

nexus, as that nexus seeks to encounter and understanding its world, with humility, honesty, and

passion. As such, the phenotypic intensity of readiness-paths is seminal to a person's meeting with

the stimuli of life. Of particular relevance to faith development, readiness-paths go a long way

toward affecting and swaying the course of any Piagetian model of growth; in other words, since

equilibration is determined by what is admitted to consciousness, and since openness determines the

degree and choice of what is admitted, and since readiness dispositions are determinative of openness

and readiness, then readiness dispositions are determinative of the process of Piagetian re-

equilibration (the basic driver of the movement of FDT). It is postulated that one of the reasons FDT

has found limited applicability in the field of pastoral care is because of its exclusion of the more

pragmatic and interrelated aspects of human *being*. The effects of readiness orientations on

experiential apprehension are foundational, and as such, form and determine the scope, intensity, and

meaning of what consciousness apprehends. Therefore, without taking stock of readiness

orientations, FDT provides a model of growth without a treatment of the vagaries of its engine.

FCPC works to retain the strong claim Fowler made to the importance of experience, while

simultaneously explicating one's orientation to that experience, through the use of readiness-paths –

to which we now turn our attention.

Acceptance

Nothing can be experienced at any level if it is not first accepted into one's self-soul nexus.[320]

For this reason, 'acceptance' is the presented as the first and most basic path to experience. Of all the

paths to fuller experience, 'acceptance' holds primacy as the most fundamental, most basic, and most

expansive.[321] 'Acceptance' is defined as an unconditional, willing invitation and embrace of the

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[320] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 43.
[321] Oden, *Kerygma and Counseling*, Ch. 1.

presenting encounter. 'Acceptance' is an act of will, a deliberate movement of psychic energy, and a loving reception of what is encountered. It is a defenseless openness, a condition-less greeting, and a gentle yet firm holding of what is confronted. In its unconditional nature, it counters judgment, pre-judgment, distance, alienation, labeling, stereotyping, and analysis. 'Acceptance' understands that the true nature of the unconditional lies in barrier-less experience and not in conceptualized or cognitive constructions. 'Acceptance' willingly experiences an input solely because the input is, in and of itself, an experience. Therefore, 'acceptance' is reception in its purest form and for the purest reasons.[322] So defined, 'acceptance' is an experiential act of grace, a wise and devoted call, and a humility of spirit.

As humility of spirit, 'acceptance' stands in direct antinomy to self-righteousness, arrogance, and fear – ways of being that are devoid of openness, bereft of intimacy, and therefore empty of fuller experience. They are orientations to apprehension that cut-off the self-soul nexus from the true nature of encounter and entangle it within the snares of a self-feeding meaning structure. According to Daniel Goleman, such structures are doomed to failure since they find no nourishment, no breath, and no insight from a world of unknowns (the only world that can introduce novel learning) and will eventually fail to uphold belief through the complexities of disparate encounters.[323] Cut-off from commingling with potential learning, non-accepting orientations promote non-experience (a state in which we re-experience the known in different forms – a kind of incestuous psychic self-validation, and the antithesis of any model of faith development) and deaden the pursuit of transformative growth. It should be noted, however, that blocks to acceptance often find their roots in fundamentally protective, defending, and shielding drives – drives that are believed to hold whole what is required for survival. Conequently, areas of non-acceptance are generally those that are guarding vulnerabilities, weaknesses, or insecurities within the apprehending consciousness. Therefore, non-

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[322] Oden, *Kerygma and Counseling*, 32; Patton, *From Ministry to Theology*, 41; Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 47.
[323] Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence.*

acceptance is not always a form of pathological alienation; rather, it is most often the purposeful

defense of a vulnerability that cannot be strengthened in the present moment: it is often an expression

of our fallenness, our fear of relating, and our wariness of the external. It is an attempt to distance

ourselves from the presenting encounter in order to maintain current equilibrium.

'Acceptance', on the other hand, is a transformative and free activity. Only invitation and

reception of a particular encounter, with a particular relational bias, at a particular moment in time,

actively felt and actively expressed without condition, is 'acceptance' leading to fuller experience.[324]

Only such acceptance is maximally constitutive of faith development. 'Acceptance' is active and

passionate, a statement of trust in the encounter, a reflection of incarnated grace.[325] By virtue of its

openness, it affects both the accepted and the accepting and clears the path for the self-soul nexus to

understand its meaning constructions and relational preferences more clearly. Hence, 'acceptance' is

not tolerance, patience, acquiescence, codependency, timidity, or giving-in. Each of these terms

implies a form of capitulation. Rather, 'acceptance' is a recognition of the continuity of experience

and psychic space: a recognition that links encounter to consciousness, blurs the distance of polarity,

and promote faithful growth.

Hence, as a fundamental orientation of the self-soul nexus, the ground of experiential

apprehension, and the very reflection of divine grace, 'acceptance' alone can bring experience in

dialogue with psychic space; it cannot, however, singularly cause internal transformation and

movement. Once we have defenselessly allowed experience to intermingle with psychic space, we

must ensure that our biases do not resist the compulsion of what was accepted. For this openness of

action we turn to the second path to fuller experience: 'innocence'.

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[324] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 71.
[325] Oden, *Kerygma and Counseling*, 53.

Innocence

'Innocence' is not meant to invoke thoughts of naiveté or gullibility. Rather, 'innocence' is defined as an openness, a natural guilelessness, a desire to learn, and an elegance of motivation.[326] As such, 'innocence' is the active counterpart to 'acceptance': whereas 'acceptance' brings fuller experience into psychic space, 'innocence' can act to openly incorporate experience's lessons and promote reconstruction and growth; whereas 'acceptance' is an invitation to intimacy, 'innocence' is an engagement of that intimacy; and whereas 'acceptance' is a defenseless reception, 'innocence' is a defenseless willingness to change based on what is accepted. 'Acceptance' and 'innocence' form two halves of a readiness dyad: they are orientations to experience that together form a wholeness of apprehension, a rounded relationalism, and a basis for faith development.[327] They allow us the opportunity to overcome fixation, heighten curiosity, and engage in passionate phenomenological questing – a central tenet of both FDT and FCPC.

According to Michael Nichol, fixation is a refusal to release and is therefore the enemy of 'innocence'.[328] Humanity is often tempted to fixate upon certain meaning and relational constructions in order to uphold a known and once-redemptive order of consciousness.[329] These held beliefs and constructions introduce biases, preferences, and agendas into one's experiential reckoning. Such agendas thwart the apprehension of the true nature of a presenting encounter and therefore substantively skew one's ability to recognize an experience for what it is. Therefore, fixations are meaning and relational obsessions that have outgrown their constructive purposes and have come to form feedback loops of self-protection. In so doing, they staunchly counteract internal change and block the possibility of faithful growth and liminal relation. Buber refers to such defensive apprehensions in his definitions of the *Seeming Man* [sic], one who is dominated and ruled by what

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[326] Randall, *Stories We Are,* 136; Malone and Malone, *Windows,* 49.
[327] Kegan, *Evolving Self,* 66; Kohlberg, *Adolescent,* 57; Randall, *Stories We Are,* 101.
[328] Nichol, *The Art of Listening,* 124.
[329] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads,* 239.

others might think of him/her, and thereby undertakes all manner of calculation to save face and appear innocent.[330] As such, *Seeming Man* [sic] *is* a state of mock innocence, a moment lived other-controlled, and a severing of truly 'soulful' relations. It is the antithesis of an honest and open participation in the vagaries of experience. Fowler himself, in an article defending the cogency of FDT, describes a childlike form of ritualistic innocence that propels 'self' into an imaginative and self-propagating desire for worthy participation in the flow of experience and the meaning of events.[331] It is just such an open and guileless participation, a comingling of what is accepted in the liminal space of the 'soul', that constitutes the notion of 'innocence'.

'Innocence', then, is an agenda-less orientation to what was received in consciousness through 'acceptance' – it is being in the cherished state of living with the 'heart of a child'.[332] It is sincerity in want, directness in apprehension, earnestness in desire, and authenticity in self-representation. It is the very definition of Buber's *Being Man*, the notion of an individual who gives him/herself freely and spontaneously to the intermingling with a situation, without thinking about the image of him/herself, as it might be awakened in a beholder.[333] In its sincerity, 'innocence' opens consciousness to intimacy. In its directness, 'innocence' works to understand the true nature of identified areas of growth. In its earnestness, 'innocence' is dedicated to truth. And in its authenticity, 'innocence' allows experience to commingle with true psychic space and dispels the potential barriers to wholesale faithful transformation and abiding interconnection.[334] 'Innocence', therefore, is an orientation to human naturalness and an almost childlike acceptance of the imperfections inherent in all orders of consciousness. Without 'innocence', experience cannot be impactful. Without 'innocence', fixation and self-defense dominate over integration and synthesis. Without 'innocence',

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[330] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 17.
[331] Fowler, "Faith Development at 30," 414.
[332] See Matt 18:2, 10; Luke 18:15-17; 1 Cor 14:20.
[333] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 17.
[334] Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode*, 51; Gendlin, *Focusing*, 46; Rogers, *Becoming a Person*, 100; Randall, *Stories We Are*, 192.

subjectivity will modulate interpretation of what is Accepted to abdicate responsibility for faith development.[335] Without 'innocence', there is no 'soulful' risk; and without risk, there is no growth in meaning constructions or in the in-between. Yet, whereas 'acceptance' brings experience to intimate dialogue with consciousness and 'innocence' cultivates that intimacy to bring about defenseless growth, another readiness-path to experience is required if we are to increase the breadth of what experiences are accepted in the first place: this is the path of 'presence'.

<u>Presence</u>

For the purposes of FCPC, 'presence' is defined as a generalized ability to bring all of oneself to bear, in real time, on interactions with experience. Thus, 'presence' is a concentration of being, a sharpness of perception, a thrusting of one's full subjectivity into the phenomenological, and a willful and concerted extension of the 'soul'. It is an ability to recognize experience without resorting to artificial complexity, forms of denial, the safety of self-protection, the shame of self-diminishment, the arrogance of judgment, or the insulation of solitude.[336] It is a form of relational congruence, and in fact, presupposes an ability to interact with the other in harmony, and the consistent capacity to bring that other into dialogue with experience without shame or anxiety.[337] 'Presence' is an impetus to lead with the relationalism of the 'soul' and an immediacy of personhood within the bounds of the phenomenological. It is the infusion of the self-soul nexus into the confluence of space and time, and therefore is the precursor and measure of the breadth and depth of experiential apprehension.

'Presence', then, is alertness to the current convergence of time, space, affect, meaning, and relation. It is an alignment of the individual to the reception of the phenomenological ('self') as well as an awareness and attunement to the epiphenomenological ('soul'). It is an expression of self-

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[335] Malone and Malone, *Intimacy*, 76.
[336] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 184.
[337] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 56; Friere, *Pedagogy*, 114.

being, of relational acuity, of environmental alertness. It is an immediacy of personhood as it

confronts encounter with a fullness of insight and attention. It is therefore a comprehensive liminal

witnessing of the various aspects of presenting encounters.

Summary

Readiness-paths are but the ground of experiential apprehension and the indicators of

experiential openness. As one's orientation and readiness to presenting encounters, however,

readiness-paths do not speak for any element of experiential processing that might take place.

Experiential processing takes place in the confluence of 'self' and 'soul', as they dialogue in the

liminal.[338] The confluence of these dimensions of personhood extend readiness-paths into the realm

of worldly presence. As such, these experiential apprehension paths promote *being*. Being is critical

to any model of faith development is it is the very dimension of consciousness that bridges the self-

soul nexus with its presence in the external world. This bridging is the source from which one's

'tripartite construal' of self, other, and God will stem, as well as the basis of our later ability to

engage in self-expression. It is to the explication of being-paths that we now turn.

The Being-Paths

Being-paths to fuller experience are those approaches to experience that bridge the gap

between the internal and external orientations to meaning and the in-between. Whereas readiness-

paths presented fundamental and internal orientations to the reception of experiential apprehension,

being-paths are orientations to engagement with what experience presents. Thus, whereas readiness-

paths provide a potential basis for constructive internalization of the experiential, being-paths stand

in a dyadic relationship with what was accepted and promote self-management in the face of relation.

Thus, although based on the readiness-paths, being-paths are irreducible in ontology, self-regulatory

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[338] See Chapters 4 and 5 of this work.

in function. and influential in external effect.[339] Being-paths are critical to one's movement through

any model of faith development, as one's capacities for self-management and relation are

determinative of one's executive and liminal abilities to incorporate and adapt to all others, including

the divine. Thus, whereas FDT, in holding experience up as a seminal force of apprehension and

input to the faith development process, does not go so far as to correlate experience's effect on one's

faithful being and management, FCPC takes the extra step of not only elucidating orientations of

experiential readiness (readiness-paths) but also orientations toward apprehensive management

(being-paths). The paths in this category are 'self-responsibility/soul-discipleship', 'surrender', and

'play'.

Self-Responsibility/Soul-Discipleship

'Self-responsibility' is defined as having two complementary facets: first, it refers to

humanity's ability to exist in the world by responding to internally-driven messages (effectively self-

response); and second, in a dialogical relationship to this direct correlation between self-response and

interaction throughout life's vagaries, humanity holds its 'self' fully responsible for beliefs and

spirituo-psychic circumstances.[340] As such, we are responsible for responding to ourselves in order to

create the circumstances necessary for growth. With the purpose of elucidating the Experiential

Vector, we will discuss each of these elements separately.

Self-response is effectively based in self-perception – after all, we must first be able to see

ourselves before we can respond to ourselves (this tenet is the natural result of Fowler's mechanism

for growth). In this context. self-perception is defined as the ability to differentiate and integrate our

cognitive, affective, and social reactions and preferences into the 'self' as we proceed through the

complexities of daily life. Self-response entails a commensurate drive toward self-awareness, and a

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[339] Pierce, Collected Works. 251; Seobock, Signs, 44; Fitzgerald, Theory of Signs, 96.
[340] Malone and Malone, Windows, 58; Rogers, Becoming a Person, 141.

felt sense about our identities in the matrix of our environmental and psychic surrounds.[341] Constructive 'self-responsibility', true to its basis in subject-object apprehension, is not a solitary endeavour. Fuller experience-promoting self-response walks a fine balance between the poles of neurosis (an over-awareness of others) and psychosis (an over-awareness of the self), and is therefore an expression of psychic space purposefully forming actions within a perceived relational context (with self, other, God meaning structure).[342] Thus, self-response forms the fundamental basis through which a person owns accountability for his/her place in the phenomenological world.

This notion of accountability undergirds the second meaning of the term 'self-responsibility': holding ourselves fully responsible for our beliefs and psychic circumstances. As a result of working toward self-perception and using this perception as the main insight in our response to life's encounters (meaning filter), we take a level of personal empowerment in our lives that renders control *a function of* phenomenological introspection. 'Self-responsibility' states that, in any given moment, we have control over who we choose to be, what we choose to do, how we choose to do it, and in most circumstances, with whom we choose to do it.[343] This seemingly absolutist statement is a fundamental tenet of apprehension, should we choose to pursue the phenomenological dimension of fuller experience. By orienting consciousness toward phenomenology in such a way as to take full accountability for our actions and reactions, we dispel the pervasive and spiritually-deadening influences of fear, survivalism, self-mistrust, and dependence. How so?

'Self-Responsibility' is a construct that tells us that we are in full control of the circumstances that affect our 'self's' matrix as well as our growth. As a result of its drive for differentiation and separateness, it reduces the fear of being swayed in differing directions from that which we are championing. As a result of this found confidence, we are further relieved of the sense

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[341] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, Ch. 3; Gendlin, *Focusing*, 62.
[342] Peck, *Road Less Travelled*, 42.
[343] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 103.

of imminent danger that often drives us toward an aggressive and protectionist survivalist stance.[344] Additionally, by accepting 'self-responsibility' into FCPC as a tenet of experiential apprehension, we reduce the intensity of our self-mistrust (the belief that we cannot trust ourselves to handle the unexpected). Thus, the conclusion so far is deceptively simple, yet dense with ramifications for faith development studies: we cannot fully experience that for which we refuse to be responsible. But this is only the phenomenological side of the equation. True to our formulation of 'caring for the self-soul nexus', health of being is contained in the balance between 'self' and 'soul'. Only then can we develop the liminal congruence needed for faith development. The component of responsibility related to the 'soul' is that of 'soul-discipleship'.

If 'self-responsibility' allows us to take ownership of our psychic reactions and manipulations in response to experience, 'soul-discipleship' allows us to determine the shape that that modulation will take, by connecting with the phenomenological in specific ways.[345] As such, 'soul-discipleship' is the practice of choosing a course of connected action for ourselves based on commitment to and pursuit of a more constructive shape of the in-between. Hence, 'soul-discipleship' is the process through which we sift our experiences of 'self-responsibility' through filters of interconnection and contemplation in order to land on a relational intervention that is synthetic of questing-in-the-in-between. It is an acceptance and analysis of experience that works to parse out introjected voices, understand transformative ramifications, and proceed with particular caring to self-soul balance. It is thus a loving engagement in life's stimuli, a responsible and innocent participation in the activated interaction of experience with the 'soul'.[346] It is the relational engagement in the world out of a sense of nurturance and cherishing of the 'self' (hence, discipleship). As the force of integration and balance, it is the complementary face of 'self-

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[344] Malone and Malone, *Art of Intimacy*, 103.
[345] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 61; Ryu, "Human Self," 129.
[346] Buber, *Knowledge of Man*, 52.

responsibility's' accountable ownership, and is dispelled by any internal orientation that diffuses

willful participation.

The forces represented by 'self-responsibility/soul-discipleship' highlight a faculty of energy

and ownership within the developing person that is seminal to any notion of faith growth. On the one

hand, 'self-responsibility' seeks to consolidate agency and internal power, while 'soul-discipleship'

tempers that power through the lens of relationship and balance. The lack of mention of such

faculties in the account of developmental stages in FDT represents a conceptual gap in the model that

needs to be addressed. In essence, a model of growth that bases itself on the conjunction of

subjectivity and objectivity is fundamentally swayed in its cogency and power by the personal choice

and energetic engagement of each developing person. It is argued by Fowler that FDT does not seek

to explicate the *what* of faithful circumstance, but rather the *how*. In other words, FDT seeks to focus

its attention on the form of internal construction and not the content (which is contingent on form).

And yet, FDT fails to take stock of internal energetic positions that would fundamentally affect

movement from stage to stage, at the form level. In other words, dimensions of being such as 'self-

responsibility' are factors in the very constructions of the form of the developing person, and as such,

speak to the *how* of personal engagement. Taking it a step further, the addition of 'soul-discipleship'

into the mix transcends the simple how of personal construction and leads to relational questions of

why – fundamental considerations, should a model of faith development be taken as seriously related

to the existential aspects of living. To correct this omission, FCPC includes the dyadic relation of

'self-responsibility' and 'soul-discipleship' to its matrix of experiential apprehension. The inclusion

of these dimensions of being do nothing less than provide the model with the energetic, agentic, and

existential levers required for understanding not only *how* a subjectivity processes its role in the

course of events, but also *why* it should engage in one line of action over another. Therefore, 'self-

responsibility' and 'soul-discipleship' transcend the vertical consideration of structuralism and enter

the realm of the horizontal. Yet, 'self-responsibility' and 'soul-discipleship' cannot account for the

comingling of what is experientially accepted to what is psychically present. For that, we must turn

to the next path to fuller experience: 'surrender'.

Surrender

'Surrender' is the *being* counterpart to 'innocence' – it is a degree of openness. But whereas

'innocence' is an agenda-less orientation to what is received in the self-soul nexus, 'surrender' is an

allowance for what is received to commingle freely with the structures of the psychic space.[347] As

such, 'surrender' allows the developing person to fit into a system, to relate intimately, to dialogue

unreservedly, and to interlace experience to meaning and relation without resorting to passivity or

defense. 'Surrender', then, is the ability to accept experience, whether or not it suits our biases and

preferences, and find a way to give up unconstructive hopes for the potentiality of what is. Thus,

whereas 'innocence' allows us to proceed unbiased, 'surrender' allows us to free ourselves of the

internal struggle to maintain the known. It is a *making do* with experience and an ability to

accommodate the new into a preset equilibrium, without losing touch with the nature of our

observing subjectivity.[348] Thus, 'surrender' is not a failure, capitulation, placation, loss, defeat, a

selling-out, or a giving-in. In separate works, both Dykstra and McDargh, harkening to the ideas of

Paul, go so far as to state that 'surrender' has nothing to do with hoisting a white flag. Rather

'surrender', in the context of faithful growth, carries a connotation of liberation and expansion of the

self-soul nexus, and is the pre-supposition to releasing personal defenses.[349] 'Surrender', so defined,

is an active passionate engagement of presenting encounter, a mode of experiential apprehension and

comingling, an expression of spiritual confidence, and a responsible, active, and chosen giving over

of 'self' and 'soul' structures to the advances of experience. It is a desire for courageous, trusting and

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[347] Oden, *Counseling and Kerygma,* 68; Randall, *Stories We Are,* 154; Gerkin, *Hermenetical Mode,* 109.
[348] Malone and Malone, *Windows,* 219.
[349] Dystra in Joy, *Moral Development Foundations,* 158; McDargh,"Desire and Domination," 224; Rom 6:1-14; 2 Cor 5:14.

reciprocal recognition, devoid of domination or submission, masochism or sadism.[350] It is thus the

ultimate expression of FCPC's pastoral notion of *being with*.

It is this relational aspect of 'surrender' that renders it important to the attainment of fuller

experience. As stated by Fowler, we live in a constant matrix of relationships and must somehow

find nourishment and wisdom through connection.[351] 'Surrender' is the process through which we

stop struggling to define the world on our own terms and allow others to be themselves (whether

those others are persons, states, or events). By giving over that graceful permission, 'self' and 'soul'

introduce a new capacity of permission, which allows *being with* without qualification, and a

connection to the other from this position of openness.[352] Herein lies the foundational tenets of one of

three main pillars of pastoral care discussed in Chapter 6. Pastoral professionals seeking to walk with

careseekers through faith development cannot succeed without a deliberate and practiced infusion of

the path of 'surrender'. Thus, whereas 'acceptance' gracefully lets experience into consciousness,

whereas 'innocence' orients itself to that experience with 'the heart of a child', and whereas

'presence' increases the breadth of what can be experienced by bringing the self-soul nexus to bear

on the moment, 'surrender' allows experience to interlace itself around the strands of psychic

meaning and liminal relation, such that 'self-responsibility' and 'soul-discipleship' can exert their

respective effects. Thus, 'surrender' allows authentic being in the face of experience, while 'self-

responsibility' provides the courage to act on that being. 'Surrender' actively engages us in

'presence' (by turning our attention to the here and now), while 'soul-discipleship' provides the

thrust to connect and interrelate on the capital of attention. 'Surrender', therefore, is a fundamental

and grounding orientation of experiential apprehension. It is the basis from which attunement is

derived and a permissive force that allows the self-soul nexus to identify its areas of strength as well

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[350] Kant in Capps, *On Losing the Soul*, 234.
[351] Fowler *Weaving a New Creation*, 26.
[352] Anthony, *Spiritual Choices*, 296.

as its challenges for growth.[353] As an end to internal struggle and rebellion, 'surrender' is a restful

act, a calmness in 'presence', and a graceful harbinger of peace. Properly applied to experience, it is

a promoter of 'self'-awareness and 'soul'-connection, a sharpener of self-attunement, and a foil

against which experience can be dissected in order to understand its teachings. It is thus truly a 'loss'

of the 'self', for a concomitant finding of the 'soul'.[354] As such, whereas FDT presents a vertical

notion of development, wherein personal effort is expended in the individualistic growth of the 'self',

FCPC transcends FDT by relying on horizontal, relational, and biblically informed notions of

personal transformation as the balance between attainment/effort ('self-responsibility/soul-

discipleship') and a 'giving over', a comingling, a congruent acceptance, an act of relational trust,

wherein progression and development are furthered in the in-between by effectual relational entities.

Yet, although 'surrender' allows experience to find an integrated home within the matrix of psychic

space, it cannot account for the mode in which faithful growth interacts with experience. For that, we

turn to the path of 'play'.

Play

'Play' is the only path to experience that actually deals with phenomenological activity with

respect to the events of life.[355] Until now, we have dealt with paths that were predominantly psychic

or orientative. 'Play', however, differs from the paths in that it is directly defining a *doing* in

conjunction with a *being* with respect to experiential apprehension. Malone and Malone define 'play'

as a non-intentional and natural engagement in the encounters of experience, where engagement is

defined as a total involvement in the presenting encounter.[356] 'Play' is not a means to an end, or an

end in itself; rather, it is an innocent manipulation of the circumstances of experiences that leads to

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[353] Malone and Malone, *Intimacy*, 135; Antony, *Psychotherapies*, 120; Randall, *Stories We Are*, 187; Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology*, 116.
[354] Matt 10:39.
[355] Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology*, 165; Winnicott, *Maturational Processes*, 144; Piaget, *Epigenetic Stages*, 63.
[356] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 267.

learning and transformation. As a non-intentional activity, 'play' risks to naturally interact with the

new, so as to explore its attributes and effects.[357] Thus, it is an act of 'innocence' and 'presence', as

well as an expression of relational freedom. Furthermore, the works of Winnicott, Pruyser, and

Piaget all indicate that 'play' is natural – it is derived from our very ontologies. Thus, it is not a

response to experience that needs to be learned; rather, it is a response to experience that is innate,

although it may need to be re-kindled or re-learned (since much socialization introduces non-

experiential elements of being).[358] In its naturalness, therefore, once all non-experiential tensions and

exigencies are released in the process of apprehending a presenting encounter, 'play' will

automatically find expression in behaviour.

'Play' is the prime exponent of the liminal sphere (transitional space). In Chapter 4, we

outlined Pruyser's definition of the transitional sphere (the very crucible of the in-between) as the

seat of illusion and intersubjective play.[359] Sander van der Leeuw goes so far as to postulate that

'play', as evidenced by its presence in humanity's most primitive belief systems and rituals, is

ontologically linked to human knowing, is determinative of humanity's conception of itself in the

matrix of creation, and is therefore a naturally spiritual and religious orientation to life's

encounters.[360] 'Play', then, is not necessarily a light-hearted activity, but rather a serious and innocent

engagement in experience, a path to penetrating insight, a relational necessity, and a sublimation of

soulful drives. According to Johan Huizinga, 'playing' is a stepping out from the ordinary dualistic

structures of 'self' and a participation into the interconnected flux of things, the in-between, or, is his

words, the 'intermezzo of life'.[361] Hence, recalling our discussion in Chapter 4, 'play' is the activity

and orientation of being that, *par excellence,* represents the ministrations of the in-between. 'Play' is

an engagement of the self-soul nexus in a transitional sphere that transcends time and space, invokes

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[357] Malone and Malone, *Windows,* 271.
[358] Winnicott, *Maturational Processes;* Pruyser, *Dynamic psychology;* Piaget, *Constructions.*
[359] See page 71 of this work; Pruyser, *Between Belief and Unbelief,* 198.
[360] Van Der Leeuw, *Sacred and Profane Duty,* 17.
[361] Huizinga *Homo Ludens.*

ritualistic repetition and pedagogy, increases and enhances awareness of liminal and actual

potentialities, and furthers "centered acts of personality."[362] According to scholars such as Patton and

Capps, even disciplines as serious as theological reflection and pastoral care can be boiled down to

playful interactions of mind, experience, and authority, where play "tests the leeway" (to borrow

from Erickson) available for potential and development.[363] Therefore, 'play' is the very definition of

re-creation and renewal. It is the engine of engagement and novelty, and the source of the impetus for

questing-in-the-in-between.

'Play' is fundamental to any model of development that claims to engage the liminal, the

existential, or the relational. FDT makes no mention of modes of apprehension (mostly due to its

vertical biases), and thereby presents a conceptual gap in the story of faith development. Since 'play'

is an ontological state of human interaction, it falls squarely into the consideration of human form (as

opposed to content), and should thereby be an included component of a developmental model.[364]

FCPC seeks to correct this deficiency in FDT by including the notion of 'play' in the elucidation of

experiential apprehension.

In its re-creational dimension, 'play' offers an individual the ability to risk the hold of the

past to be *here* and to risk the promise of the future to be *now*. 'Play' is therefore an energized and

intimate engagement in each of the presenting experiences of life – an intrinsically responsible and

responsive act of interaction, steeped in the freedom to explore ('innocence').[365] Also, in its freedom

and non-intentionality, 'play' provides the self-soul nexus with a fundamental tool for energized

cooperation, correlation and joyful communion, by providing a basic shared operational capacity

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[362] Tillich in Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology*, 330.
[363] Patton, *From Ministry to Theology*, 104; Erickson, *Childhood in Society*, 298; Capps, *Pastoral Care*.
[364] Pruyser, *Belief*, 152; Winnicott, *Maturational Process*, 156; Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 168.
[365] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 162.

with which to apprehend and learn from experience.[366] 'Play', however, also provides as powerful a development tool intra-psychically as it does interpersonally.

Being-paths provide self-management in the face of readiness experiential apprehensions. Each being-path to fuller experience presents a different, yet equally powerful, dimension through which self-mastery in the face of experiential input can be pursued. Together, these paths form a nexus of interactional competence that allows one to fully grasp one's role in the pragmatic manipulation of psychic meaning and relational structures in response to the corroborations or contradictions of experience. Whereas FDT extolled the seminal importance of experience, FCPC retains that assertion, because, as the central place of personal experience is corroborated in the thought of scholars in ministry, philosophy, and psychology going back hundreds of years, it is viewed as a strength of the model's cogency. At the same time, however, FDT does not undertake to outline any details of experiential apprehension in its stage presentation. This is considered a gap in the conceptual model of FDT since no development can occur outside of experiential apprehension; thus, the very driver of FDT's movement from stage to stage is missing in the conception of the model. In addition, it is proposed that an elucidation of some of the mechanics of experiential apprehension would serve as a conceptual basis from which pastoral professionals can orient themselves to careseekers. As such, FDT is critiqued for focusing too closely on the phenotypic aspects of faith development, and insufficiently on the deeper reasons for stage attenuation. As FDT is fundamentally a depth model of analysis (it deals with the form of knowing and not its content), it is felt that the lack of depth mechanics compromises the integrity of the mission of FDT. FCPC, then, engages in an explication of the mechanics of experiential apprehension and synergizes that knowledge in its presentation of the first vector to faith development: the Experiential Vector. In the foregoing, we have summarized the readiness-paths and the being-paths to fuller experience. The confluence of readiness and being-paths, however, has an emergent effect: the creation of the third

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[366] Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology*, 220; Randall, *Stories We Are*, 185.

level of experiential attenuation, that of expression. After elucidating the three expression-paths of

experiential apprehension, we will proceed to synergize our knowledge in the presentation of the first

vector of faith development: that of experiential apprehension.

The Expression-Paths

Expression-paths are postulated to be one's portals to self-manifestation in the dialogue

between person and world. They are pulses of experiential interplay that radiate outward from the

grasping psyche in order to reach ever-closer to fuller experience, as well as to carve out a place for

itself in the complexities of phenomenological and epiphenomenological existence. Expression-paths

are the most complex of experiential paths because they are emergent from the actions of readiness-

and being-paths. In other words, although irreducible in their own right, expression-paths cannot

pervasively exist until the relative legacy of some readiness- and being-paths has been, to a certain

degree, concretized. Thus, expression-paths are harbingers of self-mastery, indicators of internal

wisdom, forces of creativity, and thrusts toward relation. The expression-paths to fuller experience

are 'congruence', 'freedom', and 'connectedness'.

Congruence

Although we have discussed many paths to fuller experience in the foregoing sections, we

have not talked about the specific confluence of their effects. For that, we turn to the path of

'congruence'. With respect to fuller experience through FCPC, 'congruence' is defined as the state of

being in which thought, affect, and relation behave in a harmonized fashion to form the basis of

phenomenological and epiphenomenological existence.[367] 'Congruence' is a cohesion,

interpenetration, and interconnection of 'self' and 'soul', an alignment of one's various faculties

toward the immediate apprehension of and relation to encounter. 'Congruence', therefore, is a state

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[367] Malone and Malone, *Art of Intimacy,* 160.

of personal integrity, an act of behavioural honesty, and an expression of liminality.[368] It is a

characteristic of apprehension and experiential manipulation that runs very deeply through the

processes of meaning and relational construction, synergizing all impressions into a single instant of

concerted self-manifestation. 'Congruence' is clear of external encumbrance and flows freely from

the truth of internal construction ('self') as well as from the intensity of personal relation ('soul').

Also, in its synergy of readiness- and being-paths, it exerts its integrous force in full apprehension of

experiential complexity. Hence, it is a holistic knowing, an act of existential wisdom.[369]

Thus, in 'congruence', the various parts of 'self' and 'soul' meld away into a harmonious

unity, a heightened sensitivity to the inputs of life's systems is achieved, a deadening uniformity and

conformity of human subjectivities is avoided, and experiential understanding is sharpened into a

form of phenomenological and epiphenomenological wisdom.[370] Although a certain degree of

incongruence is necessary if we are to find ourselves truly participating in social systems (we cannot

constructively act out of unilateral and pure self-alignment within a complex social system if we

deem interpersonal harmony to be valuable), the pursuit of 'congruence' brings about experiential

understanding and spiritual development that is not paralleled at the readiness- or being-path levels.

'Congruence' is therefore an expressive undertaking, a statement of wholeness, and a creative

enterprise.[371] It is through 'congruence' that we come to understand ourselves as a unified whole,

transcending experiential interaction, meaning structures, and relational biases.

Thus, we have come around to closing the loop on one of FCPC's main foci – the role of the

pastoral professional: it is 'congruence' that pastoral professionals try to achieve with their

careseekers, as they walk with them through the process of finding growthful balance between the

'self' and 'soul', throughout their liminial quests (see Chapter 6). Thus, congruent relation to

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[368] Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology*, 81.
[369] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 251.
[370] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 178.
[371] Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology*, 145.

experience aligns internal meaning and relational biases, and allows a single moment of experiential apprehension to reflect upon the fullness the psyche's content – a moment that can then be focused on one's questing. As such, the mediating mind can glean understanding of internal meaning and relational structures with a level of integration hitherto unknown. Thus whereas 'self-responsibility', 'soul-discipleship', and 'play' promote a level of personal differentiation, 'congruence' (and its prior counterparts of 'presence' and 'surrender') introduces an integration of being into a new relation with experiential apprehension, according to FCPC. It is postulated that it is the counterbalance of this differentiative-integrative process (self-soul alignment) that undergirds the process of faith development.

Freedom

The internal harmony brought forth by the work of 'congruence' introduces into psychic space a latitude of impression and action hitherto not experienced. This is the experiential path of 'freedom'. By 'freedom' is not meant licentiousness or permission to behave in whatever way one pleases. Rather, we are speaking of a more internal and challenging state. 'Freedom' is defined as an internal orientation to experience in which the self-soul nexus gives itself permission to choose its own way and attitude. If thought of in ultimate terms, this conception of 'freedom' is truly our last human agency (this is seen in the example of the martyrs, Christ Himself, and more recently, the work of authors such as Viktor Frankl).[372] This form of 'freedom' pervades being, even when all other levels of freedom are restrained. It is an orientation that is taken, not one that is conferred from externals.[373] It is a decision to allow interaction with and manipulation of experience; it is not simply a reaction to a stated external license. Thus, 'freedom' is only present when it is chosen, only constructive when it is sincere, and only sustainable when it is drawn from the impetus toward

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[372] Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*.
[373] Maone and Malone, *Windows*, 88.

'self'/'soul' balance. It is this liminal aspect of free experiential interaction that counteracts definitions of freedom that abdicate commitment or deny responsibility – commitment and responsibility are integral parts of faith development and are freely chosen orientations to experience. According to Malone and Malone, to be truly free, then, is to perceive and act unencumbered by the capturing stimuli, impetuses, and biases of our internal and external systems.[374] It is thus a statement of personal authority, control and mastery, as well as an belief in the goodness of human nature. Yet, being still a product of the person, 'freedom' is bound by the limitations of the self-soul nexus.

Fowler stated that all 'freedom', whether real or consequential, is always limited by human 'destiny' – where destiny is defined in the Tillichean sense to mean all the aspects, dimensions, and features that come to constitute and represent a particular person.[375] Thus, destiny is comprised of our genetic material, our experiences, our choices, our narratives, our meaning-making capacities, our liminal relations, and the like. Destiny is therefore the sum total of who we have become – the totality of all that 'impinges upon and within us', as that sum total comes to determine our internal constructions and relations. Yet, within these bounds, Fowler continues to state that 'freedom' is given to us by God as a gift of possibility, a faculty to re-create each moment, an ability to harness the power of the future, and the ability to find self-determination.[376]

It is to this ideal of self-determination that Steckel appeals in his definition of biblical freedom as that which allows for human reflection, choice and action in the midst of a network of determinations (i.e. Fowler's 'destiny').[377] Such choice is mediated through human thought and imagination, and thereby can come to conceive of possibilities that are novel, emergent, and constructive, with the goal of forging a new or altered reality (to that end, this definition of freedom also counteracts the 'naturalistic fallacy'). This new or altered reality is nothing other than a graceful

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[374] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 209.
[375] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 42.
[376] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 43.
[377] Steckel, "Emergence of Morality," 169.

gift from God, and is humanity's capacity to determine its own course as it toils to relate to the various levels of its existence. In discussing the nature of freedom within the matrix of self-determination, Robert Bilheimer states that, biblically, freedom has come to mean the self-determined ability to transcend, to rise above the confines of life, to carry on relationship with God in order to be free, even in the face of our inescapable contingency (a reflection of Schleiermacher's "utter dependence").[378] Thus, according to Bilheimer, the powerful and loving touch of God creates passion for a future beyond our limitations, a future that begins even in the present. Thus, no matter how much biblical language might emphasize the captivity of humanity, Bilheimer insists that we not lose sight of the ontological statements related to humanity's inheritance of a new community, a new 'self', and a new 'soul' that is the legacy of our created 'freedom'. This line of thought indicates that the passion of 'freedom' renews the world and brings about personal transformation and development. It requires 'acceptance', 'innocence', 'congruence' and 'surrender' and runs explicitly counter to societal fixations such as security, perfectionism, and their analogues.

'Freedom' is the reverse of trapping and shielding the self-soul nexus from experiential apprehension. Rather, 'freedom' is the process by which barriers are removed and all possibilities are open to the apprehending psyche.[379] 'Freedom' opens to door to a level of possibility, vision, and action that is truly expressive, creative, and life-giving. It counteracts fixation, role identification and fulfillment, and pre-judgment. It is thus the expanded manifestation of 'acceptance' and the fulfillment of 'self-responsibility'. The path of 'freedom' stipulates that we relate in the way we are choosing to relate, and our orientation to our relationships is a matter of will.[380] In this way, 'freedom' is the path through which we choose how to be in relationship, what relational experiences to seek, and what object biases become obsolete. Hence, 'freedom' acts as the permissive force allowing the self-soul nexus to orient itself within relationship, through its relations to the divine and

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[378] Bilheimer, "Human Condition," 43.
[379] Malone and Malone, *Windows*, 91; Randall, *Stories We Are*, 190.
[380] Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology*, 245; Randall, *Stories We Are*, 53.

well as through the complexities of its destiny, by its own agency. In earlier chapters, we outlined

FDT's assertion that growth is not an inevitable occurrence, but requires an application of intentional

personal energy. FCPC fundamentally agrees with FDT on this important point. To that end, FCPC

goes beyond FDT's elucidation by proposing mechanisms through which this energy, this internal

impetus, can come to be expressed, and directed toward faithful growth. The expression-path of

'freedom' releases psychic space to orient itself, by the force of its own agency, toward the liminal

influences of interconnection. It is this relational connection that we explicate further in the last path

to fuller experience: the path of 'connectedness'.

Connectedness

'Connectedness' is the expressive counterpart to 'presence'. It is defined as a felt sense of

unity between oneself and an other, the in-between – the very sphere of the 'soul'.[381] Thus whereas

'presence' is the bringing of oneself to bear on the vagaries of experience, 'connectedness' is

extending that 'presence' in intentional ways so as to bridge the gap between self and other, thereby

creating a liminal space of fullness and insight. Whereas 'presence' is a confluence of internal energy

toward a given encounter, 'connectedness' is an extension of that energy to encompass the other.

And whereas 'presence' is a confluence of time and space, 'connectedness' is confluence of 'self'

and 'soul', such that interrelationship is perceived, but personal identity remains integrous.

'Connectedness', then, is much more than a state of apprehension and intermingling; rather it is a

statement of intimate and personal participation in the independent existence of the object.[382] Thus,

'connectedness' validates the experiential fact that all relationship is simultaneous (that is, subject

and object, 'self' and 'soul', one and other).[383] As a consequence, 'connectedness' apprehensions of

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[381] Bollas, Shadow of the Object, 46; Gerkin, Hermeneutical Mode, 36; Randall, Stories We Are, 214.
[382] Malone and Malone, Windows, 147; Buber, Knowledge of Man, 42.
[383] Buber, Knowledge of Man, 56; Ryu, "Human Self," 131; Mead, Mind, Self, and Society, 81.

experiential encounter are steeped in orientations to mutuality, reciprocity, and complementarity – in short, the very tenets of a passionate in-between.

'Connectedness', then, is fuller experience within a relational context. It draws unity and steps forward in good faith. It allows one to see that relational apprehension heals, that shared 'congruence' reveals insight into the world's ontology, and that expressive 'presence' is an act of fortitude and wisdom. It is the very incarnation of Jesus' Golden Rule. Hence, 'connectedness' opens the door to experiential insights not accessed by the other paths. These insights revolve around the nature and existence of the other as well as to the true nature of the relationship between those agents. Thus, 'connectedness' introduces a dimension to meaning construction that is expansive and outreaching. 'Connectedness' promotes the apprehension of that type of experiential grasping through which a person can conceive of him/herself as part of an organic whole.[384] This faculty permits transcendence of the narrow views of meaning construction and places experiential apprehension into a large, interconnected, and effectively social web. Consequently, meaning structures of the 'self' are pulled out of subjectivity's internal shell and made to act as a peer part of the 'soul's' liminal sphere. Through this process, meaning structures are actually experienced phenomenologically (in addition to their epiphenomenological origin) and are therefore able to be assessed through the scope of daily reciprocity. Therefore, 'connectedness' allows meaning structures to leap out of the phenomenological world of the 'self' and to engage the vagaries of the in-between in reciprocity and complementarity. As such, 'connectedness' breathes further life into meaning-meaning, sharpens the insight and perceptions of the in-between, and forms the basic driver though which faith development can take place.

The lack of treatment of 'connectedness' within the framework of FDT is a significant omission to an understanding of faith development. A symptom of its individualist bias, the omission of the mechanics of 'connectedness' result in a model of growth that defines one's outlook on, but

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[384] Randall, *Stories We Are*, 63; DeChardin, *Phenomenon of Man*, 12.

does not address one's relation to, the other. Thus, FDT, in conjunction with other ego psychological

discourses, treats the environment as the very source of raw material from which the self will be

challenged to evolve. In addition, such models do not take stock of the reciprocal effect of the

growing consciousness on the very environment that affects it. Yet, whereas the reductionism of ego

psychology explicitly states its individualist bias and limits its scope to the point of view of the individual, FDT claims a field of influences that is much wider – that of faith development. As we discussed in Chapter 4, current discourse of faith and spirituality emphasizes the importance of relation to the very progression of faithful development; in other words, faith cannot develop outside of a sense of connection with self, other, and the transcendent ('tripartite construal'). Should this assertion be accepted, the inclusion of a discussion or elucidation on 'connectedness' is considered to be a

Summary of Paths to Full Experience			
	Path	**Provision**	**Road Block**
Readiness	Acceptance	Reception of experience into psychic matrix	Self-righteousness, arrogance, prejudice, fear
	Innocence	Agenda-less orientation to what is accepted	Fixation
	Presence	Bringing self to bear on large breadth of experience	Displacement temporal spatial, psychic
Being	Self-Responsibility/Soul-Discipleship	Self-response and personal ownership of psychic matrix, choosing actions based on self-love	Dependence, obedience, unexamined duty
	Surrender	Allowing what is accepted to commingle with one's spiritual matrix without hindrances	Fear, control, isolation
	Play	Non-intentional doing that promotes rehearsal and experimentation	Cultural seriousness, lack of curiosity
Expression	Congruence	Harmonization of readiness and being-paths	Systemic capture, self-consciousness
	Freedom	Introduces congruent choice for self-responsibility and soul-discipleship to action	Security, perfectionism and its analogues
	Connectedness	Mutuality, reciprocity, complementarity of psychic matrix with experience	Fault-finding, blaming

critical component of a pastorally fruitful faith development theory. FCPC, in its goal to present a

model that corrects the shortcomings of FDT, includes 'connectedness' as a main pillar of

experiential apprehension, the very base of humanity's knowing. Without Connection, there is no

spirituality. Without Connection, we cannot speak of faith. Therefore, it is proposed that, whereas

FDT implied a dimension of connection but did not go so far as to elucidate its relation to faith growth, FCPC corrects the omission by placing 'connectedness' and its relation to faith development as a prominent principle of growth.

Part 3

The Experiential Vector to Faith Development

To date, honouring Fowler's belief that all faithful knowing starts in experience, we have attempted to outline a definition of experience as well as a conception of its seminal importance in the progression of faith development. Yet, in our desire to provide correctives to the current conception of FDT, we have presented a detailed account of the concept of experience – a notion that is implied in FDT, yet not engaged. To that end, we have outlined a definition of experience that delineates the difference between encounter (common experience) and dialogue (fuller experience).[385] In addition, we have used these definitions to elucidate a concept of experiential apprehension, in which the fullness of the self-soul nexus is brought to bear on each moment of consciousness – the very hallmark of the concept of fuller experience. It is in the ability to reach fuller experience that a psyche can come to apprehend itself and its relation to the 'tripartite construal' of the universe, and as such, come to encounter and dialogue with externals and presenting stimuli that can drive development forward. To further this argument, we undertook to present an account of the paths by which a developing person could work to achieve fuller experience, in readiness, being, and expressive modes. These paths work to provide pastoral professionals with a construction of experiential interplay that can help guide both them and their careseekers toward greater levels of fuller experience. The purpose of this section is to answer the last question relevant to our presentation of correctives to FDT: how is the concept of fuller experience related to faith development? It is to this question that we present the concept of the *vector of faith development.*

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[385] Fowler, "Faith Development at 30," 415.

In Chapter 6, we discussed the goal of pastoral care (according to FCPC) as being the mediated questing-in-the-in-between.[386] By this concept is meant the attuned activity of navigating relational and liminal space in the quest to achieve greater connection, interrelation, and internal balance between the 'self' and the 'soul'. Through the pursuit of this balance and connection, a developing psyche could come to make cogent, lasting, and edifying links with its apprehensions of reality (through meaning-making), and thereby find ever-greater levels of inclusion, differentiation, integration, agency, and unity. This horizontal construction of development moves away from the vertical notions of structuralism inherent in the work of Fowler, thereby allowing for a trajectory of maturity and interrelation that conceives of *optimal interrelation at any age*. Whereas the work Fowler is to be recognized for its elucidation of structural stages of growth (an offering that is of great use to pastoral professionals), it is the horizontal concept of liminal relatedness and communion that is presented (by FCPC) to be the purview of faith development proper. Thus, whereas structuralism and ego psychology can present us with the limits of orders of consciousness at various stages throughout the lifecycle, these same disciplines cannot provide us with a sense of relational ability beyond the structural. It is argued in these pages that it is just this relationality (and its passionate pursuit) that is the central focus of faith development. Therefore, FCPC does not outline, enhance, or delineate structural stages of growth. Rather, FCPC, through its investment in the pursuit of balance and dialogue between the 'self' and 'soul', presents a model of optimal interrelation that forms the basis of faith development, at *any* structural stage.

FCPC, then, approaches the pursuit of this fine balance and dialogue through the concept of a *vector of faith development*. By vector is meant a road, a pathway, a direction, or a mode – an indicative line of progression toward a certain end. 'Vector' is meant to conjure feelings of movement, directionality, sharpness, and purpose; it is meant to indicate that the road to faithful maturity is not a diffuse and undefinable notion, but rather a pointed and clear directionality toward a

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[386] See pages 87-97 of this work.

particular end. When applied to faith development, 'vector' is meant to conjure images of directionality, as that directionality is focused on increased interrelation in the in-between, through optimal 'self/soul' balance. In other words, 'vector' is meant to present a notion of purposeful and directed growth, through which the questing that takes place in the in-between is focused on a specific end point. It should be cautioned, however, that since our elucidation of faith development emphasizes growth in a relational (horizontal) mode, the end point of which we speak is not a definable static state of being, but rather a trajectory toward an ever-increasing relationality of a specific kind. Vectors of faith development point to relational maturity that transcends the manifestations of stage capabilities. Vectors of faith development provide an elucidation of pathways to connection and growth that challenge all orders of consciousness.[387] Thus, vectors of faith development are considered to be universal and ubiquitous elements of humanity's faithful impetus toward communion. As relational pathways, vectors of development present a counterbalance of pathology to healthy development; at either extreme of a relational scale, pathology is to be found. Healthy development, then, is found in the careful and attuned balance of the extremes, in a moderate and centered confluence of 'self' and 'soul'. To put it another way, vectors of development work to move a growing person from unidirectional pathology to a truly liminal and intersubjective merging of one's 'self' and one's 'soul' – a questing-in-the-in-between.

Our first vector of faith development, then, is that related to experiential apprehension. As discussed above, it is in reaching a true manifestation of fuller experience that we find a fuller capacity for faith and relational development. As such, the Experiential Vector of faith development seeks to balance the differentiating powers of the 'self' with the connecting faculty of the 'soul'.[388] The 'self', as the phenomenological dimension of psyche, is concerned with the very creation of the object. It is a naming, categorizing and distant force that seeks to sharpen and intensify the power of
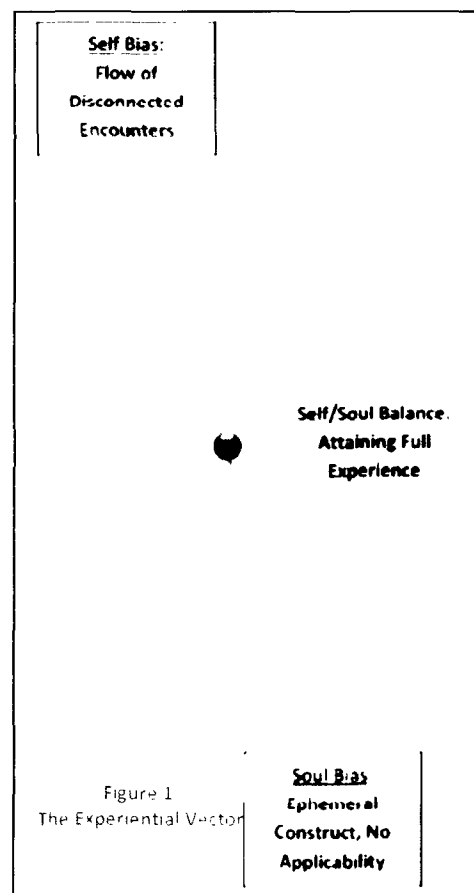
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[387] Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 58; see also Ch. 3 of this work.
[388] For more on the nature of Self and Soul, refer to Chapter 5.

agency and the definition of the individual. It is therefore consumed with objectification of all things

external as well as a unilateral separation from what which was objectified. As seen in the works of

Kegan and Fowler, it is this very separation and differentiation that brings about the re-alignment that

is characteristic of stage redefinitions. And yet, 'self' as a solitary force is severely lopsided. As a

force of unilateral objectification, its phenomenological bias does not go so far as to integrate what

was objectified at an epiphenomenological level. The sole and unmitigated power of the 'self' would

objectify and label incoming experiences, resulting in the apprehension of a constant and unwavering

flow of disconnected events. In its inability to interrelate experience, a lone 'self' is overarchingly

differentiated. In its insufficient capacity to interweave experience with the full breadth of meaning, a

lone 'self' is decentered. And in its inability to conceive of an overarching sense of continuity, a lone

'self' is subjectively overloaded. In such a state of separateness, experiential apprehension cannot

achieve the degree of cohesion required to further interconnection and thus, faith development.

Therefore, 'self' requires the contribution of its complement, the 'soul'.

'Soul', acting alone, however, does not achieve more favourable outcomes than does the 'self'. In fact, each of these dimensions of relationality ('self' vs 'soul') stands at a pole of relation that is considered (in FCPC terms) to be pathological and undesirable. 'Soul' is the force, *par excellence,* of mutuality, interfolding, and union – it is the very seat of the epiphenomenological. The 'soul', steeped as it is in liminal preoccupation and intersubjectivity, perceives only of the space in which one and other are conjoined. 'Soul' loses its link to a differentiated reality and leans

Self Bias:
Flow of
Disconnected
Encounters

Self/Soul Balance.
Attaining Full
Experience

Soul Bias:
Ephemeral
Construct, No
Applicability

Figure 1
The Experiential Vector

heavily and unilaterally toward integration. As stated earlier, 'soul' without 'self' is engulfment and

virtual annihilation of the apprehending subjectivity.[389] It is epiphenomenon devoid of phenomenon,

and thereby is a state of imaginative discourse, transitional apprehensions, and postulated illusion.

'Soul' without 'self' represents Pruyser's and Winnicott's pole of wish fulfillment, devoid of

Piaget's conception of reality testing.[390] Therefore, 'soul' without 'self' is an enmeshment in the

world of illusory, mystical, and ephemeral. In relation to experiential apprehension, an invocation of

'soul' devoid of 'self' would result in the apprehension of experiential stimuli as ephemeral

constructs of imagination, devoid of phenomenological applicability. 'Soul's' very deep engagement

in the liminality of the 'self' would utterly dissociate experiential apprehensions from its

phenomenological roots, and thereby set forth a meaning construction that is 'autistic' at best, and

solipsistic at worst.[391] The experiential apprehension of a lone 'soul' is as lopsided and

developmentally stunting as are the apprehensions of a lone 'self'. As such, FCPC seeks to move

careseekers toward a fine balance of these two poles, in which differentiation is balanced with supra-

ordinate integration, phenomenon is placed in the context of epiphenomenon, and the ephemeral

finds grounding in the empirical. It is to this balance that the first vector of faith development attends.

The first vector of faith development, referred to as the Experiential Vector, conceives of

fuller experience as the very balance of experiential apprehensions of the 'self' and the 'soul'. To that

end, the Experiential Vector guides pastoral professionals and careseekers in moving toward fuller

experience, through the paths of experiential apprehension, and toward a balance of conception

between the differentiating forces of the 'self' and the unifying forces of the 'soul'. To that end, the

Experiential Vector delineates a virtual 'sweet spot' of experiential interplay that provides for

maximal apprehension of both agentic and intersubjective drives, thereby resulting in a grasping of

the flow of experience that is reality-tested and empirical, on the one hand, while still being

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[389] See Ch. 5 of this work.
[390] For more on this, see Chapter 4.
[391] Pruyser, *Belief*. 153.

connected to the ephemeral, imaginative, playful, and communal, on the other. The Experiential

Vector aligns subjectivity with its involvement with others, thereby stipulating the uniqueness of the

'self', while undertaking ever-heightened levels of interconnection. The Experiential Vector does not

deal with one's relation to experience – that is the purview of the 'self'. Rather, as 'caring for the

self-soul nexus', the Experiential Vector is concerned with one's *relation* to one's relation to

experience. Thus, as illustrated in the notion of balance, it is not solely an increased experiential

apprehension that is the very core of the Experiential Vector.[392] It is more centrally one's orientation

to the act of apprehension itself that forms the basis of our Vector. As such, the Experiential Vector

is truly an act of questing-in-the-in-between, the very goal of FCPC's impetus. In addition, the quest

for fuller experience is one that can never find an end-point; there is no state of full experiential

apprehension that is conceived of as ultimate, complete, and/or sufficient. Rather, the Experiential

Vector proposes a line of intersubjective effort that pervades particular stages of development (e.g.

the attenuation of experiential apprehension and one's relation to it is relevant at a Stage 2 order of

consciousness), as well as an overarching liminal drive that challenges orientations at every level in

life (e.g. the same impetus toward fuller experience, although it was perceived differently at Stage 2,

is still relevant and challenging at Stage 5). Thus, the Experiential Vector is a true proponent of a

lifelong pilgrimage, and a consonant and congruent component of FCPC.

Experiential apprehension through the Experiential Vector is the faculty by which we receive

and dialogue with stimuli come to psyche from both internal and external sources. As the constant

flow of events coming to consciousness from the external world, experience finds its simple

manifestation. As the flow of information and stimuli arising from the workings within the human

mind and 'soul', experience finds its more complex and interwoven manifestation. Therefore, an

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[392] Please note that experiential apprehension is of seminal importance to FCPC's presentation of faith development,
as discussed in Part 1 of this Chapter. This statement is meant to explain the focused goal of the Experiential Vector,
as it comes to play its part in the FCPC's notion of Soul care. Since an understanding of one's relation to a relation
cannot proceed constructively without first grasping the notion of the pre-supposed relation, an explication of the
paths to experiential apprehension is crucial to our discussion.

elucidation of the mechanisms inherent in self-soul balance must take stock of, and pay close attention to the internal processes of apprehension, that so radically affect how meaning is made and what relations can mean. To that end, FCPC identifies two counterparts to the Experiential Vector that it considers to be primary: the vectors of representation and knowing. As internal counterparts, these vectors work in concert and in parallel with that of experience in order to create a holistic conception of meaning and relation. Together, the vectors of experience, representation, and knowing reflect the three founding tenets of FDT (presented in Chs 1-3). As such, these three vectors are seminal features of FCPC's horizontal approach to faith development. It is to the topics of representation and knowing that we turn our attention next.

Chapter 8

Object Relations: The Depth of Faith

It is a well-known tenet in developmental fields that human beings do not solely relate to external objects, *per se*. External objects reach the apprehension of psyche, are worked upon by the Experiential Vector, and are thereby taken up into the meaning-making processes of each person. But this process does not occur in isolation: in parallel to this undertaking, is the process of internal representation. Internal representation is effectively the process by which one creates an objectified image of the external stimulus, stores that image in memory, and proceeds to relate to that image as if it were real. In any moment of re-encounter with a known object, psychic space concerns itself with two confluent faces of the same presenting stimulus: on the one hand, the actual object or entity, as it exists in the world; and on the other hand, one's internalized and constructed image of that very object. As a consequence of this interplay, a person's reaction and assimilation of an arising object is a variegated progression of the confluence of external and internal. Hence, the nature of human apprehension is a liminal one, wherein external meets internal, objectified meets represented, and empirical meets symbolic.

It is this liminal interplay of understanding that is the focus of this chapter. FDT goes a very long way to describing formal symbolic manipulative capabilities within developing orders of consciousness. In other words, FDT outlines how a person, at each stage of development, is able to comprehend, manipulate, and analyze formal symbols (especially religious ones), that the psyche comes to meet. This is considered a weakness in the model, since, according to semiological scholars such as John Seobock and Charles Pierce, symbolic manipulation and analysis is truly a function of

cognitive reasoning and sophistication (based in Piagetian operations), and thereby is a re-statement of tenets already contained within FDT.[393]

FCPC proposes a different approach to symbol apprehension. Rather than focusing on the cognitive development required for formal symbolic understanding, FCPC focuses on the *liminal dimensions* of symbolic relations. FCPC proposes that it is this deep level of semiological interplay that is crucial for the development of meaning filters, and therefore for one's apprehension of and orientation to the experiences of life. As such, the concepts of internal representation (an effectively semiological process) and one's reaction to those representations (what will later be referred to as the Representation Vector) form the next seminal pillar of our notion of 'caring for the self-soul nexus'. Therefore, FCPC still seeks to retain the strengths of FDT (a model that recognized the basic importance of semiological manipulation for faithful growth), while seeking to correct its shortcomings (by focusing on the core of semiological interplay, rather than on phenotypic manifestations of cognitive ability). It is to the elucidation of this foundational level of symbolic representation that we turn our attention in this chapter.

Part 1

The Importance of Image

It is inherent in FCPC's presentation of its model of faith development that not every action and response of the human person can be explained using physiological or social causes. A great deal of the impetus to understand and progress is derived from inside of a person. Should one's view seek to remain in the world of the empirical and measurable, humanity's experience is reduced to nothing other than a simple link in a conceived causal chain, or, in the words of Owe Mikstrom, "an evolutionary artifact."[394] But, humanity's capability, ontology, and destiny pre-suppose the

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[393] Seobock, *Signs*, 62; Pierce, *Complete Works*, 212.
[394] Mikstrom, "Soul Recovery," 132.

entertainment and analysis of possibilities that are liminal and/or transcendent in nature, subtle in approach, and deterministic in influence. Mikstrom claims that, should we lose sight of the transcendent, subtle, and deterministic dimension within us, we will lose our very identities. These identities would be lost, David Bakan believes, because, by virtue of our inescapable proclivity to create internal representations and reacting to the world through them, we essentially set forth illusory images into the matrix of our environment, and thereafter, through the dynamics of experiential apprehension, react to them as though they were phenomenologically real.[395] Thus, Bakan and Mikstrom are appealing to the traditionally Hegelian notion that whatever is known can only be known through, and thereby epistemologically created by, the knower – a confluence of representation and cognition.[396] Therefore, should we venture to lose touch with our very representations and images, we would risk losing the 'self' – the very subject that understands and creates these phenomenological entities – as well as the 'soul' – the very dimension of being that seeks to interconnect with created objects. Hence, the nature and process of image creation and symbolic representation is a seminal feature of human epistemological ontology and must form one of the primary bases from which a re-visioned model of faith development must grow.

In relation to the importance of such images, Fowler states that it is these internal, sometimes barely noticeable, representations that hold consciousness together, that infuse form with experiential content, that orient 'self''s reactions to phenomenology, that sway the course of relation, and that directly evoke convictions.[397] They are internal symbols that contain a "surplus of meaning" (to use Ricoeur's well-known phrase), in that they evoke cognition, affect, and impetus beyond the bounds of their presenting incarnations. To use a Tillichean construction, symbolic representations symbolize and are participants in what is symbolized.[398] They are, thus, the very sources of faithful imaginings

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[395] Bakan, "Coming to Terms with Death," 210.
[396] Parks, "Faith Development," 212.
[397] Fowler, *Weaving a New Creation*, 182.
[398] Tillich in Forester, *The Essential Tillich*, 46.

and undergird one's desire for worthy participation in the world (the hallmark of the Experiential

Vector). Hence, Fowler states that "image involves a *gestalt* of meaning that holds together both a

knowing and an encompassing emotion."[399] And as a result of the "barely noticeable" aspect of these

seminal and influential representations, "we grow in understanding as we come to points where we

can bring our images to conscious claiming, and can discern their meanings in the substance of

faith."[400]

It is with this aspect of growth in understanding that FCPC is concerned in these pages.

Whereas Fowler's comments in the foregoing paragraph are salient and well-founded, they do not

find operational applications in his conception of FDT. FDT attempts to delineate the trajectory of

faithful growth through the lifecycle without actively addressing the progression of maturity inherent

in the movement of subtle imagery from the hidden to the conscious. Hence, FDT, although it claims

to focus on the form rather than on the content of development, does not take stock of the processes

and effects of internal object relating – in itself a form-based model of symbolic representation. Thus,

whereas FDT focuses on formal symbolic conceptualization (which effectively is nothing other than

the natural outflow of meta-thought), FCPC seeks to provide a corrective to FDT by focusing on the

very basis of symbolic interplay – the concept of object relations. The discussion that follows, then,

will outline the process and mechanics of object relations, connect its tenets with developments in

'soulful' connection, and end with an explication of the Representation Vector – a counterpart to the

Experiential Vector, and a seminal feature of FCPC model of faith development.

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[399] Fowler, "Faith Development at 30," 414.
[400] Fowler, "Faith Development at 30," 414.

Part 2

Object Relations: The Theory, Its Development, and the Current State

Fowler's assertion (outlined above) that representational maturity is to be found in the finding and categorizing of internal images is considered to be a cogent conclusion and a psychologically salient statement, based on the developments in the current discourse on object relational theory. Mature symbolic representation and object relating is of founding importance to our elucidation of the Representational Vector (since we have to create images before we can learn to relate to them), and as such, must form the basis of our argument in these pages. Consequently, Fowler's assertion will form the main tenet on which FCPC's approach to representation and object relations is based. In order to better understand the nature and scope of Fowler's stipulation, however, a brief discussion of the development of object relations as well as on the elucidation of that which comprises representational maturity follows. This is not only a seminal issue in Fowler's thought, but also the basis of FCPC's Representational Vector.

It should come as no surprise that object-relations theory grew out of the world of classical psychoanalysis – a world largely founded by Freud. His impact on psychological thought and on the course of subsequent Western culture in general, cannot be underestimated. His constructions provided a framework of epistemological enquiry and elucidation for almost a century of philosophical, psychological, and pastoral thinkers. The Freudian framework also provided a construction of biologically-driven psychological tenets that have been contradicted, superseded, and transcended in the century since his work was first published. Regardless of the course of psychology's development, however, the seed of innovation, the spark of genius that opened the possibility for certain types of inquiry, is unilaterally attributable to Freud – and it is for this reason that our explication of object-relations theory must begin with some constructions from this seminal figure.

In the 1920s, Freud expounded his theory that a part of the 'ego' (the nucleus of the self)

straddles both the internal and the external worlds – sensing danger, alerting consciousness, and

altering behaviour to reduce anxiety.[401] The ability of the ego to both send and receive its own

impetus for behaviour modification, Freud stated, was able to function because it had learned both

how to highlight danger and how to alter behaviour to deal with that danger from the foundational

relationship with the mother, during infancy (a time when affect transmission and reception were the

founding elements of the mother-child relationship). It was through the experiential apprehension in

this pre-memory period that human consciousness learned how to regulate its own affects and its

relation to them. Yet, although the stimuli that would evoke these affects are fundamentally external

to the growing consciousness, Freud did not give them the primacy currently afforded them. To

Freud, these externals, or 'objects' (as he called them) were but the targets of the biological drives

that undergirded his theories of psychology.[402] In other words, Freud thought that an object is that

toward which drives are directed, and therefore are contingent, secondary in nature, non-intrinsic,

and effectively accidental features in relation to the drives themselves. Therefore, since all Freudian

psychic processes are geared toward the creation or enhancement of certain types of drive

gratification, 'objects' were merely tools through which this gratification was to be found.[403]

As his thought progressed, in his *Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud referred to 'unconscious

memory traces' and indirectly implied that they somehow had the power to perpetuate feelings

involved in some earlier experience, to draw attention to themselves, and to press for a sort of

conscious expression. Taking it a step further, over a decade later, Freud stipulated his belief that

these 'unconscious phantasies' about objects may, under certain circumstances, take the place of

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[401] Freud, *Complete Works.* 289; Freud postulated the presence of three basic drives in the human psyche – ego, id, and superego. Together, these three drives formed the concept of the 'self'. For the purposes of our discussion, the Self postulated by FCPC is analogous to Freud's 'self, whereas the Soul, steeped as it is in the liminal and existential, does not find a correlate in the work of Freud.

[402] Freud in *Complete Works,* 301.

[403] Interestingly, however, Freud never used the term 'internal object' nor did he generate a notion that was somehow equivalent to that concept.

actual relationships with people.[404] A few years later, in *Mourning and Melancholia*, Freud pushed

the concept further and stated that such object identifications are brought on as a means by which a

person not only remembers, but also partially emotionally *replaces*, lost external objects with a

particular aspect of oneself that has somehow been modeled after that external object in the past

(introducing the notion of a quasi-transitional object).[405] Thus, Freud was intimating that an actual

external relationship can be replaced by an internal one that results from the interplay of the parts of

the ego that related to the originating object.

Several years later, during his exposition of the nature and make-up of the superego, Freud

developed his theory further and claimed that identification with an external object can go beyond its

modeling function in the ego, to becoming permanently instated within a person's psyche, through

the workings of the superego.[406] In this manner, Freud pulled together a concept through which an

external could essentially be abandoned as an actual object and integrated as a peer within the

internal world, continuing its original psychologically-related function, while simultaneously, as a

new part of the superego, directing, judging, and punishing the ego itself. Object internalization

involved the creation of a new psychic agency that, having its own motivational system, can initiate

activity, respond, perceive, and direct the effect of externals from a representational (and thus

semiological) faculty within the ego itself. Since this agency often goes beyond the notice of the

'conscious' mind, Freud postulated that an 'ego split' must take place. He postulated this theory in

order to account for the way in which a person can both know the object (identification and

memory), and yet not know its internalized incarnation (due to the work of the 'unconscious'),

resulting in a unique explanation that accounts for the ego's defensive acquisition of different types

of understanding regarding the elements of reality. Freud's placement of relations to externals,

however, regardless of its cogent development always rendered objects as the targets of the

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[404] Freud in Grotstein and Rinsley (eds), *Fairbairn and the Origins of Object Relations*, 90.
[405] Freud in *Complete Works*, 310.
[406] Grotstein and Rinsley, *Fairbairn and the Origins of Object Relations*, 90.

fundamental pleasure seeking or death avoiding biological (libidinal) drives. For the development of the objects place in the psychic sphere as a powerful entity in its own right, we have to look to some of Freud's successors. A seminal, yet often overlooked figure, is that of Karl Abraham.

Abraham's work played a pivotal role in the development of the ideas of object-relations, and set the groundwork for more noted thinkers like Melanie Klein and Robert Fairbairn. Working within an inescapably Freudian psychoanalytic world, Abraham shifted some of Freud's emphases, increasing the importance of the object in the workings of libidinal drives and heightening the primacy of unconscious apprehensions and images within the psyche. Abraham's vision of the early development of object internalization into the pre-ambivalent, ambivalent, and post-ambivalent phases of apprehension was the forerunner for Klein and Fairbairn's schizoid and depressive levels of psychological organization. His conceptions of the variety of psychological conflicts over self-object differentiation opened the door to the discipline of self-psychology.[407] Since Abraham's concepts are better explicated within the formulations of his contemporaries, we will turn our attention to Klein and Fairbairn to tease out the developmental story further.

Melanie Klein used Abraham's concept of the primacy of the object internally represented and moved to a fundamental shift in focus: whereas Freud and Abraham had been steeped in biological and sexual drives to explain psychological phenomena, Klein chose to conceive of the object as primarily *relational*, thereby introducing a new framework through which to view psychological construction. She propounded the notion that infants are born as fully functioning, if still loosely organized, wholes, and as a consequence, experience external objects as wholes within themselves. The infant, however, still inexperienced in the realm of the external and helplessly dependent for survival on others, cannot tolerate the conflict introduced into the psyche by the apprehension of these wholes (since every whole contained within it the threat of destruction or annihilation). Consequently, Klein said that the infant psyche relieved this tension by splitting the

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[407] Grotstein and Rinsley, *Fairbairn and the Origins of Object Relations*, 91.

ego and object apprehended into smaller and more manageable units, and by ultimately extrapolating the effects of each of these units to all similar external interaction the infant should encounter. More negative aspects of object relating, which in Kleinian terms comprise everything from compelling drives to internally apprehended urging 'voices', are kept separate from the main ego in the infant by means of protective fantasies and repressions, that are meant to create a safe psychic sanctuary within the main ego, through which he or she can safely feed, interrelate, and grow.[408] Thus, although Klein was clinging fervently to the orthodoxy of Freudian thought, she usurped the primary role customarily reserved for libidinal drives and replaced it with an ethos of *relationalism* and affective drive management. This theory of early development established a conception of psychological life based on an internal organization derived from the relationship of split-off aspects of the ego, in association with internalized (and somewhat independent) conceptions of objects. Klein's theory, however, as compelling as it was at the time, left some major questions unattended: are internal object-relations fantasies (illusions) or are they relationships between potent internal agencies (liminal interaction)? Ogden states that Klein's conceptions seem to waffle between these two possibilities, thereby confounding tenets and confusing levels of abstraction that fuse the psychic with the biological.[409] So strong are Klein's conceptions of negative and compelling internal 'voices', that many critics have accused her of a sort of psychological demonology – ascribing destructive and independent statuses to internally influential factors. Despite the clarification by Kleinians that these 'voices' are not to represent any demonological aspect, but rather are nothing other than unconscious fantasies, the Kleinian school of thought has been unable to shed itself of this less-than-flattering accusation. As such, scholars such as Fairbairn, picking up where Klein left off, worked through the confusion of illusion versus liminality, and proposed a cogent solution.

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[408] Please note that, in this context, 'voices' is not meant to denote the uncontrolled vocalizations characteristic of many psychopathologies/mental illnesses. Rather, 'voice' are meant to indicate a normal range of concept-based drives, often experienced as language-rich in later stages of development, that compel the ego to perform certain acts or rituals.

[409] Ogden in Grotstein and Rinsley, *Fairbairn and the Origins of Object Relations*, 92.

Working from a background of Kleinian relationalism and Freudian conceptions of superego, Fairbairn stated that human relationships are fundamentally and ontologically *inter*personal. Thus, Fairbairn stated that, in healthy and supportive interpersonal interactions, internalization of positive relational tenets is not required because they are available in the presenting relationship, are not difficult to process psychically, and can therefore be capitalized upon from pure experiential apprehension. In contrast, pathological relationships (or aspects of relationship) will result in a splitting of one's attitude toward the external stimulus, such that the rejected part of the interpersonal object is internalized, and represented intra-psychically.[410] This split takes place in order to shield the developing psyche from the vagaries of full-force negativity, thereby allowing psyche to process challenges and difficulties in manageable chunks. Therefore, unsatisfying relationships are characterized by an object relatedness, which internalizes and represses the 'bad' aspects of a given relationship in order to be able to preserve and co-mingle with the needed disappointing person. In this way, Fairbairn would stipulate that a child would internalize and repress those aspects of his caretaking agents and environments that cause him or her fear, shame, or any other destructive affect, in an attempt to pro-actively yet defensively maintain an ego balance, and to transform the disappointing relationship into a positive force.

In addition, Fairbairn's model added another layer of splitting: the internalized negative is further broken down into a tantalizing object (libidinal object), which is the exciting dimension retained within the object that was repressed, and a rejecting object (anti-libidinal object) which is the destructive and death-seeking dimension of the originally repressed object. Fairbairn stipulated that these two extremes of relatedness could not fall into a comfortable relationship with the holistic concept of the ego – as this concept was conscious and known. Rather, Fairbairn proposed sub-ego structures whose function it was to meet and relate to these internalized libidinal and anti-libidinal

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[410] It should be noted that psychological conceptions in the early twentieth century (before the advent of Einstein and relativity) were infused with Newtonian constructs and often used the Second Law of Thermodynamics as a basis energy transfer.

objects. To that end, Fairbairn introduced the notions of the libidinal and anti-libidinal selves – the

very basis of his concept of the schizoid split. The ego proper – or the 'central ego' – retains its

relationship with the accepting and accepted qualities of the object (Winnicott later used the term

'good-enough mother' to describe this accepted agent), and includes dynamically unconscious

affects, such as the defensive effort to continually repress anti-libidinal features of consciousness.[411]

Hence, we find a conception of internal discourse that is laden with dynamic structures, each with

independent agencies, motivational systems, and epistemologies. Therefore, Fairbairn effectively

introduced the concept of semi-autonomous agencies functioning to promote certain ends within a

single personality. If we combine this notion with his fundamental relationalism, we fall on a salient

development in the world of object relations: whereas Klein relied on inherent destructiveness (death

instinct) to account for most psychopathology, Fairbairn posited that relative absence of appropriate

validation and love at the earliest stages of development instigated events of defensive schizoid

withdrawals within the infant. Thus, Fairbairn's seminal contribution to the development of object-

relations theory was the stipulation that pathology was not due to inherent human destructiveness or

hatred, but rather to the failure of the capacity to be loved and validated in one's own right – a

completely horizontal construction. Taking over where Fairbairn left off, Winnicott added

dimensions to this notion of relationalism that are still salient and current in today's post-modern

ethos.

Progressing from the work of Fairbairn, Winnicott's major contribution to the development

of object-relations theory was the vision of the infant as being born with the potential for a unique

and healthy individuality in personality – a concept he called the 'true personality organization' –

which can only develop in the context of a responsive holding environment provided by a 'good-

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[411] Winnicott, *Maturational Processes,* 158; Ogden in Grotstein and Rinsley, *Fairbairn and the Origins of Object Relations*, 92.

enough' caretaker.[412] The corollary to this vision, of course, is that, should the mother substitute a piece of herself (motivation, defense, hope, aspiration) into an element of the relationship that called for infant-centered attunement, the infant will immediately experience a sense of relational disruption, which will adversely affect the development of his/her budding self-system.[413] Should such negative interactions figure prominently into the infant-mother relationship, the infant will learn to habitually defend by developing a secondary and reactive personality organization – the false self.[414] This false self vigilantly monitors and adapts to the needs of the mother, and in so doing, provides a protected exterior behind which the 'true self' can find privacy and can maintain a degree of integrity.[415] As such, it should be noted that Winnicott did not perceive of the false self as malevolent in any way. Rather, it is conceived as a responsible and adept intra-psychic caretaker that manages the difficult vagaries of life so that the inner true self might avoid the threat of annihilation introduced by the inattentive and over-bearing advances of the maternal/caretaking figure.[416] Unfortunately, this construction circles back onto itself: according to Winnicott, the false self is so adept at protecting the true self, that the true self learns to rely upon it for functioning, insight, and protection. This fosters a sort of dependency on the part of the true self for the false self and promotes an intense defense of the current structure of the false self (since the dissolution of the annihilation-mitigating agent is perceived as identity-threatening).

We have thus come to an interesting and integrating moment in our dialogue. So far in our discourse of object relations and internal representation, we have come through the biologically-driven thought of Freud to the relationalism and liminality of Winnicott's true/false self. Our

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[412] Winnicott, *Maturational Processes,* 169; this notion is reminiscent of Kegan's postulated culture of embeddedness.

[413] By attunement is meant a close interpersonal and liminal reading of the needs of the infant, as well as a capacity to deliver in the perceived needs. Winnicott, *Maturational Processes,* 66; Stern, *Diary of a Baby,* 41.

[414] Winnicott, *Matuational Processes;* see also Chapter 5 of this work.

[415] Grotstein and Rinsley, *Fairbairn and the Origins of Object Relations,* 96.

[416] Note that it is to such constructions of the self that we appealed in elucidating our phenomenologically-oriented definition of the Self, in Chapter 5. By virtue of its ability to be developed, superseded, avoided, or curtailed, the Self proves itself to be a construction of psyche that requires exploration and attention, should its progression through vertical stages of growth be sought.

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modern understanding, thereby moving the centre of theoretical construction from the physical and

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Most importantly, our conversation has begun to illuminate the seminal roots of our conception of

the in-between (starting as it did in Klein's relational biases and finding its height with Winnicott's

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elucidation has taken us from the scientism of early psychoanalysis to the interconnection of a post-modern understanding, thereby moving the centre of theoretical construction from the physical and objective (hallmarks of the vertical), to the relational and intersubjective (anchors of the horizontal). Most importantly, our conversation has begun to illuminate the seminal roots of our conception of the in-between (starting as it did in Klein's relational biases and finding its height with Winnicott's holding environment), thereby grounding liminality in scientific, as well as philosophical and pastoral discourse. In addition, we are beginning to further clarify the complexities of FCPC's definition of the 'self' (coming as it does from phenomenological constructions of transitional interrelations), as a force of agentic differentiation and identity consolidation, by its object-creating responses to relational challenges and disappointments (a concept akin to Piaget's decentration). We are therefore coming to see the interwoven complexity that is held within FCPC's simple and layered constructs, where statements regarding the importance of the liminal are interlinked with humanity's ontological need to represent, where representations come to be understood through the process of experiential apprehension (through the Experiential Vector, the only apprehensive process available to human epistemology), and where internal constructions of the dimensions of personhood ('self' and 'soul') are derived from the longitudinal and corroborated research of leaders in the field of human interaction. Most importantly to our discussion in this chapter, however, our progression through the history and development of object relations is leading us toward our final goal in this section: a fulsome elucidation of Fowler's assertion that representational maturity comes from the identification, naming, and conscious integration of the symbolically represented within the human psyche. To that end, we have explicated the thought of Fairbairn and Winnicott, as they came to refine the relationalism of Klein to resolve the confusion between personal illusion and intersubjective reality. Yet although both Fairbairn and Winnicott produce elegant conceptions of relationalism that allow for the smooth interplay of internal drives and agencies, neither one was able

to explicitly land on a definition for the actual status of an internalized object within the psyche. For

that seminal piece of the puzzle, we must turn our attention to the work of Wilfred Bion.

Bion bases many of his conclusions on the observations of the process of projective

identification. Projective identification is a process through which a person overbearingly thrusts

certain roles or aspects – roles and aspects that are repressed or anti-libidinal within the projecting

agent – onto another person in order to engage in a fantasy-driven process that distances the

projecting agent from unwanted self-aspects.[417] Correlatively, there is a real pressure on the recipient

of the projection to experience himself or herself as behaving in a manner congruent with the

projected fantasy, so that the projecting agent can re-integrate the presented affects in more

manageable and integrable versions than those which were originally projected. In this manner, Bion

is providing the framework for a 'self'-focused hijacking of the intersubjective field – a hijacking

that results in the humiliation of one agent's status and the aggrandizement of the other's. As an

integrative master stroke to his conceptions, Bion drew the logical conclusion that, since relational

objects are internalized through a holding environment (Winnicott) to sub-selves that are semi-

autonomous internal agents (Fairbairn and Winnicott), projective identification could be undertaken

in a purely *intra*-personal manner (a conception which draws on and synergizes the thought of Freud,

Abraham, Klein, Fairbairn, and Winnicott). Hence, Bion's concept opens the door to a re-

experiencing of internal sub-organizations that are rejected and, through a phenomenalization of

affect and impression, formally concretized those sub-organizations into 'internal objects'.[418]

Therefore, the object can be experienced by the ego as having an independent life of its own, literally

containing external objects within internal representations.[419] Thus, after decades of research and

philosophical/epistemological refinement, the study of symbolic representation and object relations

found concrete footing in Bion's concepts of internal objects – an intra-personal, integrous and

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[417] Bion in Bollas, *The Shadow of the Object*, 56.
[418] Grotstein and Rinsley, *Fairbairn and the Origins of Object Relations*, 97.
[419] Bion in Bollas, *The Shadow of the Object*, 62.

psychically solid personal reality of the status of particular objects. Yet, the story could not end there: Bion's conception, as elegant as it was in synergizing the thought of past thinkers and researcher, could not account for the variegated experience of subjective apprehensions of these internal objects. In other words, the one thing Bion's conception left untouched was the concept of warring internal voices, that come to make themselves heard in the settling of affective, behavioural, and constructive decisions. Bion's current formulation would posit that all warring voices are fantasies derived from a united personality, but such a notion remains unsatisfactory to many, especially in the light of the sheer power these conflicting factions wield within the 'self'. Addressing this particular element of object-relations theory, James Grotstein proposes a multi-layered and post-modern lens.

Grotstein built on Bion's thoughts by constructing a dual-track model of mind in which experience no longer had to be conceived of in unitary terms, but rather could be rendered as the overlapping of separate and often disparate experiences generated by the autonomous organizations within the self as it relates to its entire world.[420] Only through the integration of experiential perspectives (Experiential Vector) can healing and epistemological comfort be found. Thus, experiential integration and apprehension not only carry a crucial role in the processes of the meaning-making and knowledge construal (see Chapter 7), but, through the dynamics of symbolic representation and object-relations, also undergird the process of personal wholeness and healing inherent in faith development.

We have now come to a place in our discussion where we have set the foundations for a conception of object relations as a process of internal symbolic representation that is based on lived experience within the intersubjective field. We are therefore well poised to develop this concept one step further in the explication of Fowler's assertion that maturity is linked to the objectification of these internal symbols. Our goal, after providing support to Fowler's statement, is to link the

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[420] Note that this concept further emphasizes the importance of an attuned experiential apprehension faculty within the experiencing subject.

dynamics of object relating to the horizontal and existential sphere of human ontology in order to propose the second vector of faith development, the Representational Vector. For now, however, our dialogue will involve an integration of our concepts of object relations, 'self' and 'soul', transitional space and liminality.

Part 3

Theory in Action: Pre-Object Relations and Transformational Objects

According to Tyson and Tyson, an infant at birth is already endowed with the capacity to engage in a form of relatedness that is akin to a *proto*-object-relation.[421] These earliest internalizations, based almost entirely on need and need fulfillment, are psychosomatic and pre-symbolic (representational analogs of Piaget's Sensorimotor stage), and predate the infant's capacity to internally represent constant and differentiated object relationships. Studies have shown that this period of development is loaded with emotional signals being sent from the infant to the mother.[422] In response to these signals, the good-enough mother presents her infant with empathically attuned, holding responses, intended to satisfy needs. Tyson and Tyson, validating that this connected construct is in fact a relationship proper (independent of the fact that the infant is unable to concretely internally represent), called this relationship 'primary reciprocity', a term that suggests a fundamental psychic, emotional, and spiritual link in the nascent mother-child relationship.[423] As such, scholars such as Andrew Kumin, emphasize that infants are in no way unrelatable or autistic, but rather are *in full relation* to their surroundings – developing, unstable in representation, somehow discontinuous, and utterly narcissistic – yet on the whole, adept and pre-adapted for a kind of archaic

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[421] Tyson and Tyson in Kumin, *Pre-Object Relatedness*, 14.
[422] Stern, *Diary of a Baby*; Winnicott, *Maturational Processes*; Piaget, *Epigenetic Stages*, Kegan, *Evolving Self*; Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology*; Bollas, *Shadow of the Object.*
[423] Tyson and Tyson in Kumin, *Pre-Object Relatedness*, 22.

reciprocal relatedness.[424] Thus, this level of discourse forms a pre-stage for representation that will

later develop into a fuller sense of an object-relation capacity. How does this process take place?

Daniel Stern believed that at the beginning of life, the infant is not capable of adeptly

differentiating his or her ego from the mother's, and that the mother is experienced as an object

within the infant only when discussed through the lens of a retrospective and psychoanalytic view.

He argued also that neonates have an innate ability to distinguish somewhat between the

sensorimotor self and other, and that these very structures are the precursors for the later stages of

true object-relating.[425] It is only when the infant's sensorimotor schemes of 'otherness' become stable

mental representations capable of symbolic transformations that it is possible to conceive of them as

symbolic 'objects' in the true psychoanalytic sense. Thus and almost paradoxically, it is the very

unseen and unrepresented 'good enough' holding environment in which an infant finds him/herself

that serves as the source for the promotion of cognitive faculties that will allow for the development

of capacity to differentiate the sensorimotor experiences of self and other. Discussing what they call

the 'primary relationship', deJonghe, Rijnierse, and Janssen stated that the "primary relationship is an

object relation with the narcissistic relatedness [of the infant], that is, the narcissistic libidinal tie

between a *not yet* subject and a pre-object or part-object..."[426] Thus, at the first stages of

development, there is no object to speak of *per se*, but there very much is a manner of *relation*

naturally taking place. Such a concept thus synergizes and links the work Fowler (focused as it is on

the vertical, subject-object conception of growth), and the proposed FCPC horizontal bias (focused as

it is on the relational). Thus, we again come to the assertion that FCPC is not attempting to usurp,

replace, or in any way denigrate the tenets of ego psychology. Quite to the contrary, every additional

piece of scientific, philosophical, and theological information we add to our discussion further

ingrains the importance of this complementary relationship. The difference in FDT and FCPC,

[424] Kumin, *Pre-Object Relatedness*, 65.
[425] Stern, *Diary of a Baby*, 89.
[426] Kumin, *Pre-Object Relatedness*, 18.

however, lies solely in FCPC's narrow and exclusive focus on horizontal faith development, as opposed to FDT's vertical construction. It is the natural relating held in the folds of the 'primary relationship' that is of particular import to our task in these pages.

Talking about the development of this natural relating, Winnicott explored the change that comes about in the means of communication as an object changes from a subjective (and therefore identity-fused) element, to a thing that is actually objectively perceived.[427] According to him, insofar as an object retains its subjective fusion, it is not possible for communication of it or with it to be explicit; in this state, however, the subjective object forms the precursor for the framework of object-relating that will arise when mental faculties develop to an appropriate level (a concept that has very strong affinities to Kegan's Subject-Object Theory). What we have, then, in this subjective object, is a pre-representational form of thought, where 'representation' is meant to signify enduring mental images and symbols that act within a private and internal space. It should be noted that infant research has shown that a certain form of internal conceptualization takes place in infants as early as birth, thereby eliminating the possibility of a non-representational developmental phase.[428] Pre-representational objectification, then, represents an innate capacity within the human psyche, a capacity that sets the tone for future semiotic interpretations. The pre-representational state is characterized by sensorimotor processes, inter-modal matching, and symbolic, non-concrete, and psychosomatic apprehensions.[429] The progression, therefore, of pre-object relations moves from pre-structured sensorimotor schemes of 'self' and other, to the use of sensory shapes, bound surfaces, and eventually, subjective-demarcation, which lays the groundwork for the infant's ability to represent objects partially, and which sets the stage for the advent of a form of pre-formal object relations: transitional space.

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[427] Kumin, *Pre-Object Relatedness*, 23; for more on subjective fusion, see Chapter 3.
[428] Kumin, *Pre-Object Relatedness*, 36.
[429] Kumin, *Pre-Object Relatedness*, 25.

As discussed in Chapter 4, transitional space (and by extension, transitional objects) arises as a result of the relational synergy that is inherent in the mother-child relationship. Whereas the infant relates to his or her experience through a pre-formal and pre-representational psyche, the mother approaches the caretaking relationship with a fully formed ego, affect control and definition, a structured representational world, a sophisticated meaning-making capacity, semiotic mastery, abstract thought, and controlled behaviour. Thus, although the infant signals affect rather non-discriminately and generally, the mother is able to receive the infant's signals through a robust and stable representational world, respond appropriately, and soothe experienced distress. In so doing, assuming that the response is adept and 'good-enough' to meet the needs of the infant, the mother begins to present to her child's psyche a form of symbolically-apprehended feedback and reliable experience that allows the infant to begin to develop an internal tolerance for the original distress. This tolerance, the very seed of Ericksonian trust, stems from the *development of an internal faith* within the child that affect expression will go attended to in a particular way by the caring environment.[430] As a consequence, scholars such as Kumin stipulate that human instinct is not an innate capacity endowed to infants at birth, but rather is learned and sharpened in the original, pre-representational child-mother matrix, the transitional space, or in the language of FCPC, the in-between.[431] Therefore, over the course of the process of differentiation (individuation), instinct develops through the holding environment to become a motivating force in the internal repertoire of the infant. As Hans Loewald stated: "primary narcissism, then, is a title for the instinctual life of the mother-infant matrix."[432]

As such, the instinctual life of the infant is developed and moderated by the simple fact that the maturity gradient introduced by the mother's presence effectively provides a continuity of being,

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[430] It should be noted for completeness, however, that the opposite is also true – a negative response from the caretaking environment will build internal faith that affect expression will not result in soothing or stress alleviation.
[431] Kumin, *Pre-Object Relatedness*, 28.
[432] Loewald, *Pre-Object Relatedness*, 28.

a surrogate ego, or a substitute facilitative environment, that transmits to the infant, through a process

of continuous liminal psychosomatic negotiations and need-gratification, a particular life ethos, or

aesthetic of being, that eventually becomes a hardened intersubjective feature in the child's psyche.

As Jacobson points out, once concretized, this aesthetic develops into the functional ego activity of

the growing child.[433] Before this concretization, however, the mother, as the child's total holding

environment, the sole guardian of the in-between, comes to be known not so much as a separate

person (since pre-object relations have not yet formalized), but rather as a *process* – a process that is

identified by the infant with comprehensive internal and external transformations. Herein lies the

very definition of the transformational object: a transformational object is that which is experientially

identified by the infant in its capacity to alter experience and define the limits of being, by virtue of

its actions in the in-between. Transformational objects are interpreted as real and existent *existential*

levers, rather than as simply mental representations or illusions of something known, and entirely

held within the bounds of a liminal relation with the external world. This system of inclusive relation

cannot continue forever, however. Eventually, the mental structures of the growing child begin to

discern externals – a process which heralds the transformation of the transformational object relation.

Through this process of maturation, the infant slowly comes to be able to differentiate

between self and other (Subject-Object Theory) until a relatively stable conception of one's internal

being as well as a relatively constant sense of one's separateness emerges. This enduring sense of

separateness from the other is referred to as object-constancy, and the related emerging sense of an

enduring 'self' that is relating to the separate object is referred to self-constancy. It should be noted,

however, that these terms are describing an internal state and not an external reality: object-constancy

is not referring to the permanence of an external, but rather to the continuous internal conception or

representation of that external. Similarly, self-constancy refers not to the physical presence of an

actual body, but rather to an epistemologically stable organization of self-representation and self-

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[433] Jacobson in Bollas, *The Shadow of the Object.*, 13.

experience. It should be noted that according to Margaret Mahler and her colleagues, this concept of

constancy is not a static affair, but a rather a process of constant emergence throughout the course of

one's life.[434] Thus, we never master our representations – we simply continue to encounter and refine

them as we mature.

Infant maturity, however, comes with more developmental events. The infant him/herself will

eventually develop certain ego capacities – motility, perception, and integration (see Kegan and

Piaget) – which also transform its world. The cognitive ability to differentiate between objects and to

remember objects that are not present (object permanence) are seminal transformative achievements

that evoke fundamental changes in the infant's world. Christopher Bollas states that, because of the

sweeping influence of these changes, the infant equates these extra-maternal developments as a

failure of the mother to maintain the facilitative environment. As a result, the transformational

process is displaced from the mother-environment configuration (in which it originated) to the

subject-object configuration, so that the transitional phase of perception (wherein the infant

experiences a process) is replaced by a subject-mediated transformational period (wherein the infant

can communicate his/her experience).[435] *The transitional process, however, is never forgotten or*

diminished in the child's (and eventually, the adult's) psychic experience.
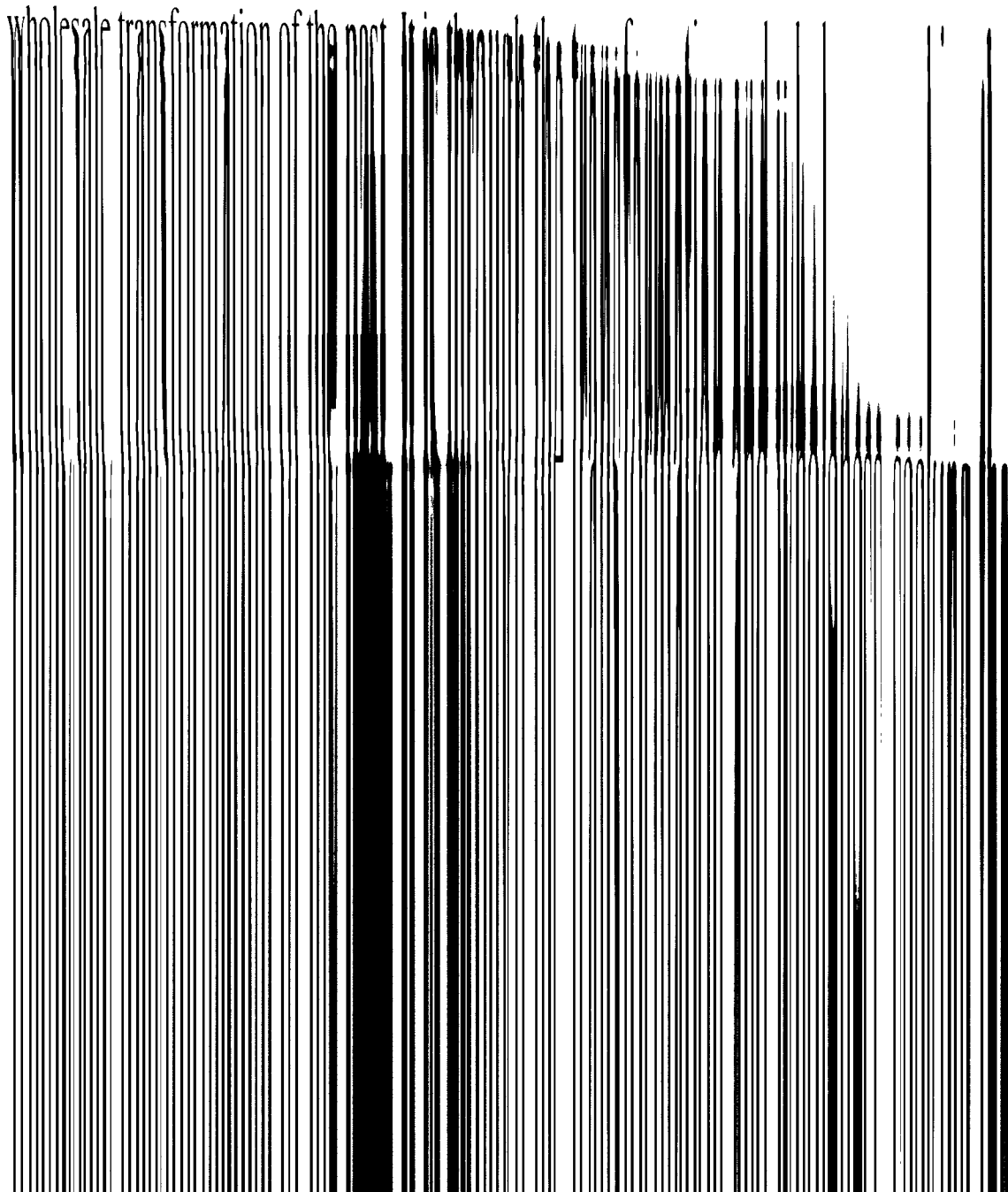
In transitional object-relations, the mother is experienced as a life-giving process of

transformation, and this feature of early psychic conditioning lives on in particular forms of object-

seeking in adult life. In the later and considerably more sophisticated stages of psychic

transformation that is human adulthood, objects linked to infantile transitional object relations are

sought for their functions as *signifiers of transformation*. In other words, the seminal experience of

being transformed and attended to in infancy develops before the formal capacity of object

representation is present; as a consequence, experiential orientations to a relational and liminal world

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[434] Mahler in Kumin, *Pre-Object Relatedness*, 90.
[435] Bollas, *The Shadow of the Object.*, 14.

are developed but, because of their development at such an early age, are inarticulable and often 'unthought'; these impressions form an internal aesthetic of emotional care and personal transformation and are sought out in adulthood as a means of wholeness, or more accurately, they are sought out in order to surrender the subjectivity to a caring medium that promises to alter and ultimately heal the self. As such, we hear of people speaking about the search for something that is not articulable but is somehow only existentially known, the memory of an ontogenetic process rather than a formal conception of thought from a concrete self, an aesthetic communion, a semiological pact with current experience which hopes in the future to find the wholeness and wholesale transformation of the most

are developed but, because of their development at such an early age, are inarticulable and often 'unthought'; these impressions form an internal aesthetic of emotional care and personal transformation and are sought out in adulthood as a means of wholeness, or more accurately, they are sought out in order to surrender the subjectivity to a caring medium that promises to alter and ultimately heal the self. As such, we hear of people speaking about the search for something that is not articulable but is somehow only existentially known, the memory of an ontogenetic process rather than a formal conception of thought from a concrete self, an aesthetic communion, a semiological pact with current experience which hopes in the future to find the wholeness and wholesale transformation of the past. It is through the transformation and wholeness-seeking that human beings are driven to heal the 'self' – a 'self' that is fragmented and pained by the effects of anti-libidinal forces. Hence, an internal representation that develops before the mother can be mentally represented in infancy results, in adulthood, with an identified source of emotional wholeness and internal metamorphosis – an enviro-somatic transformer of the subject.[436] It is the very action of perceiving, understanding, and objectifying these internal representations, these long standing symbolic nuances, these very storehouses of transformational and transitional affect, that human beings come to grasp the nature of the 'self's' matrix, and increase their maturity through subject-object rebalancing. We have therefore come full circle and have laid the groundwork on which Fowler's conception of representation-based maturity is founded.

Fowler's assertion of the nature of mature understanding as based in the objectification of internal symbols is a cogent and supported stipulation regarding the development of human symbolic interaction. As we have seen, in object relational theory, our first language and our first apprehensions come through the world of the represented and transitional, a world that stands at the base of future cognitive, affective, social, and relational development. As such, human beings relate to their experiences on several levels: the more identifiable and measurable cognitive levels, as well

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[436] Bollas, *The Shadow of the Object.*, 14.

as on the more hidden, noumenal and symbolic levels. But, in light of the fact that the noumenal and

representational come first (by far), we can conclude (as do Winnicott, Bollas, Gerkin, Seobock,

Pierce, and Goleman) that we are fundamentally semiotic creatures and that the first course of our

semiosis is hidden, subtle, and deterministic.[437] In other words, human beings are imprinted with an

understanding of the reliability and effective trustworthiness of the world from the very activities of

the early in-between, as managed by primary caretakers.[438] The development of symbolic

representational maturity, however, is a line of discourse that is parallel to cognitive growth.

Therefore, the activity of formal symbolic apprehension (i.e. the ability to comprehend and

manipulate symbolic discourse, such as art or poetry) is but the reflection of a cognitive ability, as it

is applied to meta-language. Symbolic representation through object relations, on the other hand, is

the very movement of impression, from its pre-cognitive roots, to its named and owned state. Thus,

in contradiction to FDT, internal objectifications do not follow the same path as semiological

apprehensions, but rather follow a distinct process of growth through the complexities of subject-

object theory. There is a strong need for subject-object theory to engage these internal

representations, because, as a result of their fundamentally pre-cognitive origins, they exert affective

and relational influences from the seldom accessed, non-operational (in a Piagetian sense) centre of

the psyche. As such, it is the very movement of identification of these symbolic representations –

identification in conjunction with experiential apprehension and meaning attenuation – that results in

the transformative process of coming to discover, test, and eventually master the 'self'.

So, Fowler was quite right in his assertion on object relations, and therefore, we are pleased

to base FCPC on his wise words. Fowler's FDT, however, does not include the developmental

impetus toward the elucidation and categorization of internal representations. Rather, Fowler chose

to limit the scope of FDT to formal symbolic understanding, thereby leaving out the identity

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[437] Winnicott, *Maturational Processes*, 132; Bollas, *Shadow of the Object*, Ch. 1; Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode*, 23; Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 31.
[438] This is an essentially Ericksonian and Winnicottian construct; *Childhood and Society*, 289.

determining influences of object relations and internal representation. FCPC proposes that this is a foundational weakness in Fowler's scheme, a weakness that must be addressed, should a corrective model be set forth. It is in the elucidation and presentation of the second vector to faith development, the Representational Vector, that FCPC seeks to furnish this corrective.

The Representational Vector, much like the Experiential Vector, presents a counterbalanced relational and liminal construct regarding one's *relation* to object relations. But in order to constructively achieve its goal, the Representational Vector pre-supposes certain conditions: first, it pre-supposes that Fowler's assertion that maturity is brokered through the objectification of the internal symbol is correct; second, it postulates that the pursuit of representational maturity is a lifelong process of balance, that in itself forms a basis of faith development; and third, the Representational Vector seeks to unite the influences of 'self' and 'soul' by championing an elucidation and objectification of symbolic constructs, and yet retaining the now-objectified symbols within a sphere of apprehension that does not strip them of their 'surplus of meaning'. Therefore, it is proposed that object relational theory contributes to faith development by propounding a theory of symbolic representation that undergirds being, but that, in its development and maturity, resists the tendency to devolve into a solely cognitive construct. Thus, the Representational Vector promotes the notion that elucidated and objectified symbols are to be understood on the one hand, and retained in a special sphere of surplus existential meaning, on the other. This special sphere is what we are calling 'mythic space'.

Part 4

Mythic Space

In the last section, we outlined the nature of object relations in order to elucidate a seminal assertion of Fowler's: that maturity comes from the movement of internalized symbolic representations from the hidden to the conscious. Having outlined the psychology behind the process of object relations, however, we must undertake to explicate its link to the existential, the

transcendent, the in-between, should a cogent definition of the Representational Vector be possible. It is to this topic that we now turn our attention.

According to Pruyser, the story of myth starts in Winnicott's transitional sphere, which he defines as the orbit of play in which internal and external, private and public, subjective and objective come to be known.[439] As the confluence of autistic and realistic, however, transitional space opens the door to an understanding of a level of being that is at once both of these two poles. This is a level of discourse in which the strands of premises (on the one hand) and meaning (on the other) combine to create an internal experience that has a validity of its own, as well as a form of external validation. During this level of discourse, interaction and integrated synergy is undertaken between the internal and external, wherein symbolic representations collide with presented stimuli, thereby producing an internalized image of an *ideal* object (including an ideal of self-as-object).[440] It is this level of discourse that Pruyser, as a consequence of its preoccupation with the liminal and existential, refers to as the transcendent sphere. Thus, internal representations that populate the transitional space (the symbolic representations we discussed in the last section) come to find corroboration in the phenomenological world (using the Experiential Vector and either through consensual agreement or projective identification), and thereby, becoming steeped in the transcendent and existential construction of ideals, move beyond the level of narrative and become personal myths. In this way, myth-making, far from being a childish or primitive form of communication, is truly an original and seminal human activity that is exercised at all levels of the lifecycle and at great degrees of sophistication.[441] In addition, because of the idealized and existential dimension of myth-making, it is the sphere *par excellence* of metaphysical speculation, the transmission of subtle wisdom, the creation of art, the judgment of moral thinking, and the

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[439] Pruyser, *Belief*, 270.
[440] Pruyser, *Belief*, 194.
[441] Pruyser, *Belief*, 271.

elucidation of the nature of personhood (both in itself and in relation to an ideal).[442] Thus, according

to Gloria Durka and Joanmarie Smith, myth is the basis of a personal symbol system, a

consciousness directing impetus, and a pre-requisite to meaningful constructions and apprehensions,

where symbol comes to represent emotion (a deep dimension of psychic space), and emotion comes

to represent object.[443] As a result of this depth model of origin, myth cannot be diminished to

represent any reductionistic meanings and concepts; rather, myth stands at the base of an intuitive

psychic apprehension, and as such, conveys a multi-layered and subtle presentation of the deepest

insights and profoundest values of a particular human psyche.[444] Thus, in the words of William

Sadler, "myth provides a sense of meaning and value to life by establishing an exemplary mode for

behavior... [Myth leads us] to the hidden motivation and factors behind human behavior."[445] Myth

directs us at once to the liminal border where history (the reconstruction of bygone events locked in

space and time) comes to meet illusion (impression and internal representations, not bound by space

and time). This is the very essence of 'mythic space'. 'Mythic space', then elucidates for the groping

psyche a numinous message which reveals some supra-ordinate cosmic arrangement that retains

viability, idealization, and significance.[446] Therefore, the very nature of 'mythic space' is the

transcendental.

The importance of 'mythic space' cannot be underestimated in the concept of faith

development. By 'mythic space' is meant that dimension of being that is based on symbolic

representation and want, and that is characterized by perpetual pertinence, actuality, sanctity, and

enduring importance. An aesthetic representation is an idealized and transcendent conception of

harmony that is reflective of the pre-representational state of human consciousness. It is an

impressionistic apprehension, a felt sense, of the conditions required for optimal and idealized

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[442] Pruyser, *Belief,* 195.
[443] Durka and Smith, *Aesthetic,* 203.
[444] Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode,* 162; Durka and Smith, *Aesthetics,* 23.
[445] Sadler, *Personality and Religion,* 18.
[446] Pruyser, *Belief,* 215.

concord. Thus, 'mythic space' is characterized by shades of pre-cognitive and harmonious questing, which directs desire toward the over-arching, the perpetual, and the trusted. It is because of its status as a harbinger of transcendent concord that 'mythic space' can be said to introduce sanctity and importance to experience. Inspired connectedness sparks a sense of the greater, of vast existence, and of the super-natural (meaning, greater than the mundane), and of the ground of being. As such, it is meaning-constitutive and determinative of internal regulatory hopes and epiphenomenological

aspirations. Hence, to a searching 'soul' it

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We postulate from the above definition that there is internal impetus within 'mythic space' to pursue and fulfill the existentially known desires held therein. Such desires break mythic thinking out of any state of static maintenance, propelling it into a drive, a seeking, a literal *quest* for the discovery of the liminal and connected element. Therefore, 'mythic space' is steeped in movement, ambition, and dynamism – a dynamism which animates 'soul' to continue its relentless march toward

idealized interelation. In addition, the 'mythic space', in its existential knowledge of the ideal, promotes a sense of coherence (since its unquenchable drive to seek and achieve is ubiquitously present) and meaning (since, in seeking, 'soul' is questing toward a particular end, or relationship, in which 'self' is thought to finally find rest). It is for these reasons that it is proposed that 'mythic space' is a seminal driver of the in-between and therefore of faith development. In fact, we are arguing that faithful development devoid of myth would grind to an eventual painful arrest, stripped of the epiphenomenological and mired in cognitive logical detail. Object-relations provides an existentially-based internal mechanism that hedges human beings' faith apprehensions against this untimely and tragic stunting. Therefore, object-relations' pre-representational and transitionally informed relational aesthetics form one of the necessary pillars on which faith development, through FCPC, stands.

Thus, object-relations theory (and by extension, 'mythic space') is a fundamentally relational, dialogical, liminal, and dyadic construct. It is relational because it is based on associations between a subject and an object; it is dialogical because the statuses of the 'self' and the 'soul' are in a constant state of negotiation and definition; it is liminal because it exists in a borderland in which the phenomenological and epiphenomenological meet; and it is dyadic because the subject and the object, as well as 'self' and 'soul', form a complementary construct of juxtaposition in which mutual definition is co-determined. 'Mythic space', then, is an internal sphere through which our experiences of the world and our internalized impressions of that world come together in a synthesis that transcends either of its parts. Consequently, each human psyche carries within it an orientation to the extensions of reality that are individually constructed through the outgrowth of our histories and transitional illusions. Hence, our relations to represented objects is a fundamentally personal and private matter of navigation, a framework for spiritual survival that transcends immediate need and extends itself to the fulfillment of ultimate wants. To that end, 'mythic space' pulls us out of our conceptual frameworks and places us squarely in the collision between our existential wants and our

lived realities. In so doing, object-relational constructs transcend temporal and sociological parameters of experience and enters the transcendent, the revelatory, and the sacred.

With regard to temporality, 'mythic space', having been born in the pre-representational phase of object relations and having developed as an objectified transitional process, finds placement in the human psyche that undergirds apprehendable experience.[447] Hence, we find that the relational constructs prescribed by 'mythic space' are present and influential in the psyche's experiential apprehensions (through the Experiential Vector), independent of the time elapsed between the originating objectification and the current stimulus. 'mythic space', therefore (based as it is on object-relating), is unaffected by time's passage, and maintains its continuity within itself. As such, every instance of object-re-relatedness is an act of participation in every instance of that particular act of object-relating, going all the way to the seed moment of construction. In this way, 'mythic space' frees itself of the limits of logical discourse and rationality, and enters the realm of the in-between. Relational meaning and experiential coherence, however, would not be possible without a sustained relationship to our cultural environment.

Culturally, we find ourselves enmeshed in a matrix of relationships and social exigencies that exert their perceptual and motivational influences on human preference, interrelation, self-management, and of course, meaning. This matrix of relationships begins from the earliest age, and as we have seen above, is the very source of the object-relating construct we use. It is this same construct which, in line with the development of the sophistication of the 'self', places us in a parallel world of relational and liminal experience ('soul'): the current world and the original world. By current world is meant the experience of all cultural externals as filtered through the Experiential Vector; by original world is meant the holding environment in infancy that formed our conceptions of personal interconnection and relational possibility. As we progress through our lives, we are acted upon, in very tangible and unmistakable ways, by the complexities of cultural interaction. Cultural

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[447] Or more on experiential apprehension, see chapter 7.

proclivities, ritualistic preferences, and social role-determination all exert a defining effect on our cognitive and experiential apprehensions of reality. Underneath this level of grasping, however, we find that 'mythic space' fundamentally orients us toward these cultural proclivities in pre-defined and want-quenching ways. Hence, 'mythic space', our relational and interconnecting lens, acts as a prior filter to the experiential apprehension of current cultural proclivities, bringing forward the impressionistic representations of earlier environments and unresolved social needs. Thus, 'mythic space' (and by extension, object-relating) transcends cultural interaction by superseding external experience and immersing the perceiving subjectivity in an meaning-laden extra-temporal fusion between internalized relational wants and externally imposed cultural experiences – the very seat of the in-between.

Consequently, a piece of faithful perception is anchored in seminal shared experiences, and all future cultural experiential apprehensions are interpreted through this founding lens. As such, FCPC stipulates that 'mythic space' transcends cultural interaction by creating a perpetual internal cultural construct through which others are interpreted. Every interaction, therefore, is linked with primary relationships through this mechanism, and every instant of relation (which admittedly is almost every instant of human life) is, in a very real sense, a kind of reliving of our original transitional relations (our founding in-between). Since we can say that all aspects of cultural relations draw life and extension from originals, we can conclude that 'mythic space' introduces an existential element to interaction. Even though we are relating to those we are encountering at a particular instant, we are also re-experiencing early relationships and, in a very real sense, relating to primary caretakers; although we are working toward healing and wholeness in current relationships, such wholeness is achieved through the attempted resolution of early relational conflicts. Thus, since every instant of current relating is also a relived instant of early cultural interaction (thereby being transtemporal), FCPC calls the cultural element of object relations transcendent. And because each

moment of cultural object-relating is re-lived at every moment of all other cultural relations, FCPC

calls the cultural component of object-relations mythic.

It is in the confluence and desired realization of mythic temporality and cultural interaction

that object-relational constructs and biases draw us into a liminal and continuous cycle of doubt-

diminishing questing (a cycle referred to as the mythic moment). This process fundamentally

amounts to a searching for the ultimate experience, the ideal, a yearning for wholeness that once was,

a pining for an enveloping comfort that dispels tension and promotes peace. It is this experience that

we seek when we strive to capture the existential aesthetic. It is therefore the element of object-

relations (as mediated through 'mythic space') that renders communication with God as a particularly

intentional and self-disciplined process.

Part 5

The Mythic Moment and the Search for God

The mythic moment is defined as a nexus in time in which a perceived harmony and

connectedness is introduced in a receptive self-soul nexus, as it beholds a particular object, system,

or person.[448] Such a moment, a mythic experience which transcends time, is characterized by a self-

sufficiency with the ability to trap the 'self' within itself, to keep cognition from progressing beyond

the here-and-now, and to transfix the 'soul' with a sense of awe. It is a moment that many experience

when perceiving a work of art, imbibing a performance of music, beholding a scene of nature, or

surrendering to a religious ceremony. As such, mythic moments are wordless occasions, dense in

subjective power ('self'), replete with feelings of communion ('soul'), and enveloped by a sense of

extra-personal embracing (transcendent). They are therefore suspended moments in which 'self' and

'soul' reciprocally enhance, mutually inform, and seemingly merge with one another. In this merger,

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[448] In what follows, I am indebted to the work of Christopher Bollas (in his elucidation of the Aesthetic Moment), *The Shadow of the Object*, 63-95, and Abraham Maslow (in his presentation of Peak Experience – Maslow, "Religious Apsects," 169-181.

attribution of the source of the moment is usually made to the apprehended object itself, thereby threatening to ascribe a manner of intentionality to the object, a pre-destiny meant specifically for the beholder, that captures mind and arrests thought. In this way, the mythic moment is usually an uncanny, temporally-transcendent, existentially-known generative illusion that grasps consciousness.

The term 'illusion' is used in a very deliberate way. The powerful experience of the mythic moment is often not the result of divine intervention, message reception, or other externally-transcendent phenomenon. Rather, it is illusory because its founding roots can be found in the vagaries of object-relations – specifically, those seminal relations forged in the primary holding environment. According to scholars such as Bollas and Winnicott, the first mythic moment is constructed and experienced in the context of the care delivered to an infant by the primary caretakers idiom of action.[449] In infancy, the nascent subjectivity signals distress and finds comfort and respite within the particular idiom of a caretaker. Thus, in this primary form of transformation, physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual emptiness become transformed into fullness. Mirroring this seminal process, the caretaker, a being of mature object-relating capacities, is intentionally responding to the infant's affect signals through the lens of his or her own 'mythic space', thereby completing a loop of transitional transference. Infants construct their aesthetic of wholeness, basing it on the aesthetic of care they experience in the holding environment in the pre-cognitive, pre-representational stage of growth. Thus, a 'good enough' holding environment is the key determiner of the infant's ability to construct a positive continuity of being. It is therefore a profound occasion when the nature of the self-soul nexus is formed and transformed by the environment. Thus, the unique pleasure of being captured by the power of a mythic moment is said to be derived from those pre-cognitive, pre-representational moments in early infancy when what was considered ultimate, a parent's attention, biases personal experience to what is existentially reasoned as possible. Such conclusions on the nature of life's possibility affect the eventual expectations of the 'self', and place

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[449] Bollas, *The Shadow of the Object.*, 32; Winnicott, *Maturational Processes.*

subjectivity in a particular mythic rapport to objectivity. Since mythic bias was formed in pre-representational and transformational phases of growth, future manifestations of it are defined by a meaning structure that works to reverse instances of internal fragmentation – essentially holding out the promise of finding a future experience of nurturance, a moment of healing, or a movement towards wholeness.

The corollary of this statement is also true: a holding environment that provided unsatisfying or even unacceptable stimuli and transformational experiences, offers the promise of further difficulty, the challenge of navigating in a world of violent aesthetics, and a state in which wholeness

subjectivity in a particular mythic rapport to objectivity. Since mythic bias was formed in pre-representational and transformational phases of growth, future manifestations of it are defined by a meaning structure that works to reverse instances of internal fragmentation – essentially holding out the promise of finding a future experience of nurturance, a moment of healing, or a movement towards wholeness.

The corollary of this statement is also true: a holding environment that provided unsatisfying or even unacceptable stimuli and transformational experiences, offers the promise of further difficulty, the challenge of navigating in a world of violent aesthetics, and a state in which wholeness is unattainable. The unfortunate exponents of such a state of negative object-relations will promulgate internal splits (Fairbairn's schizoid conditions), affectively presume attack and discomfort, cognitively rely on rationality at the expense of the mythic, and close the existential door to fuller experience of life's events (literally hijacking the Experiential Vector). As we discussed in the last chapter, the inability to openly experience life's events is the primary block against development, and is, therefore the arresting agent in the promulgation of evolved object-relating. Therefore, negative object-relationalism carries with it over-arching destructive effects that threaten to have lifelong and expensive ramifications. A lack of full experiencing (an imbalance in the Experiential Vector) is a generative gap in the integration of being, a defensive handling of consciousness, and an encounter in isolation. Hence, the ability to live in the world in good faith is determined by the presence and maintenance of a 'good enough' holding environment, in which both infant and caretaker, forge pre-representational aesthetics of being. Thus, the mythic moment is a recalling of an early consciousness condition brought on by rapport with an object, a moment when the subject is captured by the intense illusion of being selected by the object for some deeply reverential experience – an experience which is a deep reflection of the primary holding environment (whether that environment was positive or negative). Therefore, transformational mythic object

seeking is a relentless and ubiquitous quest to find in the future what resides in the past – it is an act of reaching backward in the hopes of finding wholeness as we look forward.

The 'looking forward' that is presented by the search for the mythic object has important and seminal implications of pursuits of the divine. The challenge here arises in the simple fact that object-relations seems to have presented a psychic explanation for the quest for God. It would appear from the above discussion that the quest for the divine is nothing other than an externalized reflection of the want for the mythic moment – a desire for the moment understood, found, retained, and internalized. Were this to be the case, all soul-searching would be reduced to an accidental game of psychological hide-and-seek, in which the seeker and the sought were one and the same. Yet, as this work is one of pastoral care and ministerial significance, it is believed that a supra-natural spiritual reality does exist, and that God, the owner and agent of that reality, does communicate with human beings. Rather than denigrating the role of mythic seeking, however, FCPC proposes that the object-relational mythic construct is a seminal part of faith development and one of the levers through which a growthful relationship with God can be achieved. So the question to be discussed is as simple as it is incendiary: how does one know that one is actually relating to God, and not simply playing a convincing, existential trick on one's 'self'?

An answer to this question begins with an acknowledgement that the development of transformational need – the root of the quest for the mythic object in the in-between – has a seminal role to play in the growth of one's spiritual apprehension and relation. In other words, we do not believe and relate despite mythic questing. Rather, because of the pragmatic principle (which states that nothing can be known outside of experience), we could not conceive of a notion of God, were the mythic construction not to take place. Thus, the nature of human transformation, a reflection of God's mind within itself, is formulated in such a way as to pre-dispose and orient the human consciousness toward divine attenuation and relationship. Hence, object-relations, so conceived, has elucidated and identified a 'God-process' which encodes the orientation for divine-human relatedness

in our minds. We have come to a clearer and elucidated understanding of Fowler's assertion that humanity is potentiated for relationship with God. As such, FCPC postulates that transformational object-relating, and therefore mythic and liminal questing, is the seminal step in the development of a growing faith. This contention is not based on researched postulates alone, but also on human relational precedent.

Studies in human relating have uncovered a unique pattern in the progression of some founding experiences in our lives. These studies have demonstrated a circular construct to affective maturity, in which an early, idealized, and temporary state is attained permanently through a process of relational complexification and struggle. The early impression of the ideal state acts as a driver of transformation, while the painful discomfort of complexified relations serves as the impetus against stagnation, until the ultimate goal is reached. As an example, Scott Peck speaks of the instances of romantic love.[450] According to him, the journey of a loving relationship begins with an act of infatuation (what we would call an mythic capture of affect), followed by a time of deep cathexis and connection. In this particular process, it is the presence of the infatuated cathexis that demonstrates to the observing 'self' the rewards and gains of a particular relational reality – a reality that is hoped to be permanent. But as is common knowledge about cathected relations, the 'honeymoon' period ends – and the relationship appears to degenerate into a whirlwind of discord, discomfort, and displeasure. It is at this point in one's relational history where the real hard work begins. Relation, connection, reciprocity, and 'soulful' attunement are sought after through the work of learning and mutual development – work that literally prunes 'self' and promotes a distilled 'soul' that is capable of accepting and 'being with' another. Only after this difficult and toilsome period, does cathexis transform itself into love (defined as the decision to promote the spiritual health of self and other – a concept that supremely transcends simple cathexis). This transformation is the fruition of the experiential paths of 'self-responsibility/soul-discipleship', 'acceptance' and 'presence'; it is akin to

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[450] Peck, *The Road Less Traveled*, 84.

Riceour's 'second naïveté', and is a state of new found harmony. Consequently, the movement from infatuation to cathexis to love is a movement from a promised state of relation to a fulfilled and permanent one. The seeds of the true are held in the shades of the illusory; and the drive to transform the illusory into the concrete is the motivation through which one grapples with the difficulty of the intervening complexity. It is proposed that the process of developing the divine-human relationship is similarly based on the quest for the mythic moment.

As in the example just cited, FCPC postulates that mythic moments are not only reminders of a time of transformational objectification, but also are representative of a foundational promise of an encompassing and embracing relationship that is achievable through a disciplined and self-responsible search. Mythic moments are necessary in adulthood, because the concepts of 'soul-discipleship' and 'self-responsibility' presume the existence of a defined, known, and autonomous core that has a robust and well-developed object-relational capacity. As such, the experience of each mythic moment acts as a real-life promise of a potential future, should significant effort and dedication be applied to the process. The achievement of a truly growthful spiritual relationship with God, however, comes through discord, discomfort, and displeasure, as the groping individual grapples to come to know that which is fundamentally non-apprehendable by cognition and infinitely bigger than the 'self'.[451] Such existential liminal questing stretches the limits of human knowing and calls upon the collusion and synergy of all internal faculties: a taxing process of constant toiling, a relentless drive forward, and a journey steeped in hope. Such toiling modulates, softens, and redefines not only internal states of relation and understanding ('soul'), but also the subject-object balance through which a person functions ('self'). Through this re-definition, a relational promise is proposed: relation to God results in a state of relative comfort and calm, a settling on a nature of reality and life. It should be stated, however, that this state is not one of absolute comfort – any state which represents itself as absolute spiritual calm betrays an underlying developmental arrest. Faithful

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[451] Kegan, *Evolving Self*, Ch. 2; Pruyser, *Belief*, 210; Sigel, "Social Experience," 208.

attenuation and transformation involves increased encounter with a living God. And since God

staggers the mundane in size, scope, and breadth, He cannot be fully known by human

consciousness. Therefore, questing for divine-human relationship must continue throughout all of

life, coupled as it is with corresponding levels of challenge and discomfort. Any psyche that claims

total calm and truth apprehension is stunted spirituality; stipulation indicating the mastery of a

faithful relationalism is an illusion; and any mindset that denies the basis for divine-human

relationship built into our very relational make-up is incomplete and uninformed. As such, the mythic

moment is the infatuated-cathected representation of what could one day be permanent. It is an

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moment is the infatuated-cathected representation of what could one day be permanent. It is an

internal driver that pushes 'self' toward further definition and 'soul' toward liminal connection. It is a

promise of spiritual unity – something to perpetually work toward. Therefore, the mythic moment is

a representation of an object-relational state that drives faithful questing. Thus, FCPC does not deny

the seminal importance of mythic seeking, nor does it believe that it denigrates or denies the power

of divine-human relationship. It is, in fact, its internal source that sheds light on the expectable

possibilities of the divine relationship.

Part 6

The Representational Vector

Up to this point in our discussion of symbolic representation and object relations, we have

fundamentally agreed with Fowler's assertion that movement of internal images from the hidden to

the conscious within consciousness is one of the main harbingers of maturity (thereby honouring one

of the strengths in his conceptions); we have proceeded to delineate the source of this assertion in our

elucidation of symbolic representation (object relations) in order to be able to explicate the workings

of the self-soul nexus in relation to internal imagery; we have defined the unique and meaning-laden

sphere of these internal representations as that of 'mythic space'; we have outlined the transcendent

nature of 'mythic space' to human epistemological ontology; and finally, we have linked 'mythic

space' (and its object relational pre-cursor) to the very notion of a driven impetus to seek and further divine-human relations. In this way, the trajectory of our argument moves from the purely psychological to the pastoral, thereby presenting object relations and 'mythic space' as prime drivers in faith development.

Such a construction is proposed in order to correct a particular weakness in Fowler's FDT. Fowler goes to great lengths in his stage explications to delineate the progression of formal symbolic understanding (one's ability to grasp and analyze symbols), thereby elevating symbolic apprehension to a level of prominent importance in FDT. In a closer investigation, however, it was concluded that Fowler's discourse of symbolic apprehension was in actuality that of phenotypic manifestation of Piagetian formal operations, as these operations come to grapple with external symbols. As formal symbolic understanding is extended beyond Stage 3, however, Fowler's extended postulation relies heavily on the ego psychological tenets of Kegan to explicate symbolic preference and ability (at Stages 4 and 5). Thus, even in its higher incarnations, FDT proposes an approach to symbolic understanding that is the phenotypic application of prior processes within the developing psyche. FCPC, seeking to correct this confusion, has approached the topic of symbol apprehension from a different angle.

FCPC, further honouring Fowler's basic desire to approach the study of faith development through a depth investigation (form over content) and focused as it is on the *ground* of relation (as opposed to phenotypic manifestations), approaches symbolic apprehension through a depth model. As such, FCPC does not concern itself primarily with formal symbolic understanding that is the extension of the work of Piaget and Kegan; rather, FCPC is concerned with the very construction of relations, as that construction finds itself affected by the symbols, representations, and images that are created *within* the developing psyche. Image manipulation at this deep level, then, is considered to be the truest form of symbolic apprehension (as seen above) because it is unilaterally the deepest such structure. FCPC, however, in its quest not to lose connection to the transcendent, has grounded

its basis for object-relational symbolic apprehension in the ground of myth, and concludes that,

whereas one's ability to move images from the hidden to the conscious dimensions of psyche

represents epistemological maturity, one's *relation* to object relations is constitutive of liminal and

therefore existential health. Thus, it is not that Fowler's conception is in any way discarded (since

symbolic maturity is the very pre-supposition for object-relational *relation*); rather, it is that FCPC

transcends FDT's phenotypic bias and presents a conception of development that incudes a mythic

relationalism that is constitutive of faith. This mythic relationalism is brokered through the concept

of the Representational Vector.

The Representational Vector is the object-relational analog of the Experiential Vector. Just as

the Experiential Vector sought to outline and broker a liminal balance between the forces of 'self'

and 'soul' (with respect to experiential apprehension), the Representational Vector seeks to broker a

similar balance in relation to mythic symbolic representations. On the road to faith development, the

Representational Vector posits two poles of pathology: the pole of 'intellectualized apperception' and

the opposite pole of 'subjective fusion'.

By 'intellectualized apperception' is meant the epistemological orientation through which

apprehended internal images are grasped by a distancing, separating, and clinical rational stance.

Figure 2 The Representational Vector
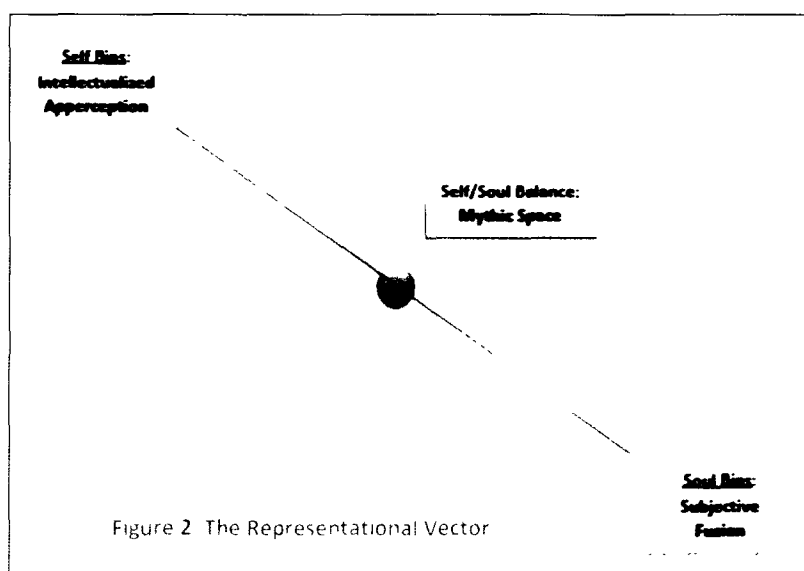
Thus, the very pursuit of the perception of the hidden object results in the grasping of that object (as per Fowler's base conception); in 'intellectualized apperception', however, the object that is grasped is not allowed to retain its 'surplus of meaning'. Rather, through a concerted act of mind, it is categorized, stripped of its existential and

transcendental aspects, and viewed through a strictly rational and cognitive lens. In so doing, the

internal representation itself is separated from its affective, intuitional and faithful origin, and

relegated to the cognitive. Hence, the symbol's apprehension is clearly defined, yet its fundamental

effect remains unseen and uncontrolled (since, as we have seen, it is not possible to live without our

object relations). Thus, the cognitive grasping of the symbol might uproot it from the affective, but

cannot succeed at stunting or somehow mitigating its powerful relational effect. Such an

apperception of internal symbol, therefore, is pathological in its unilateral distancing of the grasped

symbol and in the highly differentiated and separate status it affords internal objects and transcendent

possibilities. It is thus the over exertion of the 'self', at the expense of the 'soul'. It is a clinical

approach to self-understanding, and results in an equally clinical grasping of internal wants and the

divine-human relationship. At the other pole of pathology, we find the state of 'subjective fusion'. In

this state, internal images and representations are not finding expressive elucidation or objectification

within the workings of psychic space. Rather, the images are themselves fused with subjectivity, and

thereby exert their significant influence in a tacit and uncontrolled manner. Thus, we enter the realm

of Jung's archetypal merger, where internal images come to be expressed in quasi-supernatural

terms, usually through the vehicle of subtle and numinous internal modes of communication, such as

dreams and fantasies.[452] In this realm of imaginal existence, differentiation is stunted and an

experience of deep enmeshment takes place. Hence, the 'subjective fusion' pole of pathology is an

over-extension of the 'soul's' impetus toward connection and inter-relation. Thus, whereas the

'intellectualized apperception' of the 'self' creates pathological distance to internal representations,

the 'subjective fusion' of the 'soul' effects pathological proximity. Whereas the 'intellectualized

apperception' of the 'self' destroys myth by stripping symbolic representation of affective and

intuitional meanings, 'subjective fusion' of the 'soul' engulfs those meanings within a non-conscious

archetypal matrix. And, whereas the 'intellectualized apperception' of the 'self' renders a clinical

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[452] Dougherty and West, *Matrix and Meaning*, 23.

orientation to divine-human relations, the 'subjective fusion' of the 'soul' brings about an uncontrolled divine-human relation, through the power of archetypal merger. As such, either pole of symbolic apprehension is considered pathological in its inability to retain a differentiated sense of agency in dialogue with an integrated sense of interconnection. It is to the fine balance of this dialogue that the Representational Vector directs itself.

The Representative Vector seeks to align and integrate the forces of 'self' and 'soul' as they come to interact with symbolic representation and internal image. Thus, it seeks to find the transcendent balance between the sub-natural and the super-natural, the cognitive and the archetypal, the crafted and the fantastical. To that end, the Representation Vector present 'mythic space' as the balanced confluence of 'self' and 'soul', as the self-soul nexus works to interact with internal image and symbolic representations. By so doing, the Representational Vector seeks to combine cognitive construction with

Figure 3 The Experiential and Representational Vectors
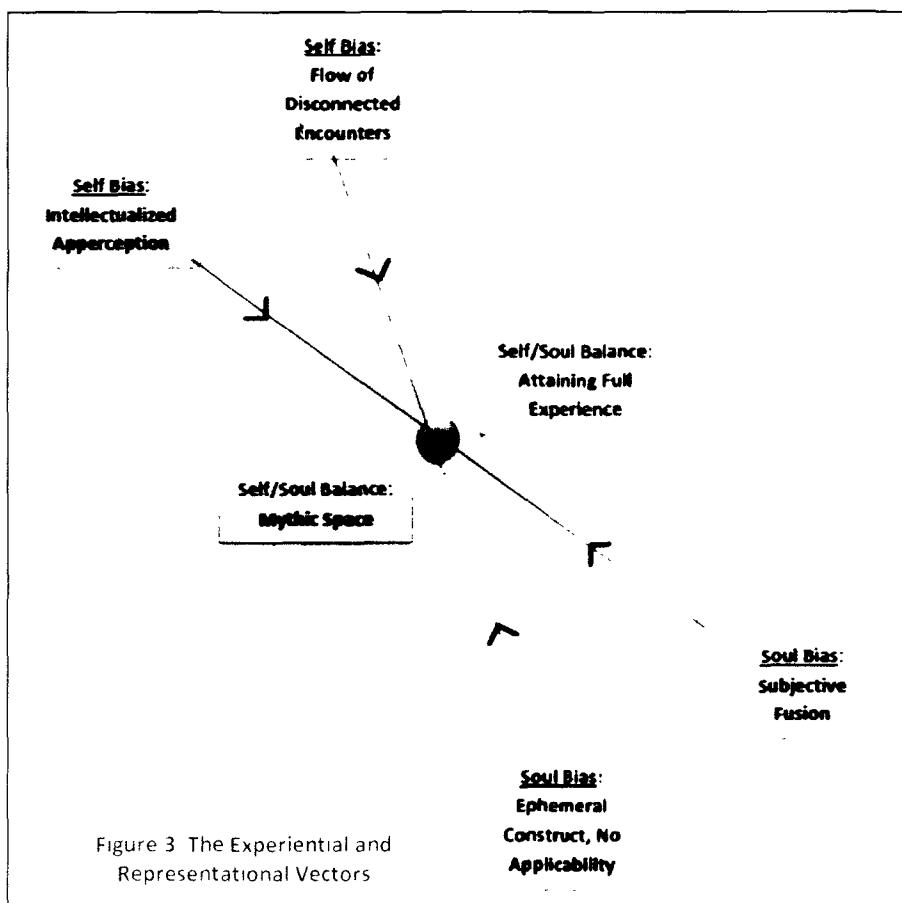
existential meaning, empirical apprehension with noumenal possibility, and historical experience with transcendent impetus. It is thus the sphere of the objectified internal image, as that image comes to retain its 'surplus of meaning', and comes to express proclivities at all levels of being. In addition, it is in the balanced sphere of 'mythic space' that the divine-human relation can be understood and

dissected (on the hand), and cherished for its irreducibly mysterious and dependent dimension (on the other). Thus, the Representational Vector is truly the balanced and growthful confluence of a differentiated being, as that being seeks to find merger (but not fusion) with a world of objects and with God.

We are beginning to build the very image that is meant to outline the direction and concern of FCPC. In our elucidation of the Experiential Vector, we concluded that the optimal state of interaction was found in the liminal condition of fuller experience. In addition, our discussion of the Representational Vector has led us to the stipulation that a developmentally optimal orientation of one's being in relation to internal image and symbol is that of 'mythic space' – an apprehension of symbol balancing the impetuses of 'self' and 'soul', and profoundly steeped in the liminal. Hence, we are developing the beginnings of the actual construction of a model of 'caring for the self-soul nexus', that seeks to optimally interrelate a particular person, as that person quests in the in-between to find a developmentally cogent orientation to and interpenetration with self, other, and God. It is the pilgrimage entailed in this very quest for optimal horizontality that is held up by FCPC as being the very seed and trajectory of faith development.

Chapter 9

Abductive Knowing: The Logic of Faith

In an extrapolation of the biblical tenet that faith, without works, is dead, Fowler argues that

faith cannot itself lead to works without first marshaling the power of knowing.[453] Initiatives and

responses that arise out of the vagaries of meaning-making, he says, must be pre-supposed by an act

of knowing and construing. Moral judgments and value decisions cannot proceed without the prior

existence of particular acts of knowing and construing. And even humanity's relation and orientation

to itself, to its surround, and to its existential apprehensions and divine connections cannot proceed

without acts of interpretations preceded by acts of construal and knowledge consolidation. As such,

Fowler asserts again and again that knowledge and construal are seminal to the progression of faith

(in fact, Fowler goes so far as to define faith as a kind of construal –see Chapters 1 and 2), where

knowledge/construal transcends the bounds of the strictly rational and is expanded to include the

experiential, the affective, the relational, and the moral.[454] It is 'knowing', according to Fowler, that

relates a person to his/her experience, community, and symbolic representation; it is 'knowing' that

guides the development of particular standards of living; it is 'knowing' that counteracts indifference;

and it is 'knowing' that acts as the ground of connection and caring.[455] Hence, 'knowing' for Fowler

is the apprehension of a depth-structure of human epistemological ontology; it is the grasping of the

form of construal and not its content. Consequently, it fundamentally transcends the Piagetian

construction on which it is based.

Although very respectful and deeply influenced by the work of Piaget, Fowler, more

interested in understanding construal as a holistic and integrated act of the human psyche, criticized

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[453] Fowler, "Faith, Liberation, and Human Development," 12.

[454] Fowler's expansive definition of faith was presented in Chapter 1 and was untangled from the traditional notion of meaning-making in Chapter 2. Although Fowler's definition of faith is being refreshed in this work, his fundamental presupposition in the primacy of knowledge is being retained and supported

[455] Fowler, "Faith, Liberation, and Human Development," 12.

Piaget for the narrowness of his exclusively cognitive focus. Fowler includes Piaget's notion of

logical and cognitive growth in the foundations of FDT, but deliberately supersedes cognitive

considerations by adding the dimensions of experiential apprehension, symbolic representation, and

communal interplay. In this way, Fowler appears to be viewing himself as yet another proponent of

the structurally-focused developmental discourse begun in Piaget and extended by Kohlberg, and

Erickson, where the tenor of his work sought to include and subsume the discourses of his

predecessors (Chapter 1). Thus, as David Heywood points out, whereas the Piagetian concept of

cognitive development was utterly extricated from any considerations of the growth of a sense of

self, Fowler was interested in interweaving his notions of construal with movements and changes

involved in the development of a subjective dimension to epistemology.[456] This subjective

dimension is a conscious and reflective 'self' (see Chapter 5), of which one can be more or less

aware. Knowing, in this context, is therefore an ever-present ontological nucleus of grasping, which

then works to order and structure the activity and contents of the psyche. Thus, through this seminal

notion of construal, the human 'self' is unavoidably involved in a constant world of decision-making,

relations, and distorted interpretations. It is a world of proximate apprehension, based as it is on

semiosis and internal imagery; it is a world of inherited value and preference, based as it is on

cultural interaction; and it is a world order and consolidation, based as it is on the navigation of

experiential apprehension. Thus, as pointed out by Chaninah Maschler, for Fowler, 'knowing' bears

no exclusive relation to notions of rational certainty and is not operationally tied to Piaget's logic of

conviction; rather, it is the process of the development of a groping subjectivity as it comes to

perceive a solid core of objectified realities.[457]

Thus, 'knowing' is one of the central foundations in the development of Fowler's FDT. A

problem arises, however, when the language of structuralism is invoked to explain a comprehensive

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[456] Heywood, "Faith Development and Piaget," 158.
[457] Maschler, *Piaget's Structualism*, 51.

act of convictional orientation.[458] This problem is related to Fowler's subsequent elucidative need to divide his conception of 'knowing' into the more purely cognitive on the one hand (epigenetic understanding) and into the more holistic and metaphorical on the other (meaning-making), in order to hold the vast purview of FDT together. Thus, one the one hand, 'knowing' comes to indicate a degree of convictional certainty around the experienced world (such as object permanence and social reversibility), and on the other, the same notion of 'knowing' is being marshaled as the champion of subject-object balance, self-other relationship, and experiential interpretation. As such, Fowler's conception of 'knowing', according to Mosely, threatens to conflate human developmentalism with theological anthropology, and the capacity for accurate objective attenuation with the pursuit of covenantal and meaningful relations. Therefore, it is concluded that the language of structuralism is insufficient to bring about a full understanding of the complexity of knowing. Although structuralism has much to offer the elucidation of a developmental scheme, the language of interrelation and form-focused ontology is preferred by FCPC. Therefore, it is the purpose of this chapter to re-cast Fowler's basic reliance on the importance of knowing in a more synthetic, relational, and ontological conception, as the ubiquitous prior ground of meaning. Although we have already parsed the definition of meaning-making out of a conception of 'faith', we have yet to deal with the complementary issue of knowing.

Thus, FCPC agrees with Fowler's decision to found FDT on a basis of knowing, and thereby employs the conception of 'knowing' as one of its four main pillars. FCPC, however, having separated meaning-making from faith, proposes that knowing is a deep and ontological feature of the human condition that ubiquitously affects interaction and interpretation. Whereas FDT does not go as far as to analyze the process inherent in 'knowing', FCPC undertakes a discussion on the mechanics of knowing for three main reasons: first, to delineate the difference between knowing and faith; second, to delineate the linkage between knowing and meaning-making; and third, to provide a

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[458] Romney, "Logic of Faith Development," 164.

strong construal-based foundation for FCPC, that can work in concert with the Experiential and Representational Vectors. As such, the fundamental tenets of 'knowing' construction are of seminal importance to FCPC as it constructs its third Vector to faithful development: the Knowing Vector.

Our discussion in the following pages will follow a simple and familiar pattern: first, we shall provide an elucidation for the process of knowing and meaning construction; second, we shall relate this construction to the Experiential and Representational Vectors; and finally, we shall elucidate the balance presented by the Knowing Vector, as it takes its place in the faith development model of FCPC.

Part 1

The Realm of the Known

In our discussion of the Experiential Vector, we stated that all that we can know can be known only through experience − a seemingly self-evident statement. And yet, that statement pre-supposes an even more foundational state of psychic existence − the faculty of 'knowing' itself. The presence of such a postulated faculty presents a seminal yet somewhat circular argument: our consciousness is comprised of only that which is known. Therefore, we cannot know what we do not know. The unknown enters consciousness always from externals, through experience apprehension (and through experience translated into internal representations). What is known, therefore, is what comprises our very psychic space; it is what defines our identity and guides our meaning-making; it is what leads our relationships and projects our impressions on the world; it is what determines our aesthetics of God, and what infuses our life's purposes with those aesthetics. What is known and how we exist with the known is determinative of spirituality, and is therefore, the fundamental building block of transformation and development. And yet, before we can explicate the Knowing Vector any further, we must briefly answer a deceptively simple question: what is it to be known? Or, put another way, how do know that we know?

It is postulated that the answer to the nature of knowledge is held in the various levels of apprehension. Thus, of all the manners in which humanity can grasp, which are the most basic, the most influential, and the most telling? We can think of four levels of knowing that are relevant to our discussion. They are the levels of observation, definition, analysis, and exhibition.

By observation is meant those elements of apprehension that come to us through sensation or impression, those elements of life that we come to perceive, that we identify as existent, and that we can later identify. As such, that which is observed is somehow seen (literally or figuratively) and is known in its continuity as what it appears to be. There is no subsequent engagement of the perception with any cognitive or pre-cognitive faculty; there is no manipulation of the contents of impression; and there is no attempt to assimilate what is observed into a meaning system of what is. An observation is simply that which is known in the initial instant of perception – it is the very concept of *common experience* (Chapter 7), and represents the purest form of unaltered experiential encounter. Should a subjectivity find the inclination to come to know what is observed in a more detailed manner, it would have entered the realm of definition.

By definition is meant that process through which we categorize and inter-relate what was observed. It is not that we simply see, but rather that we take the time to name what we see and even to place it into an established category. Definition is an act of appreciation, of designation, of identification, of appointment, and of appellation. It is psychically more proximate to subjectivity than observation and allows subjectivity to exert power over the named. And yet, even with these powerful perceptual complexities, the act of definition is un-integrative. It stands at the very boundary of exerting influence within meaning-system, yet does not do so. It is thus, the mid-point between common experience and fuller experience. It is apprehension without engagement, notice without investment. In order to exert influence, experience engagement, and undertake investment, however, we have to move to an even more involved method of knowing: analysis.

By analysis is meant that faculty of psychic space that integrates the defined into the system of apprehension. In this manner, psychic energy has to be expended to convert appellations and categorizations into functional agents of meaning-constitutive epistemology. Analysis is an increasing of one's meaning structure by the application of the logic of that very meaning structure to a newly defined known; it is a mastery of (not simply an authority over) a concept, a significant assimilation into a pre-determined equilibrium – an assimilation which could divert, convert, or even subvert the apprehending structure. It is the very manifestion of *fuller experience*. It is not only seeing, and defining, but also, interrelating what was found into a worldview and allowing that holistic view to change based on what is analyzed. It is therefore an act of transformation and development. And yet, although the concept of analysis takes the entire Experiential Vector into account, it does not go so far as to attend to the more hidden and mythical aspects of the Representational Vector. Therefore, it is not sufficient to express the complete definition of what is conceived as 'known'.

Hence, taking the complexities of internal representation and object relations into account, FCPC defines what is known as that which affects what is exhibited, regardless of its epistemological status. Not only are we comprised of what we know; what we know is what we do, show, live, project, and display. It is the sum total of our internal states that affects how we are in the world. It is the essence of what we exhibit, and the nature of how we are experienced as affecting our psycho-environmental ecology. What is exhibited transcends what is observed, what is defined, and what is analyzed. Exhibition is a category of knowing that is supra-epistemology, supra-empiricist, and epiphenomenological. It is for these reasons that FCPC reserves the definition of the 'known' to this highest and most abstract level of apprehension. In addition to what we objectify, what we 'know' is what we exhibit.

Knowing, then, is no longer a function of articulation, cognitive presence, affective description, or conscious apprehension. Knowing is a deep function of human existence, a pragmatic

principle, an experiential handle, and an existential grasping. It is a layer of perception that

transcends thought and grounds faith development. As such, the FCPC's definition of 'knowing'

correlates closely with Fowler's construction of faith as knowing. Yet, whereas FDT focused on a

single layer of knowing (the layer of apprehension and interpretation), as that layer of knowing

progresses and matures throughout the lifecycle, FCPC is going deeper in its construction. Thus,

whereas the Experiential Vector provides the handle for stimulus apprehension, and the

Representational Vector provides the handle for impression, it is the Knowing Vector that provides

the basic and pure concept of meaning construction. Thus, unlike FDT's claim of faith-knowing as a

description of meaning-making, FCPC approaches 'knowing' as the very faculty of apperception that

undergirds and is constitutive of meaning-making. In this way, FCPC is providing a *depth* model

definition for the faculty of knowing (as opposed to FDT's descriptive model of the action of

knowing), and supporting its seminal tenets of experiential and representational apprehension with a

synergizing mechanism of human epistemological interface – the interface of our very psychic space.

In our quest to elucidate the anatomy of 'knowing', it is to an elucidation of the components and

mechanics of psychic space that we turn. In so doing, FCPC will retain its grounding in the founding

faculties of Fowler's FDT, while simultaneously transcending its descriptive limits in favour of a

synergistic depth construct – a construct that will form the basis for a definition of faithful and

liminal knowing. As such, in our upcoming discussion, we will first define the notion and

components of psychic space; we will then relate psychic space to the mechanics of the conceptions

of meaning and development of Piaget as well as Kegan and Fowler; we will connect the notions of

psychic space to the existentially informed and faith-filled notion of truth; and finally, we will

synergize our discussion in the presentation of the Knowing Vector – a construct relating one's

relation to knowing.

Part 2

The Psychic Space

It stands to reason that knowing is constructed within the psychic space (consciousness) of each individual. By 'psychic space' is meant that dimension of existence that constitutes the human mind; that dimension which engages in, observes, and analyses the stimuli of life's experiences; that dimension which is both phenomenological and epiphenomenological; that abstract, prior, universal, and essential dimension of human existence that directs the reaction, reason, apprehension, adaptation, and action of the human being. In referring to the psychic space, we are referring to that dimension of human existence that is at once all of the above. It is beyond the scope of the present discussion to expound on the nature of mind itself — thousands of insightful tomes have been written throughout history on the nature, philosophy, and science of consciousness. Rather, it is the purpose of this discussion, taking consciousness itself as a given reality in human existence, to elucidate the elements that constitute psychic space, so as to provide a better basis from which to view and apprehend the process of knowing, in relation to faith development. For the purposes of FCPC, the elements of psychic space are defined as ontology, existence, and relation. Each of these elements builds upon the former and together, form the foundation of wholeness of human knowing.

Firsts: Ontology

Ontology (the nature of existence) in the psychic space is unique in that it is directed not at physical attributes, emotional responses, or behavioural requisites. Rather, psychic ontology directs itself toward the very building blocks of consciousness. These building blocks span the repertoire of dimensions that constitute and order the underlying nature of how existence is conceived and apprehended within the human psyche. Following the lead of C.S. Pierce, these elements are defined

as potentiality ('firstness'), actuality ('secondness'), and generality ('thirdness').[459] The discussion of

these categories poses a particular problem: in the same way as did the readiness-, being-, and

expression-paths to fuller experience (the Experiential Vector), each subsequent category of psychic

ontology irreducibly holds within its ontology the entirety of the former category (this will be further

discussed later). As such, it becomes exceedingly difficult to supply a pure illustration of any single

category, in isolation. Rather, in extruding his arguments, Pierce was forced to rely on examples that

were *predominantly* based on one ontological category (as over against the other two). Therefore, it

should be noted going forward that these three categories are inextricable linked and any discussion

of the purity of each one is strictly an intellectual construct called upon to ease discussion. The

ontological category that underlies all psychic existence is that of 'firstness'. It is to that category that

we now turn.

The term 'firstness' was derived to highlight a single important element: there are founding

aspects of the psychic space that exist within themselves and independently of any other form of

existence. Pierce often pointed to phenomena that he referred to as 'compound' and stated that,

should we choose to undress these phenomena of their respective layers, we would eventually arrive

at a state in which the compound phenomenon has been decomposed into its constituent parts.[460]

Upon further study, should it be concluded that these constituent parts are not in themselves

'compounds', we would be left with irreducible and primal elements of psychic existence: 'firsts'.

Thus, 'firsts', mirroring the primacy of readiness-paths to fuller experience, are elements of psychic-

ontology that are associated with psychic freshness, life for its own sake, and unmitigated freedom

(i.e. lacking contingent parts and independent of inter-relations). 'Firsts' connote creation,

spontaneity, dynamism, and beginnings. They do not hold within their natures any connections to

antecedent psychic elements. Hence, 'firsts' are perceived as psychically real and complete within

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[459] Pierce, *Collected Works*, 48-92; Fitzgerald, *Theory of Signs*, Ch. 3; David, *Pierce's Epistemology*, 20-63.
[460] Pierce *Collected Papers*, 101.

themselves, regardless of the presence or influence of anything else. Consequently, the only

parameter necessary for this ontological category to exist is the actual ability of the phenomenon to

be capable of composition in some way. Hence, 'firsts' are psychic necessities: they are what must

exist in order for other ontologies to exist; they are the ground from which other realities spring; they

are the psychic freshness that create further dimensions of being; furthermore, they are apprehended

by the human psyche as the fertile sources of all compound ontologies. It should be noted at this

point, that the very nature of psychic grasping has in itself moved us out of the realm of pure

'firstness' (since grasping implies the existence of an apprehending mind – a second entity). And yet,

even through this spoiling apprehension (since, by trying to understand the nature of psychic purity,

we somehow defile that very purity), we can still abstractly (if only through logical necessity)

conceive of the 'firsts' as 'firsts' – as the irreducible level of psychic ontology.

It is this irreducibility that further equates the nature of 'firsts' with that of potentiality.

Psychic potentials are defined as fundamental elements that have a requisite existence, on which all

other elements are based, or upon which others are derived. Therefore, 'firsts' (as potentialities) are

roots from which psychic life and existence grow. Just as the roots of a giant tree are invisible to the

probing eye and extend far underground to undergird the massive frame of the living outgrowth, so

'firsts', as potentialities, conduct an unrelated, lonely and constitutive existence, and yet introduce

the possibility of construction, development, and outgrowth. Without potentiality, there can be no

creativity, development, or diversity; there would be no extension, no mind, and no relation. Without

potentiality, psychic life would be reduced to an empty glimmer of energy, without the possibility of

consciousness, attenuation, or maturity. Potentiality is the ground from which all psychic

(consciousness) springs, and from which meaning-making progresses.[461] No sooner do we turn our

attention to a grasping entity, however, than we find ourselves in the realm of 'secondness'.

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[461] Pierce *Collected Papers*, 56.

Pierce defined 'secondness' as that element in which "there is no *a priori* reason why there should not be indecomposable elements which are what they are relative to a 'second' but independent of any 'third'."[462] Although a very abstract and circular construction, it is thought that this definition is pointing at the very fundamentals of 'otherness', as a regulative concept of psychic ontology. In this way, 'secondness' is found most notably in instances of psychic experiences in which requisite 'otherness' (action/reaction, cause/effect, force/resistance, etc.) is the predominant feature. Hence, it is the first level of fundamental *relation*, although as a category, it does not go as far as to include manipulation or apprehension of the 'first' by the 'second' (any such features would fall strictly to the category of 'thirds'). 'Secondness' then is a psychic expression of dyadism, of proper determination, of numerical identity, of counter-balance, and of resistance. Hence, 'secondness' is not simply an expression of opposition or juxtaposition. Rather, it is also an expression of an irreducible and intrinsic feature of psychic elements that introduces the retention of identity over against some other. Following James Fitzgerald's thought, this identity is not a result of opposition qua opposition, but rather is manifested in opposition *to a 'first'*.[463] Consequently, here-and-now concrete differentiation is an expression of the ontology of 'secondness': any absolute identity, any thing, concept, or idea that maintains a place for itself before a mind in the psychic space. Any aspect of time or inner workings will move an experience into the realm of 'thirdness'; 'secondness' is the state of present and absolute apposition with a 'first'.

'Seconds', therefore, imply actuality, in that 'something' is required to stand in dyadic relation to a 'first'. In the psychic realm, the 'something' is akin to a mind, within which a 'first' is abstractly confronted. The existence of this confronting mind is irreducible in nature – in other words, the fundamental nature of a 'second' is not reducible to an expression of 'firsts' (a concept mirroring the construction of being-paths to fuller experience). As an example, we can call on the

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[462] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 30.
[463] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 31.

idea of a character within a fiction. We can relate fiction itself to a 'first', since it is a convention of

literature that is replete with potentiality, and yet not active in itself. The character within fiction

(without having yet acted or interacted in the fictional world) stands as a 'second'. The character is

contingent upon the 'first' for its existence (if fiction did not exist, neither would this character). And

yet, the character itself is irreducible in its nature: we cannot conceive of breaking down the concept

of fictional character into any component parts. It is an unbreakable whole, a unified and steadfast

concept – a concept, however, which cannot exist without the prior 'first'. Thus, 'secondness' (e.g.

fictional character) stands in apposition to a 'first' (e.g. fiction), and yet cannot be conceived as

anything other than the fundamental and ontological unity of the 'first' and related 'second'. In this

way, 'secondness' is termed as irreducible. Should a putative 'second' be further broken down into a

series of 'firsts', it was not a 'second' in its true nature to begin with. A 'second' is a co-mingling of

a 'first' and 'second' in a fundamentally and ontologically irreducible relationship.[464]

'Secondness' undergirds the process of meaning-making by introducing an element of

existence that is separate from 'firsts' (potentiality) and that therefore enters the realm of identity

(actuality). It is this actuality that can act on prior potentialities to produce results. These results are

explained by the concept of 'thirdness'.

Pierce defined 'thirds' as those elements in which "there is no *a priori* reason why there

should not be indecomposable elements which are, but they are relative to a 'second' and a 'third',

independent of any fourth."[465] This statement is interpreted to signify those elements in which a

'second' (already predicated irreducibly on a 'first') acts on the raw materials of apprehension to

produce a concept, idea, law, or prediction. Therefore, 'thirds' are found in generalities,

representations, continuity, and conclusions. 'Thirds' have a basis in actuality and occurrence: for

example, a feeling may be conceived of regardless of its actually being felt (potentiality/'first'); a

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[464] Pierce *Collected Papers*, 185.
[465] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 32.

feeling cannot be a true feeling, however, unless it works through an agent (actuality/'secondness'), and is interpreted by that 'second', thereby resulting in an impression which is a 'third'. Thus, in a parallel construction to the expression-paths to fuller experience, 'thirds' contain within themselves the characteristic feature of being able to influence actual courses of events within the psychic space – a form of psychic pragmatism. They also carry within themselves a generality of being that hints at permanence (for example, once an agent has experienced a particular feeling, he or she will expect that other instances of that feeling will be the same as that which was originally experienced). As a consequence of this generality, then, 'thirds' allow us to move into the realm of predictions, regularity, law-making, and theory-construction.[466] 'Thirds' are therefore the constitutive components of knowing, construal, and thus true meaning-making.

As in the case of 'seconds', 'thirds' are in and of themselves ontologically irreducible. How is this the case? Commonly referred to in the discussion of 'thirds' is the example of the term "gift". A gift is fundamentally and irreducibly a 'third', in that it is predicated upon a 'first' (the item itself/potentiality) and upon a 'second' (someone to receive the gift/actuality). The given item is therefore no different from what it was originally except for the fact that it is now interpreted as somehow unique by the receiver ('third'/generality). Hence, it is clear to see that a gift ('third') cannot in and of itself be a gift unless we can point to the presence of an item ('first') and a receiver ('second'). Without these elements, the gift devolves into mere potentiality ('first') and loses its nature as a 'third'. Or, recalling our example of the fictional character, we can arrive at a tripartite construction: the existence of fiction ('first') allows for the existence of a fictional character ('second'), which can now act within the sphere of fiction ('third'). A 'third', then, brings about the embodiment of a potentiality in actuality. In this manner, we end up with an ontological conception of psychic space in which we have three categories of being, each of which builds on its antecedent layers and yet remains utterly irreducible in terms of its nature. Pierce believed that this triadic

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[466] Pierce Collected Papers. 196.

conception resolved the ontological issues he faced, demonstrating that any fourths, fifths, sixths, and so on, could be effectively reduced to a combination of 'firsts', 'seconds', and 'thirds'.[467] As such, although meaning constitutive knowing is composed mostly of the interplay of 'thirds', it cannot be divested of the influence and presence of 'firsts' and 'seconds'.

We have presented an elucidation of the very components of psychic space.[468] These components are critical to a full understanding of knowing

Ontological Structure of Psychic Space			
	Knowing Vector	**Representational Vector**	**Experiential Vector**
Firsts	Potentiality	Mind	Readiness
Seconds	Identity	Relationship	Being
Thirds	Generality	Symbolic representation	Expression

Figure 4: Ontological Structure of Psychic Space

(as they are the proposed bases upon which meaning-constitutive construal is built) as well as the underlying *relational* framework through which the various elements of FCPC's Vectors are constructed. We find parallel constructions of irreducible phases of ontology in the Experiential Vector ('firsts'/potentialities: readiness-paths; 'seconds'/actualities: being-paths; 'thirds'/generalities: expression-paths) as well as in the mechanics of symbolic representation ('firsts'/potentialities: the human mind; 'seconds'/actualities: the presenting relationship; and 'thirds'/generalities: the imaginal imprint left on the mind by the relationship). In addition, we can synergize our knowledge on a more macro level to demonstrate a parallel construction of ontological interrelation between the Experiential Vector – the very mechanism through which raw materials of existence are accepted into consciousness ('firsts'), the Representational Vector – the very mechanism through which images received through experience are imprinted on the human ('seconds'); and the Knowing Vector – the very mechanism through which experience and

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[467] Pierce *Collected Papers*, 214.

[468] Note that in former chapters, we have frequently appealed to the notion of psychic space as the arena in which meaning-making, experiential apprehension and symbolic representation take place. We are now engaging in the elucidation of that psychic space, and demonstrating an underlying uniformity in the ontology of meaning-making.

representation are synergized into a meaning-constitutive construal ('thirds'). Thus, whereas

Fowler's FDT presented a descriptive and differentiated account of faith-knowing as a participant in

meaning-making (a choice that resulted in the conflation of the concepts of faith and meaning),

FCPC resolves and corrects this confusion by presenting knowing as a *depth* model of apperception

through which meaning is actually constructed. In so doing, FCPC provides definitions for knowing

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horizontal and purely existential (a definition of faith is provided in Chapter 10). Hence, FCPC works

to retain the foundational strength of FDT (by basing its elucidative components of the very

foundations of FDT), while simultaneously correcting the definitional and methodological

inconsistencies inherent in FDT. Yet, our current explication of the components of psychic space is

structural in its description of anatomical and hierarchical psychic components. In order to be true to

the very relational and liminal dimension of FCPC, the interconnections of the various components

must be discussed. Thus, we ask a seminal and important question: What is the nature of the

interrelation of these ontological elements within the psychic space? It is to answering this question

that we now turn our attention.

Seconds: Existence in Relation

Although we have identified categorical ontologies within the psychic space, we are left with

important questions regarding the functional relationship among the components of psychic space:

are there over-arching and connecting patterns in psychic interplay that affect how we receive and

work on apprehensions? Are there modalities of being that affect and guide our expectations about

the relations within psychic space? FCPC answers this question by identifying three key modalities:

continuity, synthesis, and chance.[469] We will first turn our attention to the concept of continuity.

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[469] Misak, *Truth*, 57-71.

The concept of continuity implies the inter-relatedness and cohesiveness of the psychic space. It expounds a confidence that consciousness is a unified whole and that all elements within that sphere are modally the same. As we saw in the inter-relation of the Experiential, Representational, and Knowing Vectors (the Knowing Vector will be defined later in this chapter), all ontologies are in and of themselves extensions of the same mind, within a common sphere and therefore, can be expected to have common and contiguous psychic essences. Hence, it can be concluded from the concept of continuity that there is a reason, a particular logic, or an ordered course of discovery and process that attunes consciousness to the nature of psychic ontology and vice versa. As such, and related to Pierce's notion of 'synechism', continuity argues for a psychic space that is cohesive, and that, as a result, provides within itself, the parameters required for the validation and testing of particular epistemological experiments and hypotheses.[470] Therefore, the mode of continuity is the ground from which truth-determination springs, is a regulative principle of logic and order, is a prerequisite of any abductive, inductive, or deductive process, and is the existential factor that promotes psychic trust and unity.[471] The concept of continuity further implies that psychic space evolves according to regular and general principles (of which Pierce identifies the Hegelian concept of 'Absolute Mind').[472] General principles, in turn, are those principles that are not limited to any single instance or psychic location, but rather that are the source from which correlative ideas stem. Therefore, general ideas are 'firsts' which present themselves to psyche space ('seconds'), and which are therefore worked upon and extrapolated in a regular and cohesive manner ('thirds'). In this way, continuity bridges the *relation* of the ontologies by allowing an open communication and an ordered conception of the interconnection of ontological modalities.[473] In addition, the concept of continuity allows for the extrapolation of 'thirds' into true generalities without losing the cogency of these

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[470] Misak, *Truth*, 63.
[471] Cocking, "Continuities," 75; Misak, *Truth*, 147; Piaget, *Constructions*.
[472] Ejsing, *Theology of Anticipation*, 53.
[473] Pierce *Collected Papers*, 165.

conclusions. Thus, as Pierce points out, the fundamental principle of continuity relates to the fact that an idea (a 'third') cannot flow from or affect any other idea that is not somehow in continuous connection with it. [474] The continuity and inter-relatedness of these ideas will gradually cause ever-greater systems of ideas to emerge, and an integrated meaning construction to appear to the abducting psyche. [475]

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Thus, the concept of continuity is of great importance to FCPC. In agreement with Fowler,

FCPC postulates that one's approach to life is a unified and interconnected array of apprehensions.

There are not several minds, and there are not parallel structures of psychic functioning. Rather, there

is a unified psychic agent that interprets his/her world through the lens of an integrous,

interconnected, and latticed movement of interaction and response – an evoked and evocative

response that is defined by the very notion of continuity. As such, in contradistinction to FDT's more

phenotypic, parallel construct of epistemological activities that are presented in Fowler's explication

of stages, the various components of FCPC (experience, representation, and knowing) interlink in

dialogical and prehensive fashions, creating a synergy of understanding that results in meaning-

constitutive construal. Hence, the notion of epistemological continuity infuses FCPC with a oneness

of psychic action, a dialogue of developmentally-relevant faculties, and a fundamental integrity

inherent in an act of faith. Thus, continuity so understood is not an ultimate and absolute

metaphysical doctrine. Rather, it is a regulative principle of modality – a type of logic of inter-

relatedness that primes psychic space for further interconnection.

It is to this notion of interconnection that we appeal in discussing the concept of synthesis.

The concept of continuity provides psychic apprehension that is ordered and related. This

apprehension is worked upon continuously by the apprehending consciousness and must therefore,

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[474] Ejsing, *Theology of Anticipation*, 53.
[475] It should be noted that Pierce takes his doctrine of Synechism to quite its logical end, by stating that matter and mind are one in the same continuous essence. As such, since matter is but mind in which habits have absolutely concretized, mind and matter both consist of `Laws of Mind`, in both fixed and muted forms.

over time, synthesize into greater ideational clusters and more exquisite wholes. The concept of synthesis, then, is a concept of development, of growth, of transformation, and of further cohesion. It is a process that adds impetus to ideation and provides for movement toward a specific end – an end eventually defined by the meaning-making process. Synthesis, then, takes continuous 'thirds' (such as experience and representation) and combines them in a whole greater than the sum of its parts, to produce integrated psychic structures – structures that work to hold together, to explain disparate observations, and to inform further stability and apprehension. It is synthesis, then, that forms the basis of meaning-constitutive construal. Synthesis is a responsible and balanced driving force behind Piagetian decentration. It is the engine through which ideation finds transformation, and though which meaning finds recentration. It is the underlying psychic explanation for the developmental impetus proposed by the work of Fowler. It is the impetus to personal psychic movement and integrity that challenges equilibrated structures of meaning constructions. It is the very force of disequilibration that works to integrate the presentations of chance.

The element of chance is ubiquitous in the universe (whether psychic or otherwise). Any conception of psychic modality that does not take chance into account leaves out a fundamental reality of human existence. Chance events are defined as those stimuli which arise suddenly, are discontinuous with the current synthesis and continuity, and which are cogent enough to de-stabilize the construction of consciousness. Hence, we do not align chance with randomness, but only with the element of discontinuity. Chance therefore allows for absolute variety, for new possibilities, and for change – whether it is perceived as driven or not. Chance is a promoter of the developmental process without itself promoting a transformation of any particular kind. In other words, chance supplies an endless parade of surprising facts ('firsts') to the psyche ('seconds') – yet, it is up to the psyche to de-stabilize its synthesis and re-orient its apprehension of reality ('third') to incorporate the surprising and spontaneous stimulus introduced by chance. Chance is therefore a creative and disruptive driver. It can signal the beginning of a new process, just as it can signal the death of a

cherished one. Continuity without chance is a monotonous replay of the known; chance without continuity is a destructive force of absolute de-stabilization. The combination of chance and continuity bring about the circumstances required for true psychic development, and therefore, for the recurring activity of synthesis – the basis of meaning-constitutive construal.

So far, we have discussed the definition of 'knowing', we have explicated the components of psychic space and their relation to 'knowing', and we have covered how the various components of psychic space come together to effect meaning-constitutive construal. We have also outlined the importance of these postulations for FCPC, and have delineated how, using these constructions, FCPC is correcting definitional weaknesses in FDT. Although we have come a fair way in our discussion of knowing, we are yet to cover an important topic: what exactly is the mechanism through which ontologies ('firsts') and existences ('seconds') register within an individual psyche? For the answer, we turn to the concept of relation.

Third: Relating the Relations

The concept of relation is in itself fundamentally linked with the concept of 'thirdness'. Relation is the concept through which the individual psyche interacts with the stimuli in psychic space, resulting in an action of some kind. Having discussed ontologies and modes of existence, we now synthesize those tenets into the complications of *relation*, thereby closing the loop of exploration and supplying a tangible link between the above abstractions and the actual apprehension of individual meaning construction. It is clear from the foregoing that potentialities cannot be grasped directly, that actualities can be experienced only, and that generalities can be apprehended, assessed, and worked on. It is also clear from the above that psychic space boasts considerable levels of continuity and synthesis, working to produce cohesion and unity, while occasionally being disrupted by chance. What is not clear, however, is the actual mechanism by which an individual consciousness acquires and processes 'thirdness'. According to thinkers such as Locke, Hume,

Hegel, Piaget, and Kegan, individual minds cannot grasp objective reality directly, but rather are continuously engaged in a process of interpretation ('thirds'): a process in which stimuli present themselves to psychic space through a semiological process, and therefore require a degree of psychic work and apprehension.[476] This is essentially the basis of semiotic theory.[477] Taking this theory as the ground of our current exploration, we will propose a theory of *liminal inter-relation* in which individual psyche grasps sign stimuli (Experiential and Representational apprehension) and thereby produces what is known.

Simply defined, a sign is a particular 'something' that stands for a particular 'something else'. The concept of sign carries within it the requirement of a tripartite relationship: there must be an independent object, there must be a signifier of that object, and there must exist an interpreter to decipher the signifier.[478] In Pierce's terms, these elements are called the object, the sign, and the interpretant. [479] Therefore, only things that point beyond themselves to an 'other' are considered signs; also, only signs that have an effect within the psychic space of an interpreter can be considered true signs.[480] Interestingly, and in harmony with our constructions of psychic space listed in the last section, the tripartite structure of sign construction is irreducible and is analogous to the triadic structure of psychic ontology – the object is analogous to the 'first', the sign to the 'second', the interpretant to the 'third', where all three being essential to the ontology of a sign-system. Consequently, we find ourselves mired in a psychic world of great continuity and regularity (existence), thereby producing a system of psychic apprehension that is self-appointed and consistent.[481] Furthermore, according to John Seobock, sign effectiveness is simply a question of

[476] Locke in Wolterstorff, *John Locke*. 78; Piaget, *Constructions*, 52; Kegan, *The Evolving Self*, 8;Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*.
[477] Two main proponents of semiotic theory are Peirce, *Collected Papers* and Seobock , *Signs*.
[478] Durka and Smith, *Aesthetics*. 206.
[479] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 40.
[480] Pierce would state that even when considering the case of musings, a given concept affects the internal state of the thinker thereby making the future self the interpreter of the current sign.
[481] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 52.

efficient causality.[482] In other words, it is not the function of a sign simply to quickly produce an effect in an interpreter's psyche. Rather, the purpose of semiotic transmission is to outline and define a 'final causality' – an effect that transmits to the receiving psyche a representative determination in the psyche, of an effect that is mediately due to the actual object represented. Going along this line of thinking, Pierce distinguishes between two types of objects: 1) an immediate object is an object as its sign represents it and whose being is actually dependent upon the representation of it through its sign; and 2) the dynamical object, "which is the reality which by some means contrives to determine the sign to its representation."[483] The immediate object, then, is held within the sign and is that aspect of the sign, which makes it appropriate for the sign to stand for its dynamical object.[484] The dynamical object, in turn, is the ultimate concern of the semiotic process with respect to objects and interpretants Thus, it is not only that a sign is to signify something to a psyche; it is rather that a sign must signify its actual object to a psyche.[485] Also, according to Fitzgerald, the very fact that there is an effect produced by the sign in an interpretant sets semiotic interplay apart from simple cause-effect relations ('secondness'). In his argument, he states that one would not consider the striking of a golf ball with a club to be a *sign* of the ball's eventual movement. Unless the shot itself represented some 'other', there would be no reason to extrapolate the cause-effect relation to a semiotic situation.[486] Thus, we rarely hold a sign in our minds in a purely contemplative way without somehow acting upon it or discoursing with its implications (even if only to ourselves). Therefore, the founding element of the semiotic triad is the existence and invocation of the interpretant.

An interpretant is defined as that which has an effect within the interpreter, an effect caused by the action of the sign. Pierce supplies us with a more abstract definition: "an interpretant is the

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[482] John Seobock, *Signs*, 97.
[483] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 43.
[484] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 43.
[485] There are shades in this concept of Tillich's assertion that a symbol participates in whatever it is symbolizing; Church, *The Essential Tillich*, 43; Tillich, *Theology of Culture*, 103.
[486] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 41.

termination of which the immediate cause or determinant is the sign, and of which the mediate cause

is the object."[487] Interpretants, then, in a construction reminiscent of the structure of psychic space,

are by necessity triadically produced and must by definition find themselves standing in the same

relation to the source object as the sign itself stands to the object (the basis of accurate transmission

of the meaning of the sign-vehicle).[488] In this relation, however, we can distinguish between two

kinds of interpretants, analogous to their objects: immediate and dynamical. The immediate

interpretant is the interpretant as revealed "in the right understanding of the sign itself, the quality of

the impression that a sign is fit to produce and not in any actual reaction" to the sign.[489] Thus, the

immediate interpretant defines the interpretability of a particular as a sign, on its fitness to act within

the semiotic relationship. The dynamical interpretant, on the other hand, is the actual effect which a

sign, as a sign, truly determines within a psyche. Thus, the dynamical interpretant is based on the

meaning-constitutive character of the interpreter, which is the ground of the interpreter's interrelation

to reality – both psychic and physical. The dynamical interpretant is the interpretant *par excellence,*

which fulfills the requirement set forth by the definition of sign posited earlier. According to Pierce

and Fitzgerald, dynamical interpretants in the schema of construal and meaning-making, however,

carry within them a critical concern.[490] If the apprehension of psychic space is truly a matter of

semiological attenuation, and semiological attenuation must be mediated by individual

consciousnessnesses, how do we account for a world that is not entirely internal? In other words,

how does our construction of the mechanics of psychic space protect itself from the dangers of

unilateral relativism? If the interpretant is found within the interpreter and is continuous with and

synthetic of one's personal meaning-making mechanism, then what is left for semiotic theory except

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[487] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs,* 72.
[488] Durka and Smith, *Aesthetics,* 206.
[489] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs,* 76.
[490] Pierce, *Completed Works,* 198; Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs,* 156.

the various preferences of various psyches? To answer this question, we turn to Pierce's concept of the 'final interpretant'.

The 'final interpretant' is the hedge against devolving into a meaningless relativism. It is the bridging concept between semiosis as a mode of personal meaning-making, and reality as an external existence which is signified by the sign-vehicle. According to Pierce, the 'final interpretant' is that "which would finally be decided to be the true interpretation, if consideration of the matter were carried so far that an ultimate opinion were reached. It is the effect the sign would produce upon any mind upon which circumstances should permit it to work out its full effect."[491] Thus, here, Pierce is concerned with, not the interpretation of the sign is any particular manner, but rather with the sign as a law or a generality, *as an inter-relation*, as conceived by an unlimited community of thinkers, producing an ultimate opinion. Therefore, we are concerned here with an ideal, but a *relational and horizontal* ideal that is somehow inextricably linked to the human beings that act as its source. As such, this concept of semiotic interpretation carries within itself the vagaries of an individual relativism as well as the assurance of some external ultimate that drives the evolution of psychic interaction. It is the synergy of individual to communal outlined in this conception of apprehension that is of particular import to FCPC.

This section began with an account of the components of psychic space ('fists, 'seconds', and 'thirds'), progressed through a discussion of the functional operations of psychic space (continuity, synthesis, and chance), and ended with an explication of psychic space's semiotic modality in apprehending the world (object, sign, interpretant). We have additionally linked the processes associated with the Experiential and Representational Vectors to this regular and triadic construction of psychic space, thereby producing a model of apprehension that is uniform and congruent. Finally, our account in these pages has moved us from the unilaterally intra-individual ('firsts', 'seconds', and 'thirds') to the necessarily inter-relational ('final interpretant'). Thus, we have landed in an

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[491] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 80.

interesting and telling moment in our elucidation of the anatomy of construal. The faculty of

knowing, the very act of construal that was central to Fowler's conception of faith in FDT, is just as

foundational to the construction of FCPC, yet, under the aegis of FCPC, construal moves from

simply a grounding principle to a synergizing and progressive tenet. Thus, the faculty of knowing (as

described in these pages) is truly the process of apprehension that conceives (literally, construes) of

presenting stimuli that are brought about by the Experiential and Representational Vectors, while

simultaneously adding a process of reasoning that cultivates the regularity, continuity and synthesis

inherent in the very existence of lasting and singular 'soul'. 'Knowing', then, involves the reasoned

and ordered confluence of experience and representation, with the addition of layers of personal

interpretation and acceptance that are constitutive of meaning structures.

These meaning structures, however, as highlighted by the very concept of the 'final

interpretant', cannot be the result of the singular activity of an individual consciousness, but rather,

find corroboration, support, and verification through the confluence of a community of minds. The

confluence of the Experiential and Representative Vectors, as well as the addition of the reasoning of

'knowing', are formed not within a particular psychic space, but rather in the meeting of that

consciousness with an external community of groping and construing minds. As such, 'knowing' is

truly a confluence of internal and external, of differentiated and integrated, of personal and

communal – it is therefore an exemplar *par excellence* of the in-between.[492] It is an agent of dialogue,

a force of ordered integration, and most importantly, an exponent of the liminal. Thus, 'knowing' is a

prime component of FCPC's model of faith development, as that model seeks to present a balanced

and horizontal concept of faith development. Thus, whereas FDT described faith as a form of

individual knowing and proceeded to delineate how 'knowing' changes throughout the lifecycle

(stages of faith development), FCPC sees 'knowing' as a faculty of psychic space that *synergizes* the

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[492] Please note that our conception carries very strong links to relational conceptions of Piaget, Winnicott, Pruyser, and Buber outlined in Chapter 5; also, for a more biological account of semiology and the human mind, see Efran, et al., *Language, Structure, and Change*, Chs. 2 and 3.

encounters of experience, representation, and the intersubjective, and thereby results in the *relational* construction of a meaning-constitutive construal. Therefore, although the contents of knowing can change throughout a lifecycle, 'knowing', so conceived, remains constant. 'Knowing' in FCPC, then, is the ever-present and ever-effectual faculty of meaning construction that ubiquitously seeks to synergize apprehension. Hence, FCPC's conception of 'knowing' transcends that of FDT by delineating a depth structure that undergirds understanding, while retaining that structure's balanced involvement in the in-between.

Yet, we are left with another dimension of the issue of knowing that requires elucidation, before we can proceed to our definition of the Knowing Vector. That question revolves around the more practical applications of 'knowing', as conceived in FCPC. It is to this topic that we now turn our attention.

Part 3

Knowing in the World

The study of the faculty of 'knowing' points to an existential tenet: the regularity, continuity, synthesis, and generality of the psychic space leads epistemology to approximate an end – a direction toward which construal should orient itself. Such an end must be complex in itself, and must also be such that it seamlessly includes the various elements of human apprehension (experience, representation, and intra-psychic knowing) within the nature of 'knowing'. Without such a seamless fit, the construction of each person's psychic space could serve no other purpose but that of a 'buzzing confusion'.[493] Should a seamless inclusion not exist, not only would each person's epistemology act as a barrier to growth, but also, an end would be unattainable. There must exist some harmony between the human person and his/her existence in the world, if directional activity (and eventually growth) is to be considered even remotely possible. But what is the ultimate end of

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[493] James in Astley. "Faith Development: An Overview," 10.

'knowing'? What is the result of the synergy of experience and representation introduced by a directional faculty of 'knowing'?

The answer to this question is simple yet daunting: it is postulated that the end result achieved by the faculty of knowing is the creation of meaning-constitutive hypotheses. In other words, by the very confluence of the Experiential and Representational Vectors, the faculty of 'knowing' develops tenets and principles through which it lays claim to 'how the world works', through which it fills in gaps in apprehension through a reasoned process of psychic creation, and through which it comes to judge life's events and stimuli. In order to remain cogent (lest it devolve into autistic fantasy construction), however, the reasoning and synergy involved in the drawing of meaning-constitutive hypotheses must be anchored in the world of the experienced, the phenomenological, and the pragmatic. Hence, the pragmatic maxim supplied by Pierce provides an elegant and eloquent statement of this postulate. Pierce said: "Consider what effects that might conceivably have practical bearings we conceded the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object."[494] In other words, recalling to the very primacy we afforded the Experiential Vector, the very essence of our apprehensions in psychic space are in and of themselves interlinked with our personal experiences in the real world. Nothing we presume, nothing we conclude, nothing we hypothesize is independent of our intuitive grasp of the nature of reality, as grounded in the lessons we have learned through experience. The force of the Experiential Vector then is a foundational force in our apprehension of meaning. It is the gateway through which we come to meet our external reality as well as our internal reality (Representational Vector). This pragmatic tenet of human life, then, renders the activity of hypothesis formation possible, in that, because of the communally verifiable and phenomenological dimensions of pragmatism, human beings have a logical basis from which to select hypotheses for meaning construction (abduction). Pragmatism so conceived, then, is not so much a tenet of

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[494] David, *Pierce's Epistemology.* 51.

psychology or philosophy, as it is an extension of the in-between, and the primary end of any act of existential or transcendent construal.

In this way, the synergy of 'knowing', combined with the Experiential and Representational Vectors, bring us to an understanding of the very logic of meaning-constitutive construal: the construction of hypotheses through the process of abductive reasoning. This process is interested in *the reduction of the manifold of possibility into a unified comprehensible unity*, dedicated toward providing coherence and generality to one's groping psyche. Since it is an act of folding the phenomenological presentations of life into an epiphenomenoloigcal orientation toward life, it is an implicit manifestation of the 'tripartite construal', and the reasoned and abstracting dimension of the in-between. In essence, as a pragmatic explication of the Piagetian concepts of recentration and assimilation (Chapter 2), the logic of meaning-constitutive knowing is an act of construal, of conviction, and of *developed belief* in the mechanics of the world. A brief discussion of the nature of belief will serve us well as we move toward an understanding of the logic behind meaning-constitutive construal: abductive reasoning.

It is commonly asserted that there is a fundamental difference between a state of believing and a state of doubting, at the very least in affect and at the very most in existential confusion.[495] A state of belief is often characterized by a sense of conviction, whereas a state of doubt is fraught with hesitance. Also, according to Pruyser, a belief is often an indication that there exists within our consciousness some epistemological habit which in turn determines how we act (internally or externally).[496] As such, belief moves away from the epiphenomenological and autistic, and into the sphere of the experiential and communal. Furthermore, whereas we know belief to evoke a state of relative internal calm and control, we experience doubt as introducing a sense of uneasiness and agitation, a drive to push forward to further inquiry to eliminate the internal aggravation that doubt

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[495] Pruyser, *Belief and Unbelief.*
[496] Pruyser. *Belief,* 47.

brings forth.[497] This is a direct application of the very tenets of thesis-antithesis-synthesis (Hegel),

assimilation-decentration, accommodation-recentration (Piaget), subject-object rebalancing (Kegan),

and development through frustration (Fowler). Thus, inquiry presents itself as the tool through which

the aggravation of doubt is sought to be alleviated. According to Nichol, and Malone and Malone,

human beings can in effect measure the effectiveness of their inquiry by taking stock of the reduction

on doubtful aggravation experienced at the end of the inquiry process, so long as the reduction in

anxiety associated with the particular doubt that was dealt with is, in effect, lasting.[498] Charles Pierce

himself, in an extended investigation of the development of meaning-constitutive belief systems,

outlines four methods of inquiry that can be called upon to dispel doubt: first, he mentions the

method of tenacity, wherein a person settles doubt by reiterating a particular position and refusing to

allow any alternative access (a form of 'self'-reflexive mantra – a notion counter to the balancing of

'self' and 'soul'); second, he mentions the method of authority, in which a person settles doubt by

appealing to the teachings of an authoritative figure or body (the harbinger of heteronymous

authority, and therefore characteristic of the lower levels of epistemological and ego development);

third, he mentions the method of rationality, wherein a person will settle the disturbances of a doubt

based on the tenets of personal reason (reflective of Stage 4 of ego and faith development through the

works of Kegan and Fowler); and fourth, he mentions the method of experience, which involves the

verification of hypotheses that dispel doubt through the workings of experience.[499]

The first three methods, although epistemologically simple and procedurally easy, carry

within themselves a fatal flaw to fulfilling their proper function. Tenacity will break down in the face

of the inevitable sociological discourse of humanity, bringing evidence that other points of view are

equally valid and thereby resulting in renewed doubt. Authority breaks down because of its

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[497] David, *Pierce's Epistemology*; Piaget, *Constructons*; Aristotle, *Ethics*, Kegan, *The Evolving Self*; Fowler, *Stages of Faith*.
[498] Nichol, *The Art of Listening*, 103; Malone and Malone, *The Art of Intimacy*, 164.
[499] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 93.

fundamental inability to regulate beliefs in all matters, thereby producing an internal environment in which novel experience and globalization will introduce thought elements that will be left unattended by authority, and thus lead back to a state of doubt. Simple rationality breaks down because it is predicated entirely on personal constructions of logic, leaving the gate open to attacks from another person's cogent and surprising logic. We are left therefore with the fourth method, that of inquiry through experience, which in itself provides a satisfactory ground for dispelling doubt since, in harmony with the notion of optimal relation postulated by FCPC, it is rooted in the liminality of life's sphere, and not in its compartmentalized elements. That being said, however, it is wise to remind ourselves that, because of the very human epistemological proclivity toward meaning-making, the utter removal of doubt through an appeal to an accepted objective experience is not within the repertoire of human potentiality, and therefore is not considered possible (as we discussed in Chapters 2 and 3). All doubt removing endeavours lead to novel beliefs which present heightened senses of calm and internal unity, although each of these endeavours achieves its ends rather imperfectly (a further explication of the Piagetian system of re-balanced growth). Therefore, the experiential and existential door is always left open for further inquiry to dispel resultant levels of doubt. This seemingly circular process, then, provides the human psyche with the growth it seeks as well as with the *internal impetus* required to pursue further development. And with the removal of each layer of doubt, a person finds a comforting layer of settled belief.

Belief, then, can be defined as an epistemological and spiritual habit to interpret and act in a particular manner, under particular circumstances. As such, a belief habit manifests itself in terms of expectations, predictions, and foreseen order in the nature of our experiences. These habits promote feelings of cohesiveness and unity and therefore are experienced as supportive of the existential equilibrium that is currently being lived (Piagetian assimilation). Hence, an inquirer is only thrown into doubt when a recalcitrant or dissenting experience disrupts the smooth functioning of the belief-habit system (decentration). In that instance, inquiry immediately takes hold, igniting a series of

epistemological and existential events that continue until a new belief is abducted (unity from the manifold), and new incarnations of internal habit and expectation can again resume (recentration). In order for this construct to work effectively, however, only pragmatically legitimate hypotheses can be the subjects of doubt-relieving inquiries (since our beliefs must manifest themselves in a set of expectations or predictions). Without this pragmatic dimension to theory-building, human beings would not have the apparatus to test whether resultant expectations are upheld by the new hypothesis. Thus, in agreement with Fowler's assertion of the primacy of experience, FCPC's faculty of knowing finds its raw material as well as its ultimate corroboration for belief-testing through the experiential. Yet, whereas FDT stipulated the importance of experience to the development of an individual psyche, FCPC goes further to elucidate the processes of 'knowing' and placing it within an existential, liminal, and epiphenomenological matrix that is constitutive of development. Therefore, FCPC transcends the vertical notions of structural faith development and chooses to focus on the horizontal and interrelated.

Furthermore, it is only in the pragmatic sphere of the Experiential Vector that a surprising development could topple equilibrium and cause doubt (decentration). Pierce himself stated that the pragmatic maxim serves as the basis for growthful belief by stating that experiential pragmatism

> should always be put into practice with conscientious thoroughness, but that, when this has been done and not before, a still higher grade of clearness of thought can be attained by remembering that the only ultimate good ... is to further the development of concrete reasonableness; so that the meaning of the concept does not lie in any individual reaction at all, but in the manner in which those reactions contribute to development.[500]

In this way, Pierce, carrying out his construction to its logical conclusion, conceived the path of inquiry as that of "belief-surprise-doubt-inquiry-belief".[501] The construction of FCPC's faculty of

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[500] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 117.
[501] Misak, *Truth*, 48.

knowing (based as it is on Piercean notions of growth) is in deep agreement with the Piagetian conceptions of Fowler. Yet, whereas Fowler's FDT went as far to describe notions of growth, FCPC provides an elucidation of the components of psychic space, as well as an elucidation of the importance of the Experiential and Representational Vectors to any process of development. Thus, FCPC, retaining FDT's basic conviction in the primacy of 'knowing', transcends description and seeks to provide an understanding of human meaning-constitutive activity that synergizes the prior levels of apprehensions, while remaining liminal in scope.

Hence, we have thus come full circle in our argument. In Chapter 1, we delineated the processes of growth on which FDT is based (Piagetian conceptions of recentration); we proceeded in Chapter 2 to extricate FDT from its confusions with meaning-making and ego psychology; we went forward in Chapters 3 to 6 to lay the groundwork for FCPC, a model of faith development that re-visions FDT by focusing on the horizontal, the liminal, and the in-between, correcting the weaknesses of FDT and retaining its strengths; we then developed our notions further in Chapters 7 and 8, by retaining the significant foundations of FDT and engaging in a depth analysis that has resulted in our presentation of the Experiential and Representational Vectors; and thus, we find ourselves here, at a juncture in our argument where, in an elucidation of the faculty of knowing (and the Knowing Vector), we have synergized the processes set forth in our concepts of Experiential and Representational apprehension, liminality, depth-approaches to development, and the existential/horizontal aspects of understanding to provide an in-depth and re-cast explanation of the very concepts of Fowlerian (and thus Piagetian) maturation within the sphere of the in-between.

Piercean notions of maturation powerfully contribute to our understanding of the faculty of knowing in that they provide a pragmatic understanding of the source and direction meaning-constitutive construal. In fact, Pierce, on several occasions, outlined his integrated beliefs that the tenets that governed physical evolution were as complex as those that governed epistemological and existential development, and that his theory of the gradual growth of understanding through

pragmatic re-balancing – what he conceived of as the very *pursuit of truth* – was an aspect of the

development of relational and concrete reasonableness.[502] As such, the Piercean point of view is

noteworthy in that, in transcending Piaget and making explicit what is only hinted at in Fowler, it

supposes that the movement through experiential inquiry and corroboration to re-defined belief is

nothing short of an innate tendency *toward truth* (a topic further discussed below). The very

foundation of the pragmatic principle, then, is a relational construct (since corroboration requires a

relational stance to a standard or comparator), which is in itself constitutive of the concept of

knowledge – a concept which, by its definition, must involve a synergized apprehension of

experience, of interrelationships, of representations, and of principles which govern epistemological

grasping. It also, however, must include a firm living confidence of known facts and actions. But, by

what mechanism does the faculty of knowing synergize the vast panoply of knowledge into a

cohesive whole? For that we must turn to the notion of abductive reasoning. And yet, to maintain our

commitment to notions of the pragmatic, experiential, and representational, we must begin with an

elucidation of abduction that rests in an accepted tenet of human apprehension: the tenet of inference.

Part 4

Abductive Reasoning: The Synergy of Meaning-Making

Inference is the very foundation of all epistemology, according to Piercean epistemics.[503]

When all niceties of logic, system, and tradition are peeled away, we are effectively left with the

internal result of a perception – an apprehension, an act of reasoning that is derived from some kind

of experiential or representational evidence – this result is named "inference".[504] The conception of

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[502] Misak, *End of Inquiry*, 142; David, *Pierce's Epistemology*, 71.
[503] Pierce *Collected Papers*, 153; Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 188; David, *Pierce's Epistemology*, 96.
[504] Pierce *Collected Papers*, 154; Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 188; David, *Pierce's Epistemology*, 98; Misak, *End of Inquiry*, 33.

inference is explicated in Pierce's notion of perceptual judgment.[505] In this notion, every judgment consists in referring a predicate to a subject; the predicate is thought and the subject is only thought of. The elements of the predicate are experiences and representations of experiences (Experiential and Representational Vectors), whereas the subject is never experiential but only assumed (akin to Kegan's notion of 'subject'). Every inferential judgment, then, being a reference of the experienced (known) to the assumed (or subjective), is an explanation of a phenomenon by a *hypothetical* inference, that can now be subjected to experiential and representational testing.[506]

Pierce classified inferences into two main categories: explicative and ampliative. Explicative inferences are those which necessarily draw conclusions from given premises. The bulk of epistemic literature involves the treatment of explicative inference only.[507] Ampliative inference, on the other hand, is a form of inference in which the conclusion does not flow from its premises necessarily. In fact, the conclusion *amplifies* rather than explicates the given premises, thereby providing a larger context within which the given premises would still be true, and providing the only basis for the creation of new ideas in the logic system.[508] In this manner, Pierce effectively expanded the traditional dichotomy of inference (a framework he felt was too narrow to explain the full breadth of epistemic experience), to a 'trichotomy', which released thinkers from the chains of traditional induction and deduction. Pierce defended his new and expanded conception of inference by stating that there are only two principle aims of epistemics: first, it should propound conclusions that bring about a particular degree of security to each kind of reasoning (in other words, an element of certainty, albeit illusory); and second, it should bring out the value of productiveness of each conclusion (in terms of an economy of apprehension).[509] Taken altogether, we can outline Pierce's categorization of epistemics as follows: explicative inference is composed of the process of

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[505] Fitzgerald, *Theory of Signs,* 182; David, *Pierce's Epistemology,* 89.
[506] David, *Pierce's Epistemology,* 74; Pierce, *Collected Papers,* 132.
[507] For more, see Cocking in Sigel et al., *New Directions,* 71.
[508] Fann, *Pierce's Theory of Abduction,* 7.
[509] Fann, *Pierce's Theory of Abduction,* 8.

deduction, whereas ampliative inference is composed of the processes of abduction. In addition, the security provided by each process is highest with deduction and lowest with abduction (since it is nothing other than the process of hypothesis formation), whereas the value of productiveness is rendered in the exact reverse order. Thus, abduction finds itself listed as a ubiquitous and necessary component of everyday epistemics, although its fundamental security is questionable until the follow up processes of induction and deduction can be called upon. So what exactly is abduction?

Abduction is a form of epistemic reasoning that is unique in its flow of information. Whereas deduction starts at a given hypothesis and teases out all possible ramifications of that hypothesis to reach a conclusion; and whereas induction takes a set of connected and similar particulars and concludes a generality that governs them all; abduction takes a series of disconnected and disparate particulars and abducts (literally, *carries away*) from them a generality (a 'third') that, were that generality to be true, all seeming disconnections would fall harmoniously under a single statement. Hence, abductive reasoning can be explained using the following syllogism:

> The surprising facts A and B are observed;
> But if C were true, then A and B would be nothing other than a matter of course;
> Therefore, there is a reason to suspect that C is true.

Thus, abduction counts as a fundamental inference because it is first informed by observation and data (as expressed in the Experiential and Representational Vector), and second, taken as a statement of theoretical knowledge that now is open to corroboration. Abduction, then, is an epistemological act of ascribing truth to a collection of inputs that span the breadth of perception, impression, sense, and logic. It is a reflection of Pruyser's 'fabulation', a process in which organization is created out of the chaos of things, such that disparate elements are permitted to come together within the flow of a single cohesive narrative.[510] Consequently, inputs to abduction, in their very definition, come in two forms: the observable (those that can be ascertained by data and experience) and the unobservable

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[510] Pruyser, "Thought Organization in Religion," 70.

(those which leave open the question of perception and internal representation). Observable inputs offer little trouble to scientists, sociologists, and psychologists, as their effects are felt in a more externalized and objectified sense. Unobservable inputs, on the other hand, pose a more challenging problem, based as they are in imaginal reasoning. It should be noted that it is the sphere of the imaginal, representational, and mythic that often forms the basis of pastoral interventions. Therefore, an understanding of the mechanics of the observed with the represented is critical to an understanding of 'knowing' that would be cogent to a re-visioned framework of faith development. How then can we deal with this slippery notion of unobservables?

Pierce separates unobservables in three main categories: first, there are those items that are not observed at the time of hypothesis formation, but that are testable and observable later (for example, hypothesizing that the family pet is hungry because the owner has been away from home all day); second, there are those items that are simply incapable of being observed because of an experiential roadblock (such as the details being presented regarding a historical figure or event); and third, there are those items that can never be observed or corroborated factually or theoretically, even by scientific scrutiny (for example, internal representations and liminal apprehensions). These unobservables do in fact play into the process of abduction, as the human psyche synthesizes current knowledge, experience, and representation and abducts a generality (a 'third').[511] How then can we ensure that the effect of unobservables does not entirely render our inquiry autistic, solipsistic, or subjective?

The answer is that properly constructed hypotheses rely on the observable in such a way as to mitigate, yet complement, the imaginal and unobservable. Cogent hypothesis-building begins by formulating a questioning statement that will then be teased out by subsequent testing (in essence, the proposed effects of hypotheses are often predicted before the final hypothetical statement is made); the inputs from which generalities are drawn to create a hypothesis must be taken as a random

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[511] Fann, *Pierce's Theory of Abduction,* 22.

sample of experienced, represented, and lived inputs (otherwise, we are stacking the information

deck to prove our hypothesis, prior to its actual formulation); and lastly, all subsequent testing of

hypotheticals must be conducted with rigid honesty, so as to ensure a process of fairness and

equanimity. This is in fact the process taken in the development of a meaning-constitutive construal:

the probing mind conceives and perceives of disparate variables (experiential and representational)

that seem to be relatable; upon internal rumination, a hypothetical stance is adopted that provides

coherence to multiplicity and supplies an apprehendable synergizing concept that allows all the

moving parts to hang together in an elegant whole; the moving parts themselves are presented to

psyche from the vagaries of external experience (the Experiential Vector) as well as from internal

mythic structures (Representational Vector), and thus do not come from one narrow source of input,

but rather from the widest array of possibilities; as such, they are not inducted to consciousness, since

they are of disparate natures; and, the hypothesis itself is ultimately taken as a putative statement of

life's mechanism and coherence, thereby ushering in a period of hypothesis testing through the use of

experiential, representational, and pragmatic observation and corroboration.

Abduction, then, undergirds the very foundation of existential relations as it provides for the

agglomeration of disparate elements into a meaningful and cohesive unity. It is to this pursuit of

coherence that Fowler was implicitly alluding in his meaning-laden definition of faith. It is this same

conception, unifying the various apprehensions of life, that Kegan, Fowler, Piaget judge as being a

universal human attribute. The pursuit of abducted coherence lies at the roots of the systemic

tendencies of all knowledge disciplines and soulful pursuits – it is the essence of the life of reason as

well as the drive to interrelation; it is the impetus to differentiation as well as to integration; it is,

because of its relation to meaning, a uniquely human ontological characteristic. Thus, a proper

abduction *reduces the manifold of experience and impression into a unity, and serves as the basis for

the content of an integrous 'construal'*. Pierce says that "it is a well-known law of mind, that when

phenomena of an extreme complexity are presented, which yet would be reduced to order or

simplicity by the application of certain convictions, that conviction sooner or later arrives as an application to those phenomena."[512] Thus, abduction is a creative leap of inference, far more constructive (albeit far more amenable to error) than either of its epistemic counterparts. Abductions: 1) explain facts by introducing some prior cause that, should it be present, observables would fall to state of unity; 2) lead to the development of habits of expectation (meaning) which will enable the avoidance of belief toppling surprises (Piagetian assimilation); 3) are both a dialogical process and an evidencing process (bridging existentialism and psychology); and 4) are capable of experiential verification (through the Experiential and Representational Vectors). In this way, abduction places itself at the very base of FCPC's faculty of 'knowing' – where abduction is taken on as a hypothesis and only thereafter tested through the vagaries of induction and deduction. Since abduction is so fundamental to all human inquiry and meaning construction, it is important to draw its links back to the psychic space – in itself the ground from which experience and representation are synergized, and from which meaning springs.

The abductive process, because of its very nature of combining existing and disparate elements of experience and representation (both of which, as generalities and constructed patterns, are exponents of the psychic category of 'thirds') is engulfed in the *juxtaposition of 'thirds' to one another* (a liminal form of 'soulful' inference). As such, abduction carries within its very ontology the elements of actualized and resisted potentialities ('firsts' and 'seconds'). Each of these actualized potentialities was interpreted through a semiotic relationship by an interpreter, resulting in a predictable habit of mind regarding the nature, existence, relation, and meaning of the focus of that generality. It is the combination of several generalities (brought into proximity by the existential conception of chance, as well as by the power of the Experiential and Representational Vectors) that peaks the interest of the interpreter in ordering epistemic space by creating a form of unity and spark

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[512]Fann, *Pierce's Theory of Abduction*, 45.

a process of elucidation concerned with pattern-integration – this is the abductive process on a more

micro-scale.

On the macro-scale, we find ourselves confronted by a generalized habit of mind regarding

the nature of experience and representation, a habit that confers calmness and a sense of control onto

the psychic space (belief). Yet, because of the concept of existential continuity, we find ourselves

confronted by several other epistemic construals that, although they once seemed unrelated and self-

sufficient, suddenly find themselves in continuous proximity to the original habit (the precursor of

decentration). This process of rapprochement essentially creates a cluster of ideation, in which

certain ideas, experiences, and representations begin to show themselves as out of alignment and

therefore, commence processes of unitive reasoning (Piagetian accommodation). This process is

invoked to help relieve the tensions felt by the introduction of shades of doubt around the original

epistemological construal (meaning construction), and the desire of a re-established equilibrium of

comfort and control (recentration). In this way, the Hegelian, existential concept of 'synthesis' is

called upon to unite these disparate ideational clusters into a new, synthetical, and synergistic entity

that dispels doubt and promotes the creation of a novel 'knowing' (a meaning-hypothesis). This

novel 'knowing' is then semiotically corroborated (through the triadic effects of object, sign, and

interpretant) through subjection to the resulting continuous field of experience and representation

(through the use of vectors). Assuming that corroboration is attained, a new habit of constural is

concretized. The abductive process, then, calls on all the levels of psychic space in its quest for

coherence and unity. Therefore, it is safe to say that, within the scheme of FCPC, meaning-

constitutive hypothesis creation is the act of one's *whole being* (the self-soul nexus), and is not

compartmentalized into non-integrative elements of the 'self'. As such, the faculty of knowing,

progressing as it does through the mechanisms of abductive reasoning, is nothing other than a regular

juxtaposition of epistemic 'thirds' – a fundamental *relation of relations.* It carries within itself the

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very seed of existential and faithful attenuation that is crucial to the development and furtherance of FCPC.

Also, in light of the meaning's close and interdependent relation to the psychic space, it is safe to say, that the process of meaning-constitutive hypothesis creation (the faculty of knowing itself) is a natural and ontological proclivity of humankind. Human psychic space (the natural outgrowth of the confluence of experience and representation; the very nexus of our 'self' and 'soul') does in fact arise as somehow pre-adapted to the complexities of the Experiential Vector (the natural outgrowth of experience) and the Representational Vector (the internalized symbols of the Experiential Vector). Both systems present themselves as contiguous, consistent, and harmonious. Both systems rely on one another for complementarity. Therefore, it no longer comes as a surprise that the faculty of knowing finds itself presenting cogent and corrective hypotheses within psychic space, at a consistent rate.

One final point stands to be discussed, and that is the concept of hypothesis testing through the Experiential Vector. Once an abduction has been received by the psychic space of an individual, it is subjected (intentionally, consciously, or otherwise) to a set of corroborating tests. These tests are both inductive and deductive in nature and yet are unified in their experiential and representational dimensions. Since we are talking about meaning-constitutive hypotheses (the result of the work of the faculty of knowing), it stands only to reason that these meaning statements are to find themselves sized up against the world of external and internal experience. Should relational interplay somehow contradict the given hypothesis, another abduction will likely be tested as a replacement for the first (thereby further supporting the importance of the relational and interconnected). As such, we can effectively say that there is an economy of meaning-making (since a value judgment always precedes the choice of which abduction to test, and in what order). Yet, eventually (and usually in surprisingly short order), a hypothesis will find adequate support through *experience* and will be utilized as the basis for the development of a meaning-structure. Therefore, since 'knowing' (abduction) orders

meaning, and since meaning orders experiential apprehension (Experiential and Representational

Vectors), and since experience and representation corroborate the original 'knowing' (abduction), we

can effectively conclude (in a rather 'soulful' and liminal anti-positivist stance) that the faculty of

knowing is not only the basis for meaning construction, it is also the *logic of pragmatism* itself. Thus,

for FCPC, all insight, all reasoning, and in fact the entire essence of explanation is predicated on the

basis of the synergistic exertions of the faculty of knowing. Pierce once said: "It is to be assumed that

the universe has an explanation, the function of which, like that of every logical explanation, is to

unify its observed variety."[513] It is this unification that is the essence of meaning-constitutive

construal.

FCPC maintains a strong commitment to the very foundations of FDT (experiential

apprehension, symbolic representation, and knowing). It has been the purpose of the last several

chapters to elucidate the components of FCPC (Vectors) by using the very notions of FDT's

foundations. This chapter is no exception to that rule. Yet, whereas FDT provides a phenotypic and

rather cursory treatment of the importance of knowing, experience and representation, FCPC seeks to

move further along the foundation set by FDT, and postulates 1) a depth explanation of the concepts

of knowing, experience, and representation, 2) a synergized conception of the interrelations of

experience and representation, through the action of the faculty of knowing, and 3) an elucidated

approach to knowing and psychic space that works to confirm the very primary and seminal role

'knowing' plays in the complexities of any developmental model. Hence, although FCPC transcends

some of FDT's conceptual and definitional weaknesses in its presentation of the faculty of knowing,

it also works to further confirm its conviction (in agreement with FDT), that knowing and construal

are foundational to a soulful conception of faith development. Yet, to date, we have not come around

to a formal treatment of the soulful aspects of the faculty of knowledge. A discussion of these soulful

aspects will be the last stop on our road to the defining of the Knowing Vector.

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[513] Fann, *Pierce's Theory of Abduction,* 48.

Part 5

Revisiting the Meaning of Meaning

In our discussion of the faculty of knowing, we have elucidated concepts of apprehension and synergy that were predominantly phenomenological (relating the phenomena of experience and representation to the faculty of apprehension and belief construction within psychic space). In that capacity, we came across several dimensions of 'knowing' that are relational, existentially-focused and liminal (e.g. communal corroboration of developed beliefs, the toppling of equilibria through chance, and the process of abduction, that is a *relation* to the relations of foregoing apprehensions). We have not, however, delved too far into the realm of the epiphenomenological, the conditional, and the ultimate. Should FCPC proceed with deep seriousness on the road of elucidating a re-visioned model of faith development, it must work to correct the methodological pitfalls presented by FDT. One of these pitfalls is the lack of treatment of one's *relation* to one's knowing, and how that relation works to supersede relativism and approximate a conception of truth. Truth is a concept that is of seminal importance to pastoral professionals, and therefore, its attenuation must be presented as the ultimate goal of the faculty of knowing. It is to this topic that we now turn our attention in our exploration of the faculty of knowing. Our exploration of the attenuation of truth through the faculty of knowing will cover three main areas: fallibilism, self-correction, and truth proper.

Fallibilism and Self-Correction

As we have seen, as we proceed through the complexities of abducting meaning-constitutive construals, we cannot base ourselves on anything other than our own conceptions of the meaning and mechanics of the world, as presented by the Experiential and Representational Vectors. In so doing, however, there is no arguing the fact that each individual's construals, as useful as they might be for the current situation in which the individual may find him/herself, are incomplete, somehow erroneous, and always in need of further correction and redevelopment. This very concept seems to

strike futility and discouragement into the heart of the 'construal' process since it implies that our

relation to construal is always one of insufficiency, partiality, and bias. It is therefore very important,

in the scheme of FCPC, that pastoral professionals take stock of, and invest in the postulated concept

of fallibilism.[514]

Fallibilism refers to the reality that human knowledge, by virtue of its never being in a state

of perfect attunement, will inevitably fail to explain the complexities presented to psychic space (a

concept seminal to the work Piaget, Kohlberg, Kegan, and Fowler). Every act of knowing is, to some

extent, fundamentally incorrect or inaccurate. This uncertainty of human thought carries within it

both a positive and a negative aspect: on the negative side, we are confronted with the fact that,

whatever the depth of our current belief-established comfort, the incompleteness of our knowledge

has sentenced us to encountering the eventual surprise that topples our current meaning system and

ushers in the aggravation of doubt (the confluence of chance and continuity, resulting in

decentration); on the positive side, the concept of fallibilism frees the human psyche from the

necessity of having to go ever-inward in a futile search to uncover the already-discovered truth – a

truth which is not to be found solely within the individual ('self'), but rather can only be pursued

through relation and liminality. Consequently, as a result of fallibilism, one can look, in all good and

responsible conscience and spiritual calm, to the more phenomenological sphere of experiential and

representational apprehension without fearing that every internally driven objection has to be taken

with a sort of morbid seriousness. Thus, fallibilism is a revolutionary and freeing concept, allowing

human 'knowing' to investigate freely while simultaneously permitting humanity to call the

experiential high-probability outcome to be referred to as knowledge. Hence, fallibilism allows for a

liminality of approach, a requisite of dialogue, and a humility of 'soul', characteristic of experiential

'innocence'. Fallibilism is the 'soul's' conviction that questing can only result in the discovery of

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[514] Pierce, *Collected Works*, 265; Fitzgerald, *Theory of Signs*, 198; Mishak, *Truth*, 132; David, *Pierce's Epistemology*, 62.

partial truths, that human epistemological ontology cannot know the 'objective reality' of the created

universe, and that the human psyche, as a reflection of God's Image, cannot come to master a

complete understanding of its Creator. Fallibilism also provides 'soul' with the comfort of questing at

its own pace, in its own way, at its own time, for its own reasons. Devoid of an external measuring

standard, fallibilism releases 'soul' to truly engage in 'acceptance', 'innocence' and 'presence', while

retaining a degree of 'congruence' and 'freedom'.[515] Fallibility allows 'soul' to engage 'self' in

liminal 'play', and thereby opens the door to true and personal experiences of validated and

cherished development. Yet although fallibilism opens the door to experiential freedom and play, it

cannot be forgotten that, as the biblical notion intimates, as having been created in the image of God,

we are called to ever-greater conceptions of truth in order to know ourselves, our neighbours, the

world, and God Himself better. According to FCPC's faculty of knowing, then, fallibilism requires a

complementary process. Thus, whereas fallibilism provides a freedom, an internal congruence, and

an impetus to play, it does not account for an attenuation of understanding that corrects

misconceptions, when such misconceptions are discovered. For this, we turn to fallibilism's alter ego,

self-correction.[516]

The notion of self-correction stems from the fact that all acts of knowing will eventually

find a level of disillusionment in the experiential field, and be forced toward a volitional activity of

tenacity or redefinition. In this context, tenacity refers to the stubborn and unyielding fusing of

oneself to particular articles of knowledge, despite arising evidence rendering those pieces of

knowledge obsolete or incomplete. Redefinition, in this context, refers to that process of

accommodating surprise and synthesizing a new and more cogent epistemology postulated by Hegel,

Piaget, Kegan, Pierce, and Fowler – an epistemological meaning-structure that better suits the

experiential inputs, as lived by the individual. As such, through the process of redefinition, the

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[515] We are here referring to 'paths to fuller experience'.
[516] Pierce, *Collected Works*, 279; Fitzgerald, *Theory of Signs*, 201; Mishak, *Truth*, 154; David, *Pierce's Epistemology*, 65.

concept of meaning development is introduced – as is the concept of personal formation. Therefore, should redefinition be the chosen course of affairs, we can view meaning development as an internally-related, yet experientially corroborated *growing whole*, which consciousness comes to acquire by a process of an ever-widening sphere of understanding, stemming unwaveringly from the first principles of psychic space ('firsts', 'seconds', and 'thirds'). This conception, much like that of fallibilism, proposes a positive and a negative aspect to knowledge acquisition: on the negative side, an agent can be completely confident that, whatever his/her sense of certainty regarding the status of a particular article of thought, further work and energy will one day be required to be invested in an area that is considered epistemologically settled; on the positive side, however, self-corrective knowledge removes the prohibitive need to locate the start of inquiry at a particular point of understanding. Much like the assembly of a jigsaw puzzle, we can begin with any piece of epistemological interest and, following a regular pattern of correction and adaptation, end up with a more complete picture of the issue at hand. Consequently, all that is presented to consciousness is the simple choice of whether or not to engage in the elucidation of knowledge. All else will come naturally as part of the process of ontological redefinition.

What is important to bear in mind from this analysis is that knowledge grows and grows and begins to cohere as spheres of ideation find corroboration through the Experiential and Representational Vectors. This concretization results in meaning-constitutive construals, which in turn provide psychic space with a solid ground of abducted meaning statements from which to approach life's challenges. As learning continues, however, even these very meaning structures find themselves further attuned and fine-tuned to the complexities of experiential and representational knowledge, thereby becoming enriched and transformed into ever-greater conceptions of reality. Self-correction, then, invokes the paths of 'self-responsibility/soul-discipleship', 'connectedness', and 'surrender' (paths to fuller experience). Self-correction is a graceful force of human transformation that requires only impetus – since the direction of that impetus is focused over time

by the grace of disequilibrating chance. Self-correction is the promise that 'innocent' and 'accepting'

interrelations (paths to fuller experience) to presenting experience and representation is sufficient for

the further attenuation of knowledge and the spiritually sanctioned pursuit of ever-greater

conceptions of truth. Self-correction, then, is the complement of fallibilism; the nexus of fallibilism

and self-correction activates the complete path to fuller experience, absolves apprehending psychic

space from the need to control representational content and mythic apprehension, and allows an

individual to rest comfortably within the state of epistemological ontology that is human existence.

Therefore, the nexus of fallibilism and self-correction is a graceful provision of compassion, weaved

into the fabric of creation, and the very vehicle through which humanity can innocently approach a

'soulful' and interconnected relationship with God as an innocent, curious, and questing child.

Under the aegis of the nexus of fallibilism and self-correction, then, reality can only be

defined as those epistemological structures that have found sufficiently firm footing to find relational

corroboration, representational congruence, and direct experiential processing. As such, we find

ourselves afloat in a world of relativity and personally chosen and constructed apprehensions of the

nature of the external. Our notion of reality is thus both constitutive and tenuous, inescapable and

fabricated, corroborated yet deeply individual. As a consequence, we find ourselves in a difficult

position when we try to approach a question of seminal importance to pastoral care and faith

development: what is the nature of truth?

Truth

The pragmatic maxim,[517] so seminal to the conception of abduction, has at its centre a

particular and salient thesis about the relationship between truth and inquiry: the aim of inquiry is to

get true beliefs, and the beliefs which would be produced if inquiry were to run its unhindered and

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[517] Recall that the pragmatic maxim states: Consider what effects that might conceivably have practical bearings we conceded the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object.

innocent course would be true.[518] This thesis is derived by a rather simple deduction: a complete act

of belief construction would stem from a thorough process of inquiry, in which the inquiry itself

could no longer be able to improve upon the resultant belief. Thus, the belief would enter into the

fold of psychic space and cohere seamlessly with the rest of the meaning construction, as well as

with all the current interpretative proclivities of current semiotic activity. Without this feature of

harmony and coexistence, the process of inquiry would always have a drive to continue, to refine

conception, and to polish construal. If, however, belief were so congruent with experiential and

representational apprehensions as to stop the thrust of inquiry, it could be said that that particular

belief is in fact 'true', within the context of the inquiring psyche. Hence, such beliefs proximally

satisfy, not only the proximate aims of inquiry, but also its ultimate end – the attainment of truth.

Within the context of the faculty of knowing, then, truth is the property of those beliefs that

the sufficiently pursued experience-constrained, representationally-corroborated inquiry would

eventually turn up.[519] Therefore, truth can be thought of as that characteristic of those beliefs that

would not *conceivably* (at the time of the conception) encounter a recalcitrant experience (as a result

of its perceived utter congruence with experienced complexities). This view of truth carries within it

three important characteristics: first, it provides a rational context for inquiry to proceed, since the

only reason to embark on the aggravation of inquiry (Piagetian decentration) in the first place is to

trust that it can lead to an incarnation of truth (recentration); second, it provides an accessible

teleological element to the activity of inquiry – the search for truth (an existential impetus for

psyche-world congruence, and an understanding of the mechanics and complexities of creation); and

third, such a conception of truth encourages the use of a particular methodology, since it encourages

the inquirer to forego moderate comfort and calm and to seek out the more ultimate aim of truth

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[518] Misak, *Truth*, 162.
[519] Misak, *Truth*, 162.

(relational enhancement with self, world, and God, through cogent reasoning and abduction).[520] Therefore, as highlighted by Fowler's conception that the increase in knowing is ineluctable but not inevitable, the role of choice shapes the entire context of truth seeking. Truth, so conceived, depends entirely on the choice to pursue development and seek ever-clearer meaning-constitutive construals. Thus, the rationality and volitional character of truth places it squarely in the category of generality ('thirdness'), which in and of itself is ontologically attainable and favours the relational and liminal.

This ontological attainability is the factor that renders all meaning-making productive and worthwhile. Meaning-making presents a sufficiently complex and elucidative abducted structure (or world view) to the developing psyche, and stands ubiquitously in front of perception as the process of experiential corroboration takes place (through the Experiential Vector). This pragmatic testing will eventually lead to the collection of fidelity statements (beliefs) that support the premises presented by the faculty of knowing. Should these premises remain unshaken for the time of inquiry, they will signal the end of the inquiry process, thereby concretizing themselves as cogent and 'true' statements of experience. It should be made clear that phrase 'for the time of inquiry' is meant to refer to that period of time when the psyche is actively seeking support for the abducted hypotheses of the meaning constructions. Eventually, this process ends in the settlement of premises, yet this settlement is always temporary. As noted in the last section, no act of knowing is devoid of the concept of fallibilism, and therefore, all settlements are only seemingly permanent. This ontological impermanence of abducted meaning constructions is the leading driver of further growth and knowing development. Before the equilibrium is destabilized by new and surprising inputs (conception of chance leading to decentration), however, there is a period of relative calm in which the settled premises can be experienced as true (this is reflective in FDT's *stages* of development, wherein a stage is a psychic space of relative calm). This is the all-too-common form of relative truth. Yet, in our quest to present a model of faith development that transcends the weaknesses of

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[520] The 'tripartite construal' re-visited.

FDT, it would not suit our argument to stop at a relative construction of truth apprehension. We have

taken great pains in the foregoing chapters to place the sphere of influence of faith development in

the horizontal and the liminal, the very juncture of the 'self' with the 'soul'. Such a construction is

utilized to counterbalance the customarily relativistic bias of ego psychological stage studies, and

open the door to a more communal and generalized corroboration of apprehensions. Following the

same philosophy of approach, then, we find ourselves dissatisfied by the conception of relative truth.

Therefore, FCPC extends itself to deal with the larger concept of absolute truth.

In a structure of relativistic epistemic interplay, how is it possible for us to speak of objective

truth? The key to answering this question lies not in the state of settled-ness itself, but rather in the

movement of the meaning-constitutive 'knowing' over the course of successive psychic

destabilizations and re-equilibrations. As processes of personal development accrue within a

particular psyche, the concept of self-correction takes on a seminal importance. The process of

repeated *synthetic* endeavours slowly aligns the abductive apparatus in the psyche toward a greater

conception of mature truth. It is for this reason that Pierce defines the ultimate interpretation of a sign

as that interpretation which would be conceived, should an infinite number of thinkers over an

infinite period of time interpret it. His statement is clearly highlighting his belief that human

knowledge is moving toward a particular end. He explicitly states that we cannot objectively know a

generality ('third'), and that we cannot glimpse reality from outside of our experiential,

representational and individual shells, but yet, the course of human knowledge, the ontology of our

collective psychic space (another representation of the in-between), is inexorably moving toward the

apprehension of an objective truth.[521] Thus, it is not that objective truth is attainable by any human

mind alone; rather, it is that proximity to objective truth increases with engagement in every

relationship, with every passing generation of seekers and with every concretized level of

development. Thus, objective truth, although it cannot be formally attained and categorized, can only

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[521] Fitzgerald, *Pierce's Theory of Signs*, 121.

be sought after and glimpsed through the collective actions of the in-between. In line with the

thought of Piaget, Edgar Pierce, Patton, Winnicott, and Buber (Chapters 2 and 3), Charles Pierce

stipulates that, in an otherwise dangerously relativistic world, objective truth can be approached only

through the intersubjective (it should be noted that Fowler himself named the correction of internal

images and concepts, through the engagement of an other, as a primary concern in Christian practical

ministry).[522] Thus, the quest for relative truth is the purview of the 'self'; the quest for objective truth,

however, lies in the sphere of the 'soul'. Therefore, FCPC's concept of abductive meaning-

constitutive knowing provides us with the fundamental counter-balances required for a

developmental concept of liminality: individual meets environmental, relativity meets objectiveness,

knowing results from the synergy of reason, experience, and representation, and the self-soul nexus

moves toward an ultimate and exceptionally holy end – that of wisdom and truth. It is one's very

relation to truth that makes up the basis of the Knowing Vector.

Part 6

The Knowing Vector

As with the Experiential and Representational Vectors, the Knowing Vector represents a

counterbalanced approach to apprehension and attenuation. Yet, whereas the Experiential Vector was

concerned with fuller experience, and the Representational Vector was concerned with the

maintenance of 'mythic space', the Knowing Vector is concerned with the quest for truth. As seen in

the last section, the quest for truth can take on two distinct patterns: the individualized or

heteronomous attainment of relative truths (truths that are attained through the lens of the 'self', and

that stop at relativistic ends of inquiry) or intersubjective and liminal truths ('soulful' pursuit of

truths, that are concretized through a collective and connected act of inquiry, moving all questers

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[522] Fowler, *Weaving*, 49; Piaget, *Constructions*, 124; E. Pierce, *Philosophy of Character*, 45; Patton, *From Ministry to Theology;* Winnicott, *Maturational Processes;* and Buber, *The Knowledge of Man.*

toward a remote conception of objective truth). As such, it is to a balanced orientation toward the

attainment of objective truth that FCPC appeals for its mid-point of the Knowing Vector. This mid-

point is named 'synergistic questing' and it is the growthful balance of two pathological extremes:

those of 'autistic extrapolation' (on the side of the 'self') and 'heteronomous yielding' (on the side of

the 'soul').   By 'autistic extrapolation' is meant the act of settling an object of apprehension

within one's own individual mind, and then extrapolating that relative conclusion to the rest of the

experienced world, thereby conferring it with a with a false sense of objectivity. In other words,

'autistic extrapolation' is nothing other than the absolutization and aggrandizement of one's 'self',

thereby placing the 'self' as the only and final arbiter of what is true. In this manner, 'autistic

extrapolation' pulls the groping psyche out of the flow of interconnection and liminality, and places

it squarely in the field of the lone, individual, unbalanced, and quasi-solipsistic. 'Autistic

extrapolation' says that whatever 'I' believe, everyone believes; and should others disagree with

'me', then they are clearly wrong. It is thus a self-appointed truth, an act of epistemic arrogance, an

isolation and separation from the in-between, and a fundamental disconnecting and counter-

developmental stance. 'Autistic extrapolation', by virtue of centeredness on a single point of focus,

does not engage in the *relation* of relations that is so seminal to faith development, self-correction,

and the attainment of intersubjective truth. Rather, it is a stagnation of the Knowing Vector, a

stunting of the Representational Vector, and a disrupter of the Experiential Vector. Thus, in 'autistic

extrapolation', the 'self' cannot perceive external novelties, cannot maintain or comprehend the

surplus of meaning in 'mythic space', does not experience the aggravation of doubt, and effectively

avoids the processes of decentration and recentration. Therefore, 'autistic extrapolation' destroys

growth, stunts vision, and deadens impetus. 'Autistic extrapolation' chooses monologue over

dialogue, being over being with, and self-reflexive rumination over being present. As the closing of

the intersubjective door, it is the very antithesis of 'heteronomous yielding'.

On the other side of the Knowing Vector's pathological counterbalance is the notion of

'heteronomous yielding'. By 'heteronomous yielding' is meant the process through which a psyche

chooses to adopt tenets of construal based exclusively on those tenets acceptability to a particular

group or community. In other words, 'heteronomous yielding' is a construal process by which a

psyche accepts what others believe, because others believe it. It is the counterbalance to 'autistic

extrapolation' because, whereas 'autistic extrapolation' is a pathological process of self-worship, 'heteronomous yielding' is a pathological process of a life other-controlled and a meaning structure other-determined. Hence, 'heteronomous yielding' is an

Figure 5: The Knowing Vector
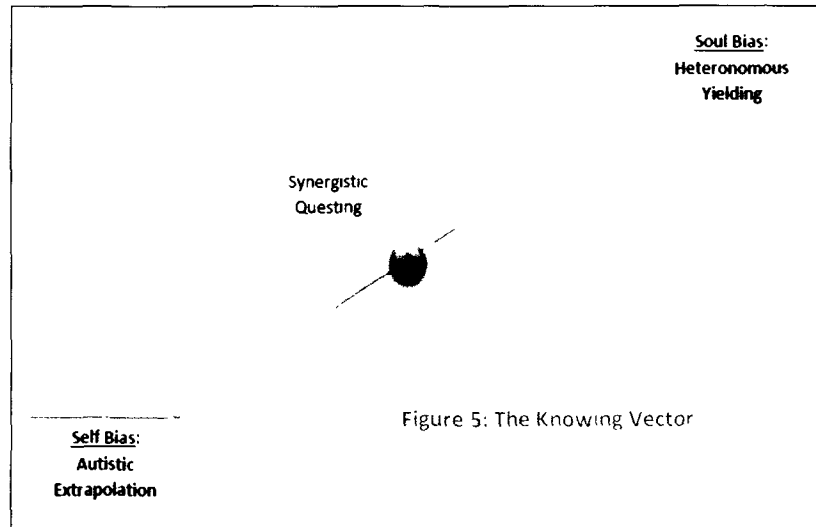
abdication of individuation and agentic responsibility; it is a denigration of the entire pole of the

'self', and a rejection of the importance of self-authorship. It is an over-investment in the sphere of

the 'soul', as it is an enmeshment in the preferences of others, a deterministic over-connection with

environmental ideologies, and an engulfment in the ethos of the cultural. It is thus an agonistic stance

that stunts development, since it deadens the very impetus for personal object creation.

Hence, what is recommended by FCPC's model of faith development is a mid-point between

'autistic extrapolation' and 'heteronomous yielding'. This mid-point is referred to as 'synergistic

questing'. By 'synergistic questing' is meant the state in which the elements of psychic space come

together to concretize an abducted construal of meaning structures, that takes deep and equal stock of

both the Experiential and Representational Vectors. As such, 'synergistic questing' stipulates the

agentic power and importance of the 'self', while simultaneously promoting the interconnecting force

of the 'soul'. 'Synergistic questing' honours the abducting faculties of psychic space while it engages

the intersubjective. 'Synergistic questing' is the very confluence of 'self' and 'soul', as that

confluence comes to reason its way into cogent, connected, corroborated, and tested meaning-

constitutive conceptions. It is 'synergistic questing' that leads one first to relative truth (through the

functions and impetuses of the 'self'), and then to a submission of that relative truth to intersubjective

validation (through the liminal work of the 'soul'), resulting in a balanced and growthful movement

toward the ever-distant concept of objective truth. Thus, 'synergistic questing' is the very sincere and

soulful intersubjective participation in the flow of objective truth. It is passionate questing, an
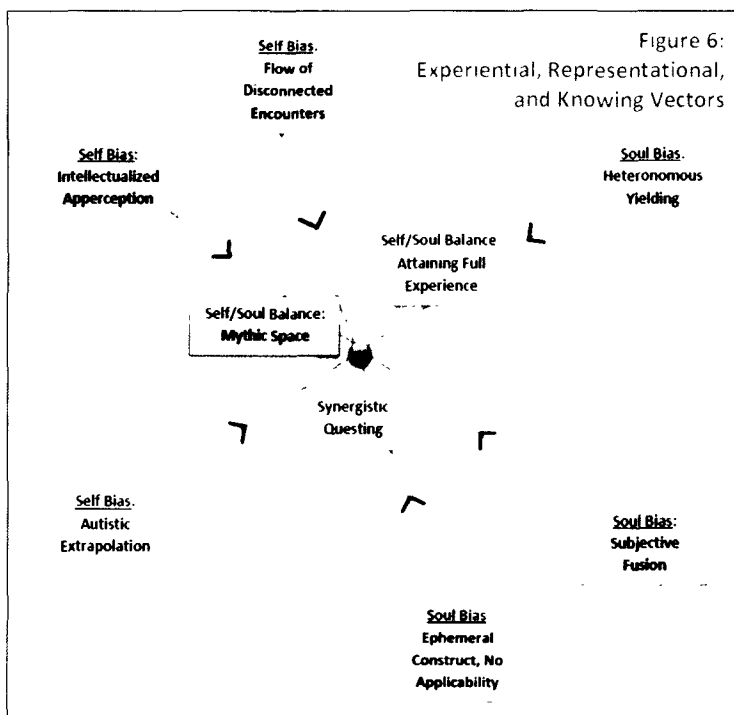
innocent investigation, a careful study, and a lifelong pilgrimage. It is a responsible 'knowing', a centered act of construal, and developmentally focused hypothesis, and a vision toward greater truth. 'Synergistic questing' is the very goal of construal, as presented by the FCPC model of faith development.

And yet, as an integrative construction of experience, representation and reason, 'synergistic

Figure 6: Experiential, Representational, and Knowing Vectors

questing' does not proceed on its own. In other words, FCPC's model of faith development comes to

a point of integration in its elucidation of the Knowing Vector. The Knowing Vector is inseparable

from its roots in the Experiential and Representational Vectors. Hence, what we have come to create

in these pages is a deep and abiding interconnection between the apprehensive faculties of the

psyche. An optimal construction, therefore, cannot involve the optimal attenuation of any single one

of the three vectors. Rather, an optimal stance for liminal experience and therefore faith development

can be found in the confluence of balance of the sum total of all three Vectors of faith development.

Thus, so far in our model, an optimal moment of liminal being involves an apprehension that is complete enough to be labeled as fuller experience, a grasping of internal representation and image that is rich enough to be labeled as 'mythic space', and an orientation to reason and hypothesis construction that, basing itself on the presenting stimuli of fuller experience and 'mythic space', is internally constructed and intersubjectively corroborated enough that it can be labeled as 'synergistic questing'. Thus, the road to faith development postulated by FCPC presents us with a multi-tiered conception of truth attenuation (the perception of maximal truth in experience, the perception of hidden truth in representation, and the attainment of intersubjective truth in knowing), that seeks to interconnect psychic space ever-more with itself, its surroundings, and its ultimate conceptions, including the conception and understanding of God. Thus, whereas FDT described knowing as a seminal feature of faith development, but did not go so far as to connect knowing to internal image and experiential apprehension, FCPC presents a counter-balanced and interwoven model of relational attenuation; whereas FDT did not differentiate between notions of knowing and notions of faith, FCPC unequivocally defines knowing as an abductive process of psychic space that seeks to attain truth, fundamentally separating its tenets from those of faith (a definition of faith is proposed in Chapter 10); and whereas FDT's structural bias centres itself on the ever-changing shades of knowing throughout a developmental lifecycle, FCPC focuses on the ever-complexified and inter-related state of apprehension that remains as the form of hypothesis building and truth seeking throughout a life cycle. Thus, whereas FDT postulated a model of faith development where higher stages of development held superior abilities and attributes to lower ones, FCPC presents a liminal model of faith development, wherein connection, apprehension, and truth seeking can be maximized and attuned, at any age of development. As such, it is argued that FCPC is presenting a model of development that is at once universal, constitutive, and validating. Maintaining the seminal foundation on 'knowing' set forth by FDT, FCPC transcends the traditional boundaries of 'knowing

as reason' or 'knowing as construal', and postulates a model where knowing is synergy and synergy

is a questing-in-the-in-between for truth.

A Final Thought

To date, we have discussed the foundations, strengths and weaknesses of FDT (Chapters 1

and 2); we have presented FCPC as a corrective framework to FDT, which is based on an approach

to faith development that retains the strengths FDT while correcting its main weaknesses (Chapter 3

to 6); and, we have elucidated the three main components of FCPC, basing ourselves on the stated

foundations of FDT (Chapters 7 to 9).[523] In our discussion, we have presented a model of relational

development, in which 'self' and 'soul' find a growthful balance leading to a furthered questing-in-

the-in-between. This balance directs our attention to a zone of psychic apprehension and openness

that heightens experiential awareness, mythic fabulation, and the pursuit of truth.[524] To that end,

FCPC presents a model of faith development that bases itself on the synergy of the various levels of

human epistemological ontology in order to bring about a liminal congruence and increased inter-

connectedness that fosters the enhancement of one's relation to oneself, to others, and to God. This

explication of the components of FCPC is meant to first, elucidate the components of the model that

will be pastorally useful (see Chapter 10), and second, lay the groundwork through which FCPC's

definition of faith will be presented.

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[523] The Experiential, Representational, and Knowing Vectors
[524] I am indebted to Pruyser for the term 'fabulation', "Thought Organization in Religion," 69.

SECTION 5

FAITH

Chapter 10

Redefining Faith

In the last section, we conducted an analysis of the various dimensions of the Vectors of faith development that are constitutive of liminal and horizontal growth. In our discussion, we based ourselves on the founding tenets of FDT in order to maintain the strengths and breadth of that model, while simultaneously proposing correctives that resolve many of the critiques and objections leveled against it. It is to this end that we are proposing the notion of Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC). FCPC is based on fundamental principles that provide unique and definitionally integrous placements for meaning-making and ego psychology, while retaining a differentiation from the notion of faith proper; remove the conception of faith development from the structural and vertical dimensions of developmental apprehension and placing it firmly in the horizontal, relational, and liminal, thereby resolving the apparent paradox of stage attenuation as the telos of FDT; present an understanding of the dimensions of a lasting and permanent personhood that separate epistemological ontology into the fields of the phenomenological, differentiated, and agentic ('self') and the epiphenomenological, integrated, and interconnected ('soul'); sets forth a model of faith development that can be viewed as a lifelong pilgrimage devoted to the betterment of interrelations, as well as to one's ability to comingle in that interrelation (the in-between); and that supplied a balanced an comprehensive model of relational development that is based on the foundational principles of Fowler's original FDT (experiential apprehension, symbolic representation, and knowing and construal). And, we have done all of this as a groundwork through which we will define the central concept of Faith. It is this final elucidation that is the purpose of this chapter of this work. The coming paragraphs will complete our presentation of FCPC by outlining a definition for faith, placing it at the centre (and as the very engine) of the vector model we have created, defining its

components (based as they are in the vectors), and discussing its *telos*, the fostering of character, in light of pastoral practice.

Part 1

Defining Faith

In the last section, we developed of model of counter-balanced relational and apprehensive vectors that work in concert, as simultaneous phases of horizontal being, to set forth the notion of an optimal moment of liminal apprehension, relational attenuation, and psychic congruence. In all cases, the vectors balanced the needs of the phenomenological and agentic 'self' with the epiphenomenological and connecting 'soul', thereby setting out a model of epistemological ontology that is reflective of primarily Fowlerian, but also Piagetian, Kohlbergian, Ericksonian, and Keganian conceptions of developmental balance. Yet whereas the thought of these scholars proposed models that were structural and vertical in nature, the model we are proposing (FCPC), has applied the notions of self-soul balance to the field of the liminal, relational, and intersubjective – the horizontal plane of interaction that is more indicative of *style of interaction* than stage of development (see Chapter 2). In addition, having based our prior elucidations on the foundations FDT (experience, representation, and knowing), we are keenly aware of the need to continue this respectful line of inclusion of the cogent tenets of FDT into our re-visioned model. Hence, we are challenged to present a definition of faith that, in concert with Fowler's intentions for FDT, assumes that human beings are ontologically potentiated for partnership with God, that faith is a central feature of human *being*, that faith is a matter of personal engagement within the questing person, and that faith development is a universal conception, undergirding human epistemological ontology. To this end, as we pursue FCPC's definition of faith, we ask a simple question: having set out the model of interrelation that is based on the Vectors of apprehension, what is the force that undergirds the model; what is the engine that drives the Vectors toward that optimal moment of conflation?

According to FCPC, this force is the very definition of faith. Thus, faith is defined as *the trusting impetus to quest-in-the-in-between*. As an impetus, FCPC's definition presents a notion of faith as an energy, a personal commitment, a relational engagement, a drive toward a particular end. As a form of trust, FCPC's definition of faith implies a confidence, a calmness of countenance, an experiential openness, a faculty of intimacy, and a resilience of conception. Taken together, a trusting impetus is the very ontological push that, as a confidence and founding dimension of genuineness, moves a questing person from a particular state of being to another, more relational, more attuned, and more encompassing one. A trusting impetus implies loyalty toward something deemed ultimate, a posture of readiness and welcome to apprehended realities, a willingness to be resilient in the face of challenge, and an ability to foster intimacy with the various encounters of experience. As a founding feature of FCPC's vector model, faith as a trusting impetus is grounded in context and narrative (intersubjective/in-between), is driven by the completeness of one's experiential apprehensions (Experiential Vector), is deeply resonant with one's internal, imaginal, and mythic representations (Representation Vector), and is a directive and focusing force of knowing and construal (Knowing Vector). As such, whereas our definitions of the individual vectors outlined relational orientations, liminal stances, and apprehensive biases, our notion of faith stems from a principle of being that literally undergirds these vectors, that acts as the *relation of the relations* to one another, and that engages in a function that is focused on the *movement* of one's vector-based orientations towards a moment of optimal apprehension and interrelation.[525] Hence, vectors are the *modalities* of faith's expression. And yet, as a part of FCPC's vector model of faith development, faith, in and of itself, is structured in a counterbalance that mirrors (and in fact augments) the dyadic

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[525] Notions of faith as a relation can be found in Fowler, *Weaving;* Fowler, *Adult*, 139; Astley, *Christian Perspectives*, 8-10; Walsh, *Spiritual Resources*, 22; Smith in Astley, *Christian Perspectives*, 88; Moran, *Religious Education Development*, 81; Piper "Faith Development," 14; Oden, *Contemporary Theology*, 39; Anthony et al., *Spiritual Choices*, 153; Steckel in Pruyser, *Changing Views*, 178; Forsyth, *Faith in Human Transformation*, 11; Doninger, *Religion and Human Behaviour*, 60, among many others.

features of the other three Vectors. Thus, the two (pathological) extremes of the Faith Vector are those of impetus-without-trust and trust-without-impetus.

Impetus-without-trust is defined as an affective state of continual and indiscriminate effort. It is a state of constant and wild questing that seeks to unearth answers to all arising questions in order to maintain a degree of predictability, security, and epistemological regularity. In a world devoid of trust, presenting relations and realities are viewed as potentially dangerous, hostile, and destabilizing. Communal contexts and shared narratives are approached with surgical calculation, resulting in an epistemological distancing at best, and an ideological recrimination at worst. The constant stream of experiential presentations is approached with caution and self-protection, thereby stunting the experiential readiness-paths of 'acceptance' (by introducing a self-defensive stance into interaction), 'innocence' (by invading apprehension with existential worries that thwart authenticity), and 'presence' (by temporally and spatially displacing the apprehending psyche from the here-and-now to an interpreted world of danger). By denuding experiential apprehension of its graceful, innocent, and apprehensive acuity, impetus-without-trust further seeks clarification of the imaginal and mysterious, thereby objectifying, categorizing, compartmentalizing, and essentially reducing mythic structures of representation, thereby bringing about an effective alienation of countenance with the deeper contents of representation. And by dealing with the world with suspicion and reducing mythic structures to cognitive constructs, impetus-without-trust abides in a world of thwarted knowing, of clinical construal, and of differentiated vigilance (the very definition of an over-activity of the 'self'). Such a world of unrelenting exploratory drive ushers in affective states of deep anxiety, of questing as a contributing means of 'self' survival, and of a fostered and encouraged distrust. Thus, impetus-without-trust is an effective orientational trap in which cognition is furthered at the expense of connection, differentiation is unilaterally promoted at the expense of relation, and the apprehendable is sought over the mythic and representational. It is therefore a stagnation of faith development, moving psychic space toward the 'self' pole, and creating apprehension pathologies that permeate

meaning and interaction. It is an act of effort devoid of surrender, acquisition devoid of acceptance, interaction devoid of play, and license devoid of freedom. Impetus-without-trust is directionless and lonely grasping. It is life conducted in the presence of, yet without any relation to oneself, one's other, and one's God.

On the other side of the coin, in the realm of the over-active 'soul', we find the trust-without-impetus orientation. Trust-without-impetus is defined as a convicted merger of psychic drive with a belief in the inevitability, regularity, and other-centered management of the apprehensions of reality. As such, a person enmeshed in this orientation is moved to a stance of complacency, of unscrutinized relations, of unilateral acceptance, and of pathological surrender. Trust-without-impetus is engulfment in the apprehended complexities of one's context and culture. It is unexamined and complete investment in the narratives that undergird shared contexts. As an abdication of the being-paths of 'self-responsibility' and 'soul-discipleship', it is a quelling of one's drive to quest, along with an infantile and non-engaged acceptance of presented realities. It is thus a hedge against 'congruence' (an expression-path to fuller experience), as it works to move the various levels of psychic space to immobilization, as well as to engulf the impetus of the 'self' within the entangled relations of the 'soul'. Trust-without-impetus, then, as a form of non-congruence is unable to step out of systemic capture and stand as an integrous and examining being. In this way, this orientation leans heavily toward a non-objectified archetypal and image-controlled relation with internal objects.[526] In other words, as a form of enmeshment in the complexities of presented internal imagery, trust-without-impetus subjects the individual to the powers of 'mythic space' (rather than understanding and participating *in* 'mythic space'), thereby setting forth an unexamined and uncontrolled process of imaginal drives that work to frame knowing. Knowing, in turn, in this orientation, amounts to taking in information *qua* information, devoid of the drive to further question what was received in order to make it better fit a conception of unity and coherence (the hallmarks of

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[526] See, Dougherty and West, *Matrix and Meaning*, Ch.1.

an integrous meaning system). Hence, whereas impetus-without-trust wildly seeks answers to all

apprehended experiences, trust-without-impetus incorporates those experiences unquestioningly;

whereas impetus-without-trust defends against all approaching stimuli, trust-without-impetus defends

against none; whereas impetus-without-trust seeks to master and dominate apprehension through

cognitive dissection and reduction, trust-without-impetus is itself mastered by its own inputs,

resulting in a naïve and complacent cognition; whereas impetus-without-trust stagnates faith

development by thwarting apprehension toward the unilateral service of a defended 'self', trust-

without-impetus stagnates faith development by quelling apprehension, merging meaning, and taking

in stimuli, in the unilateral service of the over-eager 'soul'. Thus, whereas impetus-without-trust is

consumed and captured by its own obsession for questing, trust-without-impetus is utterly detached

from any exploratory or questing drive. Impetus-without-trust is 'self' existence – alone, displaced,

and anxious. Trust-without-impetus is 'soul' engulfment – lonely, confused, and complacent. In

either case, a true relational capacity is lacking – we cannot relate when there is no 'self' available

but our own solitary 'self'; neither can we relate when we have no 'self' through which to stand

apart. It is just this form of relational inability that renders these two poles of the Faith Vector

pathological and unsuitable for true transcendental, existential and liminal investigation.

The resolution to this counterbalance, then, can be found in the notion of 'trusting impetus'.

By trusting impetus is meant the delicate counterpoint of discovery and reception, exploration and

quietude, self-preservation and self-donation, differentiation and integration.[527] It is the confluence of

the mundane and everyday with the transcendent and awesome, of reason with intuition, of

interpreted belief with abducted impression, of fact and myth, of separateness and unity. [528] It is the

paradoxical viewing of the person *as well as* the context as the centre of life, the 'self' *as well as* the

'soul' as the fundamental driver of psychic space, the individual *as well as* the other as the

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[527] Piper called the balance of differentiation to integration 'the goal of faith development', Piper, "Faith Development," 14.
[528] Gabriel Moran, *Religious Education Development*, 81.

determiner of life's meaning, and the natural *as well as* the divine as the ultimate context of life's

direction. As such, a trusting impetus melds the poles of agentic preservation, shared/intersubjective

context, and transcendent communion, locating faith at the very nexus of self, relation, and God. In

this way, FCPC's definition of faith, striking a balance between a strictly transcendent and strictly

humanistic conception, moves away from biases where faith is predominantly associated with one

level of relation over another. The notion of trusting impetus renders the principle of faith in which,

simultaneously and unconfusedly, the individual is the centre of all things, the individual's shared

context is the centre of all things, and God is the centre of all things. Thus, we arrive at a

Figure 7. The Faith Vector

counterbalanced notion of integrated existence, a

transparency of relational constructs, a reflection of the 'tripartite construal', and a validation of the

various levels of being, while concurrently integrating these levels within a larger, existential, and

form-based communion.[529] In the words of de Chardin, "the light of Heaven becomes perceptible in

the crystalline transparency of beings. It pushes to its furthest possible limit the differentiation among

the creatures that are concentrated within Itself."[530] Thus, faith, according to FCPC, is an abiding

relational construct, encompassing the whole ontology of epistemological creation, qualifying all

interactions and connections, and interfolding the dimensions of apprehension and being.[531] To

paraphrase Fowler's words (in a later work), faith converges the power of personal narratives, the

web of social interchange, and the influence of divine praxis into a single moment of individual

orientation, where convergence is meant to depict the notion of interaction, creativity, and mutual

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[529] Astley also discusses the notion of 'tripartite construal', and points to its seminal place in the action of faith; Astley, "Faith Development: An Overview, " 9.

[530] de Chardin, *Phenomenon of Man*, 114.

[531] Astley, "Faith Development: An Overview," 9; Walsh, *Spiritual Resources*, 22; Smith, "Answers to Some Questions," 88.

interpenetration.[532] This faith has an inner and an outer layer, an influential and influencing

dimension, a posture and a movement, a statement and a dialogue. The intermingled interplay of

faith's relations proposes a view of faith as a covenantal confluence of being, a binding of one's

consciousness in trust and validation to one's shared context, as well as a merging of one's psychic

space in loyalty and confidence toward a transcendent centre of value. Hence, FCPC's notion of faith

as a trusting impetus bridges the Tillichean notion of faith as the boundary situation of human

consciousness ('soul') and Bonheoffer's assertion God is to found at the centre of the village

('self').[533] It is just such a confluence that Steckel refers to as the very character of Christian

perfection, heightened by paradox, and directing communion with neighbour and God, an earthly

incarnation of the Great Commandment.[534] And yet, we cannot lose sight of the fact that FCPC's

definition of faith involves the dynamic concept of impetus. But, an impetus toward what?

FCPC answers this question by stating that faith is a trusting impetus *to quest-in-the-in-*

between. According to Pruyser, modern humanity, in a post-Enlightenment culture, has learned to

investigate its world and condition and make plausible guesses regarding the nature of its ontology

and existential destiny.[535] In the course of this species-wide investigation, he says, accepted answers

become transitional answers, and transitional answers become transformed into new questions

(thereby deconstructing beliefs and interpretations through the aggravation of doubt [Chapter 9] and

abducting new ones, in order to increase the span and sophistication of meaning).[536] Humanity is thus

locked into a cycle of ever-progressive questing – a questing that seeks to find more encompassing

and wider answers to existential concerns. Thus, humanity seems ontologically potentiated for

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[532] Fowler, *Adult,* 138; such elegant notions of faith would propounded in Fowler's later works but did not find firm and operational footing in FDT. Also, Fowler has found considerable critique from his peers regarding the apparent lack of any mention of trust, in his conception of faith; Droege, "Pastoral Counseling and Faith Development," 274; Forsyth, *Faith in Human Transformation,* 17; McDargh, "Faith Development Theory."

[533] Tillich, *Dynamics;* Bonheoffer, *Collected Papers*

[534] Steckel, "Emergence of Morality," 178.

[535] Pruyser, *Belief,* 244; see also Pierce, *Collected Works,* Chs. 1-4; Fitzgerald, *Theory of Signs,* 42; David, *Pierce's Epistemology,* 65.

[536] Griffith and Griffith, *Encountering the Sacred,* 151; Pruyser, *Dynamic Psychology,* 77.

engaging in rounds of questioning, inaugurating new levels of openness, new paradigms of meaning,

and new levels of interrelation. Gerkin states that the confluence of the individual with his/her shared

context, opens the door to a mood or habit of inquiry (about the complexities of life, but most

especially into the ultimate meaning of their actions) that shapes personal narratives and further

propels the individual into rounds of questing.[537] Hence, we find ourselves at a moment of

elucidation of Fowler's ubiquitous assertion that human beings are potentiated toward relationship

with God. By combining the influence of impetus, trust, 'tripartite construal', and ontological

questing, we come to an understanding of faithful interactions as ontologically built into our

epistemologies. Thus, and analogous to the case of meaning-making, it is not that we choose to

engage in questing; rather, the basic epistemological ontology of human beings is to quest, and the

largest part of that quest is related to the existential questions of identity, relationship, wonder, and

ultimate destiny.[538] In the words of Bernard Nachbahr, "Nothing can simply happen to an

unquestioning mind."[539]

Yet, our conception of questing, in FCPC's definition of faith, is not simply related to an

investigation of the nature of mundane world. Rather, our definition specifically focuses the arena of

questing on the liminal, the relational, the in-between. Thus, we are here talking about a concerted

act of investigation, of promotion, and of discovery *within the actual space* of relationality and

horizontality. Faith, therefore, is a concerted questing about the very nature of connectedness, the

very quality of interpenetrated meaning, and the action of communal interaction. It is a questioning

regarding optimal orientations of the 'self' and the 'soul' as they seek to find expression and

influence through the sphere of the vectors; it is a questioning regarding the quality of one's meaning

constructs as they seek to provide coherence to a set of experiences; it is a questioning of the

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[537] Gerkin, *Pastoral Care*, 125.

[538] Doninger, *Religion and Human Behaviour*, 67. In fact, it has been argued by many that the entire drive toward 'progress' is nothing other than the drive to quest for ultimate answers, as that drive directs itself toward the more mundane; de Chardin, *Phenonemon of Man;* Lonergan, *Insight*; Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode.*

[539] Nachbahr, "Embodied Self," 185.

meaning of one's orientation to conceptions of human destiny as one engages in 'tripartite

construals'. It is therefore a fundamental act of examination, in which *one's relation to all of life*, as

well as one's relation *to "the very ground of Being"* (to quote Tillich) is grasped, questioned, and re-

oriented in such a way as to enhance further interrelation.[540] It is thus a horizontal application of

Fowler's concept of conversion, a liminal metanoia, and an ultimate 'taking stock'. As an expression

of questing, then, it is a stance of fortitude (in its potential deconstruction of what is stable), a stance

of confidence (in its implicit belief that there are always better answers and better questions), a stance

of trust (in its implicit conviction that better answers lead to better relations), and a stance of courage

(in its valiant and headlong excursion into the unknown). And yet, it is only through such liminal

questing that relationality, intersubjectivity, and interconnection work to enhance self-identity and

self-stipulation, that relational congruence comes to better transcendent congruence. Hence, questing-

in-the-in-between is truly a reflection of Tillich's courage to be, in combination with his courage to

be a part.[541] Questing-in-the-in-between is an ultimately spiritual act of centeredness, an ownership

of the 'self' as well as a surrender of the 'soul', a moving outlook on experience, an investigation of

the impulses of representation, a constant re-alignment of knowing, and a continual re-orientation to

the intersubjective. In its interconnection and inescapable existential dimension, it helps us better

understand the divine as we toil through the mundane, to better grasp the transcendent as we come to

investigate the immanent, and to forge better relations to God, as we forge relations with ourselves

and our others. It is thus the basic driver of FCPC. It is not therefore that the vectors move and affect

the trajectory of faith. Rather, it is faith, as the trusting impetus to question in the in-between, that

moves psychic space and aligns relations with all levels of existence *through the ontological*

modalities of the individual vectors. As such, our elucidation to date has not presented a series of

vectors that are constitutive of faith; rather, we have undertaken an elucidation of the various

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[540] Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith*, 101.
[541] Tillich, *Courage to Be*.

modalities of faith itself, as we moved to a central definition of faith proper. Thus, FCPC is a model of faith development in the purest sense, studying the *movement* of faith itself, as it makes its influence felt in the various spheres of life and as it finds attenuation and development through these same spheres.

Part 2

The Dimensions of Faith

It is in these spheres of life that FCPC's conception finds its constitutive dimensions. As a trusting impetus to quest-in-the-in-between, functioning as it does through the modalities of liminal vectors and the in-between, faith's development is affected by and conducted through four main dimensions. It is the purpose of this section to briefly discuss these dimensions – those of 'context/narrative', *Energeia*, 'mythic depth', and Profluence.[542]

A. Context/Narrative

The notion of the in-between presented a model of relation in which one's shared context is a seminal component of faith development. In fact, so engrained is the dialogue between individual and other, that it is akin to a Whiteheadian prehension of forces, resulting in epistemological anatomy as well as in meaning construction (see Chapters 2 and 9). As such, the effects of intersubjective interaction (the in-between) cannot be dissociated from the FCPC's conception of faith. The in-between provides faith with a firm grounding in a particular context, at a particular time. Thus, unlike other conceptions of faith that work to divorce faith's mechanics from its founding traditions (FDT is one of these conceptions), FCPC conceives of faith as a trusting impetus that inevitably results from

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[542] A modality of faith is a path through which faith is developed. In FCPC, the modalities of faith are the Vectors. Dimensions of faith, on the other hand, are constitutive phasic components of faith's construction. Since both the modalities and the dimensions of faith are based on the tenets of human epistemological ontology (experience, object relating, abduction, cultural interaction), they affect each other in a reciprocal and spiraling manner.

the prehensive effects of the dialogue of individual and context. Hence, faith's impetus and trust are fed by shared epistemological biases that have been enwoven through the ecology of relational (including local and familial) interaction. Thus, local traditions, beliefs, values, ethics, religions, and principles form a basis through which faith's trusting impetus finds incarnational reality. It is in this way that faith, according to FCPC, is said to be grounded in holy narratives and mythologies; it is in this way that one's trusting impetus finds root in a particular religious orientation; it is in this way that faith is said to ground local manifestations of spirituality. Thus, whereas Fowler's FDT conceives of faith as separate and independent from the contents of one's shared contexts (presumably to ensure its universality and its insistence on form over content), and whereas other scholars such as Avery and Piper conceive of faith as solely determined by the content of one's beliefs in the Divine, FCPC bridges this tension by focusing on the form of epistemological ontology, rather than its phenotype.[543] As a form-based model, FCPC honours the view of scholars that wish to root faith in a code of belief or religious tradition by conceiving of intersubjective interaction as a seminal, dialogical, and constitutive feature of humankind (therefore, it is not possible to speak of human epistemology without also speaking of relational embeddedness). Hence, a person cannot *be* devoid of his/her context or holding environment; there is no psychic phenomenon, independent of the prehensive force of intersubjective context. In this way, FCPC's conception of liminal interaction firmly roots faith within a particular context, at a particular time, with particular beliefs, without going so far as to prescribing those beliefs. It in this form-based approach to cultural understanding that FCPC, while inextricably linking faith to local beliefs, can honour Fowler's desire for the elucidation of a *universal* understanding of the faith process. It is not that faith needs to be unhinged from religious and local tradition in order to remain universal; it is rather that faith, in FCPC, finds constitutive grounding in liminal embeddedness, regardless of what the actual content of that liminality entails, and thus finds its universality.

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[543] Avery, "A Lutheran Examines James Fowler," 145; Piper, "Faith Development."

Therefore, what we have in FCPC is a form of faith that is intimately and inextricably linked to its contextual background, while simultaneously presenting itself as a universal feature of the human condition. In this way, FCPC's conception of faith bridges two worlds that seemed incompatible, two ideologies that sought to penetrate the mysteries of belief, and two modes of operation that could not often find common ground.

B. Energeia

Energeia is a term used frequently in narrative theology and narrative analysis. A Greek word referring to originating impetus, *energeia* is defined as the base energy with which a particular process within human beings is propelled forward.[544] *Energeia* is an ambition to move ahead, an infusion of dynamism and potency, and a seminal drive that acts as the engine of development. An illustrative portrait of *energeia* can be found in the world of literature, wherein a particular narrative is felt to have more impetus, more 'push' than another. This positive impulse, this implicit energy is what we are referring to in our invocation of the term *energeia*.

Applying the same notion to faith and faith development, *energeia* is the 'push from behind', the source of personal impetus and the wave upon which consciousness can ride. It is a propelling and forceful flow moving the self-soul nexus toward greater levels of questioning and higher levels of development. It is the very energy that defines one's ambition to quest-in-the-in-between and the buffer of personal resilience that counteracts stagnation. But, such an ambition, such a forceful drive, must find a source of nourishment somewhere. It is suggested that this source of nourishment is none other than the attenuation of fuller experience.

Fuller experience is defined as the acceptance of encounter into liminal dialogue with one's internal matrix (Chapter 7). Fuller experience refers to one's ability to perceive, apprehend, and assimilate presenting experiences, such that a more complete and holistic grasping of the given

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[544] Aristotle, *Poetics*, 78; Randall, *Stories We Are*, 154.

stimulus is achieved (the workings of the Experiential Vector). Hence, the attainment of fuller

experience through the workings of the Experiential Vector provides a continuous flow of integrous,

interlinked, and liminally relevant inputs through which the self-soul nexus can seek development.

Therefore, an increase in the quality of experiential apprehension is thought to produce a

commensurate increase in the availability of stimuli through which transformation can be evoked.

Whereas a common line of discourse in faith studies promotes the notion of faith as somehow

completely transcendent, and whereas more humanistic outlooks on faith place *energeia* as somehow

emanating solely from the activity of the individual, FCPC seeks to bridge this philosophical gap.

Thus, by invoking the Experiential Vector, FCPC can ground *energeia* in the very mundane world of

experience. But, also related to the liminality of the work of the Experiential Vector, humanity's

natural tendency to invoke 'tripartite construal' draws a palpable link between the mundane and the

intersubjective, the natural and the supernatural. So conceived, FCPC's *energeia* is neither mundane

nor transcendent, neither phenomenological nor epipehenomenological, but simultaneously all of

these. As the engine of development, *energeia* is the source of the impetus prescribed by FCPC's

definition of faith.

To date, we have outlined two dimensions that ground faith in its localized relations as well as in

its experiential underpinnings. These dimensions provide FCPC's definition of faith with roots in

local belief systems, while simultaneously providing it with an internal impetus to 'push ever

forward', to move on, to quest. A fulsome definition of faith, however, cannot proceed without

taking into two more dimensions of faithful expression: those of 'mythic depth' and directionality

(Profluence). It is to these two dimensions that we now turn our attention.

C. Mythic Depth

The influential work of Anamaria Rizzuto on the relation between internal object relations and

conceptions of the divine image promoted a discourse around the interplay of internal representation

and communion with an external transcendent reality.[545] According to her work, Rizzuto concluded

that images of the divine emanate from the relationship between caretaker and infant (within

Winnicott's transitional space and through the use of transitional objects), and continue to be formed

well into the later stages of childhood. It is out of these very images that a person seeks to interact

with all levels of objects (self, others, and God); it is also through the weaknesses in these images

that individuals come to perceive gaps in their apprehensions of the transcendent. Relating to

Rizzuto's concepts, Fowler's notion of the movement of the imaginal from the non-conscious to the

conscious works to foster the strengths of images (since, now named, the strengths can be

deliberately marshalled to the aid of a groping psyche), as well as re-align the weaknesses in these

representations (since, by grasping a fuller breadth of what internal images may hold, an individual

can seek to avoid conceptual and affective pitfalls that would otherwise have been hidden from

apprehension). But, as the Representational Vector demonstrated, it is not simply the movement of

internal images from hidden to known that is of the essence for faith development. Rather, it is the

movement of internal representations from hidden to known, in such a way as to retain a surplus of

meaning in each image. Only thus can the interplay of object relational images not devolve into a

direct denigration of the holy and transcendent, and an utter reliance on the uni-dimensional activity

of the 'self'.

The retention of a surplus of meaning, however, is not a simple achievement. As we saw in

Chapter 8, the retention of internal images as liminal symbols (spanning the mundane and

transcendent worlds) involves an act of balance that tempers acceptance with reason, rationality with

affective openness. It is through this balance that a person could come to enter 'mythic space', a

psychic orientation that allows internal symbols to reveal their original truths, while simultaneously

remaining engrained within a world of parabolic meaning.[546] It is in this mystery that faith finds its

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[545] Rizzuto, *Birth of the Living God*
[546] Capps is a strong promoter of a parabolic style of pastoral engagement. See Capps, *Pastoral Care,* 96.

layers of depth.[547] As such, 'mythic depth' (mediated through the Representational Vector) comes

together with the elements of 'context/narrative' (above) to create a nexus of understanding whereby

the symbols and representations of, not only the individual but also the entire originating array of

embedding relations, are grasped with a liminal focus that synergizes faculties and deepens meaning.

Thus, the depth of faith is mediated through a person's ability to sit in a world of symbol, a world of

the 'over-determined', in order to allow the external matrix and the internal matrix to comingle

seamlessly (the definition of transitional space) and to evoke apprehensions of mystery and glimpses

of divine ontology, that are inaccessible to cognition or investigation alone.[548] In addition, the

combination of the Representational Vector with the activity of the Experiential Vector opens the

door to ever greater degrees of symbolic attenuation (since, we can more fully grasp our internal

symbols through the influence of fuller experience), and thereby allows for a representational

interrelation that lends even more depth to faith's trust as well as to faith's impetus.

An increase in faith's impetus and trust, through the attainment and maintenance of 'mythic

space' (symbolic representation), brings about a deep and abiding sense of personal awe, an awe that

increases our span of understanding, that links seemingly 'little things' to tenets of infinite

significance, that moves us beyond the scope of mind and into the realm of the eternal

within/among/without each of us.[549] In 'mythic space', one is duly aware that any language used is

insufficient to relay the complexity and depth of what is understood, that images come to order

affective interpretations, and that the parabolic force of personal narrative and meaning is a supra-

rational mode of explicating the complexities of human relationality. Thus, whereas

'context/narrative' plants faith firmly in a real and particular worldly relation, and whereas *energeia*

supplies faith with the ambitious impetus needed to push on, 'mythic depth' confers faith a sense of

profundity and insight that can only be found in the world of representational (and parabolic) myths.

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[547] Ivy, "Faith Development," 289.

[548] For a discussion on the term 'over-determined', see Peck, *In Search of Stones*, 88.

[549] Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode*, 62.

Thus, FCPC's conception of faith can now be summarized as a trusting impetus that is grounded in context and narrative, that connects with individuals at a deep affective level through the vehicle of representation, and that marshals internal energy to push forward in one's quest-in-the-in-between. And yet, our current conception is not complete; although we have discussed embeddedness, energy, and depth, we are left with one important dimension: the dimension of the direction of faith. For a brief discussion on this, we turn to the concept of profluence.

D. Profluence

William Randall defines profluence as the abiding and intuitive sense that a narrative, event, dialogue, or other interaction is directional – or to put it more simply, is 'going somewhere', where that 'somewhere' is a specific, although not necessarily known, end point.[550] Thus, profluence is the sense we get, upon hearing a tale, that it will culminate in a powerful climax, or the anticipation we feel upon hearing a joke at the revelation of the punch line. In a more prosaic context, profluence can be seen in the sense of anticipation and excitement experienced by many university students, who believe that their degree will result in the inauguration of a particular life (or lifestyle), although they may not be able to describe that life when questioned. Profluence, then, is affective and intuitional directionality, in which an expectation of an end point pervades the experience of reaching that end point. Such a notion is deeply relevant for FCPC's conception of faith.

When applied to the sphere of faith and faith development, profluence is the abiding and intuitive sense that one's orientation and relational questing is 'going somewhere', is working toward some distant *telos*, and will result in some horizontally-informed end-state. Hence, profluence works to synergize the dimensions of 'context/narrative', *energeia,* and 'mythic depth' as it extrapolates its sense of directionality. From the 'context/narrative' (the effects of the intersubjective/in-between), profluence gleans its conceptions of the possible, the desirable, the frightening, and the crowning.

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[550] Randall, *The Stories We Are,* 120.

From its interrelation with *energeia* (through the influence of the Experiential Vector), profluence

finds its seed impetus, its affective resilience in times of challenge, and its abiding sense of renewal.

And, from the consolidations of 'mythic depth' (the effect of the Representational Vector),

profluence derives a deep and soulful sense of significance, of interrelatedness, of salience, and of

awe. In this way, profluence, as a synergistic interrelation of these three elements, goes beyond their

respective parts/influences to formulate a sense (whether it be mundane or mythical) that faith's

impetus is leading somewhere that is worth the weathering of the difficulties of the journey. In

addition, healthy profluence calls upon faith's trust to establish a conviction that this sought after

end-point is one that is desirable, growthful, and worthy. Thus, profluence is an apprehension of a

multiplicity of contributing dimensions, and a reduction of that manifold of possibility into a unity of

construction that is directional. Therefore, profluence is an act of abductive reasoning that synergizes

its numerous counterparts, taking away (abducting) a sense of coherence and meaning.[551]

Consequently, profluence falls within the sphere of the Knowing Vector, and finds its apex in the

attainment of 'synergistic questing' (see Chapter 9).

'Synergistic questing', when applied to faith's dimension of profluence, implies a balanced

intermingling of 'context/narrative', *energeia,* and 'mythic depth', such that the notions of the

individual find equilibration in their confluence with the notions of the external

(other/environment/God). It is thus an act of construal that is liminal in nature, relational in content,

and horizontal in direction. Thus, whereas fuller experience is the engine of apprehension through

which *energia* arises, and 'mythic space' is the engine of salience and awe through which 'mythical

depth' arises, so 'synergistic questing' is the logic of faith development, as it comes to abduct the

notions of profluence.

What we therefore have is a definition and construction that sets forth faith as a trusting

impetus, that is grounded in context and narrative, that connects with individuals at a deep affective

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[551] In addition to the work of Peircean scholars set out in Chapter 9, see Ivy, "Faith Development," 288.

level through the vehicle of representation, that marshals internal energy to push forward in one's

quest-in-the-in-between, and that is felt to be 'going somewhere'. Such a notion bridges the gap

between many of the traditional lines of discourse regarding faith's construction, while

simultaneously retaining faith as a horizontal and liminal construct that links individual, contextual,

and divine. And yet, we must briefly deal with the notion of the integrity of faith, as a human

ontological feature. For this integration, we turn to the principle of resilience.

E. Resilience

We have stated that faith is a resilient faculty within human epistemology, that helps weather

challenge, that provides internal strength to push on, and that retains a sense of deep profluence, even

in the midst of disequilibration. We can now add to this notion that resilience is conceived by FCPC

to be the integrous and self-promoting ubiquity of faith, as it seeks to promote its trusting impetus.

Thus, what we find is a deep, rich, and self-propagating relation of faith's dimensions to one another,

that work to maintain faith's impetus and influence. We find that 'context/narrative' is a driving and

defining force of the images that make up 'mythic depth'. Without the infusion of images and

influence from one's relationship to the external environment, internal images would be the products

of a solipsistic imagination, inventing its world and engineering its relations. The liminal meeting of

individual to 'context/narrative', counteracts this solipsism and balances internal image in the scheme

of shared context and external direction. And yet, this relationship is a reciprocal one: no sooner do

we stipulate the deep interrelation of 'context/narrative' to 'mythic depth' that we must admit the

constitutive role 'mythic depth' plays in shaping 'context/narrative'. Shared contexts, after all, are

made of individuals, and these individuals energize and create these shared contexts. Thus, just as

'context/narrative' influences and grounds 'mythic depth', so 'mythic depth' renews and energizes

'context/narrative'. In this way, we find that faith, expressed as it is through its modalities of the in-

between and the Representational Vector, is structured as a deep constitutive, and self-promoting

dialogue between internal and external. Such a construction introduces resilience into the system by creating a contained nexus of liminal interaction that is promoting of both poles of the dyad. In order for this dyad's influence to come to a halt, both 'context/narrative' *and* 'mythic depth' would have to cease to exert any effect – a state utterly counter to human epistemological nature.

But, human epistemological nature boasts another dyadic and dialogical relationship that is determinative of faithful resilience: that is the balance of *energeia* and profluence. As we have seen *energeia* is the push from behind, whereas profluence is the pull from in front. *Energeia.* then, provides impetus and force to faith, whereas profluence supplies a concept of direction. Force and direction are deeply reciprocal, however. *Energeia*'s force moves a person to seek the directional end that is promised in profluence, thereby acting as the engine of transformative movement. Profluence, on the other hand, energizes *energeia* through its promise of a desirable and worthwhile endpoint. The nexus of *energeia* to profluence creates a parallel counterbalance to that which we discovered about 'context/narrative' and 'mythic depth'. The *energeia*-profluence nexus is thus a self-promoting, stagnation resisting construct that, in and of itself, is determinative of resilience. Therefore, FCPC's definition and construction of faith sets forth the notion of a trusting impetus that is grounded in relational context, is rooted in 'mythic depth', is propelled by *energeia,* and is directed by profluence, all within a balanced and appointed construct that fosters deep resilience and a continued impetus toward questing.

Thus, by combining the definition, dimensions, and ontological modalities of faith, we come to an understanding of faith as a universal, ontological, epistemologically central, existentially constitutive, resilient, and self-propagating faculty of human psychic space. In so doing, we honour Fowler's preferences for faith as an ontological potentiation, as a central feature in human understanding, as a form of personal engagement, as a confluence of the knowledge of psychology and ministry, and as a universal feature of epistemology. In addition, our counterbalanced exposition pays homage to traditional lines of thought that see faith as entirely existential and external as well as

to humanistic scholarly commentary that renders faith as utterly internal; to both sides of the

discourse that defines faith development as taking place entirely through immanent workings, on the

one hand, and entirely through transcendental interactions, on the other; to both sides of the scholarly

debate around the differentiating or integrating functions of faith; and to both notions regarding the

particularity and universality of faith.

Part 3

Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC), The Model

We have thus come to a point in our discussion where we can set out FCPC, the model

proper. Through our discussion

to date, we have based

ourselves on Fowler's founding

categories   of faith

development: those of the

centrality of experiential

apprehension, the force of

symbolic representation, and

the constitutive function of

knowing/construal. We have set

out vectors of horizontal

interaction that conflate to

produce an ideal moment of

liminal vision, of congruence,

and of faithful response. Based in the in-between, these vectors are those of experience (wherein the
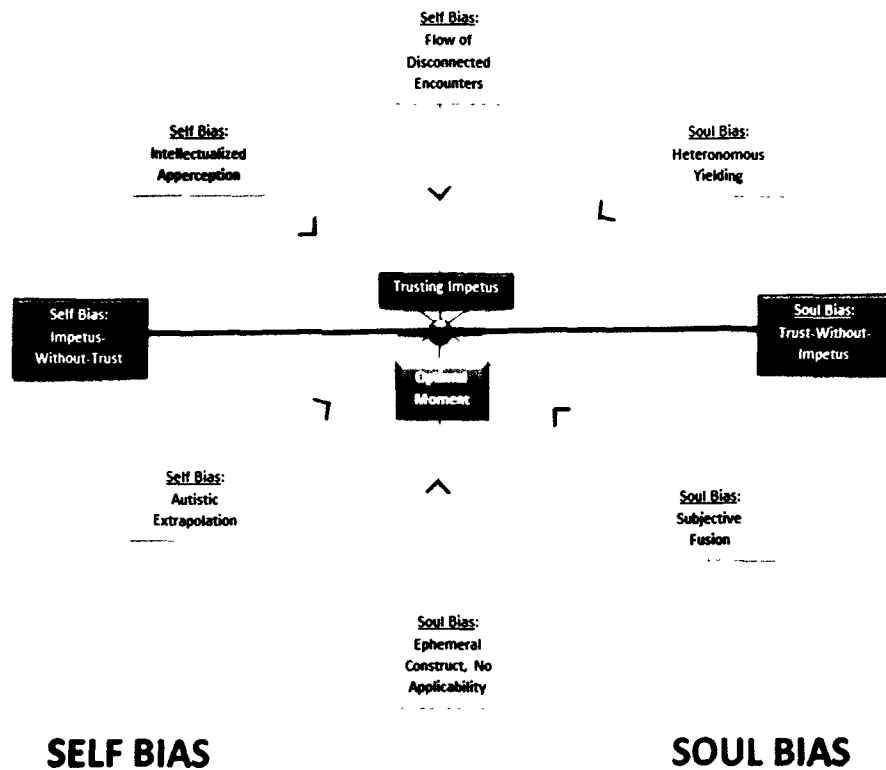

Figure 8 Faith Constitutive Pastoral Care, the Model

optimal incarnation is the attainment of fuller experience), representation (wherein the ultimate

incarnation is the attainment and maintenance of 'mythic space'), and knowing (wherein the optimal

incarnation is the attainment and maintenance of 'synergistic questing'). Together, these Vectors

relay a matrix of interaction in which relation and connection supersede structure and stage

attenuation, in which orientation to life's vagaries supersedes one's meaning-constitutive order of

consciousness, in which one's very grasping of the existential and divine elements of human

ontology take place through a perfect confluence of individual and Other (divine or mundane). Thus,

the confluence of vectors highlights the centrality of the notion of the in-between as the sphere in

which faith development is to take place. Thus, the congruent conflation of all the vectors (as well as

the individual force of each vector) within the in-between, represents a moment of investigation,

steeped in grace, innocence, and liminal presence, that is nothing short of a lifelong questing (a form

of pilgrimage) toward more attuned relation and a greater linkage with God.

We have then pulled these vector definitions together, and subsumed them to our definition

of faith. Faith is defined as a trusting impetus to quest-in-the-in-between. As an impetus to quest,

faith encompasses four seminal dimensions: that of 'context/narrative' (functioning through the in-

between and responsible for grounding faith in local relations and contexts); that of *energeia*

(functioning through the Experiential Vector and providing experiential impetus toward further

trusting development); that of 'mythic depth' (functioning through the Representational Vector and

providing resonance, salience, awe, and significance to one's liminal relations); and that of

profluence (functioning through the Knowing Vector, and providing an abducted and synergistic

sense of direction to faith). We then demonstrated how the interplay between these four dimensions

of faith results in a self-propagating and resilient faculty of human nature, that is both central to

knowledge and ontologically hard-wired into humankind.

Thus, we have retained the strengths of Fowler's system by proposing a definition of faith

central to human understanding, that is based in a deep and personal engagement in life, that is

universal in its ontological dimensions, that reflects the human potentiation for partnership with God, and that is conceived as a dialogue between the worlds of psychology and practical ministry. In addition, we have proposed a model of faith development that has resolved the weaknesses set out in Fowler's FDT: the conflation of 'faith' with the notions of meaning-making and ego psychology (in FCPC faith has its own definition that is separate from, yet utterly complementary to the functions of meaning and ego development), the use of vertical structuralism as a founding mechanism of faith development (in FCPC, the focus is on the horizontal and relational thereby removing the need to address stages and introducing the notion of styles of engagement), the unidirectional individualist bias (in FCPC, the sphere of interest is the liminal and relational, thereby transcending notions of the strictly individual), the invocation of the 'naturalistic fallacy' (in FCPC, the relational nature of the in-between maintains room for the mystery of creative and agentic communal interplay – within the self, with the other, and with God), the search for empirical 'hardness'(in FCPC, the world of faith development is conceived as that of the intersubjective, thereby allowing for empirical hardness in elucidation, but maintaining a stance of the inspirational, motivational, existential in function and operation), and the lack of an appeal in FDT toward a lasting and permanent entity (in FCPC, the self-soul nexus provides the framework through which a human being can be said to be transforming and qualitatively changing, on the one hand, while remaining continuous, lasting, related, and singular, on the other). Therefore, it is proposed that FCPC has succeeded in its quest to re-vision faith development modeling, by retaining the strengths and foundations of Fowler's esteemed work, while simultaneously providing correctives for its weaknesses. Yet, FCPC, in its foundational shifts of focus in a few key areas of theological and existential significance, has so changed the theory in which it was originally steeped (FDT) that, although every one of the changes can be shown to grow out of FDT's basic premise and philosophy, one is still left with the slightly uncomfortable feeling that, in Kegan's words, "the father of the creation might not recognize the child as his own."[552] But,

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[552] Kegan, *Evolving Self*.

perhaps such an uncomfortable feeling as part and parcel of re-visioning, as it disequilibrates psychic

space in search for a new accommodation.

And yet, there is one final weakness in FDT that we have not addressed in our explication:

this is the paradox introduced by Fowler's elucidation of stages in conjunction with his directive *not*

to pursue stage growth. FDT supplies us a vision of growth and maturity, as well as a directive not to

pursue its ultimate *telos*. In order to deal with this confusion, then, FCPC has to present a notion of

its own *telos*, and to demonstrate how this *telos* does not introduce an undue paradox into the pastoral

care system. This is the topic of our next section. According to FCPC, the *telos* of faith development,

its very purpose, is not stage attainment, but rather the development of character.

Part 4

The Telos of Faith Development: Character

Character is a superbly important component of FCPC's model of faith development; it is in

fact the model's *telos*. As the phenomenological grounding of otherwise epiphenomenological

impetuses, character is the connection we can relate to, the dimension we can control, and the bridge

over which we unite with transformation. It is for this reason that a brief explication of character as

seen through FCPC, is crucial to complete our discussion of faith development.

In FCPC, character is defined as the incarnation, identity, and expression of the fullness of

psychic space within the pragmatics of the world of relations. Therefore, character is inextricably

linked to one's orientation to the in-between as well as to the Experiential, Representational, and

Knowing Vectors, as they are animated through the trusting impetus of faith. Thus, our definition of

character is based on one's *trusting commitment to a faithful pursuit* of fuller experience, 'mythic

space', 'synergistic questing', and transformative intersubjective balance throughout daily life.[553] The

more trusting impetus one generates, the more experiential-paths one pursues, the more internal

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[553] Edgar Pierce, *Philosophy of Character*, 17.

images retain their mythic force, the more construal is derived from liminality, and the more a developing person can trustfully engage the intersubjective in internal dialogue, then, the more developed his/her character will be. Thus, any movement toward the optimal moment of faithful conflation, whether in the phenomenological or epiphenomenological sphere, will result in a commensurate increase in congruence, trust, impetus, and presence in the complementary sphere, as well as a furthered maturity in one's character. A mature character, then, is an individual's ability to innocently accept (grace), self-responsibly manipulate (a major achievement of the confluence of faith's modalities), lovingly engage (through a liminal questing), and congruently connect (through a trusting impetus) to presenting experience, regardless of whether that experience is internal, solitary, relational, or external. Thus, the greater one's scope of apprehension, the greater one's ability to embrace mythical transformation, the greater one's ability to exhibit grace and presence, and the greater one's ability to take free and congruent responsibility for one's abducted and intersubjectively constructed apprehensions and actions, the wiser, more mature, more developed, and more powerful one's character will be.[554]

Thus, character formation is the mediate, proximate, and phenomenological spike that grounds faith development in the complexities of everyday action and interaction. It is the portal through which meaning-making and object-relating effect lived reality, while simultaneously being the conduit through which experience and context find their way back to meaning and relation, in order to promote questing. Character then is the seat of social wisdom, the basis of lived knowing, the focus of connective relation, the tester and builder of meaning, and the vehicle of faith's horizontal legacy.[555] Our character defines how we are today, how we have been in the past, and who

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[554] In a brief statement, Fowler himself defines character a consistency, predictability, and stability of values, attitudes, and commitments in the life cycle. He does not go so far as to elucidate a conception of 'mature' character, or of 'character development'. Fowler, *Adult*, 12.

[555] Character, according to Joy, denotes a readiness for good action that comes to determine the disposition of a moral person. Joy, *Moral Development Foundation*, 106.

we can hope to become in the future. The growth of character is truly the *telos*, the goal, and mission of pastoral care, through FCPC.

Character's relation to faith's Representational and Experiential Vectors is akin to that of a bridge. Since character is fundamentally a faith-filled ability to interrelate with life's experiences in grace-filled, wise, reasoned, trusting, and responsible ways, introspective experience finds its fulfillment and amplification in a developed and attuned character. In addition, external experience (as a mirror and laboratory for internal preferences) comes to have a greater and clearer impact when it is filtered through the lens of a mature character. Thus, developed character is the handle which opens the vault of liminal experience and releases the secrets within. As a result of this release, relational biases can be controlled, re-balanced, and even transformed, in order to add momentum to the process of horizontal faith development. Furthermore, character, as a holistic synergy of faith-filled faculties, maintains a similar bridging and transformative role within the processes of dialogical abduction and liminal interaction –mediated by the in-between and the Knowing Vector.

Meaning structures are developed through abductive hypothesis formation and are tested for reliability through the complexities of shared interaction and experiential apprehension (the pragmatic principle). In addition to its interplay with the Experiential and Representational Vectors (above), character is comprised of the sum total of how one accepts and orients abductive construals and shared interactions toward faith's impetus of questing-in-the-in-between. Thus, character is the aspect of a person that bridges the gap between experience, representation, construal and relation, such that meaning, liminal, and existential constructs can be understood, studied, compared, and transformed, all within an air of trust and confidence in the final outcome (the very action of faith itself). In other words, it is the quality and maturity of character that determines the extent to which psychic space, meaning structures, and faithful preferences can be scrutinized and transformed. Therefore, mature character is a force of liminal transformation, a harbinger of change, and the legacy to faith development.

Character is thus the channel by which the modalities of faith (as expressed through psychic space) find grounding, expression, and fulfillment in the pragmatic world. It is the central point through which meaning, relation, and experience pass, the nexus of the phenomenological and epiphenomenological, the manipulator of the conscious and non-conscious, and a powerful concrete tool by which faith can assess its impetus and further grow. Therefore, the more one develops and nurtures character (through FCPC's model of faith development), the more one can achieve greater awareness ('self') and attunement ('soul'),[556] and realize more comprehensive and fulfilling encounters with the God and the world of the divine. Thus, character is a self-reflexive placement filter: a lens through which human beings place their meanings, experiences, interactions, and relations within the flow of daily life, and in turn enhance those very modal vectors that comprise one's orientation.[557] Therefore, faith's trusting impetus ends in the development of character – mature character is the *telos* of FCPC's model of faith development.

By maintaining character is the *telos* of its impetus, FCPC resolves a fundamental weakness that was contained within the folds of FDT. FDT, in its structural and vertical presentation of faith development, set out a series of stages, where each stage represented a higher attainment of faith maturity. And yet, such a construction was in danger of introducing a unilateral form of elitism into the complexities of the model, where lower stages would be viewed as somehow less worthy, adaptable, or capable than higher stages. In order to counteract this potential elitism, however, Fowler stipulated his belief that pastoral interaction should, under no circumstances, pursue the movement of careseekers from one stage to another. He asserted (and FCPC agrees with this assertion) that such an impetus to faith development would comprise a personal and spiritual arrogance on the part of the pastoral professional, as he/she seeks to create opportunities for the growth of the presenting careseeker. His solution, therefore, was to set forth a paradox of conception:

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[556] For more an awareness and attunement see Chapters 4 and 7.
[557] There are strong links here between FCPC's conception of character and Fowler conception of vocation. Fowler, *Adult*, 95.

he stated that a pastoral professional's role is to walk with the careseeker through presenting issues,

and not to pursue stage attainment. As a result of this interplay, however, the careseeker might move

through a stage transition.[558] Such a paradox is considered to be a weakness in FDT, as it literally

strips pastoral professionals of direction and ultimate *telos* as they work to include FDT in their

interventional repertoires.[559] FCPC proposes a solution to this paradox through its re-focusing of faith

development from field of the vertical to the field of the horizontal.

In FCPC, the *telos* of faith development is character formation. Thus, it is the role of pastoral

professionals, according to FCPC, to walk with careseekers through presenting problems *in order to*

lead them toward heightened, more attuned, more interconnected, and more congruent conceptions of

themselves, of themselves in relation, and of themselves as they face God. Such a *telos,* then, can be

applied to all careseekers. at all times, in response to all presenting stimuli, and at all ages and stages

of development. Hence, whereas FDT sets out a statement of ever-heightened stage iterations, FCPC

sets out a conception of relational health; whereas FDT set up a teleological outlook toward greater

ego maturity, FCPC sets out a teleological outlook of centeredness, congruence, and surrender;

whereas FDT implicitly postulates that higher is better, FCPC explicitly postulates that character

development can take place at any age and at any stage; and whereas FDT struggles to cover its stage

attainment basis with a paradox of practice, FCPC finds its conception of faith and faith development

(including all of its modalities and dimensions) to be congruent with traditional and biblically

sanctioned goals of pastoral practice (the development of mature character).[560] Thus, FCPC resolves

the final weakness in FDT listed in these pages.

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[558] Fowler, "Faith Development at 30," 423.

[559] For more on the pastoral implications of the paradox, as well as the practical confusion it may cause, see Chapter 6

[560] Fowler, *Weaving,* 94.

Part 5

FCPC and Pastoral Care

We are thus left with the final topic of these pages: the relation of FCPC to pastoral care. We have already provided an explication of the weaknesses of FDT related to pastoral practice (in Chapter 2), as well as an elucidation of the orientation to be taken by pastoral professionals toward careseekers, as per FCPC's founding tenets (being with, dialogue, and making present – Chapter 6). Thus, we have already come a significant distance in our discussion of FCPC in relation to pastoral practice. It is the purpose of this section to close that final loop, and propose some practical links between pastoral practice (as undertaken through the liminal concept of being with, dialogue, and making present) and FCPC's conception of faith. As we proceed, we will use the same categories of pastoral care that we introduced in Chapter 2 – those of education, counselling, and praxis. It should be stated before we proceed that these divisions of pastoral practice are taken, in our upcoming discussion, to be pure and exclusive representations of their individual disciplines. Therefore, in the paragraphs below, when we mention, for example, pastoral education, we are talking about a pure conception of education, as carried out by pastoral professionals (without the inclusion of elements of depth analysis, and praxis). It is acknowledged, however, that this is merely a rational construct to aid in our discussion, and that any pastoral intervention always involves a unique and careful mixture of all three categories.

A. Education

Donald Joy stated that the role of faith education is to supply the raw experiential materials such that, students in a classroom can scrutinize their values and decide on whether or not such values are to be retained or transformed.[561] Mott-Thorton, moving in a similar vein, proposes that the purpose of faith education is the questioning of and questing through the structure of current faith

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[561] Joy, *Moral Development*, 177.

construction in order to help students develop more attuned and more congruent faith structures.[562] Moving beyond this position, and carrying the notion of faith education into a mystical realm, Gabriel Moran stipulates that faith education is the attempt to keep learners open to the unaddressed possibilities in the human race.[563] In all of these cases, faith education is perceived as a fundamental impartation of what Pruyser calls 'transformational knowledge' – knowledge gleaned from practical wisdom and experiential attenuation, and applied to the movement of consciousness from one state to another.[564] And yet, the imparting of knowledge, when taken in its purest sense, is nothing other than the presentation of material through which cognition can engage the other levels of being. Thus, it is not that education touches the 'souls' of students; it is rather that education, so defined, intrigues the students' psychic space, so as to encourage him/her to pursue a further investigation that would, in turn, affect the 'souls' of students. Therefore, faith education is an act of knowing, a movement from the presented to the manifested, and a guide to a student's construal of the nature of faithful life. Faith education, then, is the activation of a form of faithful actualization, where the person of the teacher him/herself acts as the helper of that actualizing force, with the intention of developing a more mature character.[565]

To that end, the practice of faith education can be guided by the lens of the Knowing Vector – the modality of faith that seeks to abduct meaning and coherence from presented stimuli in order to produce a meaning-constitutive construal. The Knowing Vector is a modality of faith that seeks to move toward a moment of 'synergistic questing', as the liminal comes into a focused balance. As the seat of reason and rationality, it is this modality of faith that is of particular import to the art of education. Thus, according to FCPC, the focus of faith education should be on the presentation and/or elucidation of appropriate stimuli that would cause a questing student to take stock of his/her

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[562] Mott-Thorton, *Educating Faith,* 46.
[563] Durka and Smith, *Aesthetics,* 161.
[564] Pruyser in Patton, *From Ministry to Theology,* 46; Pruyser, *Changing Views,* 20.
[565] Buber, *The Knowledge of Man,* 73.

liminal engagements and convictions, and thus, through the use of abductive reasoning and synergistic construal, move to a form of understanding that actualizes further character development and faithful drive. Pastoral education, then, through the Knowing Vector, amplifies faith's trusting impetus by feeding it principles and experiences through which to find better 'self'-awareness and 'soul'-attunement.

Thus, FCPC sets forth a conception of pastoral education wherein information accessible within a present and dialogical relationship (see Chapter 6) is geared toward the enhancement of liminality and toward the attenuation of character. In other words, pastoral education is the art of providing would-be students with the information required to abduct certain construals, that would, in turn, move them along the Knowing Vector and toward 'synergistic questing'. The movement along the Knowing Vector would, in virtue of the fact that it is nothing but a modality of faith itself, increase faith's trusting impetus and therefore result in a more actualized and phenomenologically-apprehendable character. And yet, this movement along a vector is by no means an exact science. Although we have presented the anatomies of modalities of faith in a reductionistic and ordered manner, we cannot pursue the same *modus operandi* in discussing the function and application of the vectors. Consequently, FCPC's construction of faith, its modalities and dimensions, does not account for the actual *interplay* of person to modality, individual to dimension – nor should it. We do not buy in to the notion that component elucidation leads directly to style of functioning. Such interplay is considered a more mechanistic application of the 'naturalistic fallacy' – a denigration of the living breadth of faith and faith development. Rather, the very *functioning* of faith is left to the noumenal interplay between individual and pastoral professional, individual and context, and individual with God. Thus, pastoral education, in its quest to move students to ever-more proximal relations to 'synergistic questing' must, in a modelling of the tenets of FCPC, rely on the relational, the incarnational, and intersubjective. Hence, true pastoral education, according to FCPC, is not a kind of

ordered and phasic construction, as has been suggested by stage-focused educators.[566] Rather, it is the presentation of material, appealing to the Knowing Vector, in conjunction with *a soulful attunement to and discernment of* the very state of character development in which the student finds him/herself. By using the Knowing Vector, the pastoral professional seeks to discern whether a student's countenance leans more toward the autistic or the heteronomous, and works to present stimuli (lessons, lectures, exercises, and assignments) that encourage movement toward 'synergistic questing'.

It can be stated that pastoral education is a deeply soulful undertaking. Pastoral education cannot take place without discernment, and discernment cannot take place without wisdom, relationality, and deep inspiration. Consequently, FCPC explicitly believes that pastoral education is a three-entity process: a liminal convergence of teacher, student, and God, where discernment and inspiration is strictly the result of a 'soulful' openness to God's nudgings and where the desired goal resides in the development of character through the attenuation of the Knowing Vector.[567] It is this same tripartite dynamic of discernment and inspiration (that so closely mirrors one's internal 'tripartite construal') that is to be found in the each of the other two disciplines of pastoral practice.

B. Counseling

According to Clinebell, the pastoral counseling relationship is simply an intensification of the same quality of relatedness which should exist in one's relation to God.[568] In addition, the work of Rizzuto and Capps both outline the importance of internal mythical constructions in the forging of

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[566] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care.*

[567] There is empirical evidence that an increase in knowledge and education does in fact translate into a likelihood of higher ego development as well as higher FDT stage attainment. Thus, we can safely state our belief that an increase in knowing and construal goes a long way toward promoting an increase in faith development and personal maturity. Furushima in Astley, *Christian Perspectives*; Kwilecki in *Changing View,* 148.

[568] Clinebell, *Mental Health,* 213.

the nature and scope of one's theistic, relational, and affective interactions.[569] Thus, whereas secular

psychotherapy works with clients to achieve a level of healing through insight, realism, and relational

interactions, pastoral counselling goes a step further to include the imaginal, the existential, the

theistic, the communal, and the mythical. Therefore, FCPC encourages a conception of pastoral

counselling that seeks to further faith, by enhancing and fostering 'mythic space' and 'mythic depth',

as it works to help careseekers move toward a more mature character.

To this end, FCPC perceives a close and complementary link between the practice of pastoral

counselling and the use of the Representational Vector, through which to undertake pastoral

diagnoses and design pastoral interventions.[570] Every human being is replete with internal object

relations through which he/she encounters and interprets the world. According to Fowler (as well as

many other psychotherapeutic and pastoral scholars), the movement of imaginal content from the

non-conscious to the conscious is a seminal and foundational enterprise to which pastoral counsellors

should devote themselves. In agreement with this statement, FCPC presents its notion of the

Representational Vector as a guide to help pastoral professionals undertake this movement within

psychic space. Therefore, according to FCPC, a pastoral counselor, as a result of his/her attuned

'being with' the careseeker, as well as his/her client-centered engagement in a close dialogue to the

careseeker's experience, is to make an inspired discernment regarding the position of the careseeker

on the counterbalanced road between 'subjective fusion', on the one hand, and 'intellectualized

apperception', on the other (the Representational Vector). The goal of pastoral counseling when

undertaking imaginal manipulation is to walk with the careseeker as he/she moves psychic space into

the realm of the mythic, thereby understanding internal symbolic representation, and yet retaining a

constructive degree of mystery, parable, and *over*-meaning, in order to promote a more attuned

relation to all the encounters of life (including those of self, other, and God). It is also through the

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[569] Rizzuto, *Birth of the Living God*; Capps, "Melancholy Soul," 185.
[570] For more on pastoral diagnosis, see Pruyser, *Minister as Diagnostician;* Capps, *Pastoral Care.*

development of a consonant and consistent 'mythic space' that pastoral professionals can help

careseekers further relate to, integrate, and revere the symbols, images, and signs held within their

respective religious contexts, as well as in their shared relational backgrounds. Thus, 'mythic space'

is not only an area of personal understanding and fulfillment; rather, it is also an area of personal

engagement in the noumenal, existential, symbolic, and contextual, and is therefore a seminal and

founding conception in the development of an attuned character. In addition, every move along the

Representational Vector toward 'mythic space' will (as a result of the Representational Vector being

but a modality of faith) further the trusting impetus and the liminal questing that is the hallmark of

FCPC's definition of faith. Therefore, we can confidently state that an increased capacity to sit in

'mythic space' increases one's faith, as well as one's ability to come face to face with awe that is

presented by a liminal relation to God.[571]

C. Praxis

According to Fowler, pastoral praxis is a basic concern of practical minsitry, is customary and

transformative, requires a deep knowledge of human nature, and presents strategic initiatives and

intentional actions intended to lead people into a closer relationship to God.[572] FCPC, agreeing with

this impressive list of attributes, would add that praxis is the mode through which pastoral care takes

place. It is thus the confluence of all activities of practical ministry, with a special emphasis on

preaching, shepherding, engaging, researching and modeling the tenets of one's tradition on a

relentless and daily basis. Thus, pastoral praxis is not conceived as a temporary or spatially-defined

orientation. Pastoral praxis is defined as the personal engagement of all of life's presenting

encounters so as to promote a furthered trusting impetus to quest, in oneself, in one's complete

environment, with all of one's counterparts, at all times. The notion of such a complete and utter

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[571] Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode*, 70.
[572] Fowler, *Weaving*, 30; Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 16.

devotion to a vocational function can only take place through the complexities of an experiential

outlook that fosters resilience, courage, and further energy. It is for this reason that FCPC links the

notions and activities of pastoral praxis to the Experiential Vector.

Within the sphere of pastoral praxis, ministers have a dual engagement with the Experiential

Vector – both intra-personally and inter-personally. On an intra-personal basis, pastors and ministers

must display an extraordinary attunement to the events of daily life in order to be able to fulfill the

daunting challenge presented by their vocations. But, an awareness of and relation to the

complexities of life's stimuli cannot be apprehended through any other faculty than that of the

Experiential Vector. It is only through this vector that we can hope to orient ourselves in order

achieve an ability to engage ever-further in fuller experience. It is in the throes of fuller experience

that a minister can discern what needs to be discerned and grasp what needs to be grasped. It is in the

activation of fuller experience that a minister can orient his/her self-soul nexus toward the graceful

and wise acceptance of the events, messages, persons, and encounters that cross his/her path. It is

therefore, according to FCPC, a pastoral objective to work toward the attainment of fuller experience

in order to better be able to relate to oneself, to one's others, and most importantly to pastoral praxis,

to one's God. It is only through this internal congruence that a minister can constructively shepherd

and guide careseekers and congregants.

Throughout this activity of shepherding and guiding, pastors and ministers, according to

FCPC, should also rely on the power of the Experiential Vector in their inter-personal encounters.

Throughout exercises of preaching to and engaging congregants and careseekers, it is the

counterbalancing of the forces within the Experiential Vector that hold powerful sway. Thus,

whereas FDT provides little tangible aid to a preaching and shepherding professional (outside of the

concept of 'ecology of stages'),[573] FCPC, in its quest to develop faith through ontological modalities,

stipulates that a founding tenet of most, if not all praxis, is the furtherance and development of

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[573] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care.*

congregants' characters (both individually and communally). Thus, pastoral praxis falls squarely within the scope of FCPC, whose very *telos* it is to promote character development. As ministers undertake their shepherding and preaching tasks, FCPC provides the counterbalance of 'disconnected encounters', on the one hand, and 'ephemeral constructs' on the other, to help guide message construction, sermon direction, and the interpersonal liminality of the pastor. Such a counterbalance is considered appropriate for the activity of pastoral praxis since the content of most sermons and messages revolves around the phenomenological development and attenuation of a furthered faith, a more resilient spirit, and a more attuned character. It is just these points that are addressed in FCPC, through its modality of the Experiential Vector.

A Final Thought

It is essential to remind the reader that, as stated in Chapter 6, the founding tenet of FCPC's approach to pastoral care is that of relationality, incarnated impetus, trusting congruence, and liminal attunement. The concepts of 'being with', dialogue, and making present (Chapter 6) in conjunction with the activities of faith-related education, counseling, and praxis bring about a powerful and transformative system of careseeker/congregant engagement. Far from being a reductionistic account of simple psychological tenets, FCPC incorporates existential concerns as well as the need for divine participation and inspiration, should the vectors of faith, faith itself, and the development of character be soulfully and constructive discerned. Thus, FCPC provides a liminal model of engagement in which the intersubjectivity of the careseeker, the pastor, and God ('tripartite construal') come together in a single moment and space of confluence and congruence, in order to further the 'trusting impetus to quest-in-the-in-between' that is faith. What we have, then, is a unique interpretation of Oden's kenotic relationship where, instead of having the counselor empty him/herself and descend into an empathic communion with the careseeker's experience, the confluence of the careseeker, counselor, and God empties itself of preconceived notions of impetus, in order to discern the very

personal, the very deep, and the very mythic inspirations that are required for the furtherance of faith (and therefore character).[574] It is also an interesting interpretation of Oden's salient notion of the incarnational relationship, where the confluence of careseeker and counselor incarnates the caring and grace representative of Christ's countenance, thereby allowing for the biblical message to be experienced, rather than simply heard or read.[575] In FCPC, the arena of engagement is the liminal, the intersubjective and the tripartite – the confluence epistemological worlds.[576] As a consequence, FCPC, in agreement with Oden, presupposes an ontological assumption that God is with us, and meets that God in the confluence of the in-between. Thus, whereas for Oden, incarnational relations implied a particular posture on the part of the counselor, for FCPC, incarnational relations are pre-supposed in the quality of the in-between. Thus, in FCPC, there is a joint responsibility of the careseeker, of the minister, and of God to make themselves present in the in-between. It is thus a powerful meeting of beings and a transformational, albeit subtle, kerygma of the grace and good news of God. As such, FCPC does not view faith development as some sort of salvational exercise based in the Socratic achievement of insight (as many models of pastoral counseling do). Rather FCPC pre-supposes the presence of a living and divine Being, who populates the in-between in conjunction with the careseeker, and provides His own unique gift of relatedness, connection, and impetus to the developing character. Therefore, FCPC, when approached through a lens of the actions within the practical art of ministry, provides an ontological presupposition for the nature of relation, the direction of transformation, the energy of discovery, the power of myth, the importance of context, the reality of the liminal, the development of character, and thus, the very movement of faith.

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[574] Oden, *Kerygma and Counseling*, 52.
[575] Oden, *Kerygma and Counseling*, 19.
[576] Gerkin, *Hermeneutical Mode*, 53.

Section 6

Epilogue

Faith-Constitutive Pastoral Care (FCPC) has sought to present a re-visioned model of faith development that maintains the great strengths of Fowler's FDT while incorporating correctives to counteract its weaknesses. Over the course of the past ten chapters, we have elucidated this model of FCPC, thereby presenting a conception of faith development that is horizontal/relational in approach, general in application, universal in its ontological presuppositions, and pastorally useful, in its application. It should be noted, however, that this work is not meant as a challenge to Fowler's FDT or as a denigration of the salience of the work held therein. The author of this work holds no illusions regarding the foundational importance of FDT for the foregoing chapters. Were it not for three decades of conception and debate, the tenets in these pages would not have been possible. Thus, it is not that FCPC seeks to replace FDT and move Fowler to the sidelines; it is rather that, in the elucidation of this model, we base ourselves of the wisdom, devotion, and passion of those who have gone before us. Thus, we are literally standing on the shoulders of giants, and are deeply grateful to them for their inspiration and probing investigations. Just as this work came from the legacy of past work, so, it is hoped, future work could be based on the dialogue begun in these pages.

To that end, future work related to FCPC could focus on intensive explications of each of its vectors, on a theological exploration of liminal interaction as it is related to character development, on a complete theologically informed explication of each of the paths to fuller experience, on a fulsome and cogent exposition of the relation between faith and character, on a further investigation of the nature and construction of character, or on the psychological implications of a trusting impetus. On a more theoretical and theological plane, further research could be conducted into the meeting of the Divine in the liminal, into God as a transitional object, into a Trinitarian elucidation of the 'tripartite construal', or into an exposition of the Incarnation of Christ as the supreme example of faith-constitutive liminality. Whatever the case, it is believed that FCPC can provide the basis for a

rich discourse of study and dialogue, that would work to further the incarnation of the Kingdom of God on earth. That, of course, is the implicit reason for promoting faith development to begin with.

It is also hoped that this work will encourage further inter-disciplinary dialogue between ministry, psychology, psychotherapy, and philosophy, all discourses that have made their influences known in the foregoing pages. As the penchant for investigative integration progresses (thereby blurring traditional separations of discourses), it is hoped that further cooperation and dialogue, rather than protectionistic defense and separation, will become the dominant epistemological culture in research and pastoral circles. Just as the growth of faith and the development of character take place in the in-between, so it is believed that this future of growthful theology and practical ministry is to be found in the liminal space wherein the various disciplines meet. Hence, reflecting our model of faith development, it is believed that our future (and the salience of church, in and of itself) is to be found not in an elitist stance (as is sadly being expressed today by many groups), but rather in a differentiated integration, a moment of union and intercourse in which identity is retained, a confluence of heartfelt and open investigation that is nothing other than an investigative reflection of de Chardin's Omega Point.[577]

It is only thus that we can attain a concerted culture of faith development, a universal movement toward attuned character, a general drive toward trust, and most importantly, an innocent and congruent impetus for questing.

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[577] de Chardin, *Phenomenon of Man.*

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