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Holistic Religious Education: Toward a More Transparent Pathway from Philosophy to Practice

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HOLISTIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

TOWARD A MORE TRANSPARENT PATHWAY

FROM PHILOSOPHY TO PRACTICE.

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DECLARATION

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used

have been acknowledged in this thesis.

Signature:

DEDICATION

To my God – the Great author and finisher of my faith, and His helpers:

Mum and Dad, Alan and Deirdre Lindsay, who have given me

powerful examples of living, resolute faith;

Kendell who has walked the path way both ahead of me

and beside me with such depth and insight,

(and who never failed to hand over a great thought

even though he had need of it in that moment,

clearly an indicator of one who is spiritually-formed);

and to our Racquel and Hayley, who continue to delight us as they

are drawn into the magnetic field of life-with-God.

I am *richly blessed.*

Lanelle

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ABSTRACT

The challenge to match philosophy with practice is an age-old concern. For Seventh-day Adventist Education, the challenge is no different. Within this context rests religious education. In this more specific realm, this challenge has been impeded in a number of different ways. Two are relevant to this study.

The Adventist religious education classroom could well be considered a nexus for the purposes of Adventist educational philosophy. It holds much potential for holistic, authentic faith formation. There is evidence to suggest however, that in recent years, instruction in religious education within the context of Adventist Education has been somewhat paralysed by the dichotomies emerging from enlightenment and modernism; the fracturing of reason and emotion, thinking and acting. This has lead to practice that has been typified by a predominantly cognitive, information-driven emphasis. Such a characterization has had implications for the nurture of holistic faith, and the purposes of Adventist education have been compromised as a result.

In addition to this, as with any educational practice, there exists within the teaching of religious education the propensity to divorce what is philosophically valued from what is practically applied. The invasion of expedient concerns can obscure what is deemed important, and the result is one of idealistic erosion.

It is believed that a tool that can remind the teacher of holistic, aspirational goals can be of benefit to both pedagogy and student experience. The pathway between philosophy and practice can then be viewed with more transparency and authenticity.

Recent decades have brought forth much enlightenment in the areas of best educational practice as it relates to holistic, authentic learning, and the crucial ingredients of faith formation for the young. The researcher believes that multiple spheres of influence, not only from the realms of education and faith formation, but also brain research, sociology and psychology have much to offer a holistic approach to religious education that will assist movement towards a personal and established faith. This study seeks to fuse what is relevant from these disciplines and forge ingredients of best practice into a practical tool that can not only make vision and purpose accessible, but holistic religious education, and ultimately spiritual formation more possible.

The resulting *Transformational Planning Framework* offers a re-centering of the focus and modus operandi of religious education. It serves to protect what is valued in Adventist educational philosophy, and propel it towards the ultimate goals it so highly esteems.

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RESEARCH CONTEXT AND APPROACH

"Vision without action is merely a dream,
Action without vision just passes the time.
Vision with action can change the world."
Joel Barker

INTRODUCTION

At the dawn of the 1900's, sociologist Ellen Key declared, "Absolutely new truths are very rare. Truths which were once new must be constantly renewed by being pronounced again from the depths of the ardent convictions of a new human being" (1997, 62). So it is with an exploration of religious education from within a Seventh-day Adventist Educational context. The purpose of this study is to "pronounce again from the depths of the ardent convictions of a new human being" (Key, 1997, 62) truths that have emerged with increasing strength over the last decade with regard to the formation of faith and the teaching of religious education. Such an exploration will be undertaken with the view to pursuing 'truths' that might enhance the practice of religious education in the Adventist educational context with optimal efficacy.

Adventist Education has always promoted the formation of faith as its raison d'être. Adventists claim that it was a mission born millennia ago by God Himself in Matthew 28, when he commanded, "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Vs 19). This pronouncement invited Christ's followers to participate in what Christians believe to be the most momentous endeavour one can be involved in. With the *Great Commission*, transformation became mission (Hull, 2006). The need for the cultivation of a vibrant encounter with the living God was "pronounced again" for Adventist Educators over a century ago, from the "ardent convictions" of Ellen White, Adventist prophetess, who articulated the need for Adventist schools to be a means of nurturing the redemptive process. She stated, "The work of education and the work of redemption are one" (1903,16), and she proceeded to expand what this might look like in the process of Adventist Education through the delineation of secondary aims and purposes (1903, 1913). The import of her words was

underscored by her belief that if Adventist Education failed at this foundational point, it failed entirely (1923, 436). Clearly, the formation of personal faith, expressed through Christian discipleship is inextricably woven in to the fabric of Adventist educational heritage and certainly provides the bull's eye on the target of Christian education (Willard cited in Gangel, 2005, 155).

Given this historical framework, the teaching of religious education in schools could well be seen as an optimal environment for this "work of redemption". Ellen White's advice that "the teaching of the Bible should have our freshest thought, our best methods, and our most earnest effort" (1913, 181) bears testament to its stature in the Adventist education context. Certainly, a declaration of Bible classes as being Adventist schools' 'core business' has embedded itself in the Adventist educational lexicon of meaning. Twenty-five years ago, Knight's identification of Bible class as providing a 'unique forum' for students (1985, 182) where the true purpose of Adventist education can be pursued and students can be led into "a saving relationship with Jesus Christ" (Knight, 1985, 30) only highlights the quintessential nature of Bible classes for this purpose. In light of this, Knight's reflective question at that time still rings true: "Are our instructional programs structured to reach the desired destination?" (Knight, 1985, 175).

With the passage of time and changing pressures for Adventist Educators, measured research and reflection on the salient elements that will take religious education to the "desired destination" of "a saving relationship with Jesus Christ" (Knight, 1985, 173, 30), and resulting in discipleship for students is imperative. If Adventist Education desires to practice not only spiritual integrity, but also its core business in the twenty-first century, the fusion of philosophy and practice is a necessity, not a

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luxury. The truth needs to be 'pronounced again' with 'ardent conviction' (Key, 1997) in our complex era, and the optimal ways of doing this invite attention.

Knight's synthesis of the goals of Adventist education as proposed by White is particularly helpful at the outset of this study. His visual schema synthesising messages within her writing is noted below in Figure 1.1 and notes the interconnection between these goals and purposes. Of significance in this summary is the primary goal of a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. This must be the starting point in any faith initiative. All other goals flow from this one; a fact that will receive significant attention throughout this study. It is self-evident that any action that propels practice toward these primary, secondary and ultimate goals is deemed worthy of pursuit to the Adventist educator. It could also be said that what is sought in Adventist religious education also precisely aligns with the ultimate goals of Seventh-day Adventist education. In effectuating one, the other is also fulfilled. This is important to note at the outset of this study.
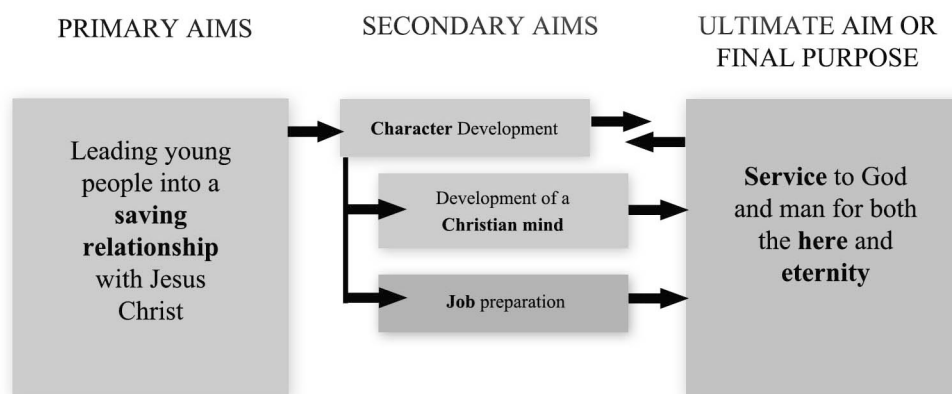
Figure 1.1
Knight's summary of White's Purposes of Christian Education

Because of White's prominence in the launch of Adventist Educational philosophy, and because her words reiterate so many of the concepts being 'pronounced again' in this study, her work will feature throughout.

BROAD HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Westerhoff's declaration that Christian faith and education are "inevitable companions" (1976, 1) is both philosophically inevitable and an historical reality. His identification of the religious education movement eclipsing every other aspect of Church life in the first two decades of this century underscores the truth that "wherever living faith exists, there is a community endeavouring to know, understand, live and witness to that faith" (Westerhoff, 1976, 1). In his estimation, the early Christian Education movement "had a mind and soul" (Westerhoff, 1976, 27); it was a form of practical theology that brought "action and reflection together; [uniting] scripture, tradition and experience" (Westerhoff, 1976, 31). Prior to the modern era, theology had always been, in Charry's opinion 'a sapiential practice'. Sapience, by her definition was "engaged knowledge that emotionally connects the knower to the known" (1997, 4). During this period, "the primary task of theology was to assist people to come to God" (Charry, 1997, 5). Certainly the legacy left to Adventist Education from Ellen White similarly encouraged this broad and experiential focus in practice,

> "Our ideas of education take too narrow and too low a range. There is need of a broader scope, a higher aim. True education means more than the pursual of a certain course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that now is. It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers" (1903, 13).

The vision is a lofty one indeed, one that would appear to have been diminished with the passage of time. Not only have priorities changed, but also as other demands have invaded. With the industrial age and the ensuing explosion of modern science and 'enlightenment', rationality and reason became privileged over the affective educational domains, and came to be seen as the way to truth and enlightenment. 'Liberation' from the irrational emotions was seen as favourable. With this trend, 'sapience' was torn apart (Charry, 1997). This dichotomy prevailed in the subsequent agenda of modernity that gripped public education during the twentieth century (Miller, 2003), which further enthroned fact and reason. These significant trends have compounded this dilution of holistic knowledge. Palmer's assertion summarises this focus, in his thought that during this time, gradually "humanity became 'watered down', turning wisdom into information, community into consumerism, politics into manipulation, destiny into DNA – making it increasingly difficult to find nourishment for the hungers of the heart" (cited in Kessler, 2000, v). Maslow's opinion that "history is a record of how we have sold the potential of humanity short" (Jensen, 1993) indeed, became a consolidated notion. Teaching and learning during this time was characterized by a fixation on curriculum development rather than human development, which in Stoddard's opinion became a dam blocking educational reform (1992). Given this material reality, it is not surprising that the last decade has peppered schools with an inundation of headlines reporting a "generation at risk" (Kessler, 1999, 49), for information alone is not enough.

The drive in public education for cognition that "ignored the inner life" but became equated with "amassing data and mastering sterile technique" (Kessler 2000, v), seems to have been trafficked into Christian Education to become the blight of

religious education. Petersen's experience captures that of decades of students in Christian schools when he states that, "The educational approaches in all the schools I attended conspired to ignore the wisdom of the ancient spiritual leaders who trained people in the disciplines of attending to God and forming the inner life so that it was adequate to the reception of truth, not just the acquisition of facts" (1989, 89). Cognitive assent channeled through an information-driven curriculum certainly has shaped the landscape of Adventist religious education teaching in past decades, as is shown by curricula developed during this time. Dudley's assertion that "Seventh-day Adventists have always put a high premium on the belief components of religion" (1992, 81) has characterized practice.

Valuegenesis II, a second study in the most expansive research on the faith of Adventist young people in the United States of America, reveals that one area in which Adventist Educators have had "reasonable success" in is the arena of "mental assent to the doctrinal positions of the church" (Gillespie et al, 2004, 291). In matters of doctrinal knowledge "we continue to be impressed with theological commitment of our youth" claimed Gillespie (1989, 67). Such mental assent on the intellectual plane (Knight, 1985), seems to have characterised the efforts of Adventist Education, to such a degree that Valuegenesis II brings ambiguity about the effectiveness of Adventist schools in having even so much as a 'positive' influence for Adventism. In this second study, Gillespie's concern over the number who were 'not sure' about the answer to this question (a startling 75%) is one that needs to be taken seriously (2004, 310).

It would seem that for all its cognitive-doctrinal emphasis, Adventist education has not always produced individuals who are passionate about their faith affiliation. Evidently, 'knowing about' and 'knowing' are two entirely different realities, inviting two vastly different approaches. There is a cosmic difference between "learning about the Bible and living as a disciple of Jesus Christ" (2004, 23). The writer is of the opinion that God does not want encyclopedias of data, but faithful followers. Clearly, intellectual truth is not necessarily a catalyst for heartfelt passion for God.

Hilde identifies this reality with a more blunt assertion: "In too many cases the education provided in our schools has not appreciably changed young people…. A person can graduate from being a stupid sinner to an intelligent sinner" (1980, 173). Such a statement highlights an historical impediment in the biblical studies modus operandi of Adventist schools.

These voices highlight what Coe (2009) describes as the 'sanctification gap' – that gap which exists between what is known to be the goal and where a person actually is in his/her life. This is, in the opinion of Coe, a significant dilemma. He asserts that the best theological teaching "may in fact be partly responsible for the sanctification gap in so far as it does a better job of presenting the spiritual ideals and goals from the Bible than it provides the necessary wisdom to assist people in their daily growth" (2009, 6). This can leave a legacy of frustration with "good words of what we should be and little wisdom on how to get there…. It leaves a theoretical-experiential gap… in explanation and understanding about the dynamics and motivations involved in spiritual growth" (Coe, 2009, 6).

It would seem that the propensity for this kind of fragmentation has been mirrored in the wider educational landscape. Palmer explores what he defines as the 'broken paradoxes' of education,

> "We separate head from heart, resulting in minds that do not know how to feel and hearts that do not know how to think. We separate facts from feelings, resulting in bloodless facts that make the world distant and remote and ignorant emotions that reduce truth to how one feels today. We separate theory from practice, resulting in theories that have little to do with life and practice that is uninformed by understanding, and we separate teaching from learning, resulting in teachers who talk but do not listen and students who listen but do not talk" (1998, 69).

The potential damage that such broken paradoxes represent to the mission and purpose of biblical curriculum is unmistakable. Faith can easily become a fractured process, and the end result can be compromised. Certainly, in a world where outcomes dominate, if something is to be sacrificed, it will invariably be the affective elements within this juxtaposition, for quantifiable tangibles are far more easily measured than the affective abstract. Such has been the legacy of the age of reason. It is a great irony that a commission so focused on the integration of action with belief; head heart and hand, should be ever splintered through reasoning alone.

Recent Trends in Education

Fortunately, the past decade has also rewarded us with a myriad of voices accenting a more holistic approach to education. Voices in public education such as Gardner (1983), Goleman (1995), Miller (1994), Noddings (1984), Schaps et al (1997), Elias et al (1997), Glasser (1998), Solomon (2000), Sizer (1999) and an aggregation of other thinking educators, have formed a compelling chorus calling for an 'authentic' model that "does not ignore the soul, or the heart of those who participate in the

educational journey" (Kessler, 2000, v). In so doing, they have sought to "reclaim the integrity of teaching and learning so that it can once again become a process in which the whole person is nourished" (Kessler, 2000, v), and eroding the enthroned fact and reason (Miller, 2003). Informed thinking in this area suggests that indeed, the former can in fact inform and enhance the latter, expanding it and making it more dynamic.

Recent Trends in an Understanding of Faith

Similarly, in the arena of Christian spirituality, thought-leaders such as Willard (2002, 2006), Foster (1989), Boa (2001), Petersen (2003), (Benner (2003), Mullholland (1985), Nouwen (2005) and others have challenged thinking about holistic nature of spiritual formation, and Adventist educators such as Gillespie (2004), Knight (1985), Oliver (2006), Hasel (2006), King (2006) and Luxton (2004) have challenged Adventist educators to think more holistically about what matters in the formation of faith. It would seem that with such a plethora of wisdom and insight, the tide has turned and paved the way, at least in theory, for biblical teaching to be a laboratory where God is experienced more fully, rather than a museum where He is just observed.

Recent Trends in Adventist Religious Education

Recent trends in Adventist education in Australasia noted in the work of Hughes (1993), Sonter (1989) and McClintock (1995) highlight a range of other salient points pertinent at the outset of this study. While there were some meritorious aspects of the results of the Australian and New Zealand Valuegenesis 1992 study, McClintock's analytical assessment of a range of commentators on this study on

faith in young people concluded, "All agree that there is no room for complacency, but rather there is a need to enhance the family, the church and the school environments as they work together to nurture the faith of the people in the church" (1995, 30).

Of concern in the more recent exploration of faith in young people within Adventist schools has been the concern over the trend in declining faith between elementary and secondary school students (Benson & Eklin, 1990; Gillespie 1991 cited in McClintock, 1995). In Widmer's estimation "to discover that high faith maturity does not increase between Grades 6 and 12 in spite of our vast educational system should wake us up. To find that loyalty to Adventism decreases slightly as our youth move through the academy years should shock us" (1991, cited in McClintock, 1995, 32). Menegusso's 1980 study confirms this conclusion. "The longer students were exposed to SDA education, the more they tended to know about religious facts and appreciate religious beliefs, but the less they tended to translate that knowledge and appreciation into their devotional life and lifestyle" (cited in Sonter, 1989, 28). Hughes make comment on the attrition rates born from such reduced loyalty in his core report from Valuegenesis I (Australia and New Zealand), "the influence of home, church and school is not sufficient to prevent the youth from losing their Christian commitment and the relationship to the church" (1993, 3). Sonter adds weight to this concern, "considerable numbers of young people "never join or join and later leave the church" and there is a "general concern that SDA schools are not succeeding in keeping young people in the church" (1989, 3, 4).

McClintock's summation of Adventist Education as reflected in the Australasian

Valuegenesis study identified "a cold, impersonal climate and the quality of religious

education" as two of the four key factors that were negatively impacting the

reputation of the system (McClintock, 1995, 33). He saw this as highlighting "the

need for change – the need to respond to the data with a sense of urgency"

(McClintock, 1995, 34).

Given the significant proportion of corporate and private church resources committed

to its education system (Sonter, 1983), this has been an unfortunate historic reality.

While this data is decades old, the challenges seem to continue with perennial

regularity, and little recent research exists to contradict it. What also seems truant in

the research archives is data that reflects on the actual characteristics of schools and

their correlation to enhanced levels of faith (Sonter, 1989) that could give clues to a

way forward. Such is the recent historic context that this study confronts.

Recent Approaches to Adventist Religious Education Curriculum

In its 1996 syllabus document, the South Pacific Division Adventist Secondary Bible

Syllabus held the worthy aim "to facilitate student encounters with a loving God".

This was a meritorious goal, reflecting this more recent experiential faith model.

However, financial limitations at the time of the release of this document constrained

training opportunities, and thus prevented such a goal from being fully explored,

clarified and ultimately inculcated into practice with rigorous intent. In addition to

this, while there was a selection of generic guiding practices outlined at the

beginning of the document that could move students toward this end, scaffolded

help, or structured support with the methodology of delivery was somewhat truant; a fact highlighted in Mitchell's 2007 study. She claimed that in this syllabus, "there is no definite focus and methodology that should be applied and is often left to the teacher's own personal interpretation…. It is the methodologies that need to be examined" (51). The result has been that this worthy goal has somewhat fallen short of penetrating systemic collective consciousness. While overview framework documents have reflected the importance of this encounter experience and do not, by nature, delineate implementation strategies; the subsequent limited training in the implementation of the syllabus has led to a regrettable lack of philosophical buy-in and a prevalence of mental tread milling. In the writer's view, Adventist Education as a system has not been particularly characterised by highly experiential, heart-targeted, inquiry-based practice that intentionally pursues such encounters and develops a biblical model of discipleship (Matthew 28). Anecdotal empirical research in the field has identified a prevalence of 'worksheet theology', an easy solution for the busy teacher who draws material from various cognitively saturated curricula.

In 2006, the Australian Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church sponsored a Curriculum report to examine the practice of curriculum by various schools in Conferences within Australia as a means of setting appropriate direction for the future (Lloyd, 2006). This comprehensive report brought a number of valuable recommendations, including one that has specific implications for the direction of religious education for Adventist schools in Australia. Lloyd's report gave voice to what has been anecdotally suspected for a number of years; that the attrition-rate of Adventist young people from faith is of a disturbing level, requiring "radical and substantial solutions" (Lloyd, 2006, 8). Given the historic cognitively

driven approach, this is no surprise. In the wake of such a reality, Recommendation

2d of his report stated that,

> *"Commitment be made to, and substantial funding provided for, the re-examination from first principles of the whole of the K-12 Bible curriculum, commencing with a description of the range of pupil/student types, of their understood spiritual needs and of what is expected best in a Bible/Religion program to meet those needs, on the understanding that all relevant stakeholders are to be consulted and that a Steering Committee for the above be established as a matter of urgency"* (2006).

This recommendation was subsequently acted upon, and has brought Adventist

Education in the South Pacific to a significant crossroad.

CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Such a sobering recommendation invites an honest look at the unprecedented

challenges that Adventist teacher's grapple with in the twenty-first century. These

challenges impact the focus, development, teaching and efficacy of religious

education. The pervading malaise of moral relativism characteristic of post-

modernity, the high levels of accountability demanded of educators, the

characteristics of post-modern youth and the laodicean trends in Christianity referred

to in Revelation, all compound the role of the teacher of biblical curriculum.

The Challenge of Moral Relativism

The challenge of moral relativism is one that confronts every teacher of religious

education. Few would dispute the rapid moral decline in even recent decades.

According to Adventist theology, ours is a world deeply fractured by sin, a concept

central to Christian theology. Evidenced through blatant aggression, lawless behaviour, egocentric worldview and this more insidious harm of moral relativism, it pervades life in the twenty-first century. Nowhere is the reality of this litany of issues played out more graphically than in the classroom; that crucible of society - and no group is possibly more aware of a moral vacuum than teachers, who function in this microcosm of society. For the religious education teacher who seeks to impart absolute biblical truth, such relativism represents a significant challenge. In light of such a challenge, more than ever before, practical tools are needed to help teachers connect with students in meaningful ways, and connect them to God with authenticity so they can be led into His perspective on truth.

The Challenge of Cognitively driven Educational Accountability

In addition to the demise of morality, schools live in an age of educational accountability where pedagogy lies in the crucible of scrutiny. As a result, the demands imposed on educational practice today are overwhelming, and the focus of teachers can easily gravitate to elements of educational but not spiritual significance. Government mandates and increased pyres of paperwork have given an increased profile to elements of the teaching process that do not necessarily grow faith, and it is easy for these to become all-consuming foci, while those elements so pivotal to the development of a connection with God, our growth as human beings and disciples, become far too easily eclipsed by the pursuit of expedient academic accountability, and as a result, the important can be displaced by the urgent.

The Challenge of Post-Modern Youth

Further to these educational challenges, there is the added contemporary challenge of the *pulse* of this current generation. "The remote control symbolizes their reality: change is constant; focus is fragmented. They've eaten from the tree of knowledge. The live for now… nothing shocks them. They take consumerism for granted. They are a cyber-suckled community… They've had everything handed to them." (Zoba cited in Gillespie et al, 2004, 24). In short they are post-modern, bringing the complex matrices of their culture. But for all the challenges these bring, it is important to note that they do care about God (Gillespie et al, 2004, 24). This is no small reality, and it must be at the forefront of thought as a relevant future is forged. Palmer identifies the results of this dilemma for educators. "The pace of change has us snarled in complexities, confusions and conflicts that will diminish us, or do us in, if we do not enlarge our capacity to teach and to learn" (1998, v). That we "enlarge our capacity to teach and learn" with holistic relevance constitutes one purpose of this study.

Of particular relevance to the issue of curriculum development in light of this is Pearcey's comment, "Christians are not called to be only like immigrants, simply preserving a few customs and phrases from the old country. Instead, we are to be like missionaries, actively translating the language of faith into the language of the culture around us" (2004, 67). To pursue this kind of relevance to a group of searching human beings constitutes another purpose of this study. Oliver points out that this is indeed an imperative, "Discussion of curriculum is fruitless unless the

goal is to reach the young…. We need a curriculum that entices Virtual Kids to know God" (2004, 5, 24).

The Challenge of Trends in Christianity

Thought-leaders in the Christian community also identify challenges that plague a Christianity caught in the grip of a post-modern world, challenges that have an impact on students in Adventist Schools. Willard is one such leader who identifies the disappointment expressed by society about the character and effects of Christian people (2006, ix). His pertinent question challenging the extent to which *disciples* have been developed "in any substantive sense" is a real one, considering "disciple" to be "a learner, a student, an apprentice – a practitioner even if only a beginner" (Willard, 2006, xi). The general thought by professing Christians is that discipleship is optional.

Barna's research has certainly noted that many adults "see spiritual development of children as a value-added proposition rather than the single most important aspect of children's development" (2003, 14). He shares the view that the New Testament is "a book about disciples, by disciples and for disciples of Jesus Christ" (2003, 3). Willard's work is a parenthesis to discipleship as mandatory in the Christian life. His declaration relating to the lack of "orderly progress through the content of Christian living" (cited in Gangel, 2005, 155), and the need for a 'genuine curriculum' highlights a need that is particularly pertinent to this study. Willard's questions invite reflection in light of an exploration of biblical curriculum and return one again to the challenge of the *Great Commission* (Matthew 28): to 'make

disciples'. Gillespie et al's declaration of radical discipleship as being developed not through "intellectual assent, but by the example of a friend, by a loving and accepting community, and, ultimately by the steadfast love of God" (2004, 155) proffers wisdom worthy of note at the outset of this study.

FUTURE DIRECTION FOR ADVENTIST BIBLICAL CURRICULUM IN LIGHT OF CHALLENGES

In light of this consortium of challenges, one could concur with Knight that "religious instruction in Adventist Schools must aim at larger targets than it sometimes has in the past" and question whether we are "currently using the best possible means to reach those goals" (1985, 183). Westerhoff's identification of the ease with which schools are imprisoned by past frames of reference that can easily serve as barriers to new possibilities (Westerhoff, 1979) also offers salient caution. Any new possibilities involve embracing new thinking about what is ultimately important in the teaching of religious education.

In light of this desire, it is interesting to note that Valuegenesis II identifies a high interest by Adventist young people to "go deeper into relationship with God." (Gillespie et al, 2004, 61). Eighty-one percent of respondents responded positively to this question, making it the highest register in the study. This inherent interest is a resounding touchstone to all who wish to pursue "larger targets" in practice. As stated, contrary to some accounts, post-modern young people desire God. Further to this, while the study identified a greater understanding of grace in Adventist youth, (Gillespie et al, 2004) than the initial Valuegenesis study (Dudley, Gillespie, 1992),

there is still an identifiable desire to learn more about grace. Seventy-six percent of senior students expressed a desire to explore such themes more (Dudley & Gillespie, 1992): a high interest level indeed. Such research provides a rich source of hope, as the pathway to Westerhoff's "new possibilities" (1976) and Knight's "larger targets" (1985) are being scrutinized.

The call to discipleship suggested by Willard (2006) and Gillespie et al (2004) is relevant, as a new instructional paradigm for religious education is considered. Palmer's identification of man's preoccupation with viewing the world with the eye of the mind; a view of fact and reason, or the eye of the heart; with its sense of loving community, is an insightful one. The foregoing evidence would indicate that Adventist educators have historically primarily focused on fashioning biblical curriculum with the eye of the mind. What is proposed in this study is not a pendulum shift to the eye of the heart, but a more holistic target of becoming 'whole-sighted', with "not a blurry double image, but one world" (Palmer, 1993, xxiv). Gillespie's advice that "neither the emotional, nor the highly cognitive approach are the best models" for working with postmodern teens (2004, 153) clearly suggests that balance is the more elevated path to pursue. It is such whole-sighted balance that is offered in this study. Only with 'whole-sight' can the purposes of religious education be realized.

If Seventh-day Adventist schools are to be true to their mission, it is imperative that their fundamental priorities of redemption and discipleship are not obscured beneath the chalk-dust of daily endeavour. As a future is forged, these aforementioned

challenges herald the importance of developing a paradigm that is culturally relevant, both spiritually and pedagogically rigorous, and relationally infused. A focus on the key ingredients of faith formation in Adventist young people need to remain paramount in the minds of curriculum developers and be meticulously pursued both explicitly and implicitly in the biblical curriculum of Adventist schools if Knight's 'larger targets' (1985) are to be striven for.

RESEARCH APPROACH

It is out of this deeply nested religious and educational context that this study emerges. Because of the aforementioned challenges, a new practical direction in biblical curriculum is needed, and this provides strong justification for objectives of this study. This research is "paradigm-driven" in its approach (Punch, 2009, 19). The conceptual framework for the study within this approach consists of three integrated elements that will inform and generate a construct for the methodological approach. These include: relief from the cognitively-driven mindset that has restricted practice; a shift to a more holistic paradigm in religious education; and coherent, practical alternatives by way of exemplars for teachers of all experience levels. Addressing these elements provides an opportunity for the gulf between philosophy and practice that perennially threatens the teaching of religious education to be bridged. These elements drive this study.

Given the complex nature of life, youth, faith and education, it is believed that Adventist education could benefit from a practical tool that can assist Bible teachers in authentically and intentionally reaching the goals it has long held as true. The

wisdom initiated by White and proffered by other thought-leaders over the ensuing decades in the arena of faith formation and education will only be of benefit if steps are taken to develop a transparent procedural pathway from philosophy to practice, to ensure the action matches the vision. When faith is the goal, the methodology of delivery becomes considerably more consequential than the content (Gillespie, 2005). This notion is absolutely foundational to this study. Such a methodological tool is needed. A tool of this nature has potential to offer scaffolded help to those in the field who apply philosophy to practice. An additional need at this juncture is for a measure of practical evidence-based exemplars based upon such a tool, where Palmer's 'whole-sighted' approach (1998) can be seen to be embedded and flourishing. This study has begun with this practical end in mind.

RESEARCH QUESTION

In light of the context of this study, the core research question that will drive the emphasis of this study is: ***How can Adventist Educators fuse philosophy and practice in religious education with greater intentionality?***

Out of this fundamental question, others emerge: *How does current research inform what is best both educationally and spiritually? What sort of framework could be derived to assist this pursuit? How might such a framework specifically reflect this research*? And, *how might such a framework apply in practice?*

STUDY OBJECTIVES

These research questions invite five objectives that will be of principal importance to its purpose:

1. Identify the empirical research that buttresses the core ingredients of faith formation and educational best practice with the view to identifying and analyzing relevant elements that may enhance the practice of religious education in Adventist schools.

2. Synthesize relevant information from this research and use it to develop a practical planning tool for Adventist teachers to be known as the *Transformational Planning Framework;* a tool that can serve to protect and propel the practice of the valuable faith formation ingredients that have been identified.

3. Outline the substance of the *Transformational Planning Framework,* delineating the purpose of each planning phase and demonstrating the theoretical authority of each.

4. Articulate, through action-research, the seminal decisions in the development of this *Transformational Planning Framework* as expressed through a curriculum initiative in religious education for Adventist schools.

5. Showcase two emerging exemplar teaching units that demonstrate the functioning of the *Transformational Planning Framework,* as a means of illustrating a transparent pathway from philosophy to practice, as identified in the study title.

This study emerges from a desire to offer a higher level of practical support for Adventist teachers of religious education. Adventist Education in Australasia has historically experienced a high turnover of religious education teachers, particularly at the secondary level. In addition to this, many of these teachers have not received specialized training. This has meant that there are a relatively high percentage of young teachers who would benefit significantly from having methodological support in their teaching of religious education, and the provision of a range of pedagogical possibilities. The *Transformational Planning Framework* proposed in this study potentially offers such support.

The goal of salvific education, so core to the philosophy of Adventist Education invites scrutiny of the kind offered in this study. Institutional impediments to reform need to be broken and a possibility offered for those who desire another way. Embracing change is worth the struggle if in the end the teaching of religious education can flourish. In Gillespie's view, "'something better' must continue to drive us to excellence and continued improvement. Our church believes in it. Our parents demand it. And our students deserve it" (2004, 312).

STUDY SCOPE

This study is bounded by a number of defining parameters that can be visualized in the graphic organizer overleaf on page 36.

Figure 1.2
Visual Schema of the Study Scope

At the core of the study is an interlocking interconnectedness between what will be

found to be optimal in both faith formation and general educational practice. Herein

lies the substance of the *Transformational Planning Framework.* The framework

itself lies beneath this blended emphasis, and constitutes the primary focus of this

study. These two foci are injected into not only what is believed to be the essence of

Adventist religious education, but also the larger purposes of Adventist Education

itself. The manner in which this is done receives attention throughout this study.

These two overarching concerns are blended in their colouring to show the integral

Figure 1.2 (Overlay)
Visual Schema of the Study Scope

relationship that exists between them. To fulfill one is to fulfill the other. All this feeds, and is fed by the many and varied processes of faith formation, ever-expanding and overlapping. These varied processes (many of which lie outside the scope of this study) lie beneath all Adventist educational endeavours, permeate everything. They are therefore shown in the diagram to lie beneath the centre graphic. The double arrows and the words 'faith formation' show how it both feeds into the core of a person, and is ever-expanding outward in their life. There is evident motion in the outer bands, demonstrating the dynamic nature of this process.

THESIS STRUCTURE

This study, with attempted "whole-sighted" vision (Palmer, 1993), will scan the landscape of research, inspired thought and best practice to glean what is considered to be beneficial not only in the development of faith, but also of the mind, through pedagogy. To this end, this study adopts the following structure:

Chapter ONE: STUDY OVERVIEW

In this introductory chapter, consideration has been given to the historical context of religious education in Adventist education and the wider teaching community, together with a brief statement of the need for the study. In addition to this, the reason for the study, the study objectives and some definitions of terms have been outlined.

Chapter TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Two identifies the literature that gives theoretical authority to the development of the *Transformational Planning Framework*. A review of this literature, offering a philosophical foundation for the teaching of religious education will be outlined, with a view to identifying what best practice in facilitating the goal of both faith formation and academic rigour. An intentional shift to a spiritual formation framework is enunciated as a means of pursuing more holistic goals in the arena of biblical teaching. Research from a number of spiritual, academic and sociological disciplines offer the vital ingredients on which to base some seminal decisions with regard to developing a functional and constructive practical planning framework.

Chapter THREE: CONCEPTUAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Using the literature review as its theoretical fuel, Chapter Three outlines the *Transformational Planning Framework* proposed as a guide for teachers' planning. This framework will be seen to call religious education pedagogy to account as a means of ensuring that educational rigour and faith formation are intentionally cultivated at all levels of practice and in every teaching/learning unit. The theoretical foundation of the *Transformational Planning Framework* outlined in Chapter Two, will be seen to be validated and expressed in eight phases of the framework.

Chapter FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter Four explores research methodology and overviews the action research of the development of the *Transformational Planning Framework*. The process from the genesis of methodology through to the development of teaching units developed as exemplars of this planning framework will be noted, with projected plans for the future of this project identified. This reflective practice will demonstrate the manner in which theory has informed practice at each stage of its development.

Chapter FIVE: IMPLEMENTATION

The final chapter will highlight the applications, suggestions and conclusions of the study, including functional structures, suggested strategies for the way forward and an identification of future challenges as a curriculum project making use of the *Transformational Planning Framework* is embraced. Insights for educators will be enunciated, together with an identification of the possible contribution of the study to religious education for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Background

A number of terms will be used throughout this study that attempt to capture its intent and purpose. It has been a challenge to accomplish this with accuracy. It appears that over time, numerous concepts have gathered multiple semantic connotations, and many terms have come to have undercurrents that fracture or distort meaning and limit use.

In describing religious faith, a number of researchers have identified analogous concepts but couched in them in different ways. For example, in 1985, in exploring the myths that exist within religious instruction, Knight defined *theology* as the academic and cognitive knowledge about God and *religion* as the more desired experiential approach that has transformation as a goal. In other circles, religion has assumed connotations of the more liturgical, cognitive components of faith, whereas a vernacular interpretation of *spirituality* approaches more of a core, experiential pursuit of God.

However, *spirituality* has also trawled a number of meanings in the wake of post-modern thinking, and in many ways has come to be the panacea of relative thinking. Stevens and Green highlight the nature of this reality: "Today, spirituality is a buzz word and almost any scheme for self-realisation can pass for 'spirituality.' There is 'business spirituality', native spirituality,' ascetic spirituality' and 'environmental spirituality'" (2003, ix, x). Their question of the extent to which these lead to communion with the living God and holistic living in the world is a relevant one. God wants first-hand direct human contact with Him and not a hand-me-down faith (Stevens & Green, 2003). This cannot be possible from a spirituality that overlooks the source of 'Spirit'. Hence, the concept of spirituality has also developed connotations that are problematic to the Christian.

One could consider the concept of *faith*, with its manifold biblical references and echoes over centuries to be a concept completely fitting, familiar and understood in Christian circles. Certainly interest in faith development and a deep understanding

of what is happening through key faith stages has been profoundly advanced by the work of Fowler and brought much clarification to the faith phenomenon. However, even this term, because of its multi-woven, multi-coloured and multi-varied texture (Gillespie, 1988) has been interpreted on so many different levels that its essence can appear obscured. Many definitions of faith are not limited to religion (Parks, 1986). Parks' own definition sees faith as "the activity of seeking and composing meaning in the most comprehensive dimensions of existence" (1986, xv). While an existential pursuit, this does not necessarily involve God in this quest. Fowler's own primary definition of faith as a grasp for meaning (1981) can also certainly be interpreted from a number of different world-views, and while his exploration is all-encompassing and transcendent; a kind of generic human phenomenon, it is certainly not necessarily bound by religious tradition. In addition to this, by Fowler's own assertion, some characterisations of faith are "formidable in their formalism" (1981, 93).

Of core interest to this study are the definitions of faith that lie within the realm of the Christian faith. Here, thoughts of faith that identify a vertical relationship with God and a horizontal arm of reaching out to others as a result, are enlightening and helpful. However, even within the Christian context, there is a vast landscape of definitions ranging from the theological theoretical (Smith, 1977) to the contemporary mystical (McGrath, 1999). This vast array of suggestions, including elements of feeling, experience, attitudes, life orientations, (Fowler, 1981, Gillespie, 1988) and involving relationship (Fowler, 1981, Gillespie, 1988); ways of knowing in both a cognitive (Piaget, Kohlberg) and affective way (Fowler, 1981); belief (Plantinga, 2000); and commitment expressed through action and behaviour (Parks,

1986) is multi-varied indeed. While all highlight valuable elements of faith, their breadth can be somewhat overwhelming. Of this Erikson contends; "The reality of any such complex process will not be exhaustively contained in our theoretical frameworks" (cited in Fowler, 1981, xiii).

Of all the components of faith, those that are deemed of particular benefit to this study given the historical emphasis within Adventist Education, are those that echo Smith's more spiritual emphasis of faith commitment being described as setting the heart upon God (cited in Fowler, 1981). Here, the relational God-connection that will ultimately fuel the faith of an individual is captured. Along with Godin, this definition acknowledges that faith is a 'real' experience, seen in the affective and dynamic domain as a kind of mode of knowledge, "richer than notional learning, more lasting than mere emotion" (1985, 66). It is upon this particular relational aspect of faith that focus will be placed. Faith must involve a holistic spiritual quest with God if it is to be authentic. The horizontal arm of faith is predicated on this vertical arm. Action and service have no spiritual impact if they do not stem from this vertical connection (Knight, 1985). It is the starting point of all Christian discipleship and authentic faith -- at whatever stage it resides.

Groome's definition, clarifying faith as a threefold activity involving: believing, trusting and doing, is particularly helpful for this study as it identifies the integral blend of how this God-quest is played out in the life (cited in Gillespie, 19, 185). Dykstra expands on this concept and suggests that faith is "appropriate and intentional participation in the redemptive activity of God" (1986a, 55). This definition is helpful as it suggests the response of an individual to the redemptive action of a loving God. Holmes also comments of this thought. Faith, he suggests is

man's response to God. "Credal assent is not enough…. Religious faith includes

trust, openness, consent and commitment as well as assent. It is the response of the

whole person to the revelation of God's grace that transforms his life" (cited in

Knight, 1985, 177). There is a strong inference here of attachment with God

(Banister, 2001) and a courageous involvement on the part of the individual in the

acts of God in the life. "Faith development is a journey, where, having experienced

the presence of God, our faith becomes portable and we discover "a new sense of

what is important and who is responsible to others." (Gillespie, 1988, 43). We

respond to the preciousness of others as Christ would (Ezzo, 1998) as we live our life

story. Herein lies the discipleship that is invited in the Great Commission of Matthew

28.

Dunn unpacks this concept in a particularly practical and helpful way as seen in

Table 1:1. He identifies a healthy, growing relationship with God as involving

knowing, being and doing, but as demonstrated in the table, each of these can be

achieved in a false and a true way. He identifies the role of a spiritual caregiver as

critical to differentiating between the two. This concept reflects the pathway of

holistic integrated faith (2001) and as such is helpful to this study as it identifies core

elements involved in truly setting the heart upon God in a relational manner (Smith

cited in Fowler, 1981).

TABLE 1:1

FALSE RELIGION AND TRUE RELATIONSHIP

RELIGIOUS FOCUS	APPROACHING GOD	RELATIONAL FOCUS
Intellectual knowledge about God	Knowing	True knowledge of God
Emotional life experiences	Being	Affection for God
Right behaviours	Doing	Loving obedience to God

The lexicon of meaning that has emerged from the language of leaders of recent Spiritual Formation movement accurately encapsulates and expands the particular faith-emphasis that is here promoted. Willard defines spiritual formation, as walking "routinely and easily in the character and power of Jesus Christ" (cited in Gangel, 2005, 154). Such a definition offers an accurate frame of reference for the purposes of this study. Other authors speak in a variety of metaphors as they define its meaning. Spiritual formation is 'the attention we give to our souls through 'spirituality in action' (Peterson, 1989); it is living the meta-narrative of God's romance in the world and our lived experience of Him (Stevens & Green, 2003, ix); it is 'God getting into us and us getting into God' (Stevens & Green, 2003, xi); it is a kind of orthopathy or 'straight passion'; the "primal reality of human existence" and is "scripture-directed, prayer-shaped care" that cures our souls (Mouw, cited in Stephens & Green, 2003, xii). Perhaps most significantly, it is determined to work at the centre, to concentrate on the essentials (Peterson, 1989).

Such definitions identify the pathway all disciples must take. If faith-transformation is the goal of biblical instruction in Adventist Education, then by necessity, 'essential' practices need to shape pedagogy and planning. This will mean making

decisions than have been hitherto not been considered. Pursuing what is essential in any biblical curriculum will mean acknowledging, "they are not ultimately our own practices, but rather habitations of the Spirit, in the midst of which we are invited to participate in the practices of God" (Dykstra cited in Wilhoit, 2009, 153).

Study Definitions

In light of the challenges of these word associations over time, this study makes interchangeable use of the terms *faith formation*, following the tradition of the great exponents of faith ideology; *faith transformation* as a hint of the ultimate goal; and *spiritual formation* as it rests within the great self-named discipline, as a means of pursuing with accuracy concepts that are defined by an authentic, incarnational spirituality. A spirituality that is incarnational protects it from the post-modern, new age inferences and harnesses it to a concept where God is abiding and enabling of meaning, identity, purpose and character in the individual's life, empowering him to be both loving and counter-cultural (Cooling, 2006). On analysis of the nuances of meaning within these terms, it is believed that they synonymously capture the purpose proposed in this study.

To this end, the preferred definition for *spiritual formation* is the movement of the entire life towards God (Maxson 2006). While no definition necessarily encapsulates the depth of such an expansive phenomena, this one captures an emphasis that resonates with the purposes of this study, for it harnesses traditional elements from the lexicons of both faith and spiritual formation.

Beyond this working definition of spiritual-formation and faith formation, the researcher considers other terms to need clarification. *Religious education* in this study refers to the subject offered in Seventh-day Adventist Schools that provides the context for faith formation to occur for students within the culture of a faith-enculturation atmosphere (Westerhoff, 1976), wherever they are in their faith-journey.

Holistic, a concept noted in the thesis title refers to the intentional attempt to overcome the cognitive/affective dichotomy identified as a historical and contemporary challenge, and fuse together both realms so that faith formation can be more complete, balanced, and authentic.

Spirituality, in the researcher's mind refers to the setting the heart upon God as declared by Smith (1981) of faith.

Character education refers to the learning emphasis put on the process of discipleship through combined commitment to *Lordship* and *Presence* as they sit within the total spiritual formation paradigm.

Learning, by the researcher's interpretation, refers to the relatively permanent change that results from systematic immersion in a process, reinforced practice and encouragement rather than development alone. It can refer to mental and motivational areas and involve skills, values, belief systems and a wide range of behaviours.

Conclusion

Knight has highlighted the sharp dichotomy between an education in faith (life-centered) and an education in religion (text-based) (1985). It is an education in faith and elemental spiritual formation within the context of religious education that is to be pursued in this study. The context, challenges, parameters and pathway for this study thus established now pave the way for investigation into some practical, workable solutions.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

"No problem can be solved from the same
level of consciousness that created it."
Albert Einstein

INTRODUCTION

Any vision of a different educational future must be buttressed by a solid

philosophical foundation. Fortunately, time has offered a rich body of knowledge to

increase understanding in matters relating to both education and faith formation. The

review of literature to follow provides both the philosophical context and authority

for the proposed *Transformational Planning Framework* that constitutes the

theoretical foundation of this study. Westerhoff's assertion that Christian education

is "dependent upon the theological underpinnings which judge and inspire its efforts"

(1979, 27) highlights the reality that while a unity of philosophy and practice is a

necessity and not a luxury, the latter cannot, in reality exist without being deeply

grounded in the former.

Throughout its development, the *Transformational Planning Framework* to be

outlined has been founded on a number of key educational, sociological and spiritual

principles from thought-leaders. These principles feature in this review because of

their prominent profile in these disciplines. It is believed they represent a reasonable

summary of current thinking. If, in fact, mature faith is the goal of Adventist

education, the time-distilled concepts and findings that emerge from these leaders

need to be articulated. Only then can they be synthesized and intentionally embedded

into a practical tool that can guide and protect pedagogy.

Pre-emptive to any exploration of the *principles* of this study are three cornerstone truths which impact biblical curriculum. These truths, while deeply embedded and widely accepted by educators are particularly relevant to the trajectory of this study. They relate to *process* issues within a classroom, more than *content*, and thus have powerful influence on classroom culture. Because of their importance, they exist as givens in the delivery of the *Transformational Planning Framework*, are implicit to the functioning of the framework. Their collective validity has influenced significant decisions in its development. These three truths will now be considered.

CORNERSTONE TRUTHS

TRUTH ONE: WE TEACH CHILDREN, NOT SUBJECTS

At the nucleus of educational understanding is the reality that the needs and best interests of the student participating in the teaching and learning process must always lie at the core of all educational endeavours. This reality should therefore also lie at the heart of any educational tool striving to make a difference. The centrality of positive relationships in faith formation cannot be overestimated. "The greatest programs will fail and the most interesting curriculum will never be absorbed if the primary focus is not building solid, encouraging positive relationships with young people" (Burns, 1988, 21,22). Sadly, the teaching of religious 'redemption' too often happens in a manner that is not redemptive, and may in fact treat students as objects rather than God's image-bearers (Graham, 2003). The exploration of *text* should never overshadow the communication of the *context* of the human heart involved in the process.

Palmer's identification of a marginalisation of the young (1998) echoed by Brendtro, Brokenleg and Bockern (2002) who believe our consumer society has lured the young into consumptive roles resulting in a powerless victim mentality, reinforces the fact that in education in general such human focus has not always been the case. Such a reality should invite the Bible teacher in particular, to intentionally 'hear young people to speech' as Morton's construct invites (cited in Palmer 1998). In essence, this means responding with sensitivity to the nuances of human emotion with grace and love, and using the 'small acts of cunning' spoken of by Kameniar (2007, 414) that validate that care is in the details. The 'remarkable energy' (2007, 414) that comes from such acts feeds the human element in the teaching equation and can greatly assist faith formation. Such a child-centred approach to classroom *process* can mean that the voices of the young can ultimately be spoken with confidence. This is necessary if faith-talk, an observed key element in faith development (Gillespie et al, 2004), is to be realised.

Such a focus on the student leads Graham to emphasise the importance of the teacher thinking and acting like God in our methods and practices as well as in content (2003). It is a reclaiming process that teachers are involved in with students, and the personal growth that arises from security in identity and intimacy with others is highly influential to this end (Shelton, 1989, 92).

McQueen has much light to add from a sociological perspective to the concept of focusing on students in the learning process (2010). His cutting edge work on Generation Y gives insight into the identity of the tech-savvy, well- educated, ambitious students of today. He highlights the areas of paradigm rift that now exist

and defines eight new rules for engagement in dealing with youth of today in light of these changes. His first rule of engagement: *putting relationship before role* again highlights the need for meaningful connection with young people, irrespective of the differing values-system they manifest. This is a vital starting point if we are to take them on any sort of journey, learning *or* faith.

Much more could be said on this seminal issue, but for the purpose and focus of this study, an acknowledgement of its crucial stature suffices, and will guide the decision-making process.

TRUTH TWO: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FAITH COMMUNITY IS A CORE CONCERN

A second truth foundational to religious education methodology involves an acknowledgement of the vital importance of a true faith community in faith formation. The Bible is replete with images of a loving, communal, triune God seeking relationship with His children. His desire for relationship with us was realised in an ultimate way when "the word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1: 1). The incarnation was God's ultimate act of connection and community. The notion of communal relationship being linked with faith formation was thus born in the mind of God Himself and powerfully modeled. Word became flesh. Truth is a person. Humanity does not need a system; It needs a Saviour. To develop faith is to experience a partial restoration of this vertical relationship with God. But when faith is born, one also departs on a journey where life is lived in new levels of community with others. When such a faith-community is nurtured, real growth can take place. This concept is validated by Suhor. In his estimation: "The most accessible spiritual

experiences are deep love for, and close community with other people" (1999, 14). In the end, 'faith grows through relationship – human and transcendent" (Rasi, 1998, 2). Thus, a core role of the teacher is to develop a dynamic faith community in the Bible-centered classroom. This goes beyond curriculum and completely overshadows it. Learning undertaken within the religious education classroom will only ever be relevant from within such a relationally rich context.

The crucial importance of community becomes even clearer when one considers Westerhoff's assertion that ultimately only religion can be 'taught', and that the growth toward mature Christian faith is experienced, sustained and expanded in the way people interact and live in faith and, in essence, faithfully share life and faith with each other. "There is a basic need to belong to and identify with a faithful community, to own its story as our story, and to have our religious affections nourished" (1976, 39). This thought fortifies the importance of a cohesive, supportive classroom culture where all relationships are protected and nurtured, and honesty is encouraged. His questioning of the "schooling-instructional" paradigm is valid, as it places content before both the learner and this community of faith that makes true connectedness possible (Westerhoff, 1976). The purely content-driven agenda dominating this instructional paradigm must be guarded against.

It is interesting to note that Westerhoff's styles of faith: *experienced*, *affiliative*, *searching*, and *owned* faith, become expanded only if the proper environment, experiences and interactions are present. Experienced and affiliative faith-styles in particular, are directly linked to our interactions with others and a sense of belonging (Westerhoff, 1976). This is a significant insight, and again bears testament to the importance of developing a 'faith-community' in the classroom. At times, such

community will mean welcoming diversity and conflict, tolerating ambiguity and embracing paradox (Palmer, 1993), for searching faith in particular is a time of mental grappling and questioning. It will be a learning environment that encourages transparency, asks the tough questions and honours doubt. Ultimately, it is a safe place, where feelings are welcomed (Palmer, 1993). Community is indeed a courageous venture, clearly indispensible in growing faith.

As the truth about the key role of a community of faith emerges, it is evident that Adventists could pursue more rigorously Huebner's belief that religious education need not be a place, or an activity with others, or even special materials, but rather "a way of practising the presence of God" (1998, 369), for God is a triune God; existing in community and love. To do this, for believers, is to experience God in one's life so powerfully, that the 'Who that He is' instinctively flows to those around them. It is within this context that the kind of relationships that will nurture authentic spirituality can flourish. "The effects of knowing God in the communal life… inform our religious knowledge of how God acts in our lives" (Gillespie, 1988, 56).

The Contribution of Classroom Community to the Community of Faith

A confederacy of voices in public education validates the need for educational community. Erikson (1968), Sergiovanni (1994), Elias et al (1997), Kessler (2000) and Senge et al (2000) are among those who speak of this educational necessity. In Luxton's opinion, the concept of community is considered the most important of all the contemporary emphases of educational theorists (2004). Erikson views the intimacy of community as having a central role in developmental growth (1968). More recent research by Shochet goes so far as to claim that "school connectedness

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is an even stronger predictor [of adolescent mental health] than attachment to parents" (2006). This astounding claim highlights the importance of the school environment, particularly during the critical teen years. The prominence of this issue in the education arena only serves to highlight the need for individuals to have connectedness and significance (Kessler, 2000). These have long been noted as essential human needs. The communal ideology, together with the values of collaboration and sharing so characteristic of a connected community are mirrored in stature in Westerhoff's faith-growing community. The bond that characterizes the connected community includes both the relationships within the classroom and the attitudes and actions towards the wider community. Both proffer potent building blocks for faith formation. It is interesting to note that the *climate* that would best contribute to this kind of faith-growing community; one characterized by warm, supportive open-thinking was, in the estimation of Donahue, the *most important* factor related to faith maturity in the Valuegenesis I data (McClintock, 1995). In light of the weight of disturbing issues that are borne by students today, this issue becomes of even greater importance, so that negative emotions can be dealt with in a positive and constructive manner.

Kessler adds to the tide of those who strongly advocate the building of community and speaks with particular conviction on the need for deep connection. Her claim that young people who thrive have encountered such deep connection (Kessler, 2000) is one that resonates in the quest for faith. She states that this feeling arises from "profound respect, deep caring and a quality of 'being with' that honours the truth of each participant in the relationship" (Kessler, 2000, 18). Of such priority is this issue, that she places deep connection at the centre of her seven gateways to the soul in

education. Suhor's 'palpable web of connectedness' also emanates from a "deep love for, and close communication with other people" (1999, 14), which, in his mind is "the most accessible [of] spiritual experiences" (1999, 16). This kind of sharing responds to the deep need for intimacy that human beings desire - the inner yearning for unconditional acceptance that the Christian community believes was taken from man at the entrance of sin. When this need for intimacy is filled, growth can occur. Such a concept is highlighted in the work of Scazzero in his focus on emotional health as a necessary accompaniment to spiritual health. Too often the emotional life is buried "under the surface of being a 'good Christian'" (2006, 11), and all kinds of fall-out can result. He highlights the need to confront the propensity to allow Jesus to only superficially penetrate the inner person, and sees deep levels of community as critical to the support all people need as they seek to allow God to transform all areas of their lives (2006). This connected community needs to be facilitated in the classroom environment.

The need for authentic community is thus a premise of the proposed curriculum framework. While it relates to classroom process more than content, Chapter Four outlines specific steps that have been taken to encourage this in the life of the religious education classroom.

CORNERSTONE TRUTH THREE:
THE TEACHER IS THE MOST VITAL ELEMENT IN BIBLICAL TEACHING

No treatment of faith within the religious education context is complete without reference to the stature of the teacher in the faith development journey. It is

incontestable that in any faith-nurturing community, the teacher is *the most significant* agent. The Adventist teacher is *the* living curriculum; they are *the agent* who will bring to life the Words from God and act out God's love by walking beside and strengthening students. Palmer's assertion that good teaching is not a matter of technique, but rather the condition of the teacher's identity and integrity (1998), is echoed by others from diverse educational disciplines (Jensen, 1993; Gillespie et al, 2004; Glasser, 1990; Elias et al, 1997; Inlay, 2003). Great teaching emerges from our being, more than our doing (Jensen, 1993), it relates more to process than content, and in the spiritual transformation paradigm, it either builds or erodes the faith journey. The teacher's role is complex and difficult to corral. However relevant to this discussion are three key teacher-qualities that become critical in the nurturing of faith: spiritual authenticity, a commitment to connectedness (rapport), and a passionate belief in both students and the content matter. Though numerous other teacher-qualities are admirable, it is believed that many flow from these, and they hence offer a core trio to help define the authentic practice of religious education. While the exhibition of these qualities also primarily relates to classroom process rather than content, they are to be deliberately overtly and covertly respected in the proposed framework.

Spiritual Authenticity

The personal spiritual experience of the teacher is of pre-eminent importance in the dissemination of faith, for "out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks" (Luke 6: 45). White launched this concept a century ago with her words, "The teacher of truth can impart effectively only that which he himself knows by experience" (1913, 435). Such a comment accents the need for teachers of Bible to be authentic adults

whose lives are built around caring for new lives (Palmer 1998); a concept echoed by Cooling who declared that "To be a distinctively Christian teacher means to be shaped by the Bible" (2006, 38). We teach not content but 'who we are' (Inlay, 2003, 70). Gardner summarized it well when he said that young people "do not learn ethical principles; they emulate ethical (or unethical) people. They do not analyze or list the attributes they wish to develop; they identify with people who seem to have these attributes. That is why young people need models" (cited in Dudley, 1999, 67). Actions have always demonstrated spiritual authenticity. White's words hold a note of caution to all Adventist Bible teachers. "Let it never be forgotten that the teacher must be what he desires his pupils to become" (1923, 58). Ultimately we get what we are. Students need to see a vibrant faith experience in the teacher that is alive, attractive and authentic. Only then might they desire it for themselves. That which rules the heart, will always form the art.

Such a notion has been echoed by countless thinkers over the centuries, all personalizing the concept through their own unique language: Luther sought to care for his own soul as a spiritual advisor; Seventeenth century English puritan, Baxter saw the oversight of self being prerequisite to "oversight of the flock"; Guenther saw that creating "inner order" as a leader, was a vital preparatory work; while Shinohara expressed the need for "physicians of souls" to have consciously used the true remedy themselves (cited Shinohara, 2002). The more recent spiritual formation thought-leaders such as Foster (1989), Patterson (1999), Peterson (2007), Willard (2006) and Boa (2001) all place high priority on this important pre-requisite of sharing with others.

In considering this concept of authenticity in teachers, it is important to note that there is not necessarily a correlation between being a theological expert and being spiritually mature. A technical expert can teach theology, but only a genuine Christian can lead in faith formation (Knight, 1985). The notion of education as a redemptive act only reaffirms the need for the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the teacher (Knight, 1985). Patterson has perhaps captured the essence of this truth in his comment, "The greatest thing we have to offer people is not our education. It is not our good ideas. It isn't even our gifts and abilities. It is the fruit of the time we have spent with the Savior, the utterly unique and unparalleled thing that happens to us when we are simply in his presence" (1999, 52). Such authenticity is a cornerstone concept, if the definition of faith formation as identified in this study is to be realized.

The Teacher's Commitment to Connectedness

Another significant element relating to the eminent role of the teacher lies in a commitment to connectedness; in essence, the offering of a welcoming self to the teaching process. One way this is manifested through the rapport that is established with students. This is the glue of relationships. Youth ministry educator Robbins highlights the salience of positive relationships in his comment, "One of the recurring themes of developmental research is the impact of relationships on virtually every area of development" (2004, 242, 243). In the area of faith, it becomes particularly crucial, a fact highlighted by Gane, who wrote "Friendship is the best evangelism" (2010, 60).

The centrality of the teacher relationship with students as key to educational efficacy is a concept also well grounded in public education. Marzano's conclusions following a meta-analysis of more than 100 studies found that "the quality of teacher-student relationships" to be the "keystone for all other aspects of classroom management" (2003, 6). Jensen's summary of this truth captures the essence of much research in this area,

> "Surprisingly, the skills of the top teachers are secondary. What's primary is the person behind the skills. Many skilful teachers fail with their students because they forgot that 99% of what the students learn is not in the curriculum. Students learn about life not by what you teach, but by who you are. Your students need, more than anything else, you love, your integrity, and your commitment to their potential. If you teach out of a conviction that every one of your students is a 'possibility' awaiting the discovery of their gifts, brilliance and humanity, they'll show it up for you" (Jensen, 1993, 31).

When faith development is brought into the equation, these words are only magnified in their relevance.

This commitment to connection is offered through the provision of "concretized grace gifts" in all interactions (Gillespie et al, 2004, 292) and is the means by which the teacher can powerfully influence the life of a student. Again, White's words offered wisdom ahead of her time when she declared that there are few things a teacher can impart that are so valuable as "the gift of his own companionship" (1903, 202). She proceeded to offer specific advice as to how to do this. Of note are her words to teachers to step down from their high position and say to the young people "let us climb together, and we will see what can be gained by a united study" (cited in Dudley, 1999, 125). Also of note is her specific, time-honoured counsel:

> "There is a danger of… teachers commanding and dictating too much while they fail to come sufficiently into social relation with their children. They

often hold themselves too much reserved, and exercise their authority in a cold, unsympathising manner which cannot win the hearts of their pupils. If they would gather the children close to them, and show that they love them, and would manifest an interest in all their efforts… sometimes even being a child among children, they would make the children very happy and would gain their love and win their confidence" (1923, 18).

This statement highlights the potential of the teacher-student bond and its potential for providing the grace-oriented classroom culture that can lead to the kind of faith-community that Westerhoff advocates. Over half a century later, Shelton echoes the similar sentiment, "The adult who can prudently convey his or her own struggles, questions, joys, beliefs, and commitments becomes a tremendous ratifying force in the young person's life" (1989, 155). Burns takes this concept even further, "Your actions of unconditional love will often be the determining factor in solidifying the faith of your students" (1988, 18). Such is the importance of connectedness in relationships.

In a real way, the religious education teacher 'represents' God in the mind of the student. Thus, consideration as to how the teacher's spiritual and personal journey can be cultivated needs to receive purposeful attention. Palmer voices this concept, "As I teach, I project the condition of my soul onto my students, my subject and our way of being together. Teaching holds a mirror to the soul. Knowing myself is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject" (1998, 3). He goes on to say, "The most practical thing we can achieve in any kind of work is insight into what is happening inside as we do it" (1998, 6) and that the connections made by worthy teachers are "not held in their methods but in their hearts" (1998, 6). The teacher will always be the most significant and compelling component in the teaching of religious education. In McCahill's estimation they need to draw from

deep within before they can encounter their students (2006). It is the teacher who

will act as interpreter of Words from God; it is the teacher who will develop the faith

community so essential to faith development; it is the teacher who will be the conduit

for connecting the head, heart and hand.

While it is impossible to capture issues of teacher authenticity and efficacy in a

pedagogical framework such as proposed in this study, such considerations, so vital

to faith development, will receive attention in the curriculum development

methodology.

Passion for both Students and Content

Flowing out of the Adventist teacher's commitment to relational connection, and

perhaps self-evident in such a construct is a genuine love for students and a tenacious

belief in them. This does much to nurture students along the path of faith and is often

simply a choice that is made by the teacher. It "may be little more than a healthy

dose of potential, but school people can choose to emphasize and cultivate it even on

the slightest evidence" (Wesley, 1999, 4). Loving encouragement "deems all of its

members to be important, believes everyone has something to contribute…

acknowledges that everyone counts… and replaces… mean-spiritedness with a

culture of welcome" (Elias, Zinz et al, 1997, 6). Clearly, the idea that 'you are

important to me' needs to be communicated overtly and covertly in a thousand ways.

Perhaps the most potent way to start giving this message is to 'change our language

to acknowledge God's presence" (Heubner, 1987, 371) in every aspect of our lives.

Such thoughts responds to C.S. Lewis' admonition, "the task of the modern educator

is not to cut down jungles, but to irrigate deserts" (cited in Wesley, 1999, 45). Such

qualities are certainly affirmed in Vallance's qualitative analysis of 19 very different

'teachers of excellence.' In his analysis, all were ultimately *cut from the same cloth*; integrous, reflective individuals with whom love for the students, generosity of spirit, and enthusiasm were all defining qualities (2000).

Harratt's notion of the school as being a venue for 'saving' children is indeed an accurate metaphor for the Adventist educator. And while Adventist Educators would see this as the core business of a biblical curriculum, history attests to the fact that sadly, "Adventist Schools have not always thought deeply or holistically enough about the saving process, for we have too often neglected to 'save' their self-esteem, their honour, their dignity, their sense of importance and significance" (1991, 162). If we had done this, perhaps the tide of human departures apparent in the original Valuegenesis study would not have been as great (Rice, 1993). Harratt's generalisation has, at times become the reality, "A tragic drama of personal formation occurs when the student ends up hating the teacher and what the teacher represents" (1991, 162). This drama bears out the truth of the power of showing love and care in the school setting. In so many ways, faith formation emerges from unconditional love - gifted by God to humanity, and reborn in human hearts. Burns' assessment of this kind of love so often being the determining factor in solidifying faith (Burns, 1988) is a truth worthy of note, and needs to be recognized in context of the this study.

It is clear that words such as 'morale', 'nurture', 'support', 'belief in', 'belonging', 'intimacy' and 'community' all have indisputable spiritual implications, and therefore very personal implications. While the proposed *Transformational Planning Framework* primarily focuses on content, these powerful process realities will be

intentionally accounted for in numerous ways, in order for their importance to be validated.

In addition to a love of and belief in students, the faith-oriented teacher will be passionate about the subject matter and elevate it in the learning environment. Such passion helps develop a thinking culture where authentic inquiry into Scripture is pursued. This is only possible if students are connected with the teacher, with each other *and* with the subject matter itself (Palmer, 1993). All three relationships are vital if authentic learning is to take place. Moreover, it is Palmer's assertion that the subject itself should always lie at the centre of the 'community of truth' that should exist in every classroom, being elevated and respected by all in the learning community.

Palmer's identification of a construct emerging from Rilke, where the learning community is held together by the power of 'the grace of great things' is a valuable one. This, he believes should constitute the subject matter to be focused upon and is a concept that strengthens the importance of depth and rigour. These 'great things' are identified as the subjects of substance around which a circle of seekers gathers "not the disciplines that study these subjects, not the texts that talk about them, not the theories that explain them, but the things themselves" (1998, 109). He views these great things as being a vital nexus in education and, by deep implication are explored only through authentic educational grappling at a deep level. It is when these topics of significance are dealt with that a learning community truly become knowers, teachers and learners in the truest sense of the word. In his estimation,

these great things lie in danger of disappearing through intellectual rationalisation or other factors that limit true exploration in the spirit of seeking, and the resulting diminishing of their gravitational pull on the lives of learners does much to reduce the depth that constitutes authentic learning (1998). This is an insightful conviction that bears reflection, for it is key to what constitutes authentic learning in the faith formation environment. A passionate teacher, a student and subject matter - it is a potentially transformational combination.

Adventist teachers of religious education teach human beings, not subjects. An authentic faith community is the best way to grow faith. The teacher is the most important agent in the religious education classroom. These are cornerstone truths that need to guide practice. Attention now turns to the principles so prolific in current literature upon which a relevant tool to guide practice can be developed.

CORE PRINCIPLES FOR TRANSLATING PHILOSOPHY TO PRACTICE

Barker's comment: "Vision without action is merely a dream, action without vision just passes the time, vision with action can change the world" (Joel Barker) is a compelling observation about the importance of harnessing *both* vision and action as a means of effectuating change. In the consideration of a practical framework that can move the action of religious education in Adventist Education even closer towards the *vision*, it is believed that the following well-substantiated spiritual and educational essence principles need to be considered. In a thinking landscape that offers a myriad of possibilities, these are the ones that are deemed by the researcher to be central to a faith-forming curriculum for Adventist Education. They have

gradually coalesced in her mind to become empirical convictions. Their presence in this study can be attributed to their high profile in the literature of faith development, learning theory, religious education, sociology, brain research and spiritual formation. These sources have made explicit over time the personal worldview and spiritual understanding of the researcher and have been selected for the 'great truths' they represent (Palmer, 1993).

The following principles will be considered:

1. The power and potential of a faith formation paradigm to fashion practice

2. The importance of relevance and meaning in learning

3. The importance of emotional engagement

4. The importance of thinking rigour in the learning environment

5. The worth of experiential learning

6. The value of reflective practice

7. The importance of an ultimate focus on transformation

PRINCIPLE ONE: A PARADIGM-SHIFT TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Reference has already been made to the historical challenge of faith attrition in Seventh-day Adventist young people (Sonter, 1989; Hughes, 1993). This can be attributed, in part to the prevalent intellectual, information-driven approach to religious education already discussed (Knight, 1985; Gillespie et al, 2004). That such has been the predominant modus operandi is no surprise, given that Adventist education has, of necessity, been framed within a purely 'educational' construct. As

such, it has been tethered to cognitively driven *Ministry of Education* outcomes that have dominated both pedagogy and assessment.

A pioneering shift in thinking is to consider biblical teaching more exclusively from the perspective of spiritual transformation; for that, in essence, is what Bible teaching in Adventist Education is all about. The commission to "Go and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19) is no less relevant for Christian Educators than other Christians. Such a shift in approach, while not abandoning rigour or meaningful assessment of biblical content, constitutes a substantive paradigm shift and has been the primary impetus for this initiative. Palmer comments, "Educating toward truth does not mean turning away from facts and theories and objective realities.… What will change is our relation to the facts, or to the world that the facts make known" (1993, 31, 32). His *whole-sight* concept, spoken of in Chapter One, by necessity, involves both eyes; mind *and* heart. It is this model that is essentially embraced by spiritual transformation. The varied definitions relating to faith formation outlined in Chapter One demonstrate the depth and breadth of this focus. Of concern to this study are those definitions that seek to awaken spiritual hunger for God. At the least, the teaching of religious education needs to be a spiritual quest. The voyage towards owned faith, discipleship, and indeed spiritual formation is a journey, and such a paradigm shift invites a new range of questions and practices in the path of that journey.

It is important to note that faith has definitive cognitive components, where conversion of the mind (King, 2006) through grappling with ideology and mentally wrestling with issues is essential. However, as has been noted, from a faith formation perspective, information is simply not enough. Faith is text-anchored, but it must

also be Spirit-enlivened (Gallen, cited in Kettenring, 2004). According to Knight, even the Devil is a cognitive believer (Knight, 1985, 176). Thinking does not assure heart-felt dedication. Knowledge about God and the Bible does not necessarily lead to religious experience (Knight, 1985). Scholarly detachment, rather, can be potentially dangerous, as pointed out by Tozer:

> "Sound biblical exposition is an imperative in the church of the living God…. But exposition may be carried on in such a way as to leave the hearers devoid of any true spiritual nourishment whatever. For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself, and unless and until the hearers find God in personal experience they are not the better for having heard the truth. The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may enter into Him, that they may delight in His presence, may taste and know the inner sweetness of the very God Himself in the core and centre of their hearts" (1984, 6).

The true purpose of Bible study is to never lose sight of the Giver in the appreciation of the gift. A century ago, White identified what is the most damaging potential of this paradigm when she commented, "Students must be impressed with the fact that knowledge alone may be, in the hands of the enemy, a power to destroy them" (1948, 422). In later years, both Tozer and Benner have acknowledged that personal knowing is superlative to objective, descriptive knowing (1950, 2003).

In more recent times, Schaeffer has also expressed the belief that serious theological study may actually be the means of shutting us off from God rather than opening doors to Him, particularly when knowledge is considered an end in itself (cited in Knight, 1985, 176). Certainly, it can be said, "an intellectual religion will not satisfy the soul. Intellectual training must not be neglected, but it is not sufficient" (Knight, 1985, 540).

When God came and 'dwelt among us,' He modelled a relational experience and the "Word became flesh" (John 1:1). In becoming incarnate and saving the world, Christ was heart-focused and immersed in relationship; His ministry was Incarnate, flesh and blood, relational, particular, local, personal. "By contrast, the ways in our… culture remain conspicuously impersonal: programs, organisations, techniques, general guidelines, information detached from place" (Peterson, 2007). Although Christ bridged the gap millennia ago, it would seem that Palmer's dichotomy of the eye of the mind and the eye of the heart have continued to be perennial issues. As God became incarnate, it is important that He become incarnate within human beings, and therefore religious education. This is the call of faith formation. This thought has been echoed by a plethora of other spiritual leaders: Foster, (1988), Shelton (1989), Patterson, (1999), Nouwen (1999), Kettenring (2004), Manning (2005), Willard (2006), Peterson, (2007) and others attest in thought and personal experience to the inestimable value and pre-eminent authority of knowing Jesus personally.

Authentic faith formation announces an openness and submission on the part of an individual for the journey of this incarnate spirituality to begin: to be developed by God in God's own way. It gives God permission to do what He desires. Human beings struggle to be involved in the abiding, waiting and trusting necessary to be shaped by God's agenda (Mulholland, 1985). Faith formation essentially reverses the human role and allows the Spirit of God to lead, to act in lives to bring about God's purposes. This brings about a fundamental shift from being "our own production to being God's creation" (Mulholland, 1985, 27). This will, at times, mean challenging culture rather than mindlessly embracing it. For the religious educator, Christ's way is the only model to pursue; He was truly spiritually formed. All this is accomplished

through a connection with God. Willard highlights the centrality of this connection and the relationship born of it in his exploration of the cost of non-discipleship as robbing us of every worthwhile thing in life. "In short, without discipleship, we would never have that abundance of life that Jesus said he would give us" (1991, 132).

Faith literature demonstrates God as desiring for us a first-hand contact with Him, rather than a "hand-me-down faith and a rule-based approach to life. We are invited to worship Abba, be disciples of Jesus, temples of the Spirit, children of hope and ambassadors of love" (Stevens & Green, 2003).

Integral to this first-hand spiritual experience is an immersion in the wonder and mystery of God. Heschel's prayer captures it eloquently. His request is to be granted "the grace of wonder" (Cited in Manning, 2005, 104). God cannot be completely explained by mere man, but He can be experienced as the biblical patriarchs experienced Him. This experience of God, shaped by the scriptures and fuelled by the appropriate use of imagination is inherent in faith formation and is the treatise of the proposed planning framework.

Application of Faith formation to Educational Practice

In the identification of contemporary challenges that face biblical curriculum, mention has been made regarding the importance of discipleship in the Christian life. Mullholland (1985), Peterson (2007) and Foster (2001) all highlight the fact that, contrary to the accepted perception of many Christians, faith formation is not

optional in the Christian life. It is primal. This challenge of nurturing Christians to a purpose of faith formation however becomes compounded when translated into the educational arena. Attention has also already been given to the notion that helping youth to become spiritual and to have their lives focused on Jesus in a holistic way has been identified as the key goal of Adventist education (Gillespie, 2006, White, 1903). However, methodology for achieving this has been somewhat less defined. Not only has there been only isolated precedent for such a shift, but also as stated, education by nature tends to be emphatically academic. Unfortunately, Knight's identification of this problem twenty-five years ago has not been followed by substantive systemic action:

> "An extremely real problem here is that it is infinitely easier to develop a course of religious instruction that passes on information than to prepare one that brings a student into a personal confrontation and /or relationship with the living God.   The latter, however, is the ideal that we must seek to accomplish despite its difficulties…. The very least we should do is to attempt to develop curricula and instructional techniques that aim at the more vital realm beyond the transmission of knowledge" (1985, 178, 179).

This need continues to be a challenge, but in light of recent research identifying the spiritual curiosity and desire for depth with God prevalent in today's young people (Gillespie et al, 2004), and in light of the growing chorus of voices honouring the affective domain, it would seem that the context is ripe for change. Confronting and pronouncing this challenge again "from the ardent conviction of a new human being" (Key, 1997, 62) perhaps provides an opportunity to pursue faith formation in a new way. In an age where many young people are losing God and never missing Him, one of the desires of Adventist Educators is to honour the quest of each student to find the God that gives life meaning, purpose and wholeness. A primary role of the Adventist religious education teacher therefore is to help each student feel connected to this God, built-up in this God and then desiring to bring others to this same God.

An encounter experience is a desirable pursuit, a necessary pursuit, for spirituality is a journey involving the whole person. Adventist faith formation must be intelligent, but it also must be integrated, contextualized and incarnational. (Alexander, 2001, 20). This begs a focus not on information alone, but, rather, personal formation (Mulholland, 1985). Thus, an intentional focus on faith formation as a foundational frame of reference is inherent to the proposed *Transformational Planning Framework*. It offers a possible practical pathway to the discipleship mentioned in the Great Commission (Matthew 28) as noted in Chapter One.

Of relevance here are the characteristics of transformation as defined by Kinnaman (2007). If spiritual formation is ultimately about depth rather than simplistic formulas, a specific definition of the passion that defines a Christian is worthy of exploration. A range used by Barna research to this end can be found in Appendix A. These elements will be valued where is natural in the classroom context.

Proposed Spiritual Formation Model

With the end of faith formation clearly in sight, a model that can safeguard this focus is crucial. Maxson's construct of spiritual formation offers a profound yet simple model on which to base a developing framework (2006). His work in the area of discipleship and faith formation has significantly impacted the thinking of the researcher and helped to clarity direction at many levels. His *Spiritual Formation Model* noted in Figure 2.1 succinctly captures the direction and purpose of the process of faith transformation. While being a partly cognitive model, it expresses a dynamic and relational process, and flows from his expression of the working definition of spiritual formation pursued in this study, namely: "the movement of the entire life towards God" (2006, 2).
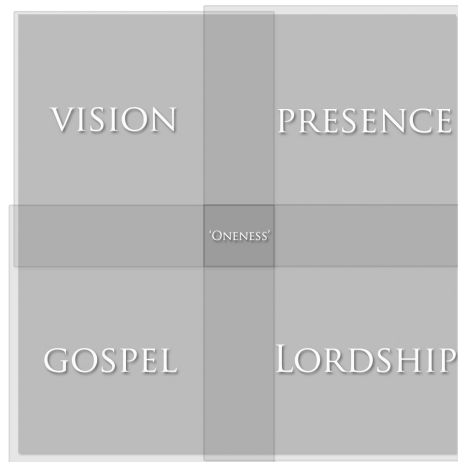
Figure 2.1
Maxson's Spiritual Formation Model

In this model, four ingredients to spiritual formation are identified: Vision, Gospel, Lordship and Presence. Each one expresses an increased awareness of God and His action in the life. *Vision* is concerned with encountering an accurate picture of God. This is an important starting point for the faith journey. To the Christian mind, human beings are born with a distorted picture of God. As a result, a fundamental goal in life is to clarify this picture and understand God for who He is. This vision of God includes both acknowledging how He views humanity and "understanding what He wants to do in and through us" (Maxson, 2006, 3).

When students realize their spiritual *context:* one of inestimable value in the sight of God, they can then be open to experiencing what Jesus Christ has accomplished in the Gospel story. '*Gospel'* in Maxson's model concerns "knowing what Christ has done and is doing for us" (Maxson, 2006, 3). Implicit here is the reality that "before we can do, we must *be*"; a concept reminiscent of Palmer's thought processes (1993). 'Being' in Christian thinking is predicated on 'being' in a saved relationship because of an acceptance of Christ's atoning sacrifice.

Out of an acceptance of the Christian gospel message in Maxson's construct, an individual is then open to "submitting, both personally and corporately to God's direction and control in all we are, have and do" (Maxson, 2006, 2). In his model, this constitutes *Lordship*. In Maxson's thinking, "spirituality is the realized Lordship of Jesus Christ" (Maxson, 2006, 2). Lordship gives God permission to transform all areas of life and is characterized by "intimacy with God" (Maxson, 2006, 2). The power of *Lordship* however, must be acknowledged and is captured in the final arena, *Presence*. God's *presence* is what gives His *Lordship* its power and authority. It is the process of "integrating His presence into every area of our lives and everything we do" (Maxson, 2006, 2).

In this *Spiritual Formation Model*, the order of attention is important: if this is to represent a movement towards God, one must always begin with vision, then move through gospel, to lordship and presence. These four quadrants are seen to overlap at the cross. It is Maxson's contention that the cross offers the clearest vision of God. As the four elements are continuously integrated in the life, an individual moves towards the centre, to 'oneness' with God.

This model has been chosen as a foundational frame of reference not only because it offers a grounded, applied demonstration of the transformation process, but also because it extends far beyond *discipleship* which involves an acceptance of the Gospel. The model is therefore relevant to students at *all* stages in the process of faith formation. For this reason, it is a worthy blueprint, one that will be featured in the forthcoming planning framework.

PRINCIPLE TWO:

THE IMPORTANCE OF MEANING AND RELEVANCE

The cornerstone truth: *we teach children, not subjects*, hitherto revealed as a foundational truth underlying this study has implications for this second *essence principle* of future curriculum considerations. If this truth has veracity in practice, *relevance* and *meaning* for the human being in the learning journey are crucial. For centuries developmental theorists have verified education as a process in meaning making (Piaget, 1953; Bruner, 1961). However for the purpose of this exploration, if faith formation is a conscious goal, relevance and meaning will be even higher on the Christian teacher's mental agenda.

Meaning for Individuals

Mezirow's claim that "meaning-making is an urgent need for human persons" is indeed indisputable (1990, 24). His identification that knowledge is not fixed and life is constantly changing, requiring meanings to be constantly reformulated, brings challenges to the teacher of any religious education class (1990, 24). This means that not only does the teacher need to be aware of the different stages of intellectual, emotional and social development (Barnes, 2005), but also the unique life experiences of each student. The faith community concept hitherto discussed clearly needs to be so evident, and relationships so open, that the teacher can detect personal challenges for students, and be flexible enough to respond with support and encouragement in order to maximise the meaning-making process. While this is largely a classroom *process* issue rather than a content issue, it will, at times have a bearing on content decisions. If meaning is to be maintained so that learning can

have relevance, the discerning teacher will want to know his students and how best to connect with them meaningfully.

Meaning in the Personal Human Journey

In an established sense, childhood and adolescence by nature chronicle the passage of an individual toward meaning and identity. "Those crucial questions of 'Who am I?' 'Where am I going?', 'How is the best way to get there?' and 'Why am I making this trip at all?' need resolution and reasonable answers." (Gillespie et al, 2004, 204). Teaching with meaning to this personal quest is essential if we believe in holistic growth.

Meaning and Relevance as observed in Educational Priorities

Despite Bruner's (1961) strong statement regarding the learning process as an exercise in meaning making, sadly, history demonstrates that meaning and life-relevance for the student have not always been driving practical priorities. Senge comments, "the fragmentation of knowledge is the saddest irony of our business" (2000, 46). Palmer echoes this sentiment in his identification of the pain that permeates education as being the *pain of disconnection* (1983). His paradoxes in pedagogical design speak to the importance of framing the little stories of students with the big stories of the discipline (1993). These become particularly relevant for the teacher of religious education. Gillespie et al believe that giving students the big picture as often as possible provides a helpful frame of reference, and is vital in the steps of faith formation (2004).

The stress on the overall picture as a means of pursuing both relevance and meaning is also noted from educational researchers. The *National Research Council* notes,

> "It is the network, the connections among objectives, that is important. This is the kind of knowledge that characterises expertise. Stress on isolated parts can train students in a series of routines without educating them to understand an overall picture that will ensure the development of integrated knowledge structures and information about conditions of applicability" (2000, 139).

From a purely educational perspective, these integrated knowledge structures and the pursuit of applicability are pedagogical imperatives. Jensen's patently practical reminder that just because something is relevant to the teacher, does not mean it is relevant to the students, is also a reminder that one of the primary roles of the teacher is to help students discover relevance. Connection with Palmer's concept of the big-picture story helps develop this kind of relevance. The work of Kovalik also testifies to the importance of pursuing relevance and meaning. Her claim that boredom and discipline problems are the result of meaningless curriculum is relevant to this study. It is her belief that more than 95% of the discipline problems disappear "when meaning comes back into the curriculum" (1994, 52).

It is interesting to note that social researcher, McQueen (2010) gives oxygen to the notion of meaning making from another perspective. His discussion of 'matrix learning' as one of the eight rules for working with Generation Y, where teaching occurs in context, again testifies to its importance. In addition to this, in McCain's synthesis of the six most important considerations for teaching in the twenty-first century, an emphatic mention is also made of the need to stop teaching de-contextualised content (2005).

Relevance and Meaning and Spiritual Formation

The desire to pursue faith formation as a modus operandi calls for particular concentrated reflection on relevance and meaning; for if the formation of faith is a priority, meaningful learning will surely be of pre-eminent importance. Of all learning areas, religious education needs to be bathed in these two important realities. The Christian education literature supports the idea that students need to engage in meaning making as they learn (Drovdahl, 1991, Knowlton, 2002; Nelson cited Knowlton & Shaffer, 2004). The very definition of faith is one of act-oriented meaning making (Nelson, 1987). It is certainly core to Fowler's understanding of faith (1981). This meaning is to be pursued at all levels of planning and preparation for faith learning to be relevant. Both Cooling and Knight note how easily the teaching of Bible dwells in the realm of comprehension alone, with no reference to spiritual development. Certainly, it would seem that students

> "are accustomed to thinking of Scripture as a discrete subject to be taught…
> not as a tool that can provide a view of the world and be integrated across
> content areas. Other Christian Education literature also seems to support the
> assertion that memory work and de-contexualised consideration of Scripture
> is prevalent in Christian education" (Knowlton & Shaffer, 2004, p 3).

In light of this, it should be no surprise if students emerge from their Christian school experience with no heart for Christian living. It could be that they never saw such living as relevant to their lives. Glasser punctuates this thought, "Usefulness does not depend on facts. It depends on your students seeing the connection between their life and what you are teaching. Whether you like it or not, you are the only one who can help them make that connection" (2006, 72).

The problem of comprehension without spiritual development has been an emerging refrain of this study. This thought, however, now becomes apropos on a different

plane, as it applies to the pursuit of relevance and meaning. Comprehension alone from a cognitive construct has little meaning or relevance to the student. If these elements are not a priority, the purely cognitive emphasis hitherto discussed is in danger of becoming more deeply embedded in practice. Cooling's analogy of biblical curriculum as a window promoting greater knowledge and understanding, and a mirror where students can look and find something new about themselves, is a helpful one (2006). Such reflection greatly assists relevant meaning making for the student.

Meaning begins to emerge with big-picture connections. It also comes with real-life links and a concentration on the essentials from the student's developing perspective. To this end, connecting student's prior knowledge, life experience and interests with learning goals are important. This kind of meaning making will help to nurture an ownership of one's personal journey towards owned faith.

The Power of Narrative in the Pursuit of Relevance and Meaning

Another powerful agent in the pursuit of meaning making is the use of story. Used throughout history in every culture and age stories have been a powerful tool in teaching and learning (McQueen, 2010). This is perhaps because all our knowledge begins with experience, and as Camus declares, "you cannot create experience. You must undergo it" (cited in Miller, 2003, 18). Stories provide an emotional experience on which to build truth.

McQueen's treatise on Generation Y highlights the particular relevance they have for this generation. Having moved beyond the modern era with its moral absolutes, this

generation is more interested in something that works than that something is right. In light of this, Stoddard affirms the value of story, "Principles communicated through story have a far more profound effect on people and their lives than ideas presented outside the scope of human experience (McQueen, 2003, 24). In as much as Christianity still does hold to moral absolutes, story is going to be a particularly valuable tool in mentoring students towards biblical truth.

The young of today do not need to be told what to believe. They need messages to be illuminated and the thinking and grappling to be given to them to process. In Miller's opinion, "it is time to speak the language of the natives… to replace all argumentative information-driven language with 'beautiful narratives, and let people feel the power of story. Instead of trying to convince people to accept a list of spiritual laws, how about placing individuals in the story, allowing them to learn and interact with God's character" (2003, 26). Stories are powerful agents in this because they have the ability to touch human beings in a most personal manner on every level. "They speak to the mind, the body, the emotions, the sprit and the will" (Miller, 2003, 33). It is interesting to see the current renaissance in storytelling in light of this.

Further to this, stories give opportunity to appropriately harness the power of imagination (Maxson, 2006). Through story, meaning is heightened as biblical content comes to live through the experience of characters. White highlighted the potential of this for the very young by declaring, "where can be found anything that has such a hold upon the heart, anything so well adapted to awaken the interest of the little ones, as the stories of the Bible?" (1943, 181).

Another benefit of stories is highlighted in the meaning-making process for the individual. Westerhoff points out that child-centred and life-centred education have sometimes forgotten that the story or tradition is of central importance to meaning making for the individual. "Learning the community's story is,.. an essential for faith" and particularly integral to the development of affiliative faith (1976, 95). Here the personal benefits can be seen, as stories have the power to evoke messages that enhance a sense of personal identity and placement within God's great meta-narrative. Simmons emphasises both the meaning-making potential of stories and the faith-affirming nature of stories in his words, "People value their own conclusions more highly than yours. They will only have faith in a story that has become real for them personally. Once people make your story their story, you have tapped into the powerful force of faith… Story is your path to creating faith" (Cited in Miller, 2003, 39). Middleton and Walsh also affirm the need for meta-narratives in the pursuit of meaning making, "We require some overarching framework that makes sense of the totality of life and that gives meaning to our place in the grand scheme of things" (1995, 76).

Because of the strong connective power that stories evoke, linking head and heart, and because of their potential for meaning making, they will be endorsed in the forthcoming planning framework.

PRINCIPLE THREE: EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT

If the cornerstone truth that *teachers teach children, not subjects* is to be honoured, the emotional engagement of the human being in the teaching process could well be considered to be a fundamental necessity. This concept has been acknowledged for

far longer than may be assumed. In the fifth century BC, Plato made comment

concerning this necessity, "Direct them…by what amuses their minds, so that you

may be better able to discover with accuracy the perculiar bent of the genius of each"

(Plato). This 'amusing of the mind' implies the emotional engagement of students.

To accomplish this is to acknowledge such engagement as being *a high priority* in

the learning experience.

Reference has been made to the fracturing of reason and emotion that occurred with

enlightenment and what was hitherto sapiential spiritual knowledge (Charry, 1997)

became dichotomised. This led to not only a segregated construct between belief and

praxis in the realm of faith; truth at this time being collapsed into categories of

rational certainty, ignoring any sense of mystery (Grenz,1996), but also a fracturing

of the cognitive and the affective in general educational practice.

The Prominence of Emotions in Learning

The wake of such a dichotomy has sustained a domination of this segregation, and it

has only been in recent times that emotions have again been acknowledged as

legitimate, even desirable components of learning. Goleman (1995) can be attributed

with bringing to public attention again the importance of emotions and emotional

literacy. His expanding range of emotional intelligences is firmly embedded in the

educational landscape and is generally accepted as features best practice. Their

acceptance highlights the fact that "our thinking is not 'contaminated' by emotions:

rather, our emotions are an integral aspect of our neural operating system" (Jensen,

2000, 201).

Jensen, in his amassing of brain research to feed into the educational community highlights again and again the importance of actively, intentionally engaging student emotions in the learning process. "We are learners, yes; but we are also people with feelings, beliefs, food cravings, personal problems, attitudes and various skill levels. While the old academic model addressed primarily the intellectual aspect of learners, the new prevailing model… acknowledges we learn with our minds, heart and body" (Jensen, 1995, 28).

Of such import is emotional engagement through the managing of emotional states that he declares, "manage states well and the learning will take care of itself" (Jensen, 2003, 12). In his view "there is no such thing as an unmotivated student. There are, however, students in unmotivated states" (2003, 26). It is Jensen's treatise that one of the teacher's primary goals is to influence the emotional states of students in such a way that they will be drawn into the learning process. "There is firm evidence that any single neuron or any population of neurons can come to be voluntarily controlled… in about ten minutes" (Baars & McGovern, 1996 cited in Jensen, 2003). Teachers daily demonstrate the power they have in influencing emotional states. When this can be done in positive, layered, social, empowering ways, learning will occur more easily and students will move into deeper levels of mastery (Jensen, 2003). In light of this, it is no surprise that in Jensen's opinion, "engaging emotions must be intrinsic to the curriculum, rather than something attached to it as an afterthought" (2000, 208).

The Educational importance of joy as a driving emotion

Emotional engagement by definition would wish to harness the most positive of emotions in the classroom environment. From a psychophysiology viewpoint, Fredrickson emphasizes the benefits of positive emotions on body and mind. Her research suggests that positive emotion promotes physical, intellectual, and psychological/social health that endures "long after the positive emotion has vanished" (Fredrickson, 2003, 332). It also assists in longevity, individual and collective functioning (2003, 330). At-risk youth researchers Brendtro, Brokenleg and Bockern recommend that a student "should know some joy each day and look forward to some joyous event for the morrow" (1990, 85). In today's climate, the value of joy in both learning and faith development has somewhat eluded comprehensive public scrutiny. There have been a number of educational voices however who have validated the inclusion of joy in learning endeavour. The power of positive emotions; joy in particular, was foundational to Glasser's model of quality schools, and Kessler (2000) has also intentionally applauded its power. In the current climate of accountability through standardised testing, it is easy to lose sight of the fundamental truth that learning should be fun.

Neuroscience supports this concept. Fun leads to increased mastery and medically endorsed improvements in emotional and physical health. Researchers such as McNab *et al*, identified that learning is ultimately an electrochemical event in the brain, and involves the neurotransmitter dopamine, a pleasure chemical. Researchers found that with the right levels of dopamine in the brain, we are in a better mood, can make better decisions and have better working memory and neural plasticity. Good feelings in a classroom will enhance the production of dopamine. Such feelings can

be affected in a number of ways, including physical activity, succeeding at a challenging task and camaraderie and team spirit, but further to this – just the anticipation of pleasure can also achieve this. Research by Assadi, Yucel and Pantelis (2009) have identified that the levels of this pleasure-incurring chemical in the brain improve working memory, enhanced memory formation, better decision-making, and neural plasticity. 'Good' feelings in the classroom, induced by an 'in-state' flow have been noted to enhance dopamine production. Further to this, a remarkable reciprocity emerges, for the enhanced working memory, positive decision-making and increased neural plasticity through connection of new synapses also serves to enhance dopamine levels (Jensen, 2009). His analysis of the research on this topic has led him to encourage teachers to help learners experience pleasure in their work and "celebrate new learning" (2000, 126). 'Joy' is evidently of mutual benefit to mind and learning.

Emotions and the Development of Faith

From a faith-development perspective, joy is a necessary hallmark of the Christian classroom. Caviness' neurological research also offers weight to such a concept. Her research into the fractal patterns of the brain and body highlights the fact that the emotional centre of the brain; the limbic system, is also the spiritual centre. Such a physiological link has implications for the religious education teacher. If they are indeed integral, they need to be nourished as an integral system.

White's acknowledgement of this principle a century ago was revolutionary in light of the trends of the time (1943). She clearly perceived the relationship between the emotional and the spiritual, and the importance of harnessing students' interest and

emotional engagement in the study of the Bible. "In order to do effective study, the interest of the child must be enlisted…. This is a matter not to be lost sight of" (1943, 181). White saw this engagement as being critical to helping the Bible become more desirable for the student. Her observation promoting religious education as a meaningful experience rather than a rote exercise carried an implicit understanding of the importance of emotional engagement in the process (White, 1943, 181).

At a patently practical level, Campolo's identification of damaging consequences of not experiencing 'fun': the breakdown of marriage; intolerable vocations; heartbreaking children, and religion that is a drag - is really a treatise to the importance of joy (1986). The Christian Bible classroom context, one that primarily concerns itself with introducing students to a God of 'abundant life' (John 10:10), is, by necessity to be a context for joy.

Suhor is direct in his reference to the significance of joy; "Spirituality grows in classrooms when teachers see themselves as agents of joy… rather than as licensed trainers or promoters of measurable growth" (1999, 16). The presence of joy powerfully illustrates how a life of faith is lived out by a Christian, and for this reason alone is important in the memory bank and faith journey of the student. In Alexander's identification of things that help to form our best selves in communities committed to a higher good, celebration is an integral part of this process (2001). His comment reinforces the particular value that service can offer to the positive experiences of students.

A particular exploration of such positive experiences can be found in the facilitation of memory events. Both Burns (1988) and French (2003) have identified the significance of such events in teaching faith to youth. By nature, these experiences are highly positive emotional experiences "big enough to dominate an adolescent's horizon, to that he or she is full immersed in the event and will never forget it or its message" (French, 2005, 3). As such they bear all the hallmarks of celebration and joy. Given this reality, it would be valuable for consideration to be given as to the ways these kind of memory events can occur, or be adapted and integrated in a seamless way into the spiritual experiences of students in the religious education classroom. On a less grand, but similarly effective scale, the *Tribes* learning initiative has done much to give face to the ways in which emotions can be integrated into learning experiences in order for emotions to be addressed and the affective domain be nurtured (2001).

Emotional engagement is core to the learning process. Clearly, it needs to have a conscious profile in any planning tool to ensure it is a prominent feature.

PRINCIPLE FOUR: THINKING RIGOUR

The first three essence principles: a shift to faith formation, the importance of relevance and meaning, and emotional engagement all appeal to the student's best interests in the journey of faith. The next three principles move more directly into the educational arena.

The teacher's interest in emotional engagement in the learning process not only serves to fulfil the first cornerstone truth outlined in this paper; that of placing the

student as the principal priority in the learning process, but it also helps facilitate to a greater degree another key principle in biblical curriculum design: that of the need for intellectual rigour and a thinking climate. The next three principles: thinking rigour, experiential learning and reflective practice form an integral triad of good practice in education.

Thinking Rigour as an Educational Pursuit

Many great developmental theorists have had as a driving motivation an undeniable pursuit of educational thinking rigour. A desire to understand what authentic growth through learning might look like has been the driving passion of educators for centuries. In recent times, innovators on the educational scene like Glasser (1990), Marzano (2001), Swartz (2000), Senge (2000), Kovalik (1994), Gardner (1999), De Bono (1993), Elias et al (1997), Jensen, 2003), Rogers (2003), Gibbs (2001), Claxton (2002) and McCain (2005) have all contributed layers of insights as to how students can best learn, and what the important components of educational best practice really are. Over time, their insights have expanded in breadth and depth, and they have offered an impressive array of strategies that represent best practice in the educational context. These concepts and practices seeking to pursue educational rigour have brought much value-added benefit to the educational community and their collective voice has mitigated what was hitherto a far-too-common practice: that of mental-treadmilling. Claxton exposes this prevalent modus operandi,

> "It appears that once you entice even successful students (and their teachers) off the well-trodden path of textbook definitions, standard demonstrations and worked examples, their surface layer… breaks up very quickly, revealing itself to have been at best only skin deep. Underneath there remain lay theories, curious mixture of personal experience and dubious common sense, which seem to have persisted quite unaltered by the lick of … sophistication which had overlain them" (1991, 7).

Movement beyond such superficial treatment of content is the goal of these and many other educators, including researchers of social and emotional learning. The concepts and practices emanating from quality schools (Glasser, 1990), instruction that works (Marzano, 2001), infusion thinking (Swartz, 2000), integrated thematic instruction (Kovalik, 1994), multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1999), thinking hats (De Bono, 1993), social emotional learning strategies (Elias et al, 1997), emotional state theory (Jensen, 2003), the high performance toolbox (Rogers, 2003), the Tribes movement (Gibbs, 2001) the power of the learning coach (Claxton, 2002) and the focus on 21st century skills (McCain, 2005) are some of the results of their learning theories. This plethora of thinking educators and the wealth of ideas they propound provides profuse support to teachers in this arena, as all promote thinking rigour as a vital educational pursuit.

Learning-to-Learn, Meta-cognition and the Thinking Climate

The kind of meta-cognitive, inquiry-based learning rigour that embodies a thinking environment promoted by these educators all celebrates learning power. These practices, encouraging students to both be engaged in learning experiences that encourage maximised mental engagement for all students, and intentionally and specifically verbalise their thinking processes in the exploration of a topic, offer a suitable pedagogical pathway into the future. With this process, authentic 'thinking' can really mature.

Claxton (2008) has synthesized in a particularly helpful way recent generational trends in the learning-to-learn movement. The Table below (Table 2:1) summarises these trends. From this summary one can note the gradual heightened sense of

capability learners are encouraged to experience. This new generation of thinking

and learning very much characterises current trends in New Zealand Education. Such

trends engage wisdom proffered by Palmer, "As I find ways to put my students

behind the wheel, I will encourage more and more of them to find their voices and

speak for themselves" (1998, 45). Clearly, this kind of ownership of the learning

journey will be beneficial to learning rigour and growing faith. Thus, strategies that

support Generation 3 and more particularly Generation 4 need to have a voice in any

curriculum proposed framework, if rigour is to be pursued.

TABLE 2.1
LEARNING TO LEARN: THE FOUR GENERATIONS. BY CLAXTON

First Generation	• Interest is sparked in learning as a complicated process. • Learning to Learn concerned with raising attainment (improve quality of students' learning) for the purposes of improved standardized testing. • 'Good Teaching' about content and acquisition in pleasant and effective manner. • 'Good teachers' can put across information; develop literacy and numeracy, etc.
Second Generation	• Still largely cognitive focus. • Learning to learn all about development of study skills / recalling for tests • Practical things to organize knowledge, engage memories or revise effectively. • Practicing techniques eg. mind maps to enhance comprehension, organization and retention thus improving performance. • 'Good teaching' seen as before, plus delivering these techniques - attached as 'extras'.
Third Generation	• The cognitive focus of Generation 2 is now challenged. • Focus on how the teachers could 'teach' better. • Expanded to include emotional factors (eg. Self-esteem) • Classroom climate now important. • Brain-compatible strategies – interest in the learning mind. • Music for learning. • Focus on learning styles / Multiple intelligences – the 'how' of teaching • 'Good teaching' included reducing stress levels (avoidance of anything confusing or distressing), helping students raise their attainment levels and ways of engaging different learning modes.
Fourth Generation	• Deeper and more robust level. Outline of the 'big picture' of what 'learning fitness' comprises. • Focus on how students can be helped to become better learners. • High involvement of students in the processes. Discovery of the ingredients of good learning and how to help themselves develop into good learners. • Inclusive of resilience (habit of persisting with difficulty), resourcefulness (ability to deploy variety of learning strategies, reflection: think about ones learning and self as a learner), and reciprocity (ability to learn well in company with others.) • Focus on learning habits and processes of learning. • Teachers themselves involved in becoming better learners. • Developmental and cumulative – encouraging the 'ready and willing', not just the 'able'. • The classroom becomes a mental gymnasium – mental fitness centre with a 'learning power coach' to help their minds become stronger and more supple. • Teacher question of 'How can I help students learn better?' now becomes 'How can I help them become better learners?'

Howard Gardner reinforces the need for an approach to this kind of inquiry learning in his words, "What we want is for students to get more interested in things, more involved in them, more engaged in wanting to know; to have projects that they can get excited about and work on over long periods of time, to be stimulated to find things out on their own" (1999, 180,181). How much more critical is this kind of inquiry in religious education classes. Authentic learning will always seek to engage students in mental grappling (Sizer & Sizer, 1999). This kind of learning involves an orchestrated immersion (Caine & Caine, 1997) in a topic that results in discoveries that greatly assist students in their personal growth.

Variety in Learning Styles

Such rigour can only really be pursued when Claxton's Generation 3 and Generation 4 practices are brought into play. Gardner's significant work in identifying intelligence as being multi-faceted and unique to each student has been a hallmark in educational practice. The kind of rigour sought in the religious studies classroom will only be possible if the whole 'spectrum of intelligences' is employed. As Senge states, "the more modalities of learning we engage, the broader and deeper is our growth" (2000, 38). Jensen affirms this from a neurological perspective. In his estimation, variety in learning activities engage more brain systems and build the strength and resiliency of connections and memories (2003).

Thinking Rigour and Faith Formation

A critical thinking climate is vital to the formation of faith (Knight, 1985, Gillespie et al 2004). It is a process in which the mind is fully engaged. Paul's statement in Romans 12:2, "…be transformed by the renewing of your mind" attests to the

importance of engaging the mind as a pre-requisite for commitment. It is the development of the mind, rather than the conquering of facts that is the desirable outcome for a Bible teacher. While it is true to say that "it is impossible to be spiritually mature and yet be ignorant of the truths of God's Word" (Downs, 1994,18), it is *how* the Word is dealt with that should influence educational practice.

As outlined in Chapter One, there are definite cognitive components to faith. Such a reality punctuates Ellen White's counsel to develop "thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thoughts" (1903, 17). Thinking is of vital importance to knowing and valuing. Sizer and Sizer acknowledge that the spiritual is embedded in the intellectual and that a mental vacuum has so often lead to a moral one as well (1999). Dudley supports this concept in his forthright assessment,

> "Spiritual development does not take place without critical thinking.... This does not mean that people might not engage in good and moral behaviour for a number of other reasons – proper training, avoidance of punishment, hope of reward, etc. But unless this behaviour results from principled reasoning, it cannot be viewed as mature faith." (1999, 10)

Gleeson promotes the teaching of philosophy to young children for the same reason (1991, 65). Faith formation is clearly a process in which the mind is fully engaged. In light of this, the use of mental processes that promote this kind of critical thinking assist in the formation of faith.

The Relationship between Cognition and Thinking in Faith Formation

White's comment that "every human being … is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator – individuality, power to think and to do" (1903, 17), has been historically validated as a touchstone for Adventist Educators. As stated in Chapter

One, cognitive belief has been one of the more 'successful' areas in the teaching of Adventist youth (Dudley1992, Gillespie et al, 2004). Certainly White's comment, "the truths of the Word can be best appreciated by an intellectual Christian. Christ can be best glorified by those who serve Him intelligently" (1943, 361) have been addressed. However, on closer examination, a focus on cognitive learning has not necessarily been commensurate with a 'thinking' environment. It must be remembered that learning is not the consequence of teaching or writing, but rather of thinking (McLaren 2004).

The Valuegenesis II study uncovered the reality that Adventist young people's perception of their high school's as a 'thinking environment' was diminished as they moved through secondary school. In response to the statement: "It challenges my thinking", those that answered 'quite true' or 'very true' in the early grades amounted to 55% (56%), while, for those in final year of schooling it dropped to 27% (23%). Of interest is the high correlation between a rich thinking climate that is open to new ideas, accepting of divergent opinions and creative in its exploration of the application of belief, and a perception of quality education, denominational loyalty and personal piety (Gillespie et al, 2004). Offering such an environment has numerous serendipitous benefits, ones that propel the cause of a resolute faith. The fact of a mere 6% increase in a perceived thinking climate in the ten-year period between Valuegenesis I and Valuegenesis II would indicate that work can still be done here.

Oliver speaks to the Adventist historical malaise in this arena,

> "It seems to me that where we may have failed our young people is in not providing them with something to be ardent and fascinated with…. They have been robbed of the feeling that there is a truth for which they can sense

an idealistic attachment. In our efforts to avoid looking emotional, we have taken from the young that at which they are best; that is to become engaged and feel strongly about anything important" (2004, 4).

When there is little intentional focus on emotional engagement, and a commensurate lack of focus on meta-cognitive thinking skills, faith growth can be adversely affected.

In light of the fact that faith development is a life-long journey that students are embarking on with God, Christian teachers need to provide them with cognitive skills so they are equipped to make their own discoveries. Such a notion is reinforced by King, "While the teacher does need to share important passages, themes and concepts, perhaps the best thing he or she can do is to 'inspire students to engage in their own personal study of the Word" (2006, 4). Certainly, it is Willard's contention that the process of transformation into Christ-likeness involves taking the Bible seriously (cited in Gangel, 2005, 158). This part of the thinking culture intentionally models for students the skills needed for a deep, personal investigation of Scripture.

Knight highlights the importance of promoting critical judgment rather than indoctrination that bypasses any mental grappling (1985). The implications of this for curriculum development are significant. Again, it is the *methodology* of delivery that will propel practice toward the goal, rather than the content itself. As Knight suggests, "Students must become problem solvers, inquirers, researchers and reflective thinkers. No longer concerned with restating simple, comfortable and largely memorised answers, students shift their activities to include a level of thinking that is more indicative of a Christian emerging towards maturity" (1985, 47). This perspective seems consistent with Wrobbel who sees pat answers as being

part of a comfortable but unexamined Christian faith (1992). In Maxson's opinion, the most a teacher can do in the pursuit of faith formation is offer information, personal Bible study skills and experiences to open person's life to God (2006). The former two of these can be explored with depth in a thinking environment.

The Influence of Collaborative Learning on Thinking

The benefits of cooperative learning are validated in teaching thinking. Students engage in thinking best when they "must collaborate with other students by sharing their own constructed truth and offering reactions to the constructed truths of others; interpret Scripture by explaining it in ways that a variety of audiences might understand; apply Scripture to real-world events, and prayerfully reflect on their own collaborations, constructions and applications" (Knowlton & Shaffer, 2004, 6). The benefits of social interaction, recently celebrated in the realm of brain research as being compulsory for optimum learning (2003) also can be seen to strengthen the case for cooperative learning as a key facilitator of the thinking climate.

A focus on the cognitive elements of education and faith are areas of such breadth and depth that much more could be said regarding their import and impact, however, the highlights that have been considered offer sufficient salient guidance to benefit a framework for curriculum planning.

PRINCIPLE FIVE: EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The two principles previously outlined, noting the need for emotional engagement in the learning process and an honest, intellectual rigour in learning communities

coalesce to impact another learning reality voiced for some time in the educational community and echoed still in current literature: that of experiential learning. Kolb, noted authority of experiential learning believes "learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (1984, 38). He sees this experience as a mandatory prerequisite to any authentic learning. The transformative nature of experience gains it potency from the highly engaging way in which experiential learning occurs and the rigour with which intellectual thought can be pursued. The old adage *talking is not teaching and listening is not learning* is a colloquial expression of a truth that is still relevant and timely. The historical characterisation of students being "not excited by the truth but embalmed by it" (1987, 66) is a call to bring all into the arena as players, rather than looking on as spectators. This is the genius of experiential learning. Healy's comment, " too much teacher talk gets in the way of higher-level reasoning because it prevents children from doing their own thinking" (1990, 96) identifies past characterisation and also its inadequacy.

Piaget's work ninety years ago, and more recent brain research noted by Kovalik substantiate this notion by acknowledging the fact that although learning best occurs with a move from concrete to abstract, traditional curriculum has persistently clung to the tradition of "telling as the primary medium". This has occurred, despite a barrage of evidence from the axioms of language, research within the educational community, brain research and direct experience (Kovalik, 1994, p xii). Didactic teaching is now considered a dinosaur. "In experiential learning, students enjoy the adventure of making discoveries - their own discoveries" (Schultz & Shultz, 1999, 155). In the arena of religious education, students have for too long drowned in a deluge of mere data. "They have not necessarily been encouraged to discover for

themselves, or own the learning process. Learners should be helped to crawl into a subject, pursue nooks that interest them, ask questions, find out what works, make their own connections with the real world, and share their insights with fellow learners." (Schultz & Shultz, 1999, 155).

Edgar Dale's Cone of Experience has been well noted in literature and practice as a useful tool to highlight the power of direct experience in learning. (Burns, 1988; Shultz & Shultz, 1999). The principles it describes will be valuable in the development of a useful planning framework.

Experiential Learning: Facilitator of a 'Community of Faith-Enculturation Paradigm'

Mention has been made of Westerhoff's identification of the need to transition from an "schooling-instructional" model to a "faith-enculturation model" of teaching faith. He has identified that what is needed in this new way of thinking is an emphasis on "what we know, what we are and what we do" (1976, 88). In his treatise on faith development, he doesn't stop there, but proceeds to offer a preferable way forward, though a 'community of faith-enculturation paradigm.' This model is one that embraces not only the 'belonging' that was embodied in the early Christian church, but also a highly experiential emphasis in its modus operandi. The nurturing of students from conversion to a radical faith is embraced within this concept; where they, as actors, are immersed in thinking, feeling, discussing and self-disclosing to each other with vigour and authenticity. "Shared experiences, story telling, celebration, action and reflection between and among equal 'faithing' selves within a community of faith best helps us understand how faith is transmitted, expanded and

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sustained" (Westerhoff, 1976, 88). All this provides a strong reinforcement of the second cornerstone truth, which identified the importance of community in developing faith. This is *only possible* from within a highly experiential learning paradigm, where the teacher relinquishes ownership of the learning, growing and sharing and gives it to the students. Such a paradigm is core to pursuing the goals that have been identified for Adventist religious education at the outset of this study.

These three principles: emotional engagement, inquiry-based rigour, and experiential learning form a kind of symbiotic nexus, both influencing and being influenced by each other to facilitate optimal learning and 'being' in the faith-learning environment. They are integral to future planning and teaching.

PRINCIPLE SIX: REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Another key principle highlighted by numerous contemporary thought-leaders is the practice of reflection. While the paradigm of faith formation has embedded reflective practice in its rich landscape in recent times (Boa, 2001; Mullholland, Jr, 1985, 2000; Foster, 2001), it is only now being featured with increasing regularity in the educational landscape. Innovative educators such as Kolb, with his experiential learning cycle, Senge, with his focus on effective learning, and promoters of formative assessment (Clarke, 2005; Claxton, 2002, 2008) have identified reflective practice as a key ingredient in learning processes. Reflection of this nature in the religious education classroom is being gradually given increased prominence.

Reflective Practice as An Agent for Learning Rigour

In the educational arena, Palmer makes a strong link between reflective practice and learning. "In authentic education," he states, "silence is treated as a trustworthy matrix for the inner work students must do, a medium for learning of the deepest sort" (1998, 80). It allows for the impediments of discernment to be removed and a personal honesty to be embraced. Such reflection however, needs to be viewed within the context of the value of social, communal learning. Learning is ultimately a marriage between community and solitude. Much research abounds about the strength of social learning (Jensen, 2003; Elias et al 1997), with its potential for significant dialogue with others; allowing for the exposure of faulty world-view perceptions, the testing of biases and the general expansion of knowledge. However, learning also requires periods of solitude (Palmer 1993), which allows for an incubation and assimilation of thoughts into the existing thinking of the learner. It is thus the interludes of reflection amidst the frequent engaged dialogues that are of significant benefit.

An increasing amount of brain research provides validation for such a practice. From a neurological perspective, "Writing in journals or discussing the new learning in small groups makes good sense for the learning brain.… Cramming more content per minute, or moving from one piece of learning to the next, virtually guarantees that little will be learned or retained. In fact, many teachers who complain of having to do so much 're-teaching' are the same ones trying to cram too much" (Jensen, 1998, 47). He goes on to say that "brain synapses are strengthened when there is no competing neural stimuli for several minutes" (1998, 47).

Senge's work (2000) also highlights the value of reflective practice as it impacts effective learning. His exploration of *mental models*, involving reflection and inquiry skills as a means of developing and aligning attitudes and perceptions within the class can really assist in defining reality with greater honesty. This leads to a safe environment where potentially contentious topics can be openly discussed. In a faith-development classroom community where multiple faith worldviews can potentially collide, this is a crucial emphasis.

Reflective Practice as an Agent for Promoting Spiritual Formation.

With the formation of faith as a goal, solitude and reflection at a personal level or with learning companions, is essential not only to connecting with God in meaningful ways, but also to cementing learning and beginning to apply spiritual truths to life. Reflective practice begins to transport cognitive learning into the affective domain so that it may be holistically internalised. It takes informative material and helps it become formative in the life (Mullholland, 1985). If the goal is not to inform, or conform, but to transform the life, reflective practice is essential.

Sages from the Syrian monk Isaac of Nineveh (cited Shelton, 1989) through to Gregory the Great (cited, Shinohara, 2002) have applauded silence and reflection in an encounter with God. In more recent times, the great spiritual formation exponents have reiterated its message with conviction. Boa (2001), Nouwen (1999), Patterson (1999), Ackerman (2001), Hull (2004), Benner (2005), Willard (2002) and Foster (1989) all speak to the crucial importance of 'holy leisure,' of quiet places and times

alone with God. In Peterson's construct, although Christ acknowledged that he was 'the way', 'the truth' and 'the life', the 'Jesus truth' seems to have attracted significantly more attention than the 'Jesus way'. The 'Jesus way' was deeply immersed in periods of quiet solitude and connection with His Father. It is his view that the 'Jesus way' wedded to the 'Jesus truth' equates to the 'Jesus life' (2007). Although we are more inclined "to follow Jesus into service than into solitude, it is the quiet time with him that matters" (Boa, 2001). Willard goes as far as to say that, "only silence will allow us life-transforming concentration upon God" (1991, 168). Nouwen supports this notion and declares that a life without these moments easily becomes destructive, for quiet reflection has the potential to unmask illusions and bring clarity to the reality of self (1999) and, by inference, clarity to Palmer's 'grace of great things' (1998). In the pursuit of such reflection, it is fortunate that "children are better than adults at tracking relationships without language" (Berryman, cited in Ratcliff, 2004, 29). It would appear they have an intuitive propensity for reflection.

Reflective practice brings an intimacy and immediacy in the search for personal identity and growing faith (Westerhoff, 1976). Reflection makes the adolescent's world more transparent, and prevents him or her from remaining an observer of other's spiritual lives, rather, drawing him in to be a participant in his own journey (Palmer, 1993). This kind of focus encourages a growing self-government of the soul (Shinohara, 2002) that is purposeful, healthy and necessary for faith development.

In Shelton's treatise on adolescent spirituality, he speaks of the need to discuss these reflective "God-filled moments… personal experiences that have involved an

awareness of God." Discussion with another or in small groups allows for these experiences to be further grounded in the identity of the individual. These reflective opportunities also flow on to opportunities that challenge application and a move towards commitment. It is here that reflective practice has the potential to be a material agent in faith formation. To be 'faith-formed' means that the Apostle Paul's admonition to be 'a doer of the word, not just a hearer' (James 1: 22) can be embraced and realised through authentic connection and dependence on God.

To a generation that exists in a world where noise dominates, the idea of reflective practice can be a threatening experience. However, given the breadth of its value, the discerning teacher who tailors practice to developmental needs can develop it into an inviting occurrence in the adolescent's life (Shelton p 123).

PRINCIPLE SEVEN: LIFE-APPLICATION (TRANSFORMATION-FOCUSED)

Six defining principles have now been discussed; six principles that can help to translate philosophy to practice. A celebration of faith formation, relevance and meaning, emotional engagement, thinking rigour, experiential learning and reflective practice all offer time-honoured insight into what is valuable in the nurture of faith and education. The final principle relates to the cornerstone aspect of transformation: life-application.

In many respects, life-application and transformation are almost synonymous with faith formation. They certainly embody the desired end result of life lived with God.

"Drawing out the spiritual implications and applications of theology to real life is not only the task but also the ultimate goal of all Christian teaching" (Coe, 2009, 7). At the nucleus of faith development is a desire for experiences to be focused on transformation; that the student be challenged through cognition, affective learning and the Holy Spirit to live their life differently, in a manner more aligned with God and His purposes. If this is to be pursued with integrity, the cornerstone truths of: adopting a child-centred approach to teaching, developing a classroom faith community, and being a teacher who is available to the direction of God need to be conspicuous elements in the learning environment. As the teacher develops this kind of culture, honest discussion regarding the great truths of Scripture can be applied with honesty, support, authenticity and accountability. Only then can the possibility of transformative education can be realised.

Comment has been made regarding the fact that a hesitation to put into practice the truth of Scripture lies at the heart of a central malaise in Christianity (Willard, 2006). The pervading proclivity of Christians to consider discipleship optional (Willard, 2006), as previously discussed, has emerged in part, because of a failure with this particular issue. Willard identifies the problematic predicament of researchers like Gallup and Barna in struggling to distinguish Christians and non-Christians on the basis of behaviour and attitudes. When summation is based solely on self-reporting for such a differentiation: " 'Yes, I am a born-again Christian'… then something is very wrong" (cited in Gangel, 2002, 20). Willard continues, "although there is much talk about 'changing lives' in Christian circles, the reality is very rare, and certainly less common than the talk" (Gangel, 2002, 78). The work of Kinnaman, in his research on the perception of Christianity from the outside paints a picture of a group of individuals who are hypocritical, sheltered, political, judgemental and arrogant; in

essence, 'unchristian' (2008). It would seem that this malaise in Christianity is underscored in part by a constrained emphasis on life-application and transformation. Kinnaman's outcomes of thinking, loving and listening (2008) are certainly life-immersed. One may ask how Adventist educators might have inadvertently contributed to this languor through the modus operandi of Adventist education.

It is interesting to note that in the eastern tradition, growth towards wholeness is 'theosis' (Shinohara, 2002). The concept clearly encompasses 'theos' God, and it is a growth that never ends. Humanity is by inference called into 'God-likeness'; a thought echoed by White when she spoke of the aim of Adventist education as being "Godliness, God-likeness is the goal to be reached" (1903). This is the journey of the disciple, the segway of faith formation and the chosen pathway of the Bible teacher. The learning trajectory must thus lead to transformative life-application. Christian faith thought-leaders such as Westerhoff (1976) and Mullholland (1985) speak of this necessity. To Westerhoff, "in Christian faith, word and deed are never separated" (1976, 93) and he proceeds to enunciate the communal process through which this can happen. To Mullholland, faith concerns God awakening humanity to the dynamics and possibilities of a new ways of being (1985, 28). In this definition, life application and transformation are overtly implied, and he proceeds to focus on how God seeks to identify the inconsistencies in the life and shape individuals towards His will through the open, receptive reading of Scripture.

Faith is to be brought to life in everyday experiences. The Christian theistic definition of faith has been identified as a complex phenomenon, expansive and

multi-layered. Of note, however, is a significant number of definitions that include this affective-behaviour orientation; the horizontal action-based arm of faith. (Smith, 1979; Dykstra, 1986a; Cobb, 1975; Fowler, 1981; Parks, 1986; Gillespie 1988, Gane, 1997).

Westerhoff accentuates the fact that it is an illusion to consider that child nurture in and of itself is enough to nurture faith (1976, 38). There must be more, and part of that more lies in a challenge and accountability to live out faith through behaviour and service. While he proceeds to unpack the stages of faith, all are aimed at ultimately living the faith in daily life (1976).

Seventh-day Adventist faith educators add their voices to the importance of life-application and transformation as necessary in the life of the Christian. White highlighted that facts and theories are of little value unless put to practical use (1943). Christ Himself "never presented truth as an abstraction, but rather always sought to apply them to the lives of His hearers (White, 1943, 81). Gillespie et al (2004), Knight (1985), Luxton (2004) and Oliver (2006), all attest to the truth that Christianity is not a body of knowledge to digest; the person must be reached, the character moulded, and Christ-likeness pursued. The ultimate priority is a unified life. "The law of God has no relevance if it is only a game and a person has no personal responsibility" (Oliver, 2006, 23).

The fracturing of belief and practice already discussed in Chapter One as being a recent historic problem could well be attributed in part, to the teaching of faith on the

intellectual plane without this challenge to application and commitment. It would seem that a portion of the intellectual diet of historic Adventism has potentially restricted the potential for life-transformation. Man is far more than mere intellect, for as Webber points out, "truth will have no meaning for him if it is unrelated to human experience. We must recognise the poverty of rational analysis and systemisation of Bible truth" (Webber et al, 1972, 106).

The concept of life-application has long been embedded in Christian youth ministry circles. Burns' 'what, so what, now what' process in debriefing has been proposed with life-change in mind and has shaped practice in this ministry arena. From an educational perspective, the notion of application has also been strongly featured. It is interesting to note that the very word 'curriculum', while most frequently used to describe learning coursework, also has a more specific definition that acknowledges its infusion into all of life. In this definition " all schooling, all of life and all learning are interrelated. All one learns is part of the curriculum of life" (Oliver, 2006, 5). Even a cursory reflection on this thought brings valuable insight into having learning immersed in life so that lives can be changed.

White's assertion that in education, "our ideas…take too narrow and too low a range" (1904, 13) could well apply to the extent to which the transformed life through Christian education has been pursued. Her declaration of the greatest need in the world is the want of men,

> "men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall" (1903, 57),

reveals the depth of intention towards 'God-likeness'. Part of the purpose of Adventist education is to apply God's principles to life in such a way that application and commitment to God's will, God's way, is the marrow of the personal identity of each student. This kind of commitment is amplified in Gleeson's comment,

> "True education is… about taking us beyond ourselves to cherish principles which are true whether we think so or not; which are good whether they suit our interests or not; which are just whether or not they run counter to what we immediately want; which are beautiful whether we happen to like them or not; which are sacred whether we are willing to recognise them or not" (1991, 65).

Personal transformation: this is the purpose of Adventist education and the core purpose of biblical teaching. While personal choice will always dictate personal direction, surely such a goal needs to reside in the consciousness of every effective teacher of religion.

The Role of Service in Transformation

Life-application and transformation are integral to faith formation. One particularly powerful manifestation of this kind of life-application lies in the arena of service. There is an abundance of research to suggest the manifold benefits of service to a young person (Billig, 2000, Glen, 2001, Elias, 2003, Hopkins et al, 2007). Of particular relevance to this study is its potential to transport the student into God's agenda. Palmer's identification of love as being the deepest source of knowledge (1993,16): one that 'transforms' our knowing and our being, is an insight which transports goals back to the core of Adventist Education and can be demonstrated though serving others. He comments that this personal knowledge is one that "does

not distance us from the world but brings us into community, face to face" (1993, 16).

At the face of it, "education for its own sake is as bad as art for art's sake, but culture held in trust to empower one better to serve one's fellow men, the wise for the ignorant, the strong for the weak," is education's highest aim (Welch, 1916, 22, 23). "The Christian character," Welch continues to postulate, "which does not find expression in service is scarcely worthy of the name." (Welch, 1916, 22, 23). Pursuing service helps to fulfil the 'grace of great things' spoken of by Palmer (1993), and fulfils White's recommendation that everything be done "for divine service" (1903, 13). But such service offers serendipitous rewards, for a reciprocity exists between altruistic humanitarianism and character development. It appears that both elements both feed and fuel each other, creating a tandem influence (Knight, 1985, 56). It would appear that transforming one's world helps to transform the individual himself. This cyclic pattern provides a means of character development. White certainly spoke much of the need for 'missionary work'; being immersed with the spiritual needs of families in the community (1913), and reaching out to others in an altruistic way. Shelton adds strength to this service emphasis in stating how young people need to be encouraged to think of their talents in light of how they may be of service to others (1983).

Brendtro, Brokenleg and Bockern have articulated a helpful comment regarding the malaise in society with regard to perceptions of youth, "Little is asked of youth except that they be consumers." While they hunger for a feeling of importance, adults infantilise them. "There are limited opportunities for the young themselves to

produce goods and services for others" (2002, 38). As a result they "come to believe that their lives make little difference to the world…. They feel like helpless pawns following somebody else's script, rather than the authors who can write the drama of their own destiny" (2002, 39).

Gardner offers a contrasting model in his exploration of the need to help the young to understand the world, but "not just because the world is fascinating and the human mind is curious", but rather "to understand it so that they will be positioned to make it a better place…. We can affect our imperfect world for good or for ill" (1999, 180,181). It is an incontrovertible truth that service transforms human beings. The influence of service and its potential to transform has been anecdotally observed in the STORMCo project within Australia and New Zealand (Unser, 2001). Such a focused purpose of healing and helping communities through service is but one initiative that has served to bridge a gap that has been increasingly concerning in recent decades. Given this fact, it would seem to be crucial to give opportunities for service in schools, these faith-nurturing communities (Westerhoff, 1976). Luxton targets the heart of the issue in her comment,

> "If education does not reach into life, and make demands of its society then it has not served its purpose.... School has a responsibility to recognise that community- centered education always has two sides to it - strengthening the learning process through community learning and completing learning by putting what has been learnt into a real context" (2004, 17, 20).

In Christ's pedagogical approach there was no separation between the secular and the spiritual, and His modus operandi was entirely service-oriented. All His teaching had one desired end: to know God and fully commit to Him. If Adventist schools are going to be relevant entities concerned with contribution to the world around then,

they need to embrace the same praxis, and centre on community-focused initiatives that can be transformational in nature. Such practice will do much to nurture students in their growing faith, and therefore needs to have a prominent voice in any emerging curriculum planning tool for religious education.

CONCLUSION

This review has provided an amassing of potent sources. The voices reiterating three cornerstone truths and seven principles have been seen to fortify the core purpose of biblical teaching; to see a rich faith developed where students will be encouraged to "walk routinely and easily in the character and power of Jesus Christ" (Willard, cited in Gangel, 2005, 154). This recent research certainly has the potential to impact the path of learning in both faith and education. Prominently visible in the discoveries in these disciplines have been the principles of: faith formation as a defining preoccupation; the vital importance of relevance and meaning in learning; the power of the meta-narrative in connecting with students and connecting them with God; the potency of emotional engagement, particularly the positively charged emotions; the need for academic rigour through experiential learning if deep learning is to be realised; the value of reflective practice to the same end; and the summative purpose of transformational learning as the great intent of biblical teaching.

These principles are highly connected and aligned. They emerge as a credible philosophical compendium on which to base planning; and as such they should propel biblical teaching methodology. These are the principles that will be seen to shape the structure of the *Transformational Planning Framework* to be described in the next chapter. Such a practical tool that has the potential to confront teachers in

their daily endeavour can only serve to integrate philosophy and practice in greater measure. These seven principles are predicated on an understanding that fuelling them are three foundational truths; namely, that the student and his/her needs dominate teacher modus operandi, that a community of faith- enculturation paradigm (Westerhoff, 1976) is experienced, and that the teacher is connected through personal authenticity and relationship with students. Westerhoff perhaps sums up best what is needed to form faith, "Shared experiences, storytelling, celebration, action and reflection between and among equal 'faithing' selves within a community of faith best helps us understanding how faith is transmitted, expanded and sustained" (1976, 88).

Chapter Three

THE TRANSFORMATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

"Making the simple complicated is commonplace;
making the complicated simple, awesomely simple, that's creativity."
Charles Mingus

A SHIFT FROM ANALYSIS TO SYNTHESIS

The landscape of current literature is clearly replete with extensive verification of what is to be valued in both education and the development of faith. The emergence of the foregoing seven principles as agents for pursuing the primary purposes of Adventist Education as expressed through religious education, have evolved from the reflective analysis of the researcher. At this juncture, the *analysis* of this vast network of ideas and conclusions now needs purposeful *synthesis* into a practical structure that can inform and guide the practice of biblical instruction at the coalface.

Mention has been made of the fact that Seventh-day Adventist Education could perhaps benefit from a hermeneutical-praxis paradigm to bridge philosophy and practice; a holistic educational matrix that can intentionally encourage transformation of the mind, heart and soul, and embedded in the definition of faith. Such a framework could with greater intent serve to reach the goal to 'facilitate student encounters with a loving God' that has been identified in the religious education syllabus for Adventist Schools (1996, 2).

The sharp dichotomy between a life-centred education of faith and a text-based education in religion has been noted. This has been a dichotomy that has been too prevalent in the past (Knight, 1985). With the rich body of knowledge now available serving to increase understanding, the time is ripe for the provision of such a tool as a means of offering assistance toward an integrated, coherent and optimal future in religious education. The *theory* of ideas, however vast the network, is of little value

unless it is translated into the *practice* of ideas. It is to this translation of ideas that attention is now turned.

FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURES FOR THE CULTIVATION OF FAITH

Before exploring the proposed planning framework, it is important to acknowledge that curriculum alone will not achieve holistic faith formation. No one thing can ever achieve this. Figure 3.1 outlines a number of functional structures perceived to be necessary for a holistic nurture of faith in the school context.

These functional structures include, a *corporate commitment* on the part of local school administration to providing the best in this key learning area in terms of resources, training and personnel is foundational. Secondly, interest in *cultivating* the spiritual development of religious education teachers is another key ingredient, for that which rules the heart, forms the art. The gospel of Luke attests to this: 'Out of the overflow of his heart, his mouth speaks' (Luke 6:25). Teaching occurs from our *being* far more than our *doing*. Thirdly, the intentional nurture of a grace-infused *connected culture* in the classroom will also be a salient consideration, for without it faith has only a limited potential for growth. Fourthly, *collaboration* with the home, the primary source of spiritual nurture will also be a priority, a place where the school seeks to offer some support and information sharing with parents concerning faith building practices. This holds much potential for the Chaplain's role in the school. Finally, *curriculum* is also a cornerstone consideration. It holds the key to the 'how' of our practice that Valuegenesis has revealed to be an imperative ingredient in faith-growth (Gillespie, 2005). All of these areas will need to be addressed if change and growth is desired.
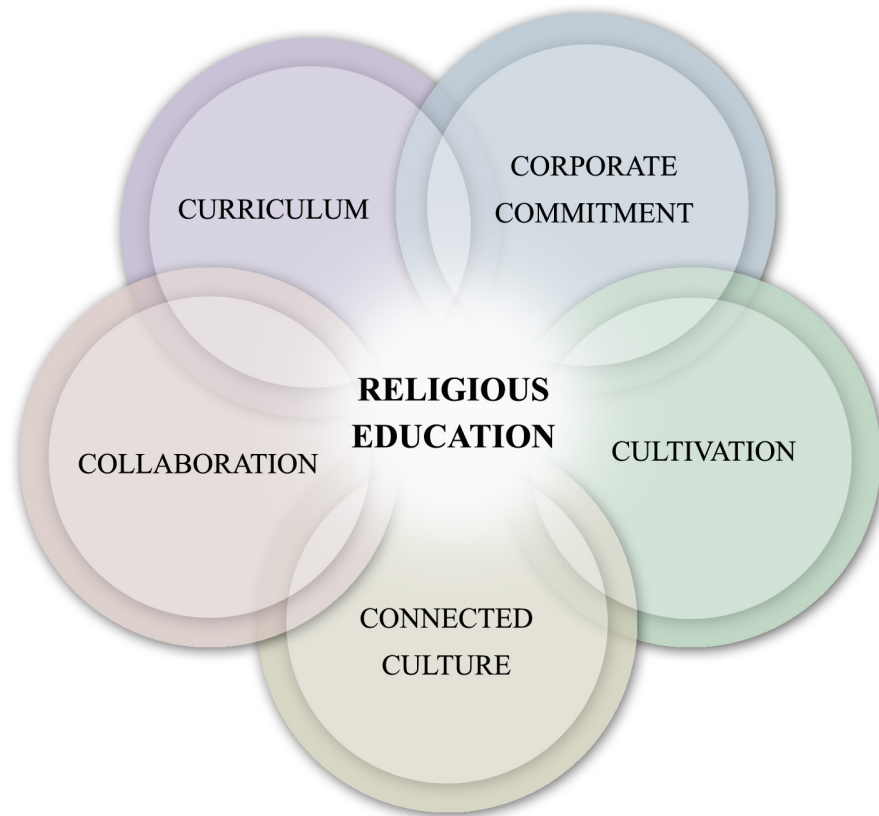
Figure 3.1
Functional Structures to Enhance the Cultivation of Faith

THE TRANSFORMATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The moments where philosophy and practice collide for the teacher are the moments spent in the planning of teaching units. Here the beliefs and assumptions of the teacher are overtly and covertly brought into play to forge not only the content of learning, but also the methodology with which it will be delivered. The *Transformational Planning Framework* (Figure 3.2) is a tool that has the potential to guide the practical decisions that teachers make in this critical phase of the pedagogical process. This framework is intent on faith development. It does not offer

mystical methods, but seeks to encourage and scaffold persuasive demonstrations through planning and ultimate practice, so that the great themes identified as being important in the development of faith and learning are indeed being honoured. It is vital that none of the valuable principles outlined in the former chapter be lost in the planning process, for students need to experience them if they are to impact their lives. The journey of biblical teaching can then be goal-focused and navigated with intentionality.
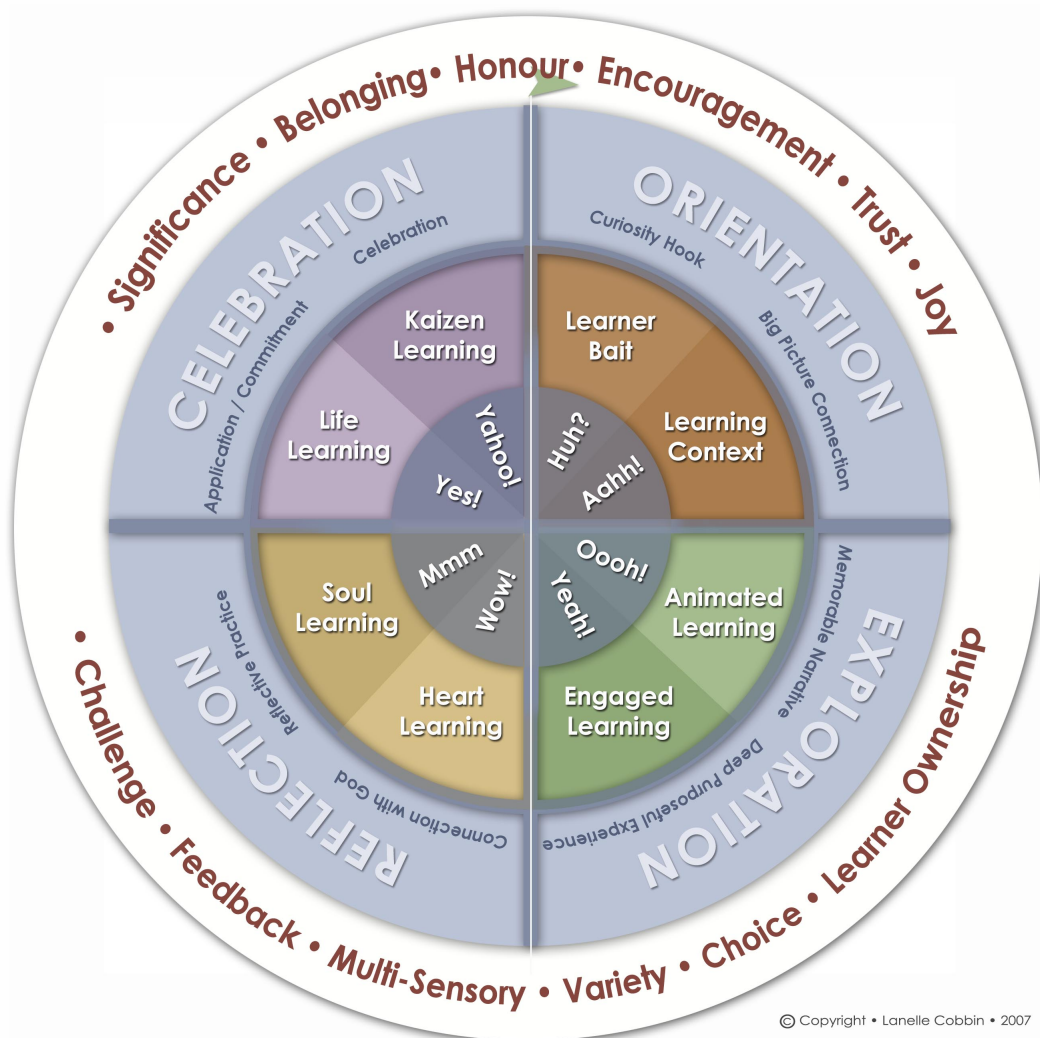
Figure 3.2
The Transformational Planning Framework
[A Guide for Spiritual Facilitators]

This planning framework, containing four quadrants and eight phases, two belonging to each quadrant, has emerged from the conviction of growing faith's experiential, dynamic, heart-focused orientation. While faith proceeds through definitive stages, a celebration of the key elements that contribute to faith formation should never leave our educational consciousness. Any structure that invites the intentional holistic pursuit of the 'larger targets' (Knight, 1985) of connectedness with God and a nurturing of heart and soul, in addition to the traditional cognitive emphasis will be an asset to planning.

This structure is a call to accountability for the teacher: a call to propel the philosophy and beliefs of the mission of Seventh-day Adventist education into practice. This can be achieved by arranging learning experiences for the students that will allow them to be involved in those experiences that were highlighted in Chapter Two as being priorities in faith formation and educational practice. Namely to be actively emotionally engaged, contextualise the learning, immerse themselves in narrative, respond with depth, thinking rigour and creativity, connect with their heart, offer opportunity for personal reflection and an obedient response, share meaningfully, and celebrate learning and transformation.

Within any teaching unit, it is important that all these areas be explored, for to neglect an area is to ignore a vital component that has been deemed important, and the result is not holistic, nor balanced. Connecting the head, heart and hand will require traversing through each of these 'phases' for however brief a time. Each phase will offer an essential element in the learning journey and the learner's

expanding understanding of faith. By no means is such a recommendation intended

to constrain teaching methodology; in fact, the opposite is desired. Within these eight

phases lies a vast range of potential teaching strategies that can be culturally shaped

and contextualized to bring a rich variety into learning experiences. The

Transformational Planning Framework is not prescriptive, constricting, or in any

way mechanical; each phase simply provides an opportunity for students to engage in

a dynamic range of experiences that will allow both spiritual and learning encounters

to take place. Embedded in this thinking is the desire for activities in any phase to

resist becoming formulaic or predictable. Jensen's (2003) celebration of variety is a

guiding principle.

It must be noted at the outset of this outline, that this *Transformational Planning*

Framework bears coincidental similarity to other models, for example, McCarthy's

4Mat cycle (2005). There are, however, notable differences. While McCarthy's

system focuses on diverse learning styles and methods of processing, the

Transformational Planning Framework relies on a process within which brain-

compatible, multiple intelligence-rich *strategies* will be activated. It also echoes the

basic 'what, so what, now what' progression towards action that has been embedded

in Christian youth ministry during the last decade (Burns, 1988). Both these models

offer sound approaches on which to base practice. The researcher believes, however,

that the *Transformational Planning Framework* harnesses some unique features

hitherto silent in a pedagogical planning framework. It is believed that its merit lies

in the holistic collective of *all* the planning phases. It is the *whole* that is hoped will

invigorate the practice of religious education. In addition to this, of value-added

benefit is the fact that it melds elements of best practice from both spiritual and

educational disciplines. It is desire of the researcher to bring some of the best of *both* worlds into a practical, workable tool.

EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT - A CORE PREOCCUPATION

At the core of the *Transformational Planning Framework* is an identification of the importance of the emotional engagement of the student (See Figure 3.3). (The theoretical impetus for this can be found outlined in Principle 3, Chapter Two). If spiritual formation and an intrinsic motivation for learning are to be goals, engagement is an absolute essential. The domain of the emotions involves the affective side of learning. Historically, this was thought to be a distraction to the learning process. Recent research certainly attests to its importance, for ultimately, emotions, thinking and learning are inextricably intertwined (Jensen, 1998).
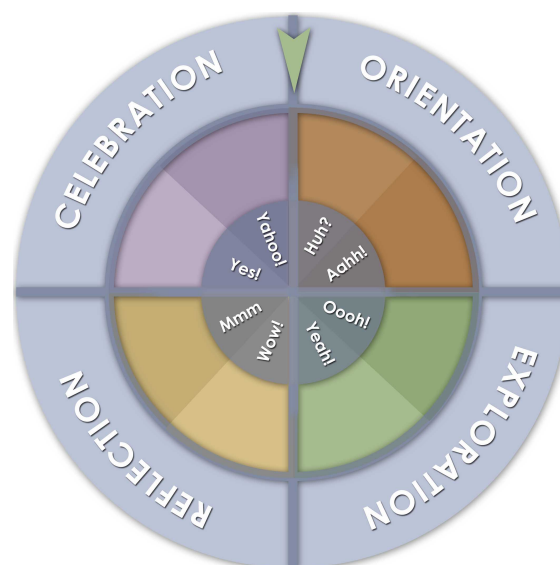
Figure 3.3
The Central focus of Emotional Engagement in the Transformational Planning Framework.

Each emotionally-charged word at the centre of the cycle, while decidedly 'non-educational' in its terminology, captures the essence of an important emotionally-

based learning state: Huh?, Aaah!, Oooh!, Yeah!, Wow!, Mmm, Yes!, and Yahoo! all reflect states of engagement in the learning process that are desired in the classroom, and these words begin a pathway to the pedagogical and spiritual elements declared to be vital for learning and spiritual formation. Each word reflects a particular nuance of emotional engagement within the planning framework, as engagement presents itself in slightly different forms in each phase. These labels are reminiscent of Jensen's emotional state theory classifications (2003). His advice to "manage states well and the learning will take care of itself" (2003, 12) is a testament to the power of emotional engagement, and his counsel, "to captivate and educate, put learners in states that invigorate" (2003, 25) reinforces this reality. The teacher, whether unwittingly or by design, is a master at influencing states. When this can become a matter of intention, academic mastery and high emotional intelligence can result (2003). The most desirable student states of anticipation, excitement, curiosity, celebration and enlightenment are ones that will benefit faith formation as well.

The additional goal of faith formation sought by Adventist educators only serves to augment the need for emotional engagement in students. Mention has been made of the impact of modernity on splintering the cognitive and the affective; the rational and the relational - what was in earlier times, integrated. Scazzero's thesis on emotionally healthy spirituality highlights the fact that it is actually impossible to be spiritually mature, while remaining emotionally immature (2006). Engaging the emotions and developing them in healthy ways in the formative years can do much to build a foundational modus operandi for life.

There are two aspects to this concept as reflected in the term: 'emotional' and 'engagement'. The former is necessary in Scazzero's opinion, for to deny the emotions is to deny our humanity. He claims "to the degree that we are unable to express our emotions, we remain impaired in our ability to love God, others and ourselves well…. Our feelings are a component of what it means to be made in the image of God. To cut them out of our spirituality is to slice off a part of our humanity" (2006, 26). Therefore, part of the goal of this planning framework is to bring emotional health as well as spiritual health that will enable students to fulfil both the vertical and the horizontal arms of faith.

The second component of this concept, 'engagement', is equally important. Jesus Christ Himself pronounced a blessing on those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). A focus on engagement purposefully encourages this kind of hungering. It will encourage students to be open, teachable and enthusiastic about the learning process and will serve to empower students (Jensen, 2003) and arrange successes for them. An emotionally-engaged religious studies classroom is going to not only foster all three foundational truths of being focused on the student and their needs, building the faith community, and cultivating quality relationships between the teacher and the students. It will fulfil *Principle Three* (outlined in Chapter Two) that deals directly with this issue of emotional engagement. This core concern can be seen to bring to life all other core principles, as observed below in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1
SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT ON ALL PHASES OF THE *TRANSFORMATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK.*

TRANSFORMATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK PHASE	FOCUS	IMPACT OF ENGAGEMENT ON THIS PHASE
Learner Bait	Curiosity Hook	Engagement creates curiosity in the learner.
Learning Context	Big-Picture Connection	Engagement intentionally builds relevance and meaning.
Animated Learning	Memorable Narrative	Emotional engagement impacts the heart through the power of narrative.
Engaged Learning	Deep, purposeful experience	Emotional engagement allows for experiential learning, rigour and the development of critical thinking.
Heart Learning	Connection with the Father	Emotional engagement provides the opportunity for a heart response to God.
Soul Learning	Reflective Practice	Emotional engagement allows for the internalisation of biblical truth through reflection.
Life Learning	Application and Commitment	Emotional engagement will both fuel and be fuelled by this phase, as it allows for powerful internalisation though experiential learning.
Kaizen Learning	Celebration	Joy is a naturally engaging element, fosters an association of joy with Gospel themes, and positive emotions with religious education.

LEARNING: THE PRE-EMINENT FOCUS

The next layer of the *Transformational Planning Framework* intentionally has each phase make specific mention of '*Learning'* (See Figure 3.4). This feature layers another important educational purpose in the mindset of the teacher, that of 'learning' as a driving emphasis. Learning, defined at the outset of this study as the relatively permanent change that results from systematic immersion in a process, reinforced practice and encouragement, with all the rigour and mental engagement this implies, must be central to planning considerations. Pedagogy must not be driven only by assessment, or teaching, but rather the quality of the thinking and learning (Marzano et al, 2001, Galloway, 2009). Hence, meta-cognition (Clark, 2005, Claxton, 2002) and the intentional teaching of critical thinking (Swartz, 2000)

through guided inquiry are important features. Recent developments in New Zealand Curriculum reflect this inquiry emphasis. Infusion thinking (McGuinness et al, 2008) and 4th generation learning-to-learn strategies are working their way into the lexicon and practice of the New Zealand educational community. Such a thinking emphasis was part of the Adventist educational historical legacy left by White (1903). Her declaration about developing "thinkers and not mere reflectors" hitherto discussed, attests to the importance of learning with rigour, discernment and student ownership.

Figure 3.4
The Focus on Learning in the Transformational Planning Framework

Attention now turns to each quadrant of the *Transformational Planning Framework*, and discussion will include an overview of the phases contained within them, and outline how each phase serves to respond to a research-based principle highlighted in Chapter Two.

AN OUTLINE OF THE

TRANSFORMATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

ORIENTATION QUADRANT

LEARNER BAIT: Curiosity Hook

The first half of the *Transformational Planning Framework* involves two quadrants and four phases that pursue what could be considered good practice in education, and focus on Palmer's 'eye of the mind' (1993). With the preeminent purpose of emotional engagement and intentional learning now visually and cognitively established at the forefront of planning, it is time to consider the progression of emphases that will fashion students' learning experiences in any biblical teaching unit. In the *Transformational Planning Framework* cycle, there is an initial orientation quadrant that encompasses two phases *Learner Bait*, and *Learning Context* (Figure 3.5). The titles of all the planning phases are, by intention, in the vernacular, unencumbered by educational idiom. If such a framework is to be inculcated into general practice, it needs to be clearly understood by teachers at the full range of experience levels. Inexperienced teachers need to have the opportunity to explore the intent of the framework without constraints caused an inability to interpret the nuances of educational nomenclature. Such a decision has already proven to be of benefit.

Learner Bait purposefully embarks on the process of emotional engagement with intentional rigour. It is designed to initiate curiosity and anticipation; the appetitive states. These highly motivating states help students 'hunger' to know more (Bradley and Lang, 2000). Such anticipation is highly useful for learning as it engages millions of neurons. With the fundamental desire to engage students in focused

learning, clearly, a 'bait' that hooks into their particular interests, uses humour, an object lesson, story, interaction, drama or surprise. Games, physical participation, anything with strong emotional connection to initiate a major theme will be beneficial. Even confusion, while not optimal, is better than no emotional engagement at all (Jensen, 2003).
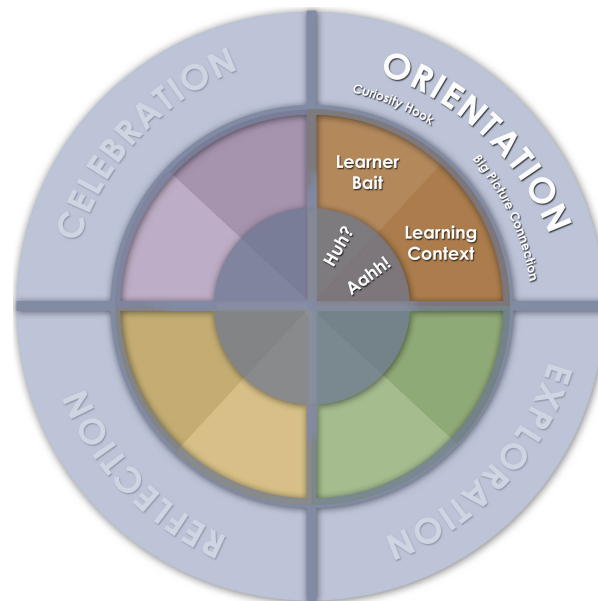
Figure 3.5
The Orientation Quadrant: Learner Bait and Learning Context

A particular benefit of *Learner Bait* emerges when considering the fact that "there is strong evidence that positive expectancy robustly and consistently influences the formation of new knowledge" (Kirsch, 1999, cited in Jensen, 2003). This, coupled with the evidence of a high attentional bias in the brain when exposed to something new or novel (Jensen, 2000), provides a strong case for 'bait', not only as an intentional teaching practice, but also as one used 'early' in the lesson (2000). Clearly, the igniting of curiosity needs to be planned for in the development of teaching units. Historically, proficient teachers have intuitively sought to engage their students. It is by no means a new concept. However, experience and

conditioning can tend to erode its predominance in planning, and, as a means of pursuing systemic improvement towards innovative practice, *Learner Bait* invites enunciation and exploration. *Learner Bait* also serves to set students on a path of emotional engagement and hunger for knowledge that will be capitalised on in later phases.

The hunger for knowledge again becomes particularly relevant when one considers that in religious curriculum, the content matter is of eternal import. Not only does this phase act as bait for the forthcoming learning experiences, but it also serves to identify a key spiritual theme in the proposed Unit exploration. As such, it is intended to whet the appetite for the faith issue that is to be explored.

LEARNING CONTEXT: Big-Picture Connection

From a purely neurological and educational perspective, learning, of necessity needs to be a meaning-making exercise. This notion has been explored in Chapter Two. Caine & Caine's work highlights the fact that the search for meaning is innate in the brain and meaning occurs through patterning (1995). Content considered in any curriculum therefore needs to pursue meaning.

However, in the realm of faith-development a different type of meaning needs to be pursued, and relevance adds another layer of necessity. The second *principle* explored in Chapter Two had as its literature-based thrust a focus on relevance and meaning in curriculum. Embedded in this were three elements: relevance and meaning for the individual in the existential questions of their journey towards

identity; relevance and meaning as core features of spiritual formation; and relevance and meaning from an educational perspective. The evidence of educational thought-leaders such as Senge (2000), Palmer (1998), Kovalik (2994), McCain (2005) and Jensen (2003), sociologists such as McQueen (2010), and faith specialists such as Shelton (1989), Gillespie et al (2004), Luxton (2004), Knowlton & Schaffer (2004) and Cooling (2006) all combine to form a strong voice affirming a contextualising of the learning for the purpose of meaning-making. Glasser's quality school's model of the 1980's and 90's was also a testament to the importance of meaning and relevance in education. The success of his competence-based classroom system can be attributed to many things, but key among them has been a focus on relevant learning experiences. A whole chapter of his book, *'Schools Without Failure'* is dedicated to the importance of this issue in relation to educational success (1975).

While the *Learning Context* phase may well be a brief sojourn, it is a vital one if a big-picture connection is to be made and, at a most rudimentary level, meaning is to be elicited from the learning that is to occur. Contextualisation during this phase is multifaceted: it will seek to place the topic under study within the context of the great biblical meta-narrative, both chronologically and semantically; it will seek to identify prior knowledge so important to the thinking models (Ausubel, 1966, Marzano 2001, Jensen, 2003); and it will also seek to identify questions from the students that are worthy of pursuit, in particular the overriding investigative question of the unit (Mc Guinness, 2008, Galloway, 2009, Clarke, 2005, Claxton, 2002). *Learning Context* will also use this opportunity to reflect back not only on other units within the current series, but also other learning in prior units. This intermittent reinforcement not only embeds learning in the long-term memory (Mehrabian,

1980), but also emphasises meaningful learning for the student. It is believed that

such meaning will set them up for heightened relevance as the content is explored.

Within this phase, questioning, establishment of prior knowledge, identification of

learning intentions, and visual knowledge cues through experiential activities will be

used to help clarify the context of the content. Beyond this practical pursuit of

meaning within the unit, the existential overtones embedded in the idea of meaning

and relevance are also deeply considered. However these will tend to traverse the

entire pathway of the *Transformational Planning Framework* for in a sense, the

whole cycle is an exercise in existential meaning-making for students and will move

beyond context to affect classroom process issues.

EXPLORATION QUADRANT

Following the *Orientation* of the students to a new topic or theme, students will be

immersed in an Exploration quadrant involving two phases, *Animated Learning* and

Engaged Learning (Figure 3.6). It is this quadrant that pursues those features of best

practice in education that have been celebrated in Chapter Two.

ANIMATED LEARNING: Memorable Narrative

This phase explores the teacher-facilitated voyage into the *story* that will form the

foundation of the biblical exploration in the teaching unit. The synthesis of literature

in Chapter Two celebrates story as a potent pedagogical tool at all levels in education

and offers a trustworthy tool in the pursuit of meaning. Story within the religious

educational context becomes of heightened value as one reflects on the importance of

telling *the* story for Christians – the great meta-narrative of the great controversy

between God and Satan (1950). This story-reality is the primary tool a Christian

teacher uses to connect with students at a heart level and give meaning to the world

as they know it. It is through connecting their story with this story that religious faith

can grow. Westerhoff's claim that story is of central importance for faith

development and particularly integral to the development of affiliative faith (1978,

95) affirms this claim. Stories traverse modernity into post-modernity. O'Neill

claims that young people of today are not so much interested in dogmatic truth, as

they are in personal stories. He goes on to say that when teachers share their own

struggles and stories, they become a tremendous ratifying force in the young

person's life (cited Shelton, 1989, 155). The sharing of story in an experiential way

will become an important modus operandi within this proposed curriculum model

and is hence a prominent feature of the *Transformational Planning Framework.*
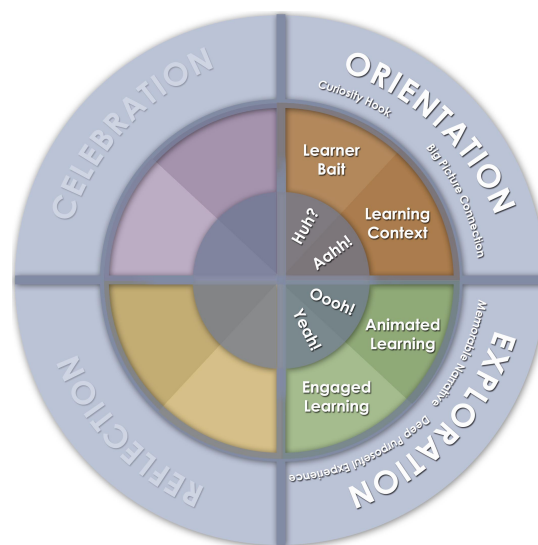
Figure 3.6
The Exploration Quadrant: Animated Learning and Engaged Learning

The emotional engagement that lies at the heart of each phase is particularly

prominent in *Animated Learning*. There is much research concerning the influence of

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positive emotions on learning and retention (Schultz & Schultz). If the goal of the story is that it be a 'memorable narrative' that embeds a message from God in the mind and heart of the listener, then an understanding of the qualifying adjective 'animated' will be essential. De Bono's exploration of the power of the *adjective* becomes particularly relevant here (2006). *Animated* will maximise the use of expressive language. It will seek to engage at a deep level, and bring characters' experiences and emotions to life. Enthusiasm is a celebrated hallmark of good teaching practice (Vallance, 2000). Doidge points out that a memory can only be as clear as its original signal (2007). Clearly, an enthusiastic, engaging sharing of the biblical account will increase emotional engagement on the part of the student.

In line with brain-compatible research, variety and novelty will become important components in the telling of the story (Jensen, 2003). A variety of story-telling techniques will provide the element of surprise, thus heightening student engagement with the message. It is the purposeful intention of the story to not only connect cognitively but affectively as well, thus responding to Heschel's comment, "Great insights happen in moments of awe" (cited in Schultz & Schultz, 1999,104). Teaching units that follow the *Transformational Planning Framework* will always seek to maximise this variety as a means of preventing any 'formulaic' pattern emerging, which may diminish emotional engagement.

ENGAGED LEARNING: Deep, Purposeful, Experiential Learning

Palmer's proclamation that "students who learn are the finest fruit of teachers who teach" (1998, 6) is a truism that drives all that is best in education. Consideration has been given in Chapter Two to the importance of rigour in the learning process so that what takes place can be deep and experiential. This kind of deep, purposeful experiential learning is unleashed in *Engaged Learning,* shown in Figure 3:6. It is during this time that the 'finest fruit' can be cultivated. White's declaration that it is the work of true education to train youth to be thinkers and not mere reflectors of other men's thoughts (1903, 17) offers a specific invitation to experience this kind of deep learning. Not only is the investigation to be deep, but also the subject matter itself is to be of substance. Palmer phrases it as "the great thing" – and how it must lie at the centre of the pedagogical circle (1998).

This concept highlights Rogers' assertion that the engagement that is desired needs to be with the students and with the subject matter (2003). For decades educators have offered insight as to how this can best be achieved. Of relevance to this study, the work of Glasser (2006), Marzano (2001), Kovalik (1994), Richards & Bredfeldt (1998), Clarke (2008), Claxton (2002, 2008), Dryden & Vos (1993), Gardner (1999), and Swartz (2000), have all fuelled thinking and shed valuable light on what could be considered effective learning practice. The quality-teaching model promoted by *New South Wales Department of Education and Training* also illuminates the path in this area (2003).

In the *Engaged Learning* phase, students respond to the story from God, and own the rigorous biblical investigation into the learning it holds. The defining adjective

'engaged' best summarises the experiential approach of this phase. What is desired is an inquiry approach to learning where Claxton's synthesised analysis of 4th generation learning-to-learn can be implemented. As such, what is desired is "a learner-centred process aimed at giving the learner a range of dispositions, competencies and skills so they can build their own understanding of relevant concepts, make new connections, and apply their understanding with innovation, creativity and wisdom" (Galloway, 2009, p6). Deep learning is the priority here. The student is involved in the process of investigation as an active learner. Independent thought is encouraged. Students are given new ways of participating and engaging in learning. Wrobbel's claim that "pat answers are a part of a comfortable, but unexamined Christian faith" (cited in Knowlton & Schaffer, 2004, 47) is reminiscent of Piaget's concept that a truth parroted is only half a truth (1953).

Engaged Learning seeks to pursue grappling (Sizer & Sizer, 1999), is intended to provide skills as tools for personal growth and development and is predicated on the Bruner's reality that "any subject can be taught to any child in some honest form" (Bruner, 1961, 52). In this phase, the principles (Chapter Two) of meaning making, thinking rigour and experiential learning become paramount. Central to the modus operandi is the cognitive grappling discussed in Chapter Two (Sizer & Sizer, 1999). To meet this end, inductive Bible study is valued, and a range of inquiry-based skill-sets is intentionally developed.

In order for students to own the learning process, formative assessment fashions accountability, with its emphasis on deepening and advancing learning rather than simply measuring it (Clarke, 2005). Techniques such as peer engagement, talking

partners, questioning, effective immediate feedback and self and peer evaluation

(Clarke, 2005) are all priorities within *Engaged Learning*. Here, the orchestrated

immersion into a topic spoken of by Caine & Caine (1997) as being essential to the

learning brain is promoted.

Such an approach to learning rigour responds to White's counsel to teach with depth.

She wrote,

> "Students should be led to think for themselves…. Urge upon their minds the vital truths of the Bible. Let them repeat these truths in their own language, that you may be sure that they clearly comprehend them. Be sure that every point is fastened upon the mind. This may be a slow process, but it is of ten times more value than rushing over important subjects without giving them due consideration" (1943, 434).

Such an approach at a slower, deeper pace will allow students to plumb the depths of

biblical meaning and reach increased levels of understanding, which is so core to the

values that drive this planning tool.

Mention has been made of the seminal work of Goleman and the emotional

intelligence phenomenon (1995), its popularity underscoring an "increased

acceptance of the important role emotions play in learning" (Jensen, 2000, 197).

Reports from the world of neurology from Caine & Caine (1997), Doidge (2007) and

Jensen (2000, 2003) all affirm how the brain is indeed a social brain, and not only

best operates within social contexts, but also informs our logic. Damasio points out

the importance of linking both emotions and cognition. He argues that the brain,

mind, body and emotions form a linked system. "Emotions are not separate, but

rather enmeshed in the neural networks of reason" (1994, 75). Le Doux asserts that

emotions are important in all mental functioning and make a marked contribution to

perception, attention, problem solving and memory (1996). *Engaged Learning* by

necessity then, is also immersed in a social context. It is a relationally collaborative

learning environment where emotions are encouraged and emphasis is on learning in

an integrated, active, accessible, process driven, relationally collaborative way, much

akin to the 'Tribes' process currently transforming learning communities (Gibbs,

2001). It is interesting that this kind of social connectedness in the estimation of

Westerhoff is also necessary to experienced faith (1976). Palmer also affirms that

"knowing is a profoundly communal act" (1993, xv). It is this kind of learning,

growing and sharing culture that is sought in *Engaged Learning.*

Such a complete focus on 'engagement in meaningful context', 'collaboration' and

'an enriched environment' is also congruent with Kovalik's *Integrated Thematic*

Instruction model (1994) where she observes these very components to be brain-

compatible, and welds them together with immediate feedback, mastery, absence of

threat and choice into a total learning environment. All these elements are implicitly

valued in this framework, particularly in *Engaged Learning.*

Implicit in *Engaged Learning* is the need for a diversified instruction so that learning can

be "intelligence-rich and intelligence- fair" (Silver, Strong and Pereni, 2000, 13). Inclusion

of a multiple intelligence checklist at the bottom of each page in a unit outline (refer to

Unit Samples, Appendix E) ensures that a full range of learning styles is consciously

accounted for. Jensen highlights the need for such pedagogical diversity,

> "The difference between an average teacher and a great one is easy to identify.
> An average teacher may be reaching at any given time, 50 – 70% of the audience.
> A great teacher may be reaching at any given time, 50 – 70% of the audience, but a
> different 50 – 70% each time. In other words, the great teacher uses a variety of
> activities and instructional methods to ensure that they reach different learners at

different times. Over the course of a week or a month, the great teacher will eventually reach all the learners. The average teacher however will still be reaching the same learners over and over again" (2003, 22,23).

Senge also highlights the importance of such variety in his comment that the more modalities of learning we engage, the broader and deeper our growth (2000). The intention of *Engaged Learning* is that not only will the use of the full spectrum of multiple intelligences enable *all* learners to experience connection and discovery over the course of an *Encounter* series, but also that the learners themselves will become more thoughtful.

Engaged Learning and Biblical Curriculum

Central to the *Engaged Learning* phase in the *Transformational Planning Framework* is an emphasis on biblical rigour and depth in biblical study, with the use of the Bible as the preeminent 'text book'. Nearly a century ago White encouraged teachers of biblical curriculum to seek its treasures in her words, "The Bible has a fullness, a strength, a depth of meaning that is inexhaustible. Encourage the children and youth to seek out its treasures, both of thoughts and of expression" (1943, 182).

A preeminent goal in this phase is to inspire the students and provide them with a range of biblical research strategies so they can engage in their own personal study of the Bible. Didactic teaching is replaced here by rich variety in experiential learning strategies, where Claxton's learning fitness is encouraged and students make their own discoveries while engaging with each other. Inquiry-based elements such as questioning, personal resourcefulness, and sociable reciprocity (Claxton, 2002) with high involvement from learners in these processes are used to sustain this

engagement. This all occurs in a high-challenge, low-risk open, reflective learning culture.

Chapter Two made reference to Mullholland's (1985) concern for being open and teachable in the study of the Bible. Such a thought is critical if spiritual formation, not just the factual dissemination of information is the end goal. Dybdahl expands on this concept and offers a helpful outline in what biblical study looks like in both paradigms. A summary of this approach can be seen below in Table 3.2. *Engaged Learning* with its emphasis on inductive Bible study, together with the presence of *Heart* and *Soul Learning* immediately following this phase, helps ensure that the formational-style of Bible study defines practice within this framework.

Table 3.2
DYBDAHL'S SUMMARY OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INFORMATIONAL BIBLE STUDY AND FORMATIONAL STUDY.

Informational Study	Formational Study
Cover as much as possible	Focus on small portion
Linear process	In-depth process
Seek to master text	Allows text to master us
Text is an object	Subject that shapes us
Analytical and critical	Humble and submissive
Intellectual problem solving	Open to mystery

This kind of investigative learning consumes a sizable amount of time in the course of an average unit, as seen on page 136 in Figure 3.7. This outline is a generic overview. At times there will be noted variation in the duration of phases, depending on the topic, the age of the students and the placement of the unit within the series. It

does however emphasise the fact that *Engaged Learning* takes a considerable proportion of the time in any given teaching-learning unit.

Engaged Learning perhaps most closely harnesses what is esteemed in educational practice. It is a key phase, predictable, yet re-fashioned for deeper purposes. Mezirow sums up well the intention of *Engaged Learning*, "…the process of helping learners become more aware of the context of their … beliefs, more critically reflective of their assumptions and those of others, more fully and freely engaged in discourse, and more effective in taking action on their reflective judgements" (2000, 31). This final point launches discussion into subsequent phases in the *Transformational Planning Framework* toward the goal of transformational learning.
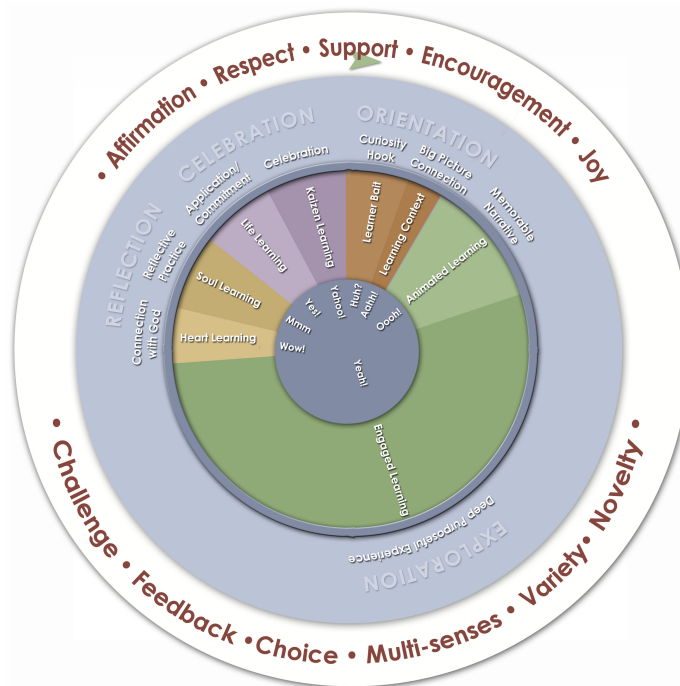
Figure 3.7
Approximate Time Weighting of Phases in the *Transformational Planning Framework*

REFLECTION QUADRANT

As stated, the first half of the *Transformational Planning Framework* features

elements esteemed in good teaching practice. These elements are not new, although

perhaps a preeminent concern for including *story* has received more prominence in

this framework than in general practice. It is at this juncture in the process that a

transition is made from the cognitive realm to the spiritual, affective one. Here

educational concerns are strengthened by a faith formation emphasis and those

elements that have been seen to promote *faith* are brought into play. Two quadrants

remain: *Reflection* and *Celebration*. This first reflective quadrant contains two

phases: *Heart Learning* and *Soul Learning* (Figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8
The Reflection Quadrant: Heart Learning and Soul Learning

Heart Learning moves students into a quadrant of reflection that begins to more

intentionally tend the heart and soul; vital elements in spiritual transformation. Here

the teacher's role is that of facilitator and encourager, where relational encounters are

orchestrated.

HEART LEARNING: Connection with God

Heart Learning provides the opportunity for transformation to really take place. It is a slice of time where the 'inspiration' spoken of by Gillespie can be pursued. "Men and women who teach the scriptures" he declares, "have a responsibility to move beyond the content and cognitive insights… beyond conceptual theology and textual exegesis to inspiration (worship, praise, gratitude, forgiveness and personal freedom)" (2006, 35). In this vital phase, there is a move beyond the sound biblical exposition spoken of by Tozer, to the spiritual nourishment of knowing "God himself in the core and centre of their hearts" (1984, 6). Luxton's comments are valid. "With God, the desired outcomes are completely clear: to know and fully commit to Him" and indeed her conclusion that "this is where our pedagogy, patterned on that of God should and can lead" (2004, 21) speaks wisdom. Space and time for this kind of connection are necessary if the spiritual formation of students is valued. Herein lies the purpose of *Heart Learning*.

The important goal of this phase is to simply connect the students with God. It is a time when the affective domain can be connected through multiple modalities. Music is a powerful medium for achieving this. Other strategies include, stories, prayer for and with students, audio-visual presentations, video clips or symbolic object lessons, depending on the age of the students. This phase invites a kind of sharing where students can take steps towards seeing themselves as the authentic and credible community of faith that Westerhoff values so highly in the faith formation process. In an ultimate sense, "stepping onto the road of Christian spiritual transformation requires an encounter with the living God. This encounter may be gradual or it may

be sudden. But it will always involve a turning and an awakening" (Benner, 2003, 74). *Heart Learning* offers such a 'turning' and 'awakening'.

In Ephesians 3, the apostle Paul encouraged Christians to come to know the love of Christ in a real way. It was a knowing that 'surpassed knowledge' (vs 19). Evidently, an experience of this love and grace is to be pursued. The biblical classroom can offer such an experience. It is an essential faith formation pursuit. Chapter One's identification of the problem of attrition within Adventist Education is attestation to a constrained pursuit of theory. Hearts must be reached if faith is to be formed. The heart is a place where truth, not theory resides. *Heart Learning* has a key role to play in this.

SOUL LEARNING: Reflective Practice

In Chapter Two consideration was given to the prevalence of evidence that values reflective practice in education and faith formation. Principle Six highlighted the necessity of this practice for growth and learning. Its stature in the research has given birth to a phase dedicated to its implementation in unit planning. In the *Transformational Planning Framework*, it is known as *Soul Learning*.

Attention has been given to the benefits of reflective practice from a purely educational perspective. Jensen highlights this notion in his promotion of long lasting learning being generated by that learning going 'internal'. He asserts that we can take information in better when it can be processed it in a personal way (1998). His reference to the importance of reflection time without competing stimuli (1998) as a

means of doing this is reason enough to thoughtfully consider this as a learning tool. Such reflective practice is a hallmark of the Generation 4 learning-to-learn paradigm spoken of by Claxton (2008). It is key to student ownership of learning.

From a faith formation perspective, there is far greater reason to regularly encourage students to practice the art of reflection. Reflection brings with it a self-awareness that can help transition learning to inner-conviction and ultimately to action. In short, it encourages the kind of life-praxis that is so embedded in the concept of faith. "Research indicates that self-conscious people usually are in touch with their attitudes" (Miller and Grush, cited in Johnson, 2008, 11). "This suggests that another way to induce people to focus on their inner convictions is to make them self-aware.

Other research has uncovered similar results; making people self-aware promotes consistency between words and deeds" (Froming *et al*, cited in Johnson, 2008, 11). Faith formation is not about developing walking encyclopaedias of knowledge, but rather faithful followers. Cultivating the art of reflection will assist this kind of growth and inhibit keeping knowledge in isolation. Further to this, meditation and reflection on the words of Scripture can help an 'absorption' process of God's Word, so that spiritual thirst can be quenched, rather than "pass through out mind as water passes through a pipe" (Whitney, 2001, 26). Ryan and Bohlin add weight to the presence of this phase in their identification of the importance of teaching to the soul in education. They declare that life education and harmonious education are only fully meeting the goals of education if it is aimed at 'soul turning'. They quote Plato,

"Then education is the craft concerned with… this turning around and with how the soul can most easily and effectively be made to do it" (1999, 140).

In the *Transformational Planning Framework*, *Soul Learning*, with its emphasis on personal reflection in all its forms; drawing, journaling, pair sharing, mind-mapping, decision-making, and response to reflective questions allows for this soul turning and flows suitably from the 'Godly connection' focus of *Heart Learning*. It provides the opportunity for students to begin to process what has just occurred in an encounter with God.

The teacher's role as spiritual facilitator in these reflective phases is a critical one, for they are key to creating opportunities for growth, movement and change through challenge in the student's life. Charry points out that "few people start out looking for an intentional devotional life: it is simply too arduous. Something has to intervene in a person' s life to awaken desire for another way. God must turn one's head from current pursuits to a new realm of possibilities" (1997, 242). The teacher, as a spiritual facilitator, can use this phase to orchestrate opportunities for this kind of intervention. In the quiet of reflection, the teacher assumes the role of "holy listener, for he/she is invited to walk with the directee on his/her faith journey" (Shinohara, 2002, 109). Operating in this role, Shinohara highlights the importance of not manipulating the heart of a person in any way during this process. There needs to be much freedom and honesty in the reflection that takes place. Only then can God's presence begin to be woven into personal relationships (Huebner, 1987) in a more intentional, and visible way.

It is noteworthy that the 'soul projects based on spiritual practices', explored by Wilhoit *et al* in a higher education context as a means of fostering spiritual attentiveness are explicitly pursued in the *Transformational Planning Framework's Soul Learning* phase. Their belief is that "intentionality and clearly articulated expectations are crucial for encouraging spiritual growth in the lives of students. When these are properly implemented through an explicit curriculum that includes partnership with the Holy Spirit, students meet with Jesus in intimate and transformational ways" (2009, 155). In their experience with such practices, the fissure between cognitive, academic study and personal, spiritual or character growth can be more than mended; they can, in fact be fused. The Hebrew notion of 'knowing' as moving beyond cognitive understanding, into the realm of an obedient response to, and experience with the truth, can thus be realised (Sire, 1990).

Heart and *Soul Learning* are critical phases in the *Transformational Planning Framework,* and represent the significant shift toward the goal of faith formation that motivated the creation of this curriculum framework.

CELEBRATION QUADRANT

The final quadrant of the *Transformational Planning Framework* (Figure 3.9) is a vital one. It harnesses the oft-featured focus on application and commitment familiar in Youth ministry (Burns, 1988) and educational circles (Gardner, 1999), (Glasser, 1990), but then moves on to explore a feature less emphasised in traditional education: that of *Kaizen* celebration (Capelli, 2006, Dryden & Voss, 1993).
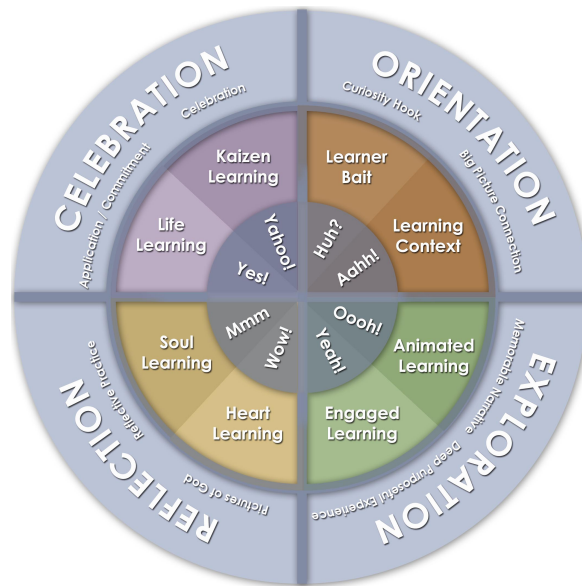
Figure 3.9
The Celebration Quadrant: Life Learning and Kaizen Learning

LIFE LEARNING: Application and Commitment

In religious education, the biblical teaching of 2 Timothy 3: 16,17 which identifies the power of the 'living word' to transform, teach and reprove, is a truth that has contemporary relevance. Every biblical teaching has, and needs to have contemporary relevance. Palmer alludes to the need for application in his pronouncement, "to teach is to create a space in which obedience to truth is practiced" (1993, 88). The final *Principle* explored in Chapter Two: a *focus on transformation*, implies that changes in the life are to be sought if faith is to be developed.

At an elemental level, "God's Word is not a collection of facts to be temporarily memorised. His Word is a guide for how we should live today, for how we should know Him, for how we should deepen our relationship with Him. After all, God wants us to worship Him, not His book" (Schultz & Schultz, 1999, 158). A chorus

of Adventist Educators echo these sentiments. Luxton (2004), Oliver (2006), Gillespie (2006), and King (2006) all testify to the importance of application and commitment – a fact ultimately necessary if indeed the Christian life is a unified life (Knight, 1985, 82). Gillespie perhaps summarises it best in saying, "No religious truth is truly learned unless it makes a difference in one's life" (2006, 35).

In Mezirow's educational construct, transformative learning is "the process of learning through critical self-reflection which results in the reformation of a meaning perspective to allow a more inclusive, discriminating and integrative understanding of one's experience" (1990, xvi). It allows for the critical reflection of one's beliefs and assumptions to be challenged and authentically propelled into life.

Clearly, this life-goal needs to fashion biblical pedagogy. However, even the nature of the application needs to be carefully considered. It is easy to limit application by dealing with it in an *informational* sense, thus binding it to the cognitive realm. The type of application that is sought in *Life Learning* is transformational application rather than informational application. In this learning phase challenges are made that are deeply personal and possibly even confronting, rather than being merely intellectual and easy. To this end, the active verbal synthesis of learning in light of learning intentions, role-play, collective brainstorming, active classroom initiatives, experiential activities and games, prayer, contemporary stories, and the facilitation of commitment-style classroom rituals and traditions (Petersen & Deal, 1999) emerging from the preceding reflective practice phase (together with the all-important follow-

up to such commitments), all promote active practice and are thus features of this important phase.

Another recurring feature of *Life Learning* is the opportunity to respond with service-oriented action. Many a focus of a teaching unit invites this kind of life application, and research attests to its numerous benefits. Mention has been made of the value of such endeavours for at-risk youth (Brendtro, Brokenleg and Bockern, 2002). At an elemental level, such activities enable students to demonstrate and respond to a world in need as Jesus would. This is important to note, for from the perspective of Maxson's spiritual formation model, such projects should never be considered outside the religious conversion experience, thus morphing them into a salvation-by-works orientation. Lordship proceeds from Gospel, and such service should always be embedded within such a context.

This focus on transformational application and commitment is the great emphasis of Christian faith formation and discipleship. Thus, when it is intentionally pursued and extending from the other planning phases, it helps fulfils the great purpose of Adventist Education.

KAIZEN LEARNING: Celebration

The final phase in the *Transformational Planning Framework* is Kaizen Learning. Intentional inclusion of a phase of this nature has not historically been a regular feature of curriculum models. The word 'kaizen' is a Japanese word meaning to honour the incremental steps towards success (Capelli, 2006, Dryden & Voss 1993). This phase is a call to accountability for the teacher to intentionally embed into the

students' learning experiences of joy and learning celebration. Glasser's seminal work in the 1980's and 90's on developing quality schools made a point of purposefully including joy as a foundational element in the competence-based classroom. In his estimation, joy is powerful. He claimed that "There is nothing motivating about learning without joy" (2006, 70), and he went on to state, "I believe the joy and success inherent in a competency-based classroom is crucial to achieving a well-educated, caring and safe society" (2006,70).

Chapter Two highlighted brain research that validated joy in learning experiences. It is for this reason that Jensen specifically encourages celebration. He says, "Throw parties; provide acknowledgements; and incorporate high-fives, team cheers, food, music, decorations and costumes! Show off student work…. Do this in an atmosphere of celebration. Have background music on, encourage applause, and provide some words of praise for a job well done" (2000, 209). Also noted in Chapter two was the power of the promise of something good in being influential in increasing dopamine in the brain, and this becomes particularly relevant to the inclusion of *Kaizen Learning* in every teaching unit. Through this phase, students will come to recognise that at the close of every learning unit, a celebration of some description will occur.

From a learning perspective, Dryden and Voss also highlight the power of joy in the classroom, "Make learning outlandish, funny and preferably emotional, because the filter in the brain that transfers information to your long-term memory is closely linked with the brain's emotional centre"(1994, 169). Further to this, if it is the beginning and the end of a learning experience that is retained most naturally

(Jensen, 2000), the completion of the learning cycle with joy-filled celebration is a powerful practice indeed.

Again, in the religious education classroom there are greater goals than simply the retention of information in the long-term memory. There is additional potency in joy and celebration when one considers the power of conditioning and the need for associating joy with Christianity. While a positive classroom culture is implicit in all teaching phases within this framework, here is a phase that specifically commits to pause in honour and celebration of three things: learning that has taken place from within the topic under study; specific attributes of God that have been discovered along the learning journey; and the possible conversion experience of individuals within the class as a response to heart convictions. Often the rigour of content and the pressure of time-constraints prevent such celebration from occurring. However this phase does much to contribute to the kind of faith-enculturating community that is desired in a transformational context. If the highest calling of Christian teachers is to encourage transformation, surely the inclusion of such a phase is needed.

Kaizen experiences can take many forms, depending on the content, the culture of the class, and the age of the students. Celebration of learning could take the form of partner-sharing of meaningful learning in a 'game' format with celebratory music, or a synthesising 'Night of the Notables' where students assume character roles and share learning in the first person. Other kaizen experiences could include 'toasts' to God, with an expression of thanks to Him, celebration events (eg. A 'Creation Celebration Fun Day' for 5 year olds, or 'Praise Party'), symbolic commitment

rituals and celebration of service gifts given, and makes use of many symbols of 'celebration' such as balloons, streamers and applause. All experiences are deeply immersed in student sharing in interactive, joy-filled ways. They link joy with the experience of religious education, a vital link in their faith formation.

The Transformational Planning Framework's Fulfilment of the Core Principles.

The four quadrants and eight learning phases of the *Transformational Planning Framework* have been outlined. Reflection on each of the phases reveals how all elements bring into play the principles outlined in the literature analysis of Chapter Two. Table 3.3 noted overleaf on page 150, captures how these principles are demonstrated.

Table 3.3
CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE PRINCIPLES (of Chapter Two) AND THE TRANSFORMATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK (Chapter Three).

CORE PRINCIPLE (Chapter Two)	PRINCIPLE DESCRIPTOR	TRANSFORMATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK APPLICATION [TPF] (Chapter Three)
Principle 1	Paradigm shift to Faith Formation	This led to an inclusion of two distinct halves in the TPF: the first half, focusing on educational issues and the second, focusing on faith formation issues.
Principle 2	Importance of Relevance and Meaning	The whole TPF is an attempt at meaning-making as it relates to faith. It is explored more specifically in *Learning Context* with its exclusive focus on contextualization, and *Life Learning*, as it attempts to pursue relevance through commitment. *Animated Learning* highlights the potential for narrative learning to heighten meaning-making.
Principle 3	Emotional Engagement	Emotional responses lie at the inner core of the TPF. Emotional engagement is sought in each phase. It is intentionally initiated in *Learner Bait*, which exclusively attempts to hook learners into a new biblical theme.
Principle 4	Thinking Rigour	The first half of the TPF gradually builds thinking rigour. It is the pre-eminent focus of *Engaged Learning*. *Soul Learning* and *Life Learning* help to synthesize learning, which then can be celebrated in *Kaizen Learning*.
Principle 5	Experiential Learning	The whole of the TPF is designed to be experiential in its approach. *Engaged Learning*, composing approximate half of the time of a unit, is intentionally experiential.
Principle 6	Reflective Practice	*Soul Learning* is exclusively dedicated to reflective practice on messages from God as well as content. It is a synthesizing / processing phase.
Principle 7	Transformation-Focus	*Heart Learning, Soul Learning* and ultimately *Life Learning* build on each other in their focus on transformation.

OUTER WHEEL – LEARNING *PROCESS*

The cornerstone truths of Chapter Two highlighted the prominence of the 'who' in the teaching process. The 'who' that teaches is significant if the 'who' of learning is to be transformed. If identity and integrity are more fundamental to good teaching than technique (Palmer, 1998), then the culture generated by the human element in the teaching process is critical. If faith is to be built in community, then the desired culture that will promote a *community* of learners needs to be identified and

articulated. These issues are of such significance that they cannot afford to be ignored in a planning framework that will guide practice. It is important that methodology does not dominate the planning cycle at the expense of an explicit focus on classroom 'process' in addition to the 'content.' The nature of curriculum development by nature invites scrutiny into content issues. It is important that this focus is not so exclusive as to ignore the import and impact of the relational culture of the growing environment.

For this reason, an outer layer exists and encircles all that occurs in the *Transformational Planning Framework* (See Figure 3.2 on p 116). It is a focus that draws attention to these invisible yet palpable dynamics in the classroom process that will inevitably allow faith to flourish or remain stunted. It is therefore integral to the *Transformational Planning Framework.*

The process-words on the upper band in Figure 3.2 involve elements that expand on the foundational truths explored extensively in Chapter One. These issues include *significance, belonging, honour, encouragement, trust* and *joy*, and relate to the process features in classroom culture. They celebrate Westerhoff's faith-enculturation environment (1976).

Significance and belonging, two great human needs, are vital starting points in the religious education classroom. They bring to life many of the principles Sergiovanni speaks of in the area of community. If a true sense of community is to be cultivated within the classroom, it will be a matter of conscious and intentional choice and

planning, and will be created not only through relationships, but also through

functional structures, curriculum (1994).

Honour (Figure 3.2) is a word not often voiced in educational circles, but it speaks to

the lofty goals embodied in the religious education classroom as outlined in this

study. Mutual honouring by teacher of the students, and by students of the teacher,

will serve to bring Heubner's priority of practicing the presence of Christ in the

classroom, a palpable reality (1998).

Encouragement (Figure 3.2) is considered to be the glue of relationships, and much

that was considered in the foundational truths in Chapter One are captured in this one

word. The religious education classroom should be one defined by encouragement,

where students can feel unconditional acceptance and the belief of the teacher in

their personhood and potential.

Trust (Figure 3.2) is the another key relational priority featured. Without trust, there

will be no possibility of self-disclosure, or grappling with personal issues of

significance. This planning framework attempts to reach the inner life in a raw and

authentic way; this will only be possible if trust between teacher and student, and

student and student is proactively nurtured.

The final element featured on the *Transformational Planning Framework* for

inclusion within the faith enculturation classroom is joy (Figure 3.2). While this

element captures but one emotion, it is a vital one, highly influential in the

transformational focus. For the heart-target to be actualised, it is vital that students come to associate joy with things of God. While they will not necessarily retain content, they will always retain the way teachers made them feel. For this reason, it is included here in a prominent manner. The researcher, does, however validate the importance of all positive emotions within this faith-environment, and would also, as noted in Chapter Two, seek to deal in a positive and constructive way with the negative emotions that so often bombard students and use the environment to help build resilience and hope.

The lower layer of process-words (Figure 3.2) capture the priorities of both brain research and Claxton's learning-to-learn emphasis within the realm of cognitive learning. These also relate to the manner in which the content is delivered: challenge, feedback, multi-sensory learning, variety, choice and Learner Ownership. *Challenge* and *feedback* (Figure 3.2) are two important features of the brain-compatible classroom; challenge that is commensurate with the developing skills of the students (Jensen, 2003), and feedback that is immediate and specific. Research shows that this practice alone leads to noticeable improvements in learner's motivation and achievement (Jensen, 1998, 2000). *Multi-sensory learning* (Figure 3.2) enhances the multiple modalities of instruction spoken of by Senge (2000). Variety and novelty (Figure 3.2) will encourage engagement in all phases of the planning framework, and seek to maximise engagement at all stages. Allowing for *choice* of topics and methods of response by students (Figure 3.2) also serves to maximise student ownership of learning topics, and finally *learner ownership* (Figure 3.2) captures the essence of Claxton's Generation 4 learning-to-learn principles that will put the learner behind the wheel of his / her own learning (Palmer, 1998) in greater measure.

All these elements are key to implementation and while the *Transformational Planning Framework* largely focuses on content, these process issues infuse and surround the phases with marked intentionality. As such, they will become an integral part of professional development and training.

***Transformational Planning Framework* Elements Expressed in other Disciplines.**

The voices of a number of authorities in multiple disciplines validate many of the phases within the *Transformational Planning Framework*. In the area of neuroscience, Jensen (1993, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2006) validates the areas of learner engagement, learner bait, contextualised learning, student ownership of the learning process, reflective practice and the importance of joy in the learning context. These are consciously represented in *Learner Bait, Learning Context, Engaged Learning, Soul Learning* and *Kaizen learning*. In the realm of positive psychology, Seligman would substantiate the principles lying behind *Life Learning* and *Kaizen Learning* through his affirmation of pleasure, engagement and contribution as being integral to human success (1991). Educational notables such as Glasser (1990, 2006), Kovalik (1994, 2001), Clarke (2005), Swartz (2000), Claxton (2002, 2008) and Rogers (2003) assert the importance of contextualised learning, the presence of joy, and deep academic learning, as expressed in *Learning Context, Kaizen Learning* and *Engaged Learning*. Faith formation specialists such as Gillespie (1988, 2004), Wilhoit et al (2009), Boa (2001), Peterson (1989, 2005), Coe (2009), Charry (1997) and Willard (1991, 2002) applaud the observation of reflective practice and its subsequent obedience to truth, as explored by *Heart Learning, Soul Learning* and *Life Learning*,

and in the sociology discipline, McQueen confirms the power of relationship, story, the teacher as a facilitator of deep learning, and contextualised learning, expressed in *Animated Learning, Engaged Learning* and *Learning Context*. Such a diversity of voices simply reinforces the relevance of the *Transformational Planning Framework* phases and the principles they represent.

CONCLUSION

The *Transformational Planning Framework* has emerged from the analysis of the foregoing expanse of literature. This literature attempts to provide academic credibility for each of the phases within the framework. The framework also attempts to articulate what is best in Adventist education. Adventist Education has been forged on a foundation of best practice. White highlighted this a century ago, "Our ideas of education take too narrow and too low a range. There is need of a broader scope, a higher aim…. Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children" (1903, 13, 18). This means philosophically seeking to pursue what is optimal not only in spiritual development, but the holistic development of students.

It is believed that any tool that can guide teacher- decisions that ultimately interface with student learning can be of benefit. It is too easy to tether philosophy to the realm of abstract theory rather than release it into the vernacular of practice. From a faith formation perspective, Westerhoff's voice summarises it well, "We need to provide the experiences and environments which encourage those interactions necessary for the expansion of faith" (1978, 99). He proceeds to delineate what these

are: shared experiences, storytelling, celebration, action and reflection between and among equal 'faithing selves' (1976, 99). It is believed that all these elements are honoured within the *Transformational Planning Framework*. It exists to scaffold these kinds of experiences, and offers not so much a program, as a *process* by which vital connections can be made that will enhance student faith formation. Ensuring that all elements in the learning cycle are included is important, as students are at differing stages in their faith development. Students need the kind of faith-enhancing experiences in a faith-learning community that all phases will offer. There is such breadth within each phase of the framework that it can be adapted for multiple ages as well as cultural settings. From a religious educational perspective, teacher-guided inquiry that leads to deep thinking about spiritual matters and personalised transformation is the path of the future.

The development of religious faith is not a cloistered realm. It must interface with the reality of life to become embedded into worldview and daily life. The way in which this can be achieved is not found in mystical methods, but rather in practical, varied, affective experiences by an intentional, authentic teacher in a supportive, grace-filled environment.

Chapter FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

"Adventure requires courage to keep us faithful to the struggle, since by its very nature adventure means that the future is always in doubt. And just to the extent that the future is in doubt, hope is required, as there can be no adventure if we despair of our goal. Such hope does not necessarily take the form of excessive confidence, rather, it involves the simple willingness to take the next step."
Stanley Hauerwas

The development of a new emphasis in education is a progressive, complex process. When the new emphasis involves faith development in Adventist Education it is, in the estimation of the Adventist Church, one that has eternal implications. Reflection on the trajectory of the development of the *Transformational Planning Framework* brings with it helpful insights regarding the process of curriculum development and implementation. It is the intent of this chapter to map the path of the development of the framework as it sits within a wider curriculum development initiative, and outline the initial processes undertaken in what is a continuing project.

As stated in Chapter One, the methodology of this study has been *paradigm-driven* in its approach (Punch, 2009, 19), emerging from a paradigm of three elements. These elements were seen as a kind of needs-analysis triad in light of past practice: that relief from a cognitively-driven mindset was needed; that a shift to more holistic teaching practice was desired in religious education; and that a viable practical alternative be offered to teachers of all experience levels as a means of bridging the gulf between philosophy and practice. These elements have been directly explored in the research summary of Chapter Two and subsequently reflected in the *Transformational Planning Framework* of Chapter Three.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANSFORMATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The development of the *Transformational Planning Framework* as a planning tool for teachers emerged in part from an appeal made at an Adventist Principal's Consultation in New Zealand in April 2006. At that time, the request was made that

the Adventist Secondary Bible curriculum be "reviewed and re-developed" by the New Zealand Pacific Union Adventist Education Department for its schools in New Zealand. This appeal gave potential voice to an incubation of ideas, both educational and spiritual that had been formulating in the researcher's mind during recent years as a result of study, observation and reflection. Reading and empirical research fused to fashion a cluster of philosophical viewpoints that attempted to capture what is best in Adventist Education from both a faith-development and educational perspective. It is from this milieu that the seven principles emerged that were explored in Chapter Two, and it was these ideas that specifically served to fashion the phases in the *Transformational Planning Framework* outlined in Chapter Three. With this curriculum request, this framework became the core ingredient of a much larger curriculum initiative for Adventist Education in New Zealand.

In the wake of this request, the researcher considered two options: to review what existed, or develop something new based on recent thinking in both educational and faith disciplines. As the elements of what was considered to be seminal in Adventist education had been gaining strength for the researcher, it was believed that re-development was the appropriate approach. This way something unfettered by past thinking could emerge in response to more recent thought and research.

The most significant paradigm shift for the researcher was the conscious move towards a faith formation model as a dominating paradigm to guide the practice of religious education rather than a purely educational one. This shift heralded a different way of exploring what is important, and invited a whole new range of questions concerning the elements that would encourage the kind of spiritual growth

embodied in the faith formation philosophy. This paradigm shift would serve to define the decisions made throughout the process of development. Much discussion has ensued in Chapter Two regarding the nature of this approach, together with the specific *Spiritual Formation* model (Maxson, 2006) that was elected as its foundational schema.

The following elements of the curriculum development and implementation process note the methodological approach taken in the initial stages of the development of a new religious education curriculum for Seventh-day Adventist Schools based on the *Transformational Planning Framework* outlined in Chapter Three.

1. Reflective Practice

The development of the *Transformational Planning Framework* and the myriad of associated decisions in developing a curriculum based upon it has very much been a process of reflective practice followed by proactive implementation. As reflective practice informs future practice, it was key to ensure that at every step of the way, theory informed what was being developed. This meant that the principles outlined in the literature review of Chapter Two, namely faith transformation as a driving emphasis, the importance of relevance and meaning in learning, the importance of emotional engagement, the necessity of thinking rigour, experiential learning, reflective practice, and an ultimate focus on transformation - were not only incorporated into the *Transformational Planning Framework,* but further that the important processes they embodied were actively modelled in the processes of training. For example, if experiential thinking rigour was an essence principle, the training packages developed would need to model these kind of learning experiences

for teachers. Similarly, if affective 'heart' moments were deemed an important part of faith formation and transformation, these would also need to be modelled in training. For an outline of how this influenced the first training package developed by the researcher, refer to Appendix B.

2. Communication – A Key Ingredient to Change

The first initiative on the path of responding to the request for curriculum redevelopment was to engage in consultation with middle management personnel who were the departmental leaders of religious education departments in Adventist Secondary schools in New Zealand. This was thought to be essential not only as a touchstone to reality, but also to ensure local ownership of the direction of the project.   During the two initial encounters with this group, much vision-casting and philosophical thinking were undertaken regarding the aims and objectives of Adventist religious education curriculum. The group articulated a vision, and current impediments and challenges were honestly aired. The initial list of elements deemed important in biblical curriculum, created by this group can be found in Appendix C.

The challenge of any curriculum developer is to translate the idealised philosophy expressed in reflective isolation into practice. It was in the process of these discussions with school curriculum leadership that the thought came to the writer that many of the concepts mentioned in their vision for biblical curriculum were guided by methodological practices, and specifically addressed the pedagogy rather than the content itself. In light of this, a tool to guide and protect this methodological ideal could be beneficial as we moved towards the re-development' of a religious

education curriculum for Adventist Schools in the twenty-first century. The *Transformational Planning Framework* emerged as a result of this thinking.

Dialogue with these key stakeholders was critical in the emerging stages of this project and has continued to be an emphasis. Their involvement with the development of a curriculum scope and sequence was important for subsequent ownership of the emerging curriculum. Opportunities were given for feedback and further consultation. Communication through regional cluster-group sharing and email and have continued to prove to be effective measures of communication. A document outlining the primary ingredients of the proposed curriculum was later sent to all schools.

3. Project Name

Very early in the process of development, consideration of a name for the emerging curriculum was deemed important. Given the significance of the paradigm shift towards faith formation, it was felt that a new name could best encapsulate this new modus operandi. Up to this time, many schools had retained the title 'Bible' to define religious education class time, while some had moved towards 'Christian Living'. Neither of these titles truly capture the essence of faith formation; the former retaining the legacy of an 'information-driven' model, while the latter, in light of faith development, only infers a focus on the *Lordship* phase of Maxson's Spiritual Formation model outlined in Chapter Two. With the vastly varied faith and commitment backgrounds of students in New Zealand Adventist Schools, it was important that the whole spiritual formation continuum be addressed so that students

could be engaged in a manner that best connected with their particular stage in the formation journey. Because of the restricted connotations of these words, it was felt that more appropriate name that reflected the core purpose of biblical instruction in Adventist Schools be created.

The name *Encounter* was seen to best accomplish this. An encounter experience with God certainly captures the purpose of the *Transformational Planning Framework*. It is a necessary pursuit. At each stage of Maxson's *Spiritual Formation model* (2006) that undergirds the framework, an encounter with God is important. If spiritual formation is "the movement of the entire life towards God" (Maxson, 2006), as has been declared at the outset of this study, intimate encounters with this God are vital. *Vision* concerns the need to gain an accurate picture of God that has been distorted by the entry of a false accusation about God's character. In the second phase of the model, *Gospel*, an encounter with the saving sacrifice of Jesus Christ occurs. *Lordship* involves one's personal submission to God's direction and control in all aspects of the life. Here, a daily encounter is needed, so that *Lordship* can truly be all-encompassing. While *Lordship* allows God to be in control, it is the final stage, *Presence* that really gives *Lordship* its power, for according to the Adventist perspective, it is the presence of God invited in through prayer-filled encounter experiences that enables the Christian to do the will of God. In every stage, a deep, personal encounter with God is needed.

4. Image Branding

The communication of a symbol to represent this paradigm shift was also considered to be important, for an appropriate image can be a powerful paradigm advocate. In light of this, the researcher chose an image of a hand to represent the program, with the intent that it be the prominent branding image for the curriculum.

The hand was considered to encapsulate the relational emphasis embodied in the framework (See Figure 4.1). It is a visual metaphor expressing the invitation by God to each individual, beckoning us into relationship with Him. It also suggests welcoming support, love, and kinship. It is an open hand, desirous of connection.

Figure 4.1
Encounter Branding Imagery

5. Expansion of the Curriculum Project

A seminal point in development emerged some two years after the initial request by Adventist Schools in New Zealand for the generation of new curriculum materials, with an invitation from the educational office of Adventist Schools Australia to share the spiritual formation model and *Transformational Planning Framework* with a think-tank curriculum group, and then, subsequently, the Adventist Schools' Australia *Bible Reference Committee*. This consultation led to an invitation to work collaboratively with Australia on the continued development of this biblical curriculum through the combined work of the curriculum officers and the functional structure of an *Inter-Union committee*. This collaborative initiative has been helpful for the development of teaching units based on the *Transformational Planning Framework*, and the propulsion of change-management methodology. The benefits of such a collaborative initiative have been three-fold:

1. A larger, more consolidated team of curriculum officers is able to spur the progress of the project and bring their unique insights to its development.

2. A greater net of experienced teachers can be called on who may be willing to write teaching units. This brings a strength and diversity to units.

3. With the greater human resource network, the expansion of the project is able to include the primary arena as well as the original secondary-focused curriculum, thus bringing benefits to more students.

The logo resulting from this collaborative work can also be noted in Figure 4.1.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES

The management of organisational change is critical to the success of any new initiative. The success of the 'product' rises or falls on the manner in which

individuals come to understand and become passionate about its vision and content. In light of this, training teachers in such a different paradigm –was considered to be imperative if the integrity of the *Transformational Planning Framework* was to be protected. Mention has been made in Chapter One of the effect of insufficient training in the curriculum release processes in the past. While the content and approach was admirable, the former Adventist Education biblical curriculum in the South Pacific region suffered due to its limited implementation. However, direct training in understanding the planning framework is only one element in what is a significant shift in thinking.

While the empirical experience of the researcher with Adventist Educators through countless visioning sessions reveal a gratifying alignment of purpose in vision, the challenge in change management comes when 'the' change becomes 'my' change and personal alterations in methodology are necessary. This is where challenges emerge.

Claxton and Carr (1991) point out many kinds and levels of change necessary in systemic change, elements that are both cognitive and affective. Their focus on this latter arena is significant and reflects informed thinking in this area. For too long the emphasis has been on the cognitive features of change, but this has failed to capture and deal with the anxiety and insecurity that accompanies the process. Levels of change in this context will include classroom habits, significant shifts in planning technique, new activities, perhaps responding to questions in a different way, relational changes, but they will also will move deeper into implicit beliefs and

theories on which they base their practice. "Their previous style… has been the outward expression of a mass of inner commitments, beliefs and values about children… school… learning… and knowledge" (Claxton & Carr, 1991, 6). They go on to point out that there will inevitably period of dissonance where "practice has changed somewhat but in a rather mechanical or rule-bound way that does not at all actualise the spirit of the desired change; yet people may think that they have done all that is possible or needed" (Claxton & Carr, 1991, 6). It is here that discussion of an affective nature will allow insights to emerge "in a more open-minded, experiential way" (Claxton & Carr, 1991, 7). Such an affective focus will allow for teachers to be encouraged through what may be a period of uncomfortable dissonance between what is real and what is hoped for.

Stages in the change process can include entrenchment, possibility, dabbling, agreement, commitment, clarification, planning, experimentation, reaction, deflation, projection, reappraisal, recuperation, reaffirmation, extension, limitation, consideration and finally permeation (Claxton & Carr, 1991, 7-9). These underlying layers in the change process highlight the necessity of giving teachers time and encouragement in the process of change, even allowing for freedom of buy-in if needed. If the intention of the change is seen as rational and desirable, if people can be sympathetic through the periods of misgivings that invariably arise, and can encourage each other through them, if the new process is seen as effective and enhancing student experiences, and if local support can disentangle self-criticism from pitfalls, it has potential to gradually become consolidated through the success and enthusiasm of the 'core' who try.

Clearly, institutional change-management is a complex long-term process and needs a long-term strategy in place. Training in the phases embodied in the *Transformational Planning Framework*, of necessity needs to be rigorous, but strategies for both cognitive and affective change need to be considered. The four stages of competence offered by Gordon in his *Teacher Effectiveness Training* (1974) provide additional vocabulary for the desire for competence in this new framework. However, a strategy for traversing from what he terms 'unconscious incompetence' through to 'unconscious competence' takes proactive thought and planning. In reality, Nonaka's fifth stage: 'reflective competence' is the desired end of these learning stages (1994) as it speaks of the teacher as reflective learners themselves who are embracing the 'spirit' of the framework and not just its practical, technical elements. With this reality in mind, the following strategies have sought to begin the process of inculcation into the systemic culture of Adventist biblical instruction.

Elements in the Process of Implementation

To date there have been eight important elements in the process of implementing the *Transformational Planning Framework*.

1. Delivery of a Vision

Every effort has been made to sell an articulate, definitive vision regarding the purposes of Adventist Education and religious education, and how the *Transformational Planning Framework* interfaces with these. It is believed that when individuals see a purpose they can believe in, it will inspire them to embrace it and move towards changing their modus operandi. To date, collegial buy-in of the

Transformational Planning Framework has been generous. Personal enthusiasm and energy have defined the approach to vision delivery and based on anecdotal evidence, this would appear to have wrought benefits.

Given the researcher's belief in the potency of enthusiastic delivery, every opportunity for a personal presentation has been made as a means of informing and promoting the framework in the most direct manner possible. Presentations at national conferences, workshops, cluster curriculum meetings, writers' workshops and brainstorming sessions have all enabled teachers to be exposed to the framework and, in many cases, experience repeated exposure. This 'interval reinforcement' (Gordon cited in Cowley & Underwood, 1998) has proven invaluable in the implementation process, as the learning has become increasingly 'embedded' in the neural pathways. It is a reminder of the way the brain best learns new material (Jensen, 2006).

In addition to this, attention has been given to the way these presentations are structured. As much as possible, engaging, interactive sessions where participant involvement is valued have dominated practice. In more formal plenary sessions, interactive strategies have still formed a part of content delivery as seen in the Reflection cards found in Appendix D.

2. Provision of Exemplars

Considerable motivation for the development of the *Transformational Planning Framework* has come from a desire to build a transparent pathway between

philosophy and practice. Given this reality, the provision of concrete teaching examples demonstrating both what good practice from a faith formation and educational perspective might look like and what the *Transformational Planning Framework* might look like at the coal-face has been a driving preoccupation for the researcher. The number of areas in this framework that embody a new paradigm have only served to heighten the need for clearly defined exemplars exploring how they be applied in the field. Thus, the development of teaching units that demonstrate in very precise ways what each phase may look like is a process that was deemed important in the management of change.

The provision of teaching unit exemplars has thus emerged as an integral part of the support provided to Adventist teachers in Australia and New Zealand. These teaching units, while highly detailed and specific in their outline, are by no means intended to be a pedagogical straight-jacket. They give tangible substance to the philosophical changes wrought by this framework and offer a suggested way forward that fulfils the goals of the faith formation philosophy, sound teaching practice and the criteria of the phases in the planning framework. They also constitute an attempt to allow teachers to feel empowered, resourced and courageous to face a new approach with some alternatives, a process important to the management of change.

In addition to this, the offer of such empirical exemplars is an important training tool, as it provides teachers with evidence-based examples of what is being proposed. Teachers are encouraged to remember the foundational truth outlined in Chapter One - of teaching *students* rather than subjects, and tailor the material to their own student

community. This is an imperative both in faith–formation and education. It is hoped that over time, as the framework becomes more embedded in the teacher's consciousness, they will become more adventurous with developing other units that reflect these same priorities. Examples of two such exemplar units from contrasting learning levels can be found in Appendix E.

3. Technological Support

Given the image-saturated status of the twenty-first century and the planning framework's intentional commitment toward variety and novelty as promoted by the exponents of brain-compatible learning (Jensen, 2003), another intentional implementation strategy has been to urge schools to make applications to relevant bodies for the inclusion of technical equipment in all religious education classrooms. The procuring of data projectors, ipod docks and speakers means that both audio and visual material can be seamlessly implemented in the classroom. If *Heart* and *Soul Learning* are core features of good teaching and learning in religious education, how these moments are implemented will have a marked impact on the quality of inspirational experiences. Affective goals such as responding with wonderment and awe (Costa, Kallick 2008) can be enhanced with the provision of such equipment, and, by inference, a lack of such, could hinder these affective encounters. It has been the intent to remove any such barriers to optimum faith experiences so that the intent of this learning approach can be protected.

4. Provision of Resources

Further to the removal of impediments has been the intentional provision of resources that can add to the variety of instructional methods. A financial grant by

the New Zealand Christian Foundation enabled all secondary schools in New Zealand to be -given $2,500 of resources in 2008, while a grant for primary schools has enabled an initial -grant of $1,200 of resources to be provided. This financial investment in resources that compliment the proposed teaching units that follow the *Transformational Planning Framework* means that not only will teachers be given with power to implement the framework in the manner intended, the important message that Adventist Education is core business can be communicated. Such value-messages are integral to the implementation of this new framework. It is intended that all resources outlined in the units be provided to teachers - graphic, audio, visual or otherwise. These will be included on a resource CD and in a unit resource kit. It is anticipated that provisions such as these will enable teachers to be empowered to implement the planning framework with ease.

5. The Nurture of *Encounter* Teacher-Ambassadors

Mention has been made of the opportunities used to share the vision of this curriculum. Of all the contexts for dissemination, the design and implementation of *Encounter Writer's Workshops* has proven to be the most effective in the initial stages in developing ambassadors who return to their school contexts excited to share the essence of the *Transformational Planning Framework*. These events have been an intentional part of the inculcation process, and have both modelled and taught in a more in-depth manner the substance of the framework. Not only have these events provided opportunity for rigorous training in the meaning and implications of each phase, but they have also immersed teachers in experiential learning, as they have written teaching units based on the framework while in attendance. These events

have also served to build ownership so vital in a project of this nature and have proven to be of particular value.

6. Demonstration of a transparent pathway back to the vision of Adventist Education Goals.

The recent development of a new vision for Adventist Education in New Zealand has provided the opportunity for connections to be made between the emphases of the *Transformational Planning Framework* now deeply embedded within the *Encounter* Curriculum Project, and the vision for Adventist Education in New Zealand. The release of a revised national curriculum by the Ministry of Education in New Zealand spawned the opportunity to explore a stronger corporate vision for Adventist schools in New Zealand. The resulting statement took the form of a GROWTH metaphor and acronym, and has been endorsed by all Adventist schools in New Zealand. This GROWTH vision framework, we believe captures the essence of what we as a collective of philosophically-aligned schools believe to be important in Adventist education. The acronym promotes: **G**odliness, **R**ich Relationships, **O**wnership of Mastery, **W**isdom in decision-making, **T**ransformational Learning and **H**arvest-focus as being core pursuits (Refer to Appendix C for a brief overview of this Vision Framework). The *Transformational Planning Framework* can be seen to be a key ingredient in this vision.

Intentionally making connections between this curriculum planning framework and the larger vision of Adventist Education to the Adventist teaching community only serves to strengthen it in the minds of the leadership and staff, and also assures local school leadership that the system is moving towards its goals. To this end, the

Transformational Planning Framework is being suggested as a planning tool for *all* teaching areas in New Zealand Adventist Schools. While a number of phases may take a slightly different form, depending on the learning area and topic, it has the potential to propel the integration of faith and learning in Adventist school curricula. A summary table outlining the specific ways in which the Framework fulfils Adventist Education goals and New Zealand Ministry of Education goals can be found in Appendix F.

7. Departmental Strategic Plan Connection

In a similar vein to the process of linking the *Transformational Planning Framework* to the corporate vision, the strategic plan for the *Encounter* curriculum has been kept before the Adventist School Principals in New Zealand as a means of demonstrating how integral it is in the overall strategic planning for Adventist Education in this part of the world. The Principals act as *Encounter Coordinators* in the New Zealand Adventist school context. Such communication strategies have served to progressively educate teachers and Principals in the *Transformational Planning Framework* as a considered and rewarding modus operandi.

8. Innovative Training Opportunities

The twenty-first century is an age of unprecedented technology. This reality has the potential to impact and indeed, revolutionise methods of training in Adventist Education. In addition to the training opportunities previously noted, an additional area that is anticipated to prove beneficial to the implementation of the *Transformational Planning Framework* is the use of e-learning as a means of training and coaching. This tool not only teaches in an incremental way, but can also

engage the learner in the process through on-line manual interaction. Further, it can track usage so specific information as to who has undergone training can be monitored. Some form of tuition prior to teaching with the framework is considered to be so important that distribution of teaching units will be dependent on the teachers in any given location completing this on-line course.

It is important to note that this method will never replace face-to-face training, but will rather complement it. Live training will still have a vital role to play in the education of this framework so that the affective change process spoken of can be addressed. To this end, a facilitation training event will always occur prior to the role-out of units at any given year level in New Zealand. However, training needs to adopt a multi-pronged approach, not only appealing to different learning styles, but also in dealing with expansive geographical regions now that the project encompasses both New Zealand and Australia.

With such a significant geographical area to cover, the advantages of e-learning are numerous: not only will this mean that all teachers can have perpetual access to repeated clarification of concepts at any time or place, but also that the tyranny of geographical isolation no longer needs to be an impediment to training. It also means that any new teacher can have access to this, even if live training events are not available when needed in the local region. It is desired that periodic on-line conferencing will also be an added feature, so that live interaction and clarification can be sought for those needing assistance and the affective support and encouragement that will inevitably be needed. This e-learning tool has brought a

solid level of instruction, and more elements can be added to the coursework as time goes by. It is anticipated that this will be a key instrument in the process of training in the planning framework.

The five areas outlined in this chapter noting the development of the *Transformational Planning Framework* and the eight initiatives undertaken in the implementation of this emerging curriculum have, to date proven effective in developing interest in it and the *Encounter* Curriculum itself as an expression of the framework. Of continued challenge is time management in maintaining all aspects of the curriculum and sufficient, continued communication regarding it. Given the complex nature of change management, it is believed that increased support in local contexts will be needed to that the spirit of the framework can be embraced at the deeper levels of inculcation through both mental and spiritual permeation. If this is not done, it runs the risk of being compromised as time goes by.

Conclusion

The *Encounter* religious education curriculum project is currently still in its inception stages. The process of inculcation will be long and will require consistent, measured implementation strategies. The development of a planning framework that guides practice is only the beginning. There is much to be done in shifting mind-sets at a deep and permanent level, and in nurturing the spirituality of the teachers who will be the all-important facilitators in the classroom faith environment.

Chapter FIVE

IMPLICATIONS FOR ADVENTIST RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

"Nothing average ever stood as a monument to progress.
When progress is looking for a partner it doesn't turn to those who believe they are only average.
It turns instead to those who are forever searching and striving to become the best they possibly can."
Lou Vickery

INSIGHTS EMERGING FROM THE STUDY

The *Transformational Planning Framework* is an attempt to bridge what is often a gulf between philosophy and practice. This study has highlighted the dichotomy that can easily exist between an education in religion that is text-based and an education in faith that is life-centred. In order to pursue the latter, the author has derived concepts from a rich body of educational research, and applied them to Adventist religious education, believing that there can be no good religious education without good educational theory. Further, it has sought to delve into the realm of faith transformation and elicit elements from "faith's multi-woven, multicoloured, multi-faceted texture" (Gillespie, 1988). It is believed that in harnessing features from both realms, the great purposes of Adventist Education can be fortified and more honestly pursued.

The study has also sought to offer a possible way forward for the teaching of religious education within the context of Adventist Education. It has attempted to answer the research question posed at the outset, *How can Adventist Educators fuse philosophy and practice in religious education with greater intentionality?* and consider a way forward in a manner that is holistic and transparent. The five key objectives emerging from this question, outlined in Chapter One have been given measured consideration. These have been to:

1. Review the research demonstrating perspectives from relevant spheres that could contribute to the development of such an enriched framework for religious education;

2. Analyse and synthesize relevant information from this research in order to fashion a practical holistic planning tool;

3. Outline the substance of this transformational planning tool with an overview of each phase within it;

4. Trace, through action-research the seminal decisions of the use of this planning tool within a broader religious education curriculum project, and;

5. Demonstrate evidence of the emerging teaching exemplars that are based on this transformational planning tool.

Objective 1: Review Research from Relevant Spheres that could enrich Religious Education

As a means of fulfilling these objectives, key messages from the worlds of education, faith, brain research, and sociology have been analysed and synthesized into a framework that has the potential to protect religious education from distraction, and propel it towards fulfilling the core goal of Adventist Education; faith formation (White, 1903). The recent plethora of insights from these multiple disciplines have reiterated messages regarding what is beneficial to both education and faith formation. Research findings from a range of contributing authorities have been explored and have formed a solid foundation for the development of the *Transformational Planning Framework* planning tool; the substance of this study.

Objective 2: Analyse and synthesize relevant information from research as a means of fashioning a practical holistic planning tool.

The research on pedagogy and faith formation has enabled the researcher to enunciate the seven principles outlined in Chapter Two. These principles included: a needed foundational shift in focus to spiritual formation, together with the importance of relevance and meaning, emotional engagement, thinking rigour,

experiential learning, reflective practice and a focus on transformation. These have been seen as crucial to the purposes of religious education and faith formation.

Objective 3: Outline the substance of the *Transformational Planning Framework*.

It is the researcher's view that it is the responsibility of Christian curriculum developers to keep the foregoing philosophical insights alive by offering something that can translate philosophy to practice. The specific constellation of ideas embodied in the *Transformational Planning Framework* reflect these principles. Chapter Two demonstrated how prevalent they are in philosophical circles. The synthesis of these elements such as arousing curiosity, contextualising the learning, using story-narrative, inquiry-based experiential learning, heart connection, reflective practice, an ultimate application to life, and an intentional inclusion of celebration, are all conducive to faith formation and have been seen to be synthesised into the phases of the *Transformational Planning Framework.* These have been captured by the titles: *Learner Bait, Learning Context, Animated Learning, Engaged Learning, Heart Learning, Soul Learning and Kaizen Learning.* They combine to offer a holistic model that can fulfil literature priorities, but more importantly, take students on a journey of discovery through intentional emotional engagement. It is believed that such a framework demonstrates a solid pedagogical rationale for the effective practice of religious education. It encourages a focus on Adventist Education's declared intent of redemption that includes pursuing Godliness and Godlikeness (White, 1903). This focus constitutes the desired outcomes of faith formation. Only when this specific heritage is in sharp focus can these age-old truths "be pronounced again from the depths of the ardent convictions" of a new generation of human beings" (Key, 1997, 62).

Objective 4: Trace the seminal decisions of the use of this planning tool as it sits within a broader religious education curriculum project.

Chapter Four explored the journey of the use of the *Transformational Planning Framework* as it helps to fashion a religious education curriculum project. Implementation strategies were seen to include, passionate delivery of a vision, provision of exemplars, the offer of technological support, the provision of resources, the nurture of *Encounter* teacher-ambassadors, a clear connection between the planning framework and Adventist Education vision, strategic plan connection, and innovative training opportunities. These have proven to be beneficial strategies.

Objective 5: Demonstrate evidence of the emerging teaching exemplar-units based on this planning tool.

Appendix E offers two samples of teaching units that are based on the *Transformational Planning Framework.* They serve to demonstrate evidence affirming its practical application within classroom practice. Intended to be concrete and detailed, they provide clear exemplars of possible ways of implementing a given topic from within its structure.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

This study has limitations. Firstly, it documents a single piece of curriculum development. Hunter and Schmidt observe that "scientists have known for centuries that a single study will not resolve a major issue. Indeed a small sample study will not even fully resolve a minor issue. Thus the foundation of science is that the accumulation of knowledge forms the results of many studies" (Hunter, Schmidt et

al, 1982, 5). The singular nature of this study thus constitutes a limitation to any real substantive change.

This study does offer a single framework for the complex process of religious education. While it is intended to be comprehensive enough to span current thinking, and simple enough to be embraced by all levels of teaching experience; pioneering enough to set Adventist Education in a new direction, yet grounded enough to take it back to its philosophical roots; flexible enough to be applied in different cultural context, yet structured enough to hold Adventists to personal account; and able to provide practical support at the coal-face of teaching, no framework can either accomplish everything a curriculum demands, or totally capture what is ultimately a dynamic process. This constitutes another limitation of the study.

A third limitation of this study comes from the fact that the framework itself has emerged from the somewhat cloistered realm of an academic and administrative research context. While classroom practice has been anecdotally involved, current roles and responsibilities have prevented it being birthed from the perspective of a classroom practitioner. While initial classroom implementation has provided positive feedback, implementation over time will determine any long-term efficacy.

Despite these limitations, it is hoped that this framework can be utilised to develop tools for developing a robust religious belief, encourage spiritual encounters with God, and inspire students to be world-changers. If it can point in the direction of a worthy goal, and offer illumination for the path, it can serve a beneficial purpose.

CHALLENGES IN THE WAY FORWARD

There are a number of key distractions that could inhibit the essence of the

Transformational Planning Framework from characterising practice. Continued,

relentless training will be imperative. The challenge of change-management, as

identified in Chapter Four is a significant issue and the process of this could well

undermine the implementation of the framework if not managed well. What is

desired is that teachers will not just *go through the motions* offered in a somewhat

comprehensive outline, but they will catch a vision of the intent of each phase and

become passionate about delivering it in the spirit that it has been written.

As time moves on, it is hoped that with effective change-management, practice will

gradually be less *by the book* and more intuitive and creative – where teachers can

potentially take the principles and make them their own, adapting them, embellishing

them and customising them to fit with their own teaching style and the learning

styles of their students and classroom conditions. Of particular importance are the

key principles that each phase embodies. In light of the foregoing evidence, these are

worth embedding in practice.

Accomplishing the spirit of spiritual transformation involves a long-term

commitment to change. The truths embedded within the *Transformational Planning*

Framework need to be reiterated repeatedly so that new neural-pathways of

operation can be embedded. It is a tireless process focused in the same direction

without distraction or subversion.

Another significant challenge within the curriculum initiative born of the

transformational framework lies in the area of a systemic movement of Adventist

schools to Claxton's Generation 4 learning-to-learn environment. While many of the Generation 3 practices (outlined in Chapter Two) are still relevant and beneficial, a move to Generation 4 practices would strengthen the purposes of Adventist education, particularly in the area of thinking and not mere reflecting others' thoughts (White, 1903). Given the desire to transform the human being in the classroom, it would seem desirable that the Generation 4 classroom goal of not so much "helping students learn better, but rather helping them become better learners" (Claxton, 2008) is consistent with this greater goal. There is much room for development in this area.

Given that the distribution of teaching unit exemplars now reaches teachers in both Australia and New Zealand, the challenge of educational 'diversity' inhibits some of the Generation 4 principles from being systematically integrated. Within different geographical regions, different educational concepts are valued and there is not necessarily the same philosophy or even common language to help clarify elements within the exemplars. Further to this, the teaching of religious education is but one learning area in a myriad that is taught by one teacher, particularly at the Primary level. It is difficult to establish in one learning area practices that may not necessarily flow through to learning patterns in other learning areas. It is, however, believed that Generation 4 thinking is the way of the future and needs to be incorporated more systematically into *Encounter* units. This challenge will call for an even greater commitment to training so that all can move forward with understanding and intentionality.

POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ADVENTIST EDUCATION

This study has been concerned with offering a deliberate way forward for religious education in Adventist education. In this regard, Adventist Schools "cannot afford to assume, guess, or hope. They must be intentional if they wish to be effectual agents of Christ's transforming grace" (Johnson-Miller, 2005, 195). It is clearly a critical work. Gillespie et al add weight to the crucial nature of nurturing faith in their comment, "It is the way grace is shared" that is important. "If done well, the church will grow, if done carefully, lives will be shaped towards the Kingdom: and if not done at all, many will never find the peace that is in Jesus" (Gillespie et al, 2004, 292). They add further wisdom to this insight in their comment,

> "Building a church that represents Christ means… we have to continually strive to reform and recreate as we give new meaning to the old forms and staid ways that served older generations but are not seen as relevant now. We must become more and more committed to comprehensive models of ministry, new shapes of church, clear sculptors of relationships that build and never tear down. Our work is one of fashioning, and it is an artistic work, I believe. So it is appropriate to provide some direction to those who craft the lives of young people." (Gillespie et al, 2004, 365).

This study has been one such *fashioning* exercise; an *artistic work.* However, Chapter Two's summary of current thinking demonstrates that the *Transformational Planning Framework* has the science of research supporting it. Ultimately, education Christian or otherwise, is a blend of science and art, the cognitive and the affective, the mind and the heart; indeed, whole-sight (Palmer 1993, xxiv). This is the path of the future.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The *Transformational Planning Framework* as a tool for practice is in its infancy.

While the researcher is of the view that the framework itself is educationally sound

and faith-oriented, it could be strengthened from further study into a range of areas.

Firstly, at the beginning of Chapter Two, attention was given to the vitally important

role teachers play in developing the kind of classroom culture that will foster faith.

In light of the magnitude of this issue, much study could occur into best practice in

andragological training (education for adults rather than children) (Knowles *et al,*

2005), so that the faith formation of teachers can be encouraged in the most

appropriate manner possible. This study has suggested that the inner landscape of a

teacher's life, far from being irrelevant, is seminal to the teaching of religious

education. As Palmer contends, "Teachers must be… provided with the best possible

methods and materials. But none of that will transform education if we fail to cherish

– and challenge – the human heart that is the source of good teaching" (1998, 4).

Consideration could also be given to the development of relevant resources for

schools that could serve to focus on this important process. In essence, such a focus

further explores the foundational truths outlined in Chapter Two. It is here that a

dynamic faith community can really be nurtured.

Extending from this thought, a second opportunity for future study resides with the

issue of the potency of the 'process' of curriculum delivery in education. Reflective

research into the elements that contribute to creating a harmonious, spiritual learning

environment would be of particular value to Adventist Educators. A focus on

classroom culture issues that will ultimately drive the depth of intent outlined in this framework also merit exploration.

A third possibility for further study concerns Claxton's influential work in the area of learning-to-learn and his helpful identification of the generations in this area (outlined in Chapter Two). This insightful work raises questions as to how a Generation 4 learning culture can be more systematically embedded in the processes of the *Transformational Planning Framework*. It is believed that these strategies are uniquely applied in the religious education classroom and investigation into the implications of this paradigm would be of benefit.

A fourth future study focus could address the complexities of the change process. Attention was given to this important concern in Chapter Four. Given that authentic change takes time and is many layers deep in order to reach not only cognitive assent but also affective ownership, further investigation into best practice in change management in a curriculum initiative of this magnitude would benefit the project significantly.

The Valuegenesis 1 & 11 studies (Hughes, 1993, Gillespie et al, 2004; Gane, 1997) highlight the importance of the home as a primary faith-nurturing agency. This realm offers a fifth potential study arena, as it has significant implications for how a curriculum such as this one might go about strengthening links between school and home. How might the school inform, educate and inspire parents in the elements of the planning framework, and how might it influence their spiritual parenting?

Given the significance of the paradigm-shift toward spiritual transformation embodied by the *Transformational Planning Framework*, quantitative and qualitative study into possible faith-growth benefits that it may lead to, offer a sixth possible area of study. Given the relative silence of Adventist researchers into measurement of curricula as they relate to faith development (Sonter, 1983), there is a place for systematic research in this area. In Alexander's opinion, we need touchstones for evaluating spiritual quests (2001). Gillespie's claim that "if you can't measure it, it didn't happen," (1998, 5) offers advice worthy of exploration. Quantifiable data would be valuable in assessing both the veracity of the principles behind the framework and the efficacy of its functional structures.

Finally, the work of Westerhoff, Fowler, Erikson and Gillespie et al invite investigation into how the *Transformational Planning Framework* may be adapted for students immersed in different stages of faith development. For example, how might the stage of mythic-literal faith affect the emphasis of phases, as opposed to the subsequent synthetic-conventional faith stage? Similarly, would Westerhoff's faith styles invite different emphases within the framework? Would these stages and styles invite special focus at different times? Such questions are worthy of pursuit.

CONCLUSION

Adventist Education will always seek new ways of making God a reality in the lives of students. The *Transformational Planning Framework* is simply a bridge to that end, emerging from a desire that this goal be accessible to the average teacher. It is not *the* way, but rather simply offers *one* way forward as the institution of Adventist Education seeks to traverse the gulf between philosophy and practice. While lying

within the realm of curricula, it is not just a technique. It is a framework that allows for meaningful encounters in a faith-enculturation classroom. It is a conduit for intentional faith formation. Adventist education is driven by an inspired ideology that begs for the continued rigorous development of simple, practical tools that teachers of any experience level can use to translate the abstract to the tangible, philosophy to practice, thought to action. Young people deserve no less.

It is hoped that what were hitherto islands of hope in Adventist schools may gradually fuse to form main-lands of opportunity in the area of religious education as it leads to development of a more resolute faith. It is imperative that such issues invade institutional consciousness even more comprehensively so that individually and corporately, incremental movement can be made towards the goals and purposes of Adventist education. Fortunately, there is synergy in corporate belief and action where these become more than the sum of their parts. When there is courage at the systemic level to embrace new directions and forge new ways of fashioning practice, new frontiers in faith formation can be pursued. Courage to take small steps in the desired direction is what is needed. This kind of courage and insight need to become prominent enough in collective thinking that they will be embedded in the fibres of the general culture and practice of Adventist education. Such insight constitutes the quest of the ideal, but it is an ideal with long-term implications, and therefore worthy of the most rigorous pursuit. Ultimately, "are not ideals like stars? We never reach them but, by them, we set our course" (Lindsay, 1978, 140).

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Elements of Spiritual Formation

The Barna Research Group has identified seven elements of spiritual formation

1. Worshipping God intimately and passionately
2. Engaging in spiritual friendships with other believers
3. Pursuing faith in the context of family
4. Embracing intentional forms of spiritual growth
5. Serving others
6. Investing time and resources in spiritual pursuits
7. Having faith-based conversations with outsiders,

Kinnaman, D. (2007) *Unchristian.* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books. p 80

Appendix B

Training Package

The following outlines activities included in a training package that was prepared for Curriculum Officers in both the Australian and New Zealand Unions for Writer's Workshops. All resources were included in the kit. The activities sought to model the processes outlined in the *Transformational Planning Framework.*

ENCOUNTER
Loving Like God • Living Like Jesus

*"If you want to build a ship, don't herd people together to collect wood and
don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea."*

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

ENCOURAGE • EDUCATE • EMPOWER

The following resources are designed to ENCOURAGE, EDUCATE and EMPOWER our teachers in the development of *Encounter* Units. We hope they are a blessing! Sample activity ideas are outlined below. Use them to fashion your training event. Those ideas marked with a * are included in this resource kit.

ENCOURAGE

1. SHARING THROUGH CONNECTION	**Biscuit Sharing** Select a biscuit that represents how things were for you this last week at school.
2. CONNECTING WITH GOD	**Prayer** Spend intentional time in a deep season of prayer for this most vital work.
3. CELEBRATING YOU	**Strength Cards*** [Refer to 1 Cor 12: 4 - 6] Suggested instructions: • Select a strength you believe you have • Select a strength the person on your left has (if they know each other well enough, if not, do this one at the end of your Retreat) • Select a strength you believe you will need in our time together. PRAY for the person on your left that God will give them this strength.
4. ENCOURAGING THOUGHTS	**Inspiring Quotes*** *"Select a quote from around the room that has special relevance and/or encouragement for you as we begin our Writer's Retreat."* Participants write the quotation of their choice on a *Quote Card.**
5. CONNECTION THROUGH SHARING	**Line Share** Form two lines and have participants face each other. Share a question, then have 3 people from the end of one row move to the other end of the line, thus creating new partners for the next question. *• What's the best news you've heard recently?* *• If you were going to leave the world one piece of advice before you die, what would it be?* *• Share a memorable spiritual moment with your students. What made it unforgettable?*

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ENCOUNTER

Loving Like God • Living Like Jesus

EDUCATE

1. INDUCTIVE MODELLING	**The Prodigal Son Study *** Explore this inductive study as a group together. [If desired, download Philip Craig and Dean's '*When God Ran*' as a *Heart Learning* experience]
2. FRAMEWORK INSTRUCTION	**Presentation** Outline the Planning Framework phases. Use Powerpoint and **Expert Cards*** to heighten engagement.
3. FRAMEWORK ACTIVITIES	i **Object Link** [Learner Bait] Distribute an object to each participant. Invite them to think of how they could use this object as learner bait. Sample objects: hankie, dice, paper cup, balloon, string, hook, elastic band etc ii **How does it fit?** [Learning Context] * Ask the participants to think of contextualisation statements or activities for a number of Bible stories. iii **Story Dash** [Animated Learning] Do a relay race where teams race to the whiteboard to write up different story-telling techniques. (Chockies for everyone's efforts!) **OR** iv **Jingle** [Animated Learning] Teams compose a new words to a well known song that captures the important principles of animated learning. v **Planning for Engagement** [Engaged Learning] * Classify the activities listed according to whether they are mentally engaging and inquiry-based or not. vi **The Face of Jesus** [Heart Learning] Read 2 Cor 4: 5, 6. Tell the person on your right how you see God's light and Christ's face in them vii **Just Do It!** [Soul Learning] Spend some minutes engaged in reflective practice about what you've learned so far today. viii **Life Link** [Life Learning] Think of a life application activity for the following: 2 Cor 4: 5,6 / Phil 2: 5 - 7 / Ps 33: 6,7, Then use your body to share a truth about life learning. Have a partner share in words with the group the message you are acting out. xix **Review Bingo** [Kaizen Learning]* Invite participants to write a question in each box on the Bingo Sheet. They will then be given a period of time to invite others to write an answer to one of their questions. (Individuals can only sign once per sheet). [NB. You may like to debrief the quality of the questions - and challenge participants to assess the extent to which their questions were higher order as opposed to lower order.)

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Loving Like God • Living Like Jesus

EDUCATE (continued)

4. REVIEW ACTIVITIES

Divide your group into smaller groups to complete one of the following:

i **Picture This** [St Lukes Innovative Resources]
Select a picture to capture the essence of each planning phase.

ii **Smartie Match**
Select a smartie colour to capture the essence of each planning phase.

iii **Random Shapes** *
Select a random shape to capture the essence of each planning phase.

Share each task with the whole group.

5. REFLECTIVE PROCESSING

i **Personal Strengths and Challenges**
Invite each participant to reflect on their personal strength areas and
challenge areas in relation to the planning framework. [Vote with feet!]

ii **Personal Metaphor**
Invite participants to think of a visual metaphor for each of the planning
phases. Share ideas.

iii **Official Symbols** *
Share and give rationale for each of the 'official' planning phase object symbols.
[Show posters]

iv **Classification of Activities by Phase**
Cut up the suggested activities into strips and invite participants to classify the
activities according to their suitability within the planning framework.

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ENCOUNTER

Loving Like God • Living Like Jesus

EMPOWER

1. UNIT CRITIQUE

EDITING
Invite the participants to critique a unit as a means of refining their understanding of the planning phases and empowering them to clarify the writing process. (Discussion of their ideas and judgements will be critical)

2. DEBRIEF

Discussion
Debrief the Writer's Retreat, giving opportunity for each participatn to reflect on their learning / growing experience.

3. UNIT PLANNING

Group Brainstorming *
Use the Group Brainstorming form to begin group brainstorming for your selected Unit.

4. PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

Goal Cards *
Use the Quote Cards* as Goal-setting cards for this project. Participants may like to write personal goals relating to how they will seek to implement areas of personal challenge in their own teaching practice (relating to the planning framework) and/or what their action plan is to complete the *Encounter* Unit assigned to them.

5. SOUL FOOD

Psalm 139
Share Psalm 139 and present each participant with a bookmark of this beautiful Psalm.

6. HONOURING YOU

Honouring Ceremony
Honour each participant for their strengths, their contribution and their passion and commitment to God. Present each participant with a gift that captures a specific strength they bring to this project.

*"You get the best efforts from others
not by lighting a fire beneath them,
but by building a fire within them.*
Bob Nelsen

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Appendix C

Vision-Casting Exercise with Religious Studies, Departmental Heads.
Held in Auckland, April, 2006

It is the desire of the Departmental Heads of Bible in Adventist Secondary Schools in New Zealand to develop a program that can pursue the following goals:

- Relational / Warm
- Intentional
- Worth-=ship - before worship
- Appeal to the post-modern mind: EPIC Experiential / Participatory / Image-driven / Connected
- Cooperative in nature
- Serving opportunities
- Spiritual life skills
- Awe-filled
- Integrated spiritual learning
- Open to Integrated school wide - themes
- Nurturing of spiritual resilience
- Answers to truth
- Grace-filled
- Promoting belonging and acceptance
- Safe / Protected environment
- Exciting
- Dynamic
- Creative
- Practical / Experiential
- Authentic / Real
- Investigative – Discovery – as with searching for treasure
- Contagious
- High-Level thinking
- Purposeful
- Transferable spiritual skills and habits
- Meaningful
- Leadership authenticity - teacher on same journey
- Teacher vulnerability
- Servant leadership

Appendix D

Plenary Training Reflection Cards

The following cards have been used in plenary sessions as a means of offering mental processing and ownership of the content.

VISION: A WAY FORWARD

1

2

THE TRANSFORMATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Learner Bait	Curiosity Hook
Learning Context	Big-picture connection
Animated Learning	Memorable Narrative
Engaged Learning	Deep, purposeful experiential learning
Heart Learning	Connection with God
Soul Learning	Reflective Practice
Life Learning	Relevance and Contribution
Kaizen Learning	Celebration

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ORIENTATION

LEARNER BAIT

- Tell about a time when your students were really engaged in what they were learning.
- To what extent do you consciously engage emotions early in a teaching unit? Share something you've recently done that really 'hooked them in'?
- How do you go about making your students 'hungry' and 'thirsty' for knowledge?
- How 'engaging' is your teaching? (Rate yourself using Card 7).

LEARNING CONTEXT

- Talk about a time when you personally 'went through the motions,' but didn't have a big-picture understanding.
- To what extent do you intentionally link learning to big-picture issues or prior learning? Give an example of what this might look like in your teaching context.
- How intentional are you about learning intentions and 'learning to learn' strategies with your students, where they can articulate what they will learn and then monitor it.

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EXPLORATION

ANIMATED LEARNING

- What potential is there for 'story' narrative in your subject/teaching area?
- How engaged are your students when you are talking to them? How do they demonstrate their engagement?
- How do you think they would rate you on an 'enthusiasm' scale?

ENGAGED LEARNING

- What strategies do you use to help students own their own learning? Be specific.
- To what extent is your classroom a 'thinking' environment'? (How would you rate it? See Card No. 7). 'Make us believe' by giving evidence.
- Would you characterize your classroom as a Generation 3 or Generation 4 learning-to-learn environment? Give evidence for your answer.
- What does variety and novelty look like in the learning experiences your students engage in? Share a novel strategy you've recently used that achieved this.

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REFLECTION

HEART LEARNING

- Think of a unit you have recently taught. What potential did it have for a Godly connection? How did you capitalize on this? What did it look like?
- How intentional are you about integrating faith and learning?
- How do you go about breathing belief into your students?

SOUL LEARNING

- Share something you just learned about the value of reflective practice.
- To what extent do you honestly value reflective practice as a learning tool?
- When was the last time you helped students process their learning in a reflective way? What did it look like?

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CELEBRATION

LIFE LEARNING

- Think of a recent unit you taught. To what extent did it 'matter' to your students?
- To what extent did you attempt to 'make it matter'?
- Did your students see the relevance of the exploration? How could you have heightened its relevance to them?
- What potential did it have for a sense of 'contribution' to their world?
- Is there potential for a service-orientation twist in your next unit of study?

KAIZEN LEARNING

- When was the last time you really celebrated learning success in your classroom? How did you do it?
- What are some strategies you use to help students share what they've learned?
- What is something you've said to or done for a student that really had an effect in making them feel a valued learner?
- How joy-filled is your learning environment? (Use Card 7).

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PERSONAL GROWTH

Potential   Planted   Emerging   Growing   Mature

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"Synapses are strengthened when there is no competing neural stimuli for several minutes."
Jensen

"When students are bored and turned off, something very wrong has occurred. A great majority of the time, that 'great wrong' is meaningless curriculum."
Kovalik

Classrooms need to be places of day-by-day knowledge-generation about learning."
Guy Claxton

"At Foxfire, an experimental high school program in Georgia, students are encouraged to interview community members, design and build cabins, and participate in a wealth of field experiences. Their prospectus is designed and written by the students."
Wigginton

"Do not then train youth to learning by force and harshness, but direct them to it by what amuses their minds, so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the perculiar bent of the genius of each."
Plato

"Unless there is a new mind, there cannot be a new line; the old will go on repeating itself with recurring deadliness. Without intervention, nothing truly changes."
William Carlos Williams

"Far from disheartening your pupils' youthful courage, spare nothing to lift up their soul, make them your equals in order that they may become your equals."
Jean Jacques Rousseau

'A memory can only as clear as its original signal."
Norman Doidge

'In authentic education, silence is treated as a trustwothy matrix for the inner work students must do, a medium for learning of the deepest sort."
Palmer

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ACTION PLAN

- A concept relating to all this that I already knew and believed...
- Something I didn't know I didn't know...
- Good things to be reminded of again...
- A new thought I'd like to do something about...
- My challenge in all this...
- A strategy I'd like to focus on this week...

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Appendix E

The following pages offer two samples of exemplar teaching units based
on the *Transformational Planning Framework;*
one from the New Entrants Level and one from Yr 8 (NZ).

Appendix F

Transformational Planning Framework Connection Summary

The following *Planning Connection Summary Table* outlines the way in which the *Transformational Planning Framework* fulfils the vision of Adventist Schools, New Zealand, together with the mandates of the New Zealand Ministry of Education.

NEW ZEALAND CURRICULUM FOCUS	Learner Bait (Curiosity hook)	Learner Context (Big-Picture Connection)	Animated Learning (Memorable narrative)	Engaged Learning (Deep, purposeful experiential learning)	Heart Learning (Connection with God)	Soul learning (Reflective Practice)	Life Learning (Relevance & Contribution)	Kaizen Learning (Celebration)
VISION — Our students will develop through:								
Godliness					●	●	●	●
Rich Relationships			●	●	●	●	●	●
Ownership of Learning		●		●		●	●	
Wisdom in Decisions				●	●	●	●	
Transformational Learning	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Harvest Focus	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
PRINCIPLES — Our Curriculum will include:								
High Expectations	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Treaty of Waitangi				●		●		
Cultural Diversity		●		●				
Inclusion		●						●
Learning to Learn		●		●		●		
Community Engagement							●	
Coherence		●		●			●	
Future Focus				●		●	●	
Biblical Foundation		●	●		●	●	●	
Spirituality	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
VALUES — to be modeled, encouraged and explored								
Love					●	●	●	●
Joy				●	●			●
Respect		●	●	●	●	●	●	
Compassion						●	●	
Engagement	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Discernment				●	●	●		
Courage				●		●	●	
Innovation				●	●	●		
Responsibility				●		●	●	●
Focus		●		●		●	●	●
Integrity		●		●		●	●	
KEY COMPETENCIES — Capabilities for life and lifelong learning								
Thinking			●	●	●	●	●	
Understanding - Language, Texts, Symbols		●		●		●	●	
Managing Self	●			●		●		●
Relating to Others				●			●	
Participating and Contributing				●	●	●	●	●

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