



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

**CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCE OF TRAUMA BECAUSE OF
MARRIAGE CONFLICT**

BY

SURGEON BOKO

26524440

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SUPERVISOR: PROF M. J. MASANGO

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DECLARATION FORM

I Surgeon Boko of the Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, solemnly declare that the copy of the proposal submitted by me is original. It is in no way the work of someone else. The research is the result of my efforts through the professional guidance of the supervisor whose name and signature appear below.

Candidate's name: _____

Candidate's signature: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor signature: _____

Date: _____

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my children and to the rest of children living in conflicting and violent situation with parents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to thank the following people for their assistance and co-operation in making the completion of this study possible. I'm particularly indebted to Professor M.J Masango for his service in making this project a success. The assistance and guidance he gave me is highly appreciated. He always gave me encouragement when realising that I was about to give up. I therefore cannot forget his inspiration and wishing me "good luck" all the time.

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ABSTRACT

The writing of this thesis is to investigate the role that the church plays for the children living with conflicting parents. This investigation takes us both into the role of Gcuwa Circuit and the Presbyterian Church of Africa in the fight against traumatized children because of parent's conflict.

The researcher's question through this thesis is to find out the role of the church as it seeks to take care for those affected children. This thesis is to enhance the response of the churches and societies to fight against abuse of children. It has attempted to explore new theological perspectives and utilise the available ones, which have already been dealing with issues that address children's trauma as a result of conflicting parents. The study also seeks to encourage church ministers, pastors and lay leaders to provide the much needed leadership in the fight against children's trauma and its accompanying social problems of injustices, culture and gender inequality. The church has the pastoral responsibilities for ensuring that all children enjoy their full rights. Nevertheless effective therapy and pastoral care normally transcends all these barriers.

Table of contents

i. Declarations	2
ii. Dedication	3
iii. Acknowledgements	4
iv. Abstract	5
v. Table of Contents	6
Chapter 1	10
1 Introduction	
1.1 The Research Hypothesis.	
1.2 Problem Statements.	
1.3 Aims and Objectives of the Research	
1.4 Social Analysis Background.	
1.5 Therapeutical Approach Background.	
1.6 Theological Background.	
1.7 Critical Historical Background.	
1.8 Theoretical Framework.	
1.9 Contextual Theology of Parenting and Shepherding.	
1.10 Parenting	
1.11 Called to the Vocation of Parenting: An Old Testament Command.	
1.12 Shepherding.	
1.13 Narrative Therapy and its Possibilities.	34
Chapter 2	35
2.1 Methodological Considerations.	

- 2.2 Theological Methodology.
- 2.3 Theological Methodology: An Exercise in Practical Theology.
- 2.4 An Exercise in Contextual Parenting and Shepherding Theology.
- 2.5 Scientific Research Methodology.
- 2.6 Research Gap.

- 2.7 Conclusion. 39

Chapter 3 40

- 3.1 The Meaning of Conflict and its Impact on Children in marriage.
- 3.2 Causes of Conflict at Home or in the Family (Domestic Violence).
 - 3.2.1 Structural Causes.
 - 3.2.2 Changes of Culture.
 - 3.2.3 The Lack of Adequate Pastoral Care.
 - 3.2.4 A lack of clear teaching and preparation for marriage
- 3.3 Gender Differences in Verbal Aggression in Spouses
- 3.4 The Impact of Marital Conflict on Children
- 3.5 Specific Impact of Parental Conflict on Children
 - 3.5.1 Psychological Impact
 - 3.5.2 Behavioural Impact
 - 3.5.3 Aggressiveness
 - 3.5.4 Risk from Continuing Contact with the Battered
 - 3.5.5 Spiritual Losses
 - 5.1 Loss of Hope

5.2	Loss of Intimacy	
5.3	Loss of Future	
5.4	Loss of Peacefulness	
5.5	Loss of Healing Memory	
5.6	Loss of Spontaneity	
5.7	Loss of Wholeness	
5.8	Loss of Innocence	
5.9	Loss of Trust	
5.10	Loss of Awareness	
5.11	Character of Healthy Family	
5.12	Intimate Violence and the Church	
5.13	Theological Issues	
5.14	Theological Resources	
5.15	Wife Battering	
5.16	Helping Women and Children come to Voice in the Context	
5.17	Crisis Care in the Context of Intimate Violence and Conflict	
5.18	Partner Battering	
5.19	Recovering from the Trauma of Intimate Violence	
5.20	Prevention and Resistance	120
Chapter 4		121
4.1	Interviews and Case Studies	
4.2	Method	
4.3	Ethical Concerns.	
4.3.1	Consent.	

4.3.2	Confidentiality and Child Protection.	
4.4	Distress and Damage.	
4.5	Danger.	
4.6	Development and Piloting of Research Instruments with Children.	
4.7	The School Survey (Phase 1)	
4.8	The In-Depth Interviews. (Phase 2)	
4.9	Separate Coding for Interviews with Children's Mother Included.	
4.10	Questionnaire and Responses.	148
Chapter 5		149
5.1	Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations.	
5.2	Conclusions.	
5.2.1	Cultural Factors.	
5.2.2	Social Factors.	
5.2.3	Cultural Factors.	
5.2.4	Jealousy and Sexual Jealousy.	
5.2.5	Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication.	
5.2.6	Lack of Education and Pastoral Care.	
5.3	Recommendations/ Researches Own Reflection on Children.	
5.3.1	At Home.	
5.3.2	at School.	
5.4	Concerning the Treatment of Women by Their Husbands/Male.	156
6.	Bibliography.	157

CHARPTEr 1

INTRODUCTION

1. Six years back my cousin-sister told me that her 11 year old son had just disappeared from home. While I was still sympathising with her about her lost son, she told me that she intends to divorce her husband because of the conflict in their marriage especially affecting her son. Conflict has a negative effect on children and thus affects them when they later get married. It is a cycle that never ends

According to the information I got from her, children are also aware of the intention to divorce because the conflict has been occurring in front of them. This process affected my own style of care-giving. As a result I tried to comfort her about the situation. The son was discovered in Kwa-Zulu Natal in one of the Indian farms and was brought back home again.

He stayed at home. But, all the attempts to take him back to school were in vain. Instead, as I had conversation with him, the boy spoke negatively about his parents especially his dad. He was very angry towards him and showed very little interest

to his mother. He had internalised anger, bitterness and violence.

At the time the father showed very little interest to his children and to their mother. He stayed away from them and would only come back home periodically, although his presence ended up in strong violence and conflict in front of his family (children). My cousin sister further continued to complain about her son's behaviour both at home (family) and in the society respectively. At home, he is very aggressive towards his younger brothers and his only sister. He alleged them of receiving more parental love from parents. On the other hand, the younger brother's behaviour began to be questionable. They like to fight against each other while the son has further moved up to the extent of bullying other children in the society. He is also involved in the crime. At home he is reacting by stealing his parent's money. These are symptoms and impact of violence that result in trauma. There are also other ways children behave as a way of coping with traumatic situation. For example, one day the daughter got critically ill.

She was admitted in the hospital because of headache. On the day of my visiting her in the hospital, she informed me that she saw and heard her parents shouting at each other strongly, and

so she became bored and was unconscious. The younger brothers are deeply involved in abuse of liquor. They show very little respect to their parents. In short they act out their trauma by misbehaving. Psychology is a helpful tool that will help to wonder what is going on.

Anyone who observes the characters, behaviour and attitudes of children from violent families where parents in particular are conflicting in front of their children would be able to realise and testify the above (Amelo and Keith, 1990). The following ill- behaviours can be observed from violent families

- 1) **Language:** Children use sarcastic words both at home and in the society.
- 2) **Behaviour:** They bring their own inherent personalities to the struggle and begin to be with one parent. For example, there is a strong bond between the mother and her children.

However, the problem of children's behaviour may be easily resolved with better parenting. An important assessment the pastor has to make is the parent's attitude towards the abusive acts and their willingness or otherwise to-do something about it. This will give an indication to the pastors of the potential for the future therapeutic work. The following guidelines on family

characteristics are associated with child abuse and therefore result in change of behaviour on the part of the child. These include among other things, one parent families, low educational attainment, low occupational status, low income, social isolation and family crisis such as material separation.

(Charles O'Brian, C.C. 1997: 25. The guidelines go on to examine parental attitude and behaviour. They list among risk factors as strong beliefs in harsh punishment and discipline, parental immaturity, low self esteem, low tolerance of stress, failure or delay in seeking medical advice and inadequate parenting. (Ellis, 2000:17-4). They are affected or even stressed by witnessing a good deal of verbal and physical conflict between their parents (Elizabeth M. Ellis, 2000:17-4).

It is important to note that children that live in conflicting situation have more emotional troubles and behaviour disturbances. Some fail at school and tend to have low cognitive abilities, poor social skills, irritability or difficult temperament and few special skills or talents that help them to cope with life. Boys tend to have more severe disturbances (Charles O'C, 1997:25).These includes:

1. Assume Inappropriate Responsibilities.

Although there is leadership potential on boys they inadequately develop undesirable behaviour such as stealing, telling lies, playing truant, wondering on the streets and going into video game centres.

2. Adopted undesirable behaviour.

When deprived of a proper parental figure, the boys become rebellious towards authority, emotional, self centred and attention-seeking. Although they seemed to be very resistant to control, they want adult support and concern at the same time. They could discipline themselves well provided that instructions are clear and reasonable.

3. Marked change in academic performance.

Teachers usually complain about boy's performance at school. They are affected by parent's conflict. Now they find it difficult in completing their schoolwork, usually come late to school, and their school performance starts to deteriorate.

4. Chronically dirty, untidy etc.

The boy's room is usually piled up with unwashed clothes, papers and books.

Psychosocial: Parental conflict produces a stressful home environment that can lead to feelings of frustrations, anger, depression, more anxiety and low self-esteem. Indeed it is now widely recognised that there are certain mechanisms whereby

a child exposed to an adverse psychosocial environment may be protected from its effects. These include having a close and nurturing relationship with an adult, the experience of success mastery over one's abilities. Thus, good relationships with teachers, peers and positive experiences in school can help the child regain his self-esteem and minimize the effects of abuse (Charles. O'B, C.C. 1997:43).

According to Brian, in line with our knowledge of protective mechanisms, placing a child in a nurturing and loving family-like environment such as foster care or small group home would provide more opportunities to establish rewarding relationships with adults.

1.1. THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Through observation, one can conclude that the reactions related to violence and conflict of parents in front of their children that occurs from generation to generation or in short, it becomes the norm that is taught from parents to children. My hypothesis behind this research proposal is that parent's conflict and violence has and still continues to have an impact on children as well as their parents respectively. Furthermore on the context of practical theology and pastoral practice within the church, I suggest that the existence and

manifestation of the above named negative effects of parent-violence and conflict in the families contradict with the concept of Christianity and the Church in which the parents participated.

- At times the Church quickly leads parents into reconciliation instead of dealing with the roots that cause the problem. So, genuinely healing and conflict transformation will be achieved if the effects at present are clearly identified, named and dealt with consciously through practical pastoral process. Narrative therapy applied in the context of contextual theology can offer genuine possibilities for such a process. This is particularly so in the narrative therapy approach to the understanding of parenting styles or human experience of parents conflict and the process of therapy and community work pain

The following questions are designed for my research project on research hypothesis.

- What are the effects of violence and conflicts on both parents and their children?

- Where do the church and Christianity feature in such crisis?
- What are the psychological and psychosocial techniques involved in conflict and marriage in this research project?
- What questions and challenges do parents conflict and violence stimulates to practical theology and pastoral therapeutic practices of the Church?

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Through the above experiences, several questions began haunting and challenging me and my pastoral care –giving ministry.

- ❖ Why do parents quarrel in front of their children?
- ❖ How can the Church begin to address this reality pastorally in a way that will bring healing in families, socially and religiously?
- ❖ As I grappled with the above I began to realise my weaknesses in working with parents as well as children who live in conflict and abusive home. The main question is to ask how caregivers intervene in such a way of breaking the cycle of violence.

1.3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The main aim and purpose of this research is to interact in the cycle of violence which occurs from one generation to the other. It is also aimed at the following:

- ✓ To ensure that children are catered and taken care of at home.
- ✓ To restore the parents to their proper place in the family hierarchy which nurture children.
- ✓ To help parents to stop violence and pursue their children's developmental task.
- ✓ The Church should ensure that children from violent homes develop appropriate assertiveness and self confidence so that they grow into maturity.
- ✓ To explore the identified problem under or behind parent's violent and conflict and to uncover its manifestations in the family and community.

My background to the research is rooted in four different areas or field of study. These include:

1. Social Analysis Background
2. Therapeutic Approach Background
3. Theological Background

4. Critical Historical Background

1.4 SOCIAL ANALYSIS BACKGROUND

Here my focus is based on Social and Cultural conditions of parent's violent and conflicting home environment. I'm paying the attention on Responding to Child Abuse (1997:123). According to Charles O' Brian (1997:123) 'there is a general acceptance that the more violent a child experiences while growing up, the greater the possibility that the child will become a violent adult. The child in turn uses aggressive forces on others. This is not only exhibited at home, but is also over into school. He would fight and bullies other boys at school. Like his father a child who observes his parents conflicts and violence usually has trust in people and a manipulative personality.

1.5 THERAPEUTIC APPROACH BACKGROUNDS

The work that I have done under the broad theme of Narrative Therapy offers the most immediate background to this study in terms of the therapeutic approach adopted in the research project undertaken here. To be specific the study considers and uses the basic work done by Anne E.Streaty Wimberly (2003-2004:68). This study is about the church and parents together in rising children. According to E.Streaty Wimberly 'Parenting is an

essential form of vocation and is a calling. This means that correct parenting is a gift and a calling.

1.6 THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The background carried out in this study is found in the contextual theologies of Youth Ministry that address or deal with ministering the youth. This is the work done by Malan Nel (1998). According to Malan, 'Youth must be protected and cared for.' I also looked at the work done by Anne E. Streaty Wimberly (2003-2004:63). He says that 'religious values must support parents to nurture children and youth. 'She further says that parents should rear children in such a way that they can make their own decision in their coming future.

1.7 CRITICAL HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The introduction that I have made concerning the conflicts of my cousin's sister with her husband, children fighting each other, bullying others outside formed an important background to the investigation that is carried out in this research project. It is also an attempt to account for the making of a social and cultural relationship/harmony between parents and their children (families)

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theological perspective of this research is informed basically by contextual theologies of parenting and shepherding.

Narrative therapy also constitutes the main theoretical patterns in this study.

1.9 CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY OF PARENTING AND SHEPHERDING

The practical theological component of the research that is carried out in here (present project) was primarily informed by contextual theologies of shepherding and parenting.

1.10 PARENTING

According to Mc Goldrock Parenting is a process of one choosing to have children either as single parents or within the context of their couple relationship (Mc Goldrock: 2005).

Parenting involves understanding that children are a gift from God and therefore need to be catered and protected for.

Therefore parenting is an essential form of vocation and is a calling (WIMBERLY, 2003 AND 2004:68)

The functions of parenting that have remained constant are of pivoted importance in my exploration of parenting. I'm in the

process of exploring six to seven key themes that will be lifted
(Wimberly 2003-2004: 68)

- Parenting is an essential form of vocation and is a calling.
- Religious value support parents nurturing children and youth.
- Parents rear children to make responsible decisions.
- Families function as communal multigenerational and extended and non-blood kin networks
- Families help youth to negotiate life cycles tasks appropriate
- Some black-family parent's functions remain constant despite racial discrimination
- Recent cultural trends threaten the process in black families.

As children gradually become their own persons, their upbringing can be a complex challenge. This means that parents must deal with small people who minds and wills of their own, but who still have a lot to learn about what kinds of behaviour work well in society (Papalia, Olds, & Feldman 2004: 278).

How do parents handle discipline of their children? Are some ways of parenting more effective than others?

Discipline: It refers to methods of teaching children character, self control and acceptable behaviour (Papalia, Olds, & Feldman 2004: 278)

Parenting Styles:

Some research suggests that styles of parenting may affect children's competence in dealing with their world.

Example of pioneering research by Diana Baumrind (1971: 281; Baumrind & Black, 1967: 281) studied 103 preschool children from 95 families. Through interviews, testing, and home studies, she measured how children were functioning, identified three parenting styles. She described typical behaviour patterns of children raised according to each.

This is called Baumrind's Model.

1. Authoritarian parents: According to Baumrind, value control and unquestioning obedience. They try to make children conform to a set of standard of conduct and punish them arbitrarily and forcefully for violating it. They are more detached and less warm than other parents. Their children tend to be more discontented, withdrawn and distrustful.
2. Permissive parents value self-expression and self-regulation. They make few demands and allow children to monitor their own activities as much as possible. When they do have to make rules, they explain the reasons for them. They consult with children about policy decisions and rarely punish. They are warm, non-controlling and undemanding. Their preschool children tend to be immature, the least exploratory.

3. Authoritative parents value a child's individuality but also stress social constraints. They have confidence in their ability to guide children, but they also respect children's independent decisions, interests, opinions, and personalities. They are loving and accepting, but also demand good behaviour. Are firm in maintaining standards, and will intend limited, judicious punishment when necessary, within the context of warm, supportive relationship.

They explain the reasoning behind their stands and encourage verbal give and take.

Their preschoolers tend to be the most self-reliant, self-controlled, self-assertive, exploratory and content

Eleanor Maccoby and John Martin (1983: 282) added fourth parenting style which is called neglectful or uninvolved parents.

According to Maccoby, neglectful or uninvolved parents focus on their own needs rather than on those of the child. This is because of stress or depression sometimes.

Neglectful parenting has been linked with a variety of behavioural disorders in childhood and adolescence (Baumrind, 1991: 282).

Researcher's conclusions on parenting styles

Authoritative parenting seems to enhance children's competence.

According to my understanding, authoritative parents make clear, consistent rules. They let children know what is expected of them.

This reduces trauma on children. Whereas in authoritarian homes, children are so strictly controlled to such an extent that they cannot make independent choices about their own behaviour.

Similarly, in permissive homes, children receive so little guidance that they may become uncertain and anxious about whether they are doing the right thing. In authoritative homes, children know when they are meeting expectations and can decide whether it is worth risking parental displeasure to pursue a goal. These children as far as I'm concerned are expected to perform well, fulfil commitments, and participate actively in family duties as well as family fun. They know the satisfaction of meeting responsibilities and achieving success.

According to my understanding in support of authoritative parents, parents who make reasonable demands show that they believe that their children can meet them, and that the parents care enough to insist that they do.

When conflict arises, an authoritative parent can teach the child positive ways to communicate his or her point of view and negotiate acceptable alternatives.

1.11 CALLED TO THE VOCATION OR PARENTING:

AN OLD TESTAMENT COMMAND

The vocation of parenting was involved in the Hebrews Bible. God created the human family and instructed humans to be caregivers of the earth, including caring for the whole earth community, its inhabitants and its resources.

An important aspect of the care of the earth includes the summons and command to procreate.

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them, God blessed them, and God said to them, “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it (Genesis 1:27-28).

An implication of this passage according to my understanding is that reproduction is an important and particular part of what it means to be human and to participate in the ministry of parenting.

“God blessed them” and made holy the vocation of parenting.

Vocation is God’s special call to this particular way of life. For human being procreation stems from this call and are God’s gift and imitation to participates in or join God’s desire for humans to exist in the earth community in harmony with other living creatures (Wimberly A.E, 2003-2004:69).

Parenting as ministry is also not simply a blessing, but, summon from God to persons in a marital dyad.

A subsequent passage of scripture introduces the genesis of the family in light of dyadic social relationships. God intended the human being to care for the earth and to be in generative relationships.

In this passage of scripture, God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner “(Genesis 2:18). Here the emphasis is on mutuality and relationship and toward intimacy and partnership between the man and the woman.

Genesis 1 passage emphasis a procreation as gift and command, the Genesis 2 passage emphasises mutual self-giving and partnership, or a generative relationship that forms a relational framework for parenting (Genesis 1:27-28; 2:24).

A passage in Deuteronomy highlights love of God as central to the functions of procreation and parenting, and places the identity of family in both individual and collective terms. In this view, family is seen in terms of a whole community with a collective or shared responsibility for the lives of every member, young and old. This profound sense of the social nature of family centres on the love of God, the Author of life, and recognising the loveliness of God’s supreme expression of love to be shown in the lives of

human beings. It also underlines the essential task of raising children who will grow in this same love of God and the explanations of God's love in the community (Deuteronomy 5: 29). The passage communicates the expectation that the child should be socialized to perpetuate the religious and socio-ethical values of the communal family.

A cross reference to the foregoing understandings of family responsibility is Malachi 2: 15, where God's prophet admonishes Judah for religious and cultural indiscretions in the situation of divorce and declares that God desires "God-given offspring".

There is an implicit command that parents possess godly character and produce children with godly character.

Further, there is a command that fathers take the responsibility for their family by remaining with them.

The centrality of godliness as a goal of parenting points to parenting as ultimately a holy task.

Parenting has a particular focus and purpose. The focus and purpose is dynamically related to nurturing the young in such a way that the knowledge of God continues to each generation forever (Genesis 18:19; Psalm 20:27). Persons, families, communities and nations that obey God's command will be God's people.

The Malachi passage confronts us with the sobering reality that there are patterns of parental relationships that threaten the

purpose of parenting and the character development of children. Parents are charged to discern the patterns of relationships that threaten the family and to institute corrections. The passage gives direction regarding the responsibility of parents to make decisions in the interest of the family. In this particular

instance fathers are called to repent, to return and to the family, and to resume the God-given family role that includes the family's responsibility of rearing children to trust God and to become responsible adults. Other passages highlight that rearing children includes providing basic care and nurture, teaching children the wisdom of God, and facilitating children's acceptance of the wisdom of God as the guide for their lives (Proverbs 6:20-23).

The themes of raising children in the knowledge, love, and fear of God, and making possible children's development of Godly character and wisdom persist throughout the Old Testament. This activity in the life of the family has been an important aspect of the Judeo-Christian legacy. The assumption has also persisted that if parents model godliness and provide children with necessary instruction then God's promised love, strength, blessings, and peace will attend and keep (Psalms 103:17-18; 20:7; 127; 128; 147:13-14; Proverbs 4; 17:6; 20:7; 31:28). A biblical framework for parenting provides an understanding of *vocare* as God's call for parenting that focuses on the ideals of nurture, structure, instruction, guidance, and influence of children. Should we

respond to this call, God promises blessings to our children and us. In our failure to respond, our children fail to discover their valued identity and the purpose in God. The whole community suffers.

Parenting from a New Testament Perspective

The New Testament Gospels and Epistles continue the tradition of parenting as ministry and vocation. The first parents mentioned in the New Testament are persons who had a profound understanding of God's purpose and ministry. Zechariah and Elizabeth were parents of John who came to baptize persons and to prepare them to hear the Gospel (Luke 1). Mary and Joseph came to terms with the *vocation* of parenting when an angel came and visited them to announce that they are going to be the parents of Jesus (Luke 1; Matthew 1: 2). Joseph adopted Jesus when Jesus was born. Joseph's and Zechariah's family were related by blood. Jesus and the Baptist each grew with the knowledge of the wisdom of God and went on to fulfil their various vocations in regard of God's plan for their lives with the community of faith.

The Gospel stories point to a strong traditions of parenting that provided young people with the values they inherited from family and ultimately from God. One of the first acts of John the Baptist's and Jesus ministries was to bring together a family of

believers. They each mentored disciples in order to evoke a specific response. The mentoring process entailed educating the disciples in an ever-increasing knowledge of God. This mentoring is reminiscent of the parental task of socialising persons to appropriate and pass on important values to future generations. John the Baptist preached repentance and baptism. Jesus Christ proclaimed the gospel. Each understood himself and his social, cultural identity, and location in the context of a communal, extended, multigenerational family and religion. From the beginning, God's people were reminded of the inclusive nature of the family of God.

By way of summary, the Judeo-Christian heritage and traditions placed high value on the function of the family. The family was a large, multigenerational group of blood relatives. "Built around a core known as a lineage. "Extended families lived together and, in most cases, traced their lineage through the descent line of the father. Families appealed to the patriarchal system in which the welfare, spiritual, and developmental needs of all family members were ideally considered and provided for. The patriarchal family system insisted on the integrity and well-defined social roles of each member of the family and extended family/community members. Attention was given to mutual concern for children by extended family members. Rearing children extended beyond the

boundaries of kinship in the wider community in accordance with rules and limit that balance and assured appropriate relationships. When the religious and socio-ethical context of the extended community system, as well as within the family, children were recipients of love, care, and nurture. Integrity, security, stability, valued identity; protection, individual roles, and tradition were important core values of the Judeo-Christian family system.

1.12 SHEPHERDING

Vocation: The term vocation comes from the Latin word “Vocare” meaning “to call”

A review of biblical, historical, and socio - cultural conceptualisation of the Christian family high lights the constancy of parenting functions over time.

Shepherding involves giving careful attention to the needs and problems of individuals and families. In this case attention is given to the needs and problems of parents and their children. (Gerkin 1997:25)

Shepherding also involves attending the life of the community of faith with care and discernment. Biblically, shepherding was first appropriated within the religious life of Israel as a metaphor with

which to speak of the care of Yahweh for Yahweh's people. This motif is most clearly captured in the imaginary of Psalm 23. Here the Lord God is depicted as the good shepherd who leads the people in the paths of righteousness; restore the souls of the people, and walks with the people among their enemies, and even in the valley of shadows of death.

So, the carryover of that imaginary from the care of God to the care of his people has to be provided by human leaders such as parents to their children respectively. (Gerkin 1997:27). And the evidence is lacking that the shepherd model ever attained a place of significance equal to those of the prophetic, the priestly and the wise guide in later Old Testament literature, probably because it lacked an institutionalized role (Gerkin 1997:27). With the coming of Jesus, who, according to John's gospel, identifies himself as "the good shepherd." The shepherding image takes its place as a primary grounding image for ministry.

Applied for Jesus ministry, the shepherding image incorporates not only the wisdom expressed in the certain of the parables and the Sermon on the Mountain, not only his followers, but also elements of prophecy such as are found in the story of Jesus cleansing of the Temple and his confrontations with the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Therefore, from early Christian times to the present the image of the pastoral leader as the “shepherd of the flock” has persisted as a prototypical image applied to pastors, parents and ecclesiastical leaders of the institutional church. Shepherding as a parenting appears again and again in the writings of the early church fathers as the organising metaphor for excellence for the work of the pastoral leader. In more recent times the shepherd metaphor has been widely appropriated as a grounding metaphor for the care giving. And parents are the most significant care-givers to their children. Parents as a shepherding and most caregivers allocated by God for this try by all means to shape the discipline of their children in communities where they belong. They in turn must exercise authority over their own children. Jesus Christ exercised authority over the congregation that he was leading. Parents as shepherds should set and enforce behavioural boundaries for their children. On the other hand be a reconciler and healer of the wounds of their children.

They need great wisdom and thousand eyes to examine the soul’s condition from every angle. The parent therefore must not overlook any of these considerations, but examine them all with care and apply all his or her remedies appropriately for fear his or her care should be in vain. The shepherd (parent) needs a lot of concentration, perseverance, and patience. He cannot drag by

force or constrain by fear, but must by persuasion lead back to the true beginning from which he/she has fallen away (Gerkin 1997:30)

1.13 NARRATIVE THERAPY AND ITS POSSIBILITIES

With narrative theory people attribute meaning to themselves and their experiences that constitute both identity and the development of resources for life giving. It can be used to help parents and their children to find voice and different meanings and possibilities for life. The narrative counsellor looks for alternative stories that are enabling. Alternative stories allow the client to speak in his/her own voice and work on the problem him/herself. Its aim and objective is to reposition the client as the speaker or teller of her own story (Drewery & Winslade 1997:43). Listening to people telling their stories call for a combination of empathetic, validating and deconstructive listening. Listening in a Deconstructive cultural way brings out a new paradigm of understanding.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Here the methodology is informed by theological methods that are relevant and appropriate to the work that is undertaken here. It is also influenced by scientific methods of research relevant to facilitate the achievement of the aim and objective of the present exercise.

2.2 Theological Methodology

The research aims at being an exercise in practical theology within the specific context of contextual theologies of parenting and shepherding children.

Scientific Methodology: The scientific methodology adopted here in this study is qualitative

Qualitative method describes more imaginatively what happens within that phenomenon being observed.

2.3 THEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY: AN EXERCISE IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

This means that this research is governed by theological concerns on the one hand and by practical considerations on

the other (Gerkin 1997:13). For the most part, however, theological concerns functions as the implicit background, while the explicit focus is practical considerations. Out of different approaches to practical theology by different theologians, Gerkin C.V's (1997) approach has been chosen as the main methodological lens to be used in the present research. According to Gerkin, practical theology becomes the task of maintaining the connections between the varied stories of life and the grounding story of the Christian community (Gerkin 1997:111). Therefore pastoral care becomes the community of faith's living expression of that grounding story. Apart from the above mentioned definition, the characteristic of practical theology is that:

It is important for interpretation and the language to be used in interpreting human situations and predicaments.

2.4 AN EXERCISE IN CONTEXTUAL PARENTING AND SHEPHERDING THEOLOGY

The practical theology attention to the parenting and shepherding context referred to the above finds further expression in contemporary contextual theology. As Malan Nel (2004:10) notes 'Children are a gift from God and therefore need to be catered and protected for. Shepherding involves

giving careful attention to the needs and problems of individuals and families (Gerkin 1997:27). The methodology applied in this present work is informed by the- desire to carry out a critical examination of the situation both in the church and in the bigger families and societies relating to the identified problem of the continued efforts of parents conflict in front of their children. It is also aimed at facilitating personal healing and family transformation regarding the identified problem of the efforts of parent's conflict on their children.

2.5 SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research will be based on participant observation approach with a view to investigate a phenomenon (Parent conflict in front of their children) and thus attempt to correct this phenomenon and provide guidance. This approach needs to be considered and applied in this research. The participant observation modelling will be used here expanded but retaining its essential feature. This model will be utilised within the framework of qualitative strategy of information gathering interpretation.

According to Merriam, the qualitative method helps those who embark on it to explore different dimension of a phenomenon

and not training one single variable, as is often the case in quantitative research (Merriam 1988:100). Qualitative method describes more imaginatively what happens within that phenomenon being observed. The paramount objective of qualitative research is to understand the meaning of that experience or phenomenon being observed or studied. Example, selecting 2 or 3-5 children from violence and conflicting families and compare them with the same selected number of children from the so called normal families or homes. The main aim is to get a clear understanding of what happens to children of conflicting parents.

Qualitative analysis attempts to reconstruct people's stories, accounts and theories that help to mould and retain internal meaning and coherence of the social phenomenon.

Qualitative analysis focuses on people's contextually valid accounts of their social life rather than formally generalised explanations. This means looking at assessing information that reveals something about people's lives as lived towards evaluation of what it could be. This is important if the relevance of parent's conflicts in front of their children is to be verified or validated, as stated in the research question.

Gerkin applies this qualitative approach in his book "An Introduction to Pastoral Care." He goes on to suggest that pastoral care is about 'Shepherding'. It means that it immediate a sense of integrity, wholeness and steadfastness to those in need.

According to Gerkin shepherding the youth as God intended us to do is more significant. Children are to be catered and protected for as they are a gift from God. At home, children need parental care that smoothly happens without them experiencing conflicts from their parents. Parents have to take care of them by baptising them, taking them to educational institutions and finally provide them with food throughout their lives. This will facilitate a very strong relationship between parents and their children.

2.6 RESEARCH GAP

Westerners have done extensive work in this area, but their work does not address the African experienced of children living in violent homes.

Fundileki, K.S. has been contracting on orphans and their trauma. Stride, Steve (1) Geffner, Robert (2), Lincoln (3) have done some work on the physiological effects only.

2.7. CONCLUSION

The work of caring for children who live violent and conflicting situation is important. It needs attention, especially in Africa, where unjust discipline is misunderstood as caring.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 THE MEANING OF CONFLICT AND ITS IMPACT ON CHILDREN IN MARRIAGE

Webster's dictionary defines "conflict" as to fight clash or struggle (Hunter 1990:210). It is a natural inevitable and central part of human existence.

I personally perceive conflict as the violent argument or misunderstanding between people, communities, culture, nations etc normally caused by hatred or disagreement. It is a disagreement which leads to violence. Conflict is a sensitive fight.

CONFLICT IN MARRIAGE: Conflict in marriage emanates when there is high level of verbal aggression such as high level of insult accompanied by physical aggression (Murphy and O'Heary 1989:12). This means that physical aggression increases by increased verbal aggression. Wife's beating, in our African context may be increased by the unsound and sarcastic words that wives use when communicating with their husbands in a marriage situation.

Steps (1990:12) maintains that verbal and physical aggression are separate phenomena but operate in a two – step process. Example: Each individual in the couple moves from non-aggression to verbal aggression. The second step of the process entails movement from verbal aggression to physical aggression.

In other words, verbal aggression between spouses can be defined as “a communication , either verbal or non-verbal intended to cause psychological pain to another person or perceived as having an intent (Infante and Wigley, 1986:173, Straus, 1079:51). It also includes the term symbolic because it is believed that non-verbal communication is also an important component of the abuse process. Verbal aggression has the following attributes between the spouses.

❖ **INSULTING**

❖ **Insulting** means bitter utterances between the couple.

It is usually initiated by words followed by fighting.

The husband does the fighting in most cases.

SWEARING

❖ **Swearing** is a process of not wishing well, love etc to your partner. There is a deep feeling of enermnity between the partners. Love turns into hatred.

❖ **Saying something spiteful**

❖ **Threatening**

Threatening means words and actions which intend to harm your partner in a marriage situation

❖ **Leaving the room and refusing to talk sometimes**

This occurs when one partner is overcome by rage and showing no care for the partner. It is caused by lack of love between the couple.

Example: A man and his wife leave the bedroom and seek for another place. One is left stressed, frustrated and can commit suicide

Incidents of verbal aggression and physical aggression are highly correlated (Hudson and Mc Intosh, 1981:100). This implies that they may tend to be intertwined, occurring at the same time. But verbal aggression tends to be higher for couples who usually report high levels of conflict. As these incidents occur, they affect children in such a way that they copy life style of parents and repeat them.

3.2 CAUSES OF CONFLICT AT HOME OR IN THE FAMILY (DOMESTIC VIOLENCE)

The question to ask is why conflict with? The following will be helpful

1. STRUCTURAL CAUSES

Structural causes are largely responsible for economic insecurity that aggravates domestic violence or conflict. In this case I want to say that both employment and family income have direct impact on family structure, functioning and development. For example, the unemployment of a former breadwinner may challenge the family's hierarchy and create tension / conflict in marriage or parental system. In other words, economic stress among unemployed men is associated with feelings of helplessness, depression and anger, as well as loss of power and prestige. One man said "if you lose your job outside, you lose the job inside". Therefore, frustration may turn violent, especially if fuelled by alcohol and drugs. The impact on this towards children is worse. In some cases, the ability of a wife to earn money while the husband remains unemployed further strengthen tense situation and can lead to domestic violence. .

Therefore, men feel that women have taken their place of being superior. This is not cultural.

According to the African culture, the man is supposed to work for the wife and the children. And the woman has to look after the house and children at large.

So, some men do not accept the changed roles such as there is equality between man and his wife. The man is supposed to work

for the partner in a marriage. Once the roles are applied, men have feelings of insecurity, frustrations etc. They may leave homes and stay in shebeens, taverns, indulge in liquor, and see themselves as worthless. They do not appreciate the good works of women, condemn everything and keep on shouting at their spouse. It is not only the Western culture that conquers with the above even in some countries such as the Philippines this culture is accepted (women working outside the home for living/to help husband augment family's financial needs).

According to this culture, working of woman while the husband is unemployed is not strange. Men can also do the work which is done by their wives and also support the above because it creates more harmony and peace between the married couples.

2. CHANGES OF CULTURE

Gender conflicts often arise from acculturation. Women tend to acculturate faster than men (Hernandez, 1996:11). According to Hernandez, husbands become upset by their wives ready acceptance of their new roles and by consequent challenges to their patriarchal authority whereas in some cultures such as African culture domestic violence's are considered normal, even sanctioned. Husbands have the right to physically punish their wives for perceived domestic infractions. Women are seen as

little more than grown children who need to be corrected and chastised. This means that wife beating may be viewed as justified if a woman is believed to be disrespectful. This is the rule if she has not prepared a meal on a good time, goes somewhere without her spouse's permission or refuses her husband sex.

Some men do not accept gender equality and will not assist with work in the home.

Presently, it is not a good way of doing things. If you punish a woman you're taken to a court of law and you pay for your actions and a divorce take place. It is very serious and to the in-laws you appear to be a bad husband who is not good to their daughter. Therefore a man pays for his wrong actions.

Biblically, it is said that husbands should love their wives. So, punishing/beating a wife is not a sign of love. It means one no longer loves his wife and is sinful. It is not right for a woman to have scars and bruises and look ugly for her husband.

Husbands have no right to physically abuse their wives. They should sit down with their wives, and talk to them, so as to correct them from what they have done.

There should be a godly communication between the two so as to solve this problem.

3. THE LACK OF ADEQUATE PASTORAL CARE

In many countries, pastoral care workers are few and those there are becoming over-burdened and discouraged (Taylor H, 1983:187). According to Taylor these few pastors often lack proper training for this task. They need further instruction themselves before they can instruct others. This often happens to both cultures (Western and African cultures). Another problem is that some churches refuse to admit people to the full membership, and they deny them the sacraments, unless their marriages have been performed before a minister in the church building. So, as far the church in Africa is concerned, it seems that many of the problems associates with Christian marriage are caused by outdated forms of church administration, and the shortage of pastors with a full and up-to date training in counselling. Very few give any teaching about the emotional, psychological or moral aspects of couple relationships and this causes conflict.

4 A LACK OF CLEAR CHRISTIAN TEACHING AND PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE

The Hastings report on Christian marriage in Africa (1973:8) refers to the widespread lack of instruction on the meaning of

marriage especially now that most schools are controlled by government and not by the churches. Today religious instruction in general has decreased. This has had its effect on those growing up and preparing for marriage. A vast number of children never go to school at all, and receive little religious instructions at any other time. This is particularly true with regard to instruction on the Christian understanding of marriage. So, there is next to no Christian instruction given on the subject of sex and marriage in schools, confirmation classes or sermons.

Immediately prior to a church wedding one or two instructions are normally given to those engaged. This is both late and too little, and of course does not apply at all to those who do not have their marriage solemnized in the church. This lack of instruction is compared to the large amount of instruction that was given in traditional society. For example, in the past, African society had very precise systems for providing marital instruction. Many of these systems have largely broken down and where they exist Christians often do not take part. They have perhaps been forbidden to do so. The instruction given in accordance with the customs, norms and values of the African tradition are inadequate and partially unsuitable for young people in today's world. So, many people nowadays, especially the married couple are simply not receiving any coherent educational help in these matters.

The methodology of Educative Counselling

Ministers have a strategic opportunity to help couples prepare for good marriages. Because premarital guidance is the parish minister's most frequent educative counselling opportunity, I will use it to illustrate the methodology of this type.¹¹

There are two categories of educative counselling: (a) *those situations in which people come at the minister's request*—e.g., premarital, pre-baptismal, church membership preparation, and (b) *those where the counselee takes the initiative*, seeking guidance on vocational, theological, or other problems they were facing. The rule of thumb is the minister-initiated types of educative counselling often require a greater proportion of direct *instruction* than do counselee initiated types.

Most premarital sessions are actually *individualized education or personalized training session*. They are not counselling in that the couples are not motivated by a desire for help with particular problems. But most couples are *open* to training and coaching (in relationship-building skills) that affirms their basic strengths and responds to their desire to develop the best possible marriage relationship. Personalized education can be helpful to many couples if counselling skills and sensitivities are integral to the process. The pastor who learns to do counselling orientated education will find increasing opportunities to do actual

counselling with some premarital couples. Here are some methods:

- (1) As in other counselling, *relate warmly, empathetically, and openly so that a sturdy relationship with the couple will grow*. Establishing a trustful and (if possible) ongoing relationship with the couple is the overarching goal of preceding sessions. Such a relationship bridge helps make the minister emotionally accessible to them if they need help with a problem, now or in the future.
- (2) As in other counselling, *establish a clear contract for how the session will be used*.

Pastor: I'm sure you both want to keep your love growing as fully as possible through your years together. Building a good marriage takes the loving skills of two people who are willing to work and play at it—to keep it growing. As your pastor, I'd like to help you in this exciting and demanding process (response by the couple). I hope that these sessions will prove helpful to you in discovering more of the hidden strengths that you want to develop in your relationship. What would each of you like to get out of these sessions?

After the couple has described their interests and needs, the pastor may mention (by way of seed planting) other topics or

skills on which it may be helpful to focus—e.g. , tension areas in their relationship; family backgrounds; their understanding of marriage and to women roles; spiritual issues and growth in their marriage; sexual pleasing skills; birth control methods; relating to relatives; love-nurturing communication skills; negotiating (and revising) a mutually fair marriage covenant (contract); conflict resolution skills; handling money issues; balancing autonomy and togetherness; conflicting values in their marriage; children—to have children or not and dividing responsibility for their rearing; developing a support group; mutual need satisfaction; outreach to their community; first year adjustments; and the meaning of the wedding as a celebration of their committed and growing relationship. On the basis of what the couple *and* the minister want and hope for from the session, a flexible schedule of topics can be set up. This collaborative structuring helps to reduce the initial anxiety that many couples bring to the first session.

(3) Allow rapport to develop by asking low-threat, open-ended questions, beginning with informational queries about positive aspects of their relationship.

Pastor: since I'm going to have the privilege of sharing in this important experience in your lives, it seems right that we should get better acquainted. Tell me, how did you meet?

Continuing to gently ask low-threat leading questions helps the talk about how their relationship began and developed. In the process a tentative picture emerges of their current interaction and of their parental families that shaped it. This modification of Virginia M. Satir's method of taking a "family life chronology" can be very useful in premarital sessions. Threatening questions should be avoided until considerable trust has grown in the relationship with the pastor.

Pastor: one reason we're meeting is to help you launch your marriage in the most creative direction possible. As you've been thinking about the kind of marriage you want, what thoughts have come to your minds?

If couple does not respond by opening up issues that they are interested in, the pastor can prime the pump by asking leading questions or by mentioning some common issues related to one of the topics on the tentative agenda.

Pastor: as we meet for these three sessions I'll have some suggestions to share about the issue we agreed on, but I'll save as much time as you want for the questions that come to your minds. We'll go through the ceremony step-by-step, to discuss its meaning as well as the mechanics. At some point I'd like to share some thoughts from my experience about how couples

can keep their love growing over the years. How does that sound to you?

What about the use of psychological inventories in premarital sessions? Psychological test or inventories of any type tend to raise the anxiety level in counselling relationships. Their potential usefulness must be weighed against this limitation.

(Marriage Counsellor. 55-58)

(3) *do everything possible to reduce any sense of threat so that a couple will feel free to reveal their real needs and worries.* In addition to build rapport and providing structure, threat reduction involves communicating to the couple that they are not on trial. At the outset the minister may say, “I consider it a privilege to share in the launching of your marriage.” This initial reassurance cannot be given of course until the minister is certain that there are no insurmountable obstacles to the marriage or to her/his participation.

Reducing the threat to open communication is often difficult on two frequently encountered issues—living together and pregnancy. In most areas of North America, it is safe to assume that the majority of couples in pre-marriage sessions have had intercourse and many are living together. A high percentage of teen-age couples are pregnant before marriage. It is important to create a *climate of acceptance* (transcending differences in sexual standards) that will free couples to talk openly rather than

remaining defensive as they try to hide the fact that they are sexually active, living together, and/ or pregnant. The fact that many young people talk so freely about sex today does not necessarily mean that they have accurate knowledge, constructive attitudes, or skills in full-body, mutual pleasuring. Premarital sessions with couples living together in committed relationships have many similarities with marriage counselling. They tend to be very different from sessions with couples who have not had such mini-marriages. If a minister suspects that a couple is pregnant, it is important to check this out by simple question (when the issue of children discussed). “When do you expect to have your first?” If they are pregnant, the pastors should explore their feelings- e.g., guilt, anxiety, blame, joy- about this fact and check to see if they’re being pressured to marry. Helping them evaluate their readiness for marriage is important so that they can consider alternatives, such as adoption or abortion if they are clearly not yet capable of establishing a constructive marriage. The most important thing is to surprise couples who expect a minister’s judgement with loving acceptance and an opportunity to learn how to cope healthily with the enormous challenges they are facing.

(4) Become aware of the couple’s learning readiness and their awareness of problems related to their relationships. This is done

by responding to their feelings as these emerge and by gradually asking more feeling-centered and relationship-probing questions; for example, “How do you respond when she/he is very late for a date?”

Couples, who answer in clichés, revealing only positive or surface-level feelings, either are unaware of deeper dimensions of their relationships or feel they must put their best foot forward with the minister. The latter type couple will bring their less socially acceptance feelings and real problems out of hiding only when they feel safer in that relationship.

A useful method of surfacing conflicted areas in a relationship (adapted from marriage counselling) is to scrutinize specific vignettes of interaction involving conflict.

3.3 GENDER DIFFERENCES IN VERBAL AGGRESSION IN SPOUSES

According to Merchall and Vitanza (1994:200) verbal aggression unlike physical aggression in which male size and strength means could cause more harm by and to both males and females. The literature for aggression and conflict suggests that males and females differ in their perceptions verbal aggression. For instance, males often attribute aggression to their wives verbal aggression hence making external attributions for their behaviours. Stamp and Sabourin (1995:59) found many examples in which the wife’s

verbal aggression was punctuated by the husbands a cause of his physical aggression. In other words, I would like to say that based on the above statement, men often blame / accuse their wives as causing physical aggression through the words they use when talking to their husbands. And I personally disagree with the above. This is because, conflict, be it verbal or physical, cannot be attributed only on females in the marriage. Males do exercise aggression especially those that are involved on alcoholic substances such as liquor, drugs etc. Non- alcoholic men do exercise it too. For instance, Ministers of religion, lawyers teachers (male) etc, do quarrel and exercise verbal aggression when their spouses need money for their children at school, food at home etc. This usually occurs during month ends. In conclusion, I want to say that both spouses are affected by verbal aggression. Abusive men are not correct to perceive their spouses as more insulting than do non- abusive men. So, they should stop perceiving themselves as not responsible for higher degree of aggression and physical violence.

3.4 THE IMPACT OF MARITAL CONFLICT ON CHILDREN

1. GENERAL THEMES /IMPACT

Although children may be the third parties within a battering relationship between intimate partners, they are victims. Even

when they are not themselves the target of the abuse, children are affected cognitively, emotionally, and physically by their parent's conflict and violence. Children can be exposed to domestic violence in several different ways (Fentuzzo and Mohr, 1999:27). They may actually witness or hear the abuse, "Hiding in their bedrooms out of fear, the children may hear repeated threats of injury, verbal assaults on their mother's character, objects hurled across the room, suicide attempts, beatings, and threats to kill. They may also be involved in the immediate aftermath of the violence by dialling or talking to the police, visiting their parent in the hospital. And they may be exposed to more long term consequences of the violence, through seeing the bruises on their mother or seeing her crying and depressed. The current research indicates that the children of fathers who are abusive to their partners are 30 to 60% more likely to be physically abused as well (Nancy E. Dowd D.G., Wilson R.F, 2006:4).

In our culture there is a saying which says "UFUZO LUYEGQITHISA". This means that our children are likely to do more than we can do. They copy each and every practise we as parents do be it bad or good.

Secondly, apart from possible physical abuse, children who witness abuse are at risk for severe behaviour and other

psychological problems. Studies carried out over the last 25 years consistently agree that child witnesses to violence are at a higher risk for a wide range of behavioural, emotional, and intellectual problems than are children who have not been exposed to violence (Huth- Bocks et al, 2001:70). Seeing one parent attack another may traumatize children in a variety of ways ranging from interference with the parent – child bond to destroying a child’s sense of security. Because children learn behaviour from parents, they may ultimately imitate the abuser’s actions toward the victim-parent or resort to violence in their own relationships.

3.5 SPECIFIC IMPACT OF PARENTAL CONFLICT ON CHILDREN

1. Psychological impact.
2. Behavioural impact.
3. Relationship with each parent and sibling
4. Risks from continuing contact with the battered.
5. Spiritual losses.

1. PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT

On a psychological impact level, child witness tends to exhibit higher levels of anxiety and depression than do children who have not witnessed violence (Edleson, 1999:15,) Stiles, 2002:99).

Feeling of fear, anger, grief, shame, distress, and powerlessness are among the host of emotional reactions that child witnesses may suffer. Some research has found that adolescent witnesses “are more likely to have a fatalistic view of the future resulting in an increased rate of risk taking and anti- social behaviour, such as schools truancy, early sexual activity, substance abuse and delinquency (Stiles, 2002:12).

2. BEHAVIORAL IMPACT

Children behaviour may be impacted in domestic ways when they are exposed to domestic violence: This may be

- a) School performance
- b) Aggressiveness

Many children’s school performance suffers following exposure to domestic violence. Poor performance in school appears to have at least three aspects (David, E, Singer G.D, 2006:6). First, there is some evidence that child witnesses have poor intellectual functioning than non – witnesses, coupled with an increased risk of learning difficulties.

Secondly, witnesses are at higher risk of lying and cheating.

Finally, these children may develop social problems, manifesting in an inability to develop relationship with others. The above evidences are really current and true

even in our situation as Africans. Usually, all children growing up witnessing the conflict between their parents have learning problems. They do not have time to think about their school work, that is, class works, tests assignments etc. At home they are restless, intolerant and hopeless. While they don't pay more attention during their school hours, have pictures of what they have observed when their parents were fighting at each other. Injuries such as blue eye, bruises and all other forms of injury on their mother really affect and even traumatize them. They are totally disturbed at school.

2. AGGRESSIVENESS

Aggressiveness is one of the most widely discussed behaviours exhibited by children who have witnessed domestic violence. But, it is good or important to remember that not every child that is exposed to domestic violence will respond with aggressive behaviours. Many factors play a role in affecting an individual response. (Wilson, 2006:6).

According to Wilson, nevertheless, child witnesses are more likely to respond to conflict in an aggressive manner. The aggressiveness results in an increased risk of fighting and bullying. In addition to child aggression, child witnesses may

exhibit more anger and temperament problems than non – witnessing children (Edleson, 1999:12). Some research suggests child witnesses of conflict are more likely to end up in Juvenile Court. They become involved in the violent crimes and involvement with drugs and alcohol. Child witnesses view violence as an acceptable way to resolve problems. Some accept violence as part of a normal relationship. These attitudes can lead to child witnesses growing up to be abusers or victims of abuse (Edleson, 1999:50). Boys are more likely to approve of violence than girls. This is especially in our culture as blacks. I therefore also concur with the above statements of aggressiveness by children witnessing violence at home.

In addition to the immediate effects, children who witness domestic violence may also suffer from troubling long term effects. For instance, males in particular are likely to become abusers in their relationships. While daughters may be less likely than sons to become involved in a violence relationship as an adult. Women who have been exposed to domestic violence as children are more likely to tolerate abuse when they do experience it (Wolfe, 2002:71). Therefore emotional problems such as depression may carry through adult hood. So, child witnessing conflict is strongly associated with adult depression and trauma related symptoms for both men and women and with

low esteem for women. Thus for children who live with a battered, the continuing violence reinforces the lesson that violence is acceptable and puts them at risk for becoming abusers themselves.

4. RISK FROM CONTINUING CONTACT WITH THE BATTERER

Given the potential damage to children who witness domestic violence, significant questions arise as to whether children should continue to have contact with the batterer. But, perpetrators pose risks to children even if the children are no longer living with them. Those risks include the obvious ones of neglectful or abusive parenting or exposure to additional domestic violence in the perpetrators new relationship. In addition, perpetrators may undermine the mothers parenting and use the child as a pawn against the mother's location or using visits as occasions for further violence against her.

5. SPIRITUAL LOSSES

5.1 Loss of Hope

Hope is strapped away by events, facts, the collapse of ideals and promises, and the changing conditions around us. In assessing a person's spiritual conditions, it is often important that distinction between helplessness and hopelessness. The hunter sits in the pit

knowing he cannot get out by himself. He is helpless. He is dependent on others to get him out. He waits with hope for others to arrive. But his hopelessness is beyond his helplessness: Others have not only arrived, they simple are not coming. The snow, the lateness of the season, and the fact that his plans were unknown to others all strip away the option of hope.

In making a spiritual assessment, it is important to have a grasp of the person's loss of hope. How profound is it? How systematic is it? How entrenched?

All I want is to know Christ and to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his sufferings and become like him in his death, in the hope that I myself will be raised from death to life.....I keep striving to win the prize of which Christ Jesus has already won me to himself . Of course ... I really do not think that I have already won it; the only thing I do, however, is to forget what is behind me and only doing my best to reach what is ahead. **I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to life above. (Philippians 3:10ff, GNB)**

It is clear to St. Paul and us that hope is a key to life. Without hope in living, there is no reason for being. To "forget what is

behind me and do my best to reach what is behind” may well be the goal for many; present-and with intensity and cruelty-then the process is shifted. When this process of hope is shutdown and no longer functions, there is a severe spiritual crisis. It is this crisis of the loss hope that leads our attention to the seriousness of conflict.

5.2 Loss of Intimacy

When loved ones have been pushed away, when the caretakers have thrown up their hands and when the last friends have slammed the door behind them, then trauma victims are free to contemplate the utter despair of their condition. It is then possible for them to finally touch the rage that has boiled deep inside, without fear it’s erupting and causes serious injury to those around themselves. The victims of conflict no doubt drive others away as an act of protection; victims know that only destruction and harm can be in the upcoming pathway. For this and other reasons, many have taken to the woods, the back bedroom, the workshop, or the darkness. To be alone, yes. But also to no longer fear the explosion of rage that could hurt those around them. Conflict victims believe that the destruction that created their pain is so severe within them, that it will surely erupt and destroy those around them. As a form of prevention, victims often isolate themselves from their loved ones.

There is also the secret fear that the utter pain of the inner condition must be contagious. This secret fear is unfounded, since the inner pain becomes systematic within the family and affects each member.

The pain of the victim becomes the pain of each family member in its own way. Pain is pain regardless of its source. The emotional pain of conflict engrosses the victim to such a degree that there is neither energy nor reason to reach out beyond the self; the inner warfare is profound and consumes from within. The loss of intimacy does not mean the victim is uncaring, even though it is often perceived this way by those around him or her. At most, the loss of intimacy is related to the victim's inability to reach out beyond his or her all-consuming inner warfare.

5.3 Loss of Future

The loss of future is certainly connected with loss of hope, but perhaps they need to be kept separate for a better assessment of spiritual condition. Loss of future is perhaps more subtle than loss of hope. It is reflected in those bits of conversation that create an uncomfortable feeling in the listener: "Just pack me off the nursing home when the kids are finished with me"; "There is no sense in retiring. There would certainly be nothing to do."; "No sense in having kids in this world"; "It's crazy to make plans.

Somebody always messes them up”; “They never let you do what you want to do”; “Life is the same damn thing with each damn life.”

There are words of people who have lost their future. The future has no meaning to them; it is nothing but the repetition of today, of worse. At some level, however, there must be the fear that to give tomorrow any power than yesterday. The loss of future is the wish to make the world stand, so it creates no future harm. It is the wish to be left alone.

5.4 Loss of Peacefulness

The victims of conflict are in many ways the ghosts in our midst. Their search is the endless for rest, for peace. They have a terrible conviction that there is no peace until the past has been undone. Their fearful search is for ways to undo the past and to recreate it with a proper ending. The nature of flashbacks is to bring the past into the present with the expectation that the ending will be different this time.

The inability to be at peace is expressed in a variety of ways: trouble sleeping, restlessness, and finding little enjoyment in the pleasure of the moment. The person who is unable to be at peace may seek to alter the present through drugs, alcohol, sex, and

food. The inability to reflect, mediate, and restore are among the many ways of not being at peace. The loss of peacefulness can also be made more serious by the “busyness” that the local parish often encourages of its members. To generate endless activity is a sure way of avoiding the reality that caused the loss of peacefulness.

5.5 Loss of Healing Memory

The terrible reality of severe trauma conflict is that it often eradicates the existence of positive, healing memories. We are all dependent on healing memories to encourage, inspire, comfort, delight, and heal us. In other words, memories of having been loved, of having been a success, and of sheer pleasure are important. Without these and other healing memories, we remain raw and broken. Very often, a victim’s answer to the question “when were you last happy?” is “never” or “I don’t remember.” The fact that life can be different from the brokenness and pain of the moment is not remembered and is, therefore, no longer an option. The task of healing, then, is in part recovering memories that are healing in nature.

5.6 Loss of Spontaneity

The inability of the child to respond to the realities of the moment is the loss of spontaneity. To be controlled by predetermined past choices regardless of the present events- is to live in an automatic

manner, without the excitement of choice. To be unable to step outside to see an exceptional sunset because your shoes have been polished is to have lost spontaneity. To be unable to be taken aback by beauty, to be unresponsive to a brief moment of joy, to be trapped and engaged in the mundane when joy is breaking out all around-these are some of the indicators that spontaneity has been lost and that a rigid veil of predetermined choices hangs over one's life.

5.7 Loss of wholeness

The concept of the loss of wholeness is difficult to measure at first. Time is needed to fathom its destructiveness in the lives of people. Basically, there is a loss of wholeness when only one or a few parts of one's personality become all there is. The pain, the injury, and the illness take on a life of their own, reducing the total person to the reality of the part. Nothing else exists or matters. The loss of wholeness is, however, quite a common affliction.

Mothers become mothers and cease to be anything else. Men become workers and lose their life beyond the job. People become mental patients and lose their identity. People take on the nature of their illness and are no longer viewed as individuals with a history and future. They become the "bipolar patient," the "heart

condition” in room 206, or the “difficult welfare mother” on the third floor.

Often, the loss of wholeness does not first come across as negative. The retained part is productive and positive. Those “lost” personality parts are not obvious unless a relationship is developed with the person; then the absence of other parts becomes clear. It is at this point that the pastoral relationship enables the pastor to view the person beyond what he or she presents in the public context of “coming to church” each week. To experience the loss of wholeness is to become only one of the parts of our being, and to lose all else.

5.8 Loss of Innocence

Learning that the world is destructive, that it can kill, and that it can rob a person of happiness is the erosion of innocence that begins in the midst of tragedy. Mothers do abandon children. Fathers do rape their daughters. Pastors do fleece the flock. Saints do become enraged. Nature does destroy. There is no place to hide. There is no going home again.

The loss of innocence becomes destructive when a victim’s jaded view of life a cynical cast to all conversation and when it debunks the caretaker’s efforts.

5.9 Loss of Trust

For a conflict victim, the loss of trust can compound an already difficult situation. Having trust means letting go of a personal coping strategy that has not been working and trying something new. The decision to admit that “something’s not working” is most frightening. Suddenly you realize that

You have had to rely on your own resources for years on end. To let that go and reach out for help is a serious act of trust. For a traumatized victim, it may require more courage than can be mustered at any given moment.

5.10 Loss of Awareness

The last symptom of PTSD caused by conflict can be summed up as the inability to believe that there can be anything greater than that which inflicted the original pain. Conflict, the power and majesty of God stands small in the face of the tragedy. The infinite has no meaning compared with the intensity of pain in that painful moment. All has been rendered insignificant by the awfulness of the trauma.

In the same way traditional leaders, pastors, psychologists etc met to research about characteristics of Healthy Family. This took

place in 1990 at a conference held in Washington (Duncan N.S, 1993; 94)

According to these leaders, nine characteristics emerged in a consensus of the basic dimensions of a strong, healthy family. It should be remembered that this list is only the beginning. It is neither conclusive nor exhaustive. Research on the healthy family is ongoing and the structure of a family continues to be defined. I do think that the list is a good beginning. I have chosen only nine characteristics as a way to organize any discussion about the nature of the healthy family where there is no conflict (there is peace and harmony).

5.11 CHARACTERISTICS OF HEALTHY FAMILY

There are about nine characteristics of healthy family namely:

1. ADAPTIVE ABILITY

Adaptive ability refers to the family's ability to adapt to predictable life-cycle changes as well as to various levels of stress. In the years between 1930 and 1990, the family has undergone enormous change. During these 60 years, incredible stress has been placed on the family, which has been forced to respond, to adapt, and to change (Duncan N.S.1993:94). Parental roles have changed, and education, for example, has radically changed the economic structure of the family. Today, few 16-year-old sons

contribute significantly to the support of the family, as was so often the case in the 1930s. Today, young women often delay childbirth until their thirties, in order to establish their careers.

Regardless of these radical changes, many of which have been exciting and creative, the family has still been able to be a place of care and support. For instance, my family enabled me to receive a college education. My brother, his wife, and their children open their home to me and enabled me to complete college. My own children have been given the option to live at home and attend a senior unit of the university system. At a time in their lives when personal responsibility and independence are so very important to my children, this arrangement has placed significant strain on our family to change and adapt. It has not been easy, but it has often been creative.

2. COMMITMENT TO FAMILY

The above involves both the recognition of individual worth and acceptance of the value of the family as a unit. Some years ago, in the process of having children live at home well beyond what had been the norm during the past several decades, certain house rules were written in our family. I would like to share them, I think they reflect struggle to commit both to the family as a unit and to individual values. As our children graduated from high

school, we offered to each of them this covenant. College and all expenses will be yours to meet, and you must keep the house rules.’ House rules were designed to enable each person to move from a more dependent status. Some of the major structured rules included:

- Communication about schedules will be clear and consistent.
- The house will know your whereabouts.
- Mutual respect for the life of each family member will be maintained. The person with the greatest need will have priority.
- The needs of the family take priority over the needs of individuals.
- Issues will be worked through with the person involved. If this cannot be done, the problem becomes a family issue. If the above fails, the parents remain the final authority.
- Destructive behaviour will not be permitted within the family. Treatment, or a similar form of dealing with the behaviour, will be expected.
- Contribution to the common good will be expected and maintained in the form of the member of household chores, regardless of other commitment.

3. Communication refers to clear open and frequent communication patterns. It is one of the characteristics of healthy families that are most often excited.
4. Encouragement of individuals refers to the family's ability to encourage a sense of belonging at the same time that individual development is encouraged.
5. Expressions of Appreciation involve consistently doing things that are positive for the other members of the family. There is a sense of delight in the family members and in the related feelings they share.
6. Religious / Spiritual orientation is an area that the conference considered as important, yet there was no consensus about the particular aspects of religion that specifically characterize healthy families.
7. Social Connectedness refers to the family's connection with the larger society, extended family, friends and neighbours. It also includes the

family's participation in community activities, which often provide external resources to assist a family in adapting to change and growth to coping with problem and difficulties.

8. Clear Roles means that there is clear and flexible role structure in which family members know their roles and responsibilities. Thus, they are able to function effectively in both normal and crisis situations.
9. *Shared Time* refers to (1) parent member sharing both quality time and (2) the degree to which the sharing is enjoyable for them. If the "healthy" family has this set of characteristics, and then it follows that the unhealthy family does not have them- or does not have enough of them. A question yet to be answered is, to what extent can a healthy family have only some of *these* characteristics? Certainly, a family may be healthy yet have some several areas that need work. What is clear is that the



family has undergone traumatic stress as a unit will be severely tried in many, or all, of the areas discussed. Some family members may be more affected by the trauma than others, and their resulting disabilities will have their own effect on everyone else. It is equally clear that the family-health or not that includes one or more members who have undergone some type of traumatic stress will find its ability to remain, or become, health severely challenged. Charles Figley, editor of the *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, has been the leading writer on treatment of families whose traumatic stress has become part of their structure. He notes five key phases in treating stress disorders. Figley's first phase involves "Building Commitment to the Therapeutic Objectives." He writes that "commitment and trust are critical elements in psychotherapy treatment methods. The early phase of

intervention is primarily dedicated to this end. In the second phase, “Framing the problem,” Figley writes that parent members “disclose how they view the problem”. During this phase, parent members will be allowed “to articulate their own understanding and acceptance of these realities among all family members” and also “help the family list wanted as well as unwanted consequences of the traumatic event.” In addition, the family will need to “encourage disclosure about the purpose and the utility of the current psychotherapy, and, in the process ... promote new rules which permit and encourage self- disclosure among all members during session. By doing so, the family will “shift attention away from the ‘Victim’ and toward the family system that has been victimized”. According to Figley, the third phase “Reframing the Problem,” is “the most critical. Here the therapist must help

the parents generate and assemble the various feelings and perceptions associated with the traumatic event. Eventually, the therapist must help the parents develop a healing theory about the event and possible future events.” In the fourth phase, “Develop a Healing Theory,” Figley believes it is “critical that the therapist allow the parents to develop a single, unifying healing theory ... [by] reframing statements to fit a pervasive family healing theory.” In the fifth phase, “Closure and Preparedness,” the “final session should convey a sense of accomplishment: that the family did it mostly on their own; that the therapist only served as a helper. They should be encouraged to or call the therapist at any time, but urged to use the skills and insights they have developed in session to try to handle their own problems as they emerge.

However, there are still challenges that the victims of abuse face. These are the challenges faced by women and their children at home. The cause of victim is by their loved ones, and even at church.

Challenges faced by victims

Women and children are more likely to be assaulted in their own homes by someone with whom they have or had a trusting, caring relationship than they are to be assaulted on the streets.

Judith Lewis Herman (1997:119) in her work on trauma suggests that facing the realities often intimidate violence and its usual traumatic consequences are much harder than staying blind to it.

She says, "It is very tempting to take the side of the perpetrator. All the perpetrator asks is that the bystander do nothing. He appeals to the universal desire to see, hear, and speak no evil. The victim, on the contrary, asks the bystander to bear the burden of pain. The victim demands action, engagement, and remembering. "We as a culture

and as a church have consistently made the decision to side with the perpetrator through our silence. In order to do that we have also had to silence the victims of intimate violence, usually through disbelief. By making the victims of the intimate violence either invisible or incredible we re-victimize them. One of the keys to recovery from the traumatizing effects of intimate violence is the ability to remember and tell the truth about these experiences of betrayal and *to be believed*. Without that community of belief, the trauma does not get resolved.

Herman points out that there are a variety of tactics that the perpetrator uses to encourage bystander to ignore or disbelieve the victim. Those tactics include secrecy as a primary strategy. Most victims of intimate violence are coerced or threatened into silence about their abuse, wife battering, or partner rape, secrecy is always the starting point. If secrecy doesn't work, the perpetrators move on to attack the credibility of the victim. This can happen through blaming the victim, denying the occurrence, or explaining or rationalizing why it

wasn't an act of violence or abuse. And as a culture we are all too ready to accept this process of discrediting the victim. Carol J. Adams notes that women and children are appropriate victims in our culture, which sees the adult (white) male as the normative person. We can find cultural definitions of women and children as male property; for that reason, fathers and husbands believe they have the right to control and punish. As I worked on this chapter I heard a news story that is not uncommon on the evening news. In the report, a twelve-year-old girl had told her parents that the pastor had been forcing her to have sex with him for the past two months. She finally broke through the fear and pressures for the silence and told her parents, who took her to the hospital for treatment. The reporter then interviewed five members of the pastor's congregation. Each one supported the pastor without a word of concern. One said "The pastor has a beautiful wife. Of course he didn't do this." Another said, "This man has done so much for this community. I don't know why someone would spread such vicious rumours about him." A third reported that he was busily engaged in raising

money for the pastor's legal expenses. This, unfortunately, is a familiar example of a principle of secrecy, silence, and siding with the perpetrator by not even being willing to even hear the story from the victim's perspective.

The church has participated in many people in many ways in this process of silencing victims of intimate violence. It has used theological justifications, particularly the sanctity of the family, to justify its silence of domestic abuse victims. It has been in unquestioning collusion with patriarchy in terms of assuming the normatively (and believability) of males. And has not wanted to participate in the kind of upheaval that it would cause actively advocate on behalf of victims, especially it is often the perpetrators who have power and authority within local churches. For example, Marie M. Fortune warns pastors that when a woman comes in to tell them that her husband, who is also the chair the board of trustees, an active church school teacher, and substantial donor, has been battering her you will not be able her. No matter how well-intentioned

you may be, what she is describing to you runs counter to your experience of that individual. What you have to keep in mind is that your experience with that individual is true and real and is private.

Now with most of us, in the conflicting face of experience and information, we go with our experience. But, remember that in cases where someone is disclosing abuse by someone you know, there is another piece to this story that is the private person. Oftentimes the typical abuser has an exemplary public persona and yet in private engages in all sorts of behaviour that seems unbelievable to you. Knowing that, our job is to press ahead and to believe that person-even though it doesn't fit with what we know about the abuser so that we can be present to the victim and ultimately to the offender.

It is usually more difficult for us to side against a person whom we wish to believe is innocent of this kind of behaviour than it is to believe that accusation is a lie.

It is important to look at some of the issues in the church that get in the way of being able to help make abused

women both visible and believable in the context. Looking at some of the potential resources in the church to help us is witnessed for those who have been harmed in helpful as well

5.12 Intimate Violence

Some pastors have not been very useful to women and children who have experienced abuse in their families. Most studies about the usefulness of clergy in situations of domestic abuse find that they are rated as both the least-used resource and the least-helpful resource compared to family, friend, psychotherapist, family, doctors, and social service agencies. In a recent study, researchers found that clergy effectiveness is consistently low and they speculated that this was probably due to clergy endorsement of traditional teachings concerning the sanctity of marriage. In addition, a research sent out a two-page questionnaire to 5,700 pastors and fewer than 10 percent were returned. The researchers concluded that pastors lacked interest in or were hostile to the nation of domestic abuse. They also noted that the clergy that did return their questionnaire seemed to be concerned about battered women, but indicated that they were torn theological perspective that seemed to be in conflict with the best interests of the women. These are very

serious issues if indeed clergy are feeling that they are not able to be very helpful to victims of intimate violence, especially wife battering or spousal rape, because they are trapped by the theological doctrine that mandates patriarchal power. It is interesting too that women rated their pastors as helpful if they are willing to take action to intervene in the violence, not just to listen passively to the victims.

Women who are committed to their religious traditions often turn to pastors for help when they experience problems in their families. Yet it is also true that women who have experienced intimate violence are much more likely to leave their religious practices and affiliation than are non-abused women. This is partly because they have experienced re-victimization through silence and silencing and partly because they experience the church's betrayal as symbolic of God's betrayal. It's important to look at some of the doctrines and popular understandings of theology that work against women's safety and against justice when they have been victims.

5.13 Theological Issues

In chapter I several theological issues were raised that have been important in developing a feminist approach to pastoral counselling. When we look at these and other theological tenets in the concrete contexts of intimate violence, it becomes even clearer that theology and the pastoral care of a person are deeply linked. I will briefly explore a few of the most relevant theological problems here as a way to gain insight into better directions for pastoral care for victims of intimate violence.

We have already talked about problems to an image of God that works to represent men as more godly and more normative than women, so I will not explore that further here except to say that an image of God that as a male or father is often a serious spiritual issue for women who have been abused by fathers or male authority figures. Helping women to explore new possibilities for their God imagery may well be an important dimension to their regaining access to the divine in their spiritual lives. Women who have been taught that God the father is in control of the world and of their lives may have only two ways to understand God's participation in their abuse. Either God is on the side of the father (s)/husband (s) and against them for good reasons, or God is as helpless or invisible as they are and not of much use. It is vital to allow the full richness of God's presence and meaning- as

evidenced in the stories of the Scriptures, the experiences of the mystic, the narrative of people of faith overtime, and her own story to be part of an abused women's healing experience. These issues around the image of God rather naturally lead us into another issue: what Carol Hohn (1948:60) calls a "theology of ownership", which she says is often grounded in a misinterpretation of the Genesis creation stories. A theology of ownership suggests that humanity was granted dominion over creation by God and that dominion was interpreted to mean ownership. Along with ownership is the tendency to objectify that which is owned so that the needs of the owner are considered primary and the purpose of the owned (or object) is to serve the needs of the owner. It is easy to see how we have gotten into trouble with this in terms of our ecological crises. But part of the ownership paradigm came from the conclusion that there is some sort of natural hierarchy that determines authority and rule. God is at top of this hierarchy and men, who are closer to God than women come next. Women follow, and children are after that.

They are followed by animals and then other groups in nature. People who are different from those who are seen as the norm (and this includes a lot of people-especially people of colour, people with disabling conditions, people with non heterosexual orientations, and aged people) lose their place in the hierarchy

and tend to be even more objectified and marginalised than their place would have them. This chain of ownership and control has grounded much of the entitlement to abuse women and children are the name of discipline and order. Carol R. Bohn suggests that most of us would absolutely reject this notion of ownership and it is extremely common for women or children who have been the victims of intimate violence and who seek counsel from whom to receive some form of advice that reflects the minister's belief in a theology of ownership. I personally have heard reported minister saying that a woman should stay with her battering husband because he's going through a hard time and needs her support or that a young woman who was being sexually abused by her father should seek forgiveness for her role in this sinful activity or the woman who is being battered must be doing to bring on her husband's battering or discipline and she should attempt to change her behaviours.

These are reflections of a theology of ownership.

Another theological issue that has been that has been pursued by both, male and female theologians exploring the dynamics of intimate violence is that of the glorification of suffering sometimes culled from our theologies of atonement. Feminist theology in particular has demonstrated a heavy investment in exploring

deconstruction, and re-imagining Christian understanding of Jesus' death and resurrection. The investment has hinged, at least in part, on the recognition by women and men of the epidemic levels of abuse against women and children and the use to which Christian theology has been put in allowing that abuse to occur.

Feminist theorists have long been aware that abused women and children frequently receive messages from the pastors, from Christian husbands and parents, and from "well-meaning" Christian neighbours that is divine meaning in their experience of abuse, that the abuse itself is salvific or a means to deeper spirituality, that it is their place to suffer, that husbands or parents know best, that they are somehow at fault, or that is a sign of deep Christianity charity to tolerate being abused by a "loved one." The stories about these kinds of messages told by battered women, incest survivors, and others are legion. Annie Imbens and Ineke Jonker conducted a study in the Netherlands of eighteen women who had experienced childhood sexual abuse and who had been raised in Christian upbringing might be related. They heard over and over again that Christian images of women, the God-given authority of fathers, and the mandates of humility, forgiveness, and submission were

contributing factors to both the occurrence of abuse and the difficulty they had in recovering from it. In their interviews, they also had of the correlation sometimes made by these women between God's relationship with Jesus and their fathers' relationship with themselves. Imbens and Jonkers recount the following:

Several of the incest survivors told us that, as children, they had been sad about Jesus' crucifixion; they did not understand why he had not come down from the cross, or why God, his father, allowed him to be crucified. The combination of the way they often experienced Jesus (as loving, good, close by, and providing security) with this torturous death (often explained as God's will in order to redeem the sins of humankind) gave these survivors a terrifying image of God: the image of a sadistic father, someone hungry for power, "God and my father were a lot alike" says Joan.

These studies and stories convey some of the motivation behind feminist and pro-feminist theologians' exploration into theories of atonement. Obviously, these issues around Christology and the way suffering and redemption are understood are of great consequence in pastoral care work. Another significant theological issue for this discussion is a

little harder to frame concretely, but has to do with the variety of qualities that have been applied to good Christian women. As Mary Daly once said, “The qualities that Christianity idealizes, especially for women, are also those of a victim: sacrificial love, passive acceptance of suffering, humility, meekness, etc. Since these are the qualities idealized in Jesus who died for our sins, his functioning as a model reinforces the scapegoat syndrome for women. Imbens and Jonker, in their study of Christian women survivors of incest, discovered similar reports from the women they interviewed. They validate, out of women survivors experiences, what feminist theologians have been writing about over the past few decades, but these, are not theologians these are wounded women. The problems these women named from their Christian backgrounds that affected their experiences of abuse include

- The image of women in the Bible and in the church is generally negative. They are seen as either sinful or evil (Eve, woman taken in adultery, Potiphar’s wife, Lot’s wife, Bathsheba, etc) or weak, silly, crying (these are their words). The women saints are seen as valuable because they allowed themselves to be martyred or to suffer for God’s glory. The saints mentioned most were those who suffered pain or

death (rather than lose their virginity in one case) and didn't complain. Their reward was in heaven. These are powerful messages to all girls; they are devastating messages to girls experiencing sexual abuse.

- The message that women are to be submissive to males and remain silent. This means that the girls who were being abused were confused about whether they had the right to say no to their abuse. Many assumed that since the males had God-given authority, what was happening must be their fault.
- The message that women are to be humble, to turn the other cheek. This message often kept in the incest victims from telling anyone about the abuse. Often the abusers had the dual role of protector and abuser and the young women found ways to make allowance for their behaviour.
- The paradox of being valued for their sexuality at the same time they are responsible for all sexual sin. All those had learned that they were responsible for men's sexual misconduct with them. Virginity was esteemed, motherhood after marriage was essential, but don't say no to your father and suffer in silence. These are difficult paradoxical messages.

- The Christian mandate to forgive the offender. Many had heard this from their pastors when they did finally break their silence and it silenced them and made them guilty again. We will look at this issue of forgiveness again in further discussions.
- The mandate to honour your father and mother. The message was frequently given in conservative or fundamentalists Christian households that parents are not to be questioned. The message was often reinforced by the girls' experience of their fathers being seen as pillars of the church.
 - Various biblical values of obedience, humility, vulnerability, being last, the sin of pride, glorification of suffering, and so on that contributes to the victimization.

It is important to note that all of these women (with one exception) had to turn their back on the church in order to heal. The majority of offenders, however, are still involved in the church. Half of them still occupy an official church position. This is true with James Newton Poling's research on child sexual abuse also. It is destructive and useless to tell these women that they have misinterpreted their religion and that God and

creation really aren't like that. This is, however, the common interpretation that they have internalized, as have most women and children and men, and this is the reality we need to address. Imbens and Jonker say that "for these incest survivors, the prevailing views on women in our Christian churches have deepened their despair and guilt rather than providing them with safe shelter. A large number of women in Europe and in the United States have validated the experiences of women of this study. This is the same as most women in the African continent. Many women who were not sexually abused have also said that their experiences of Christianity were similar to these stories and that it has affected their lives in very negative ways. It is the role of pastors to help their congregations explore our biblical and theological traditions responsibly so that they do not contribute to justification for intimate violence. The theology of forgiveness is an important issue as well. Churches have a tendency to urge victims of violence-especially intimate violence-to forgive their abusers. Those who do so are seen as more Christian, more holy. Yet as Marie M. Fortune suggests, forgiveness should probably be the last step in the healing process rather

than the first. Using a helpful exploration of the Biblical understandings of forgiveness, Fortune finds that without justice, forgiveness is an empty exercise. She says, “Forgiveness before justice is cheap grace and cannot contribute to authentic healing and restoration to wholeness for the victim of the offender.” Forgiveness as the church has tended to understand it often is in contrast to holding the perpetrator accountable for his or her actions. Fortune proposes that forgiveness be the last step in the process that includes confession, repentance (which is metanoia- a fundamental change of heart and mind), and restitution (making amends for the damage caused). She notes that in Christian Scriptures come from the one with the power to the one without power, as in forgiving a debt. To ask the powerless one to forgive the one with all the power is antithetical to our biblical witness. These challenges are helpful theological shifts that give us a way both to hold perpetrators of violence accountable and to help empower those who have been victims of violence. Fortune and Poling (1995:10) tell the story of twenty-five incest perpetrators sitting in a circle during their treatment. They said, ‘Tell the clergy for us that they

should not forgive us so quickly.” Each of them upon arrest had gone to their ministers and had been prayed over, ‘forgiven’, sent home. Each of them said it was the worst thing that could have been done to them. That cheap grace had allowed them to continue to deny responsibility for their abuse of others. It in no way indicated their repentance of their treatment.

We must consider these theological issues as we develop a pastoral counselling approach to women and children victimized by intimate violence. Without challenging some of the “traditional” doctrines that support a patriarchal power system, pastoral care cannot appropriately provide a safe and healing environment for abuse victims. Nor can it appropriately call offenders to account. The church will continue to be known silent in the face of abuse and by collusion with those who do harm. Larry Kent (1959:16), et al, Graham and Marie M. Fortune say that the church needs to be known as a place where “we hold perpetrators accountable and we are on record as religious communities that is not tolerated. When offenders are held accountable, we can become a safe community to heal.”

Many women find their spiritual resources, often built out of quite traditional theological doctrine, to be of central importance in surviving their experience of violence. It is not uncommon for women to report that they prayed to God that they might live through their rape or experience their battering and it was only that connection to the divine that gave them any hope. Many also feel that their prayers have been answered when they are not killed in their violent or abusive experience. Women's spirituality is often rich with deeply personal connections to the divine and their confidence in God's presence and the faithfulness is a cornerstone of their narratives. The theological issues discussed above do not denigrate or deny the potency of spirituality in many women's lives. They only question whether the traditional doctrine, commonly understood by church women, serve as vehicles of resistance to intimate violence or whether they may even make it more likely that intimate violence will occur.

So it's important for us to look within Christianity to see what resources our faith traditions hold for us as we seek to become a community where accountability,

prevention, and healing are possible in the context of intimate violence.

5.14 *Theological Resources*

It seems to me that our tradition does hold resource for those of us attempting to care for survivor of intimate abuse and prevent future abuse. I think there are several theological resources that can deeply and positively inform our pastoral directions with people who have experienced or are experiencing these kinds of violence. Let me explore just two of those.

The first theological resource is the nature of justice as understood in the Scripture, especially in the prophetic traditions. Many would suggest that the core principle that runs throughout all of the Scriptures is the notion of justice. John Dominic Crossan (1999:20) suggests that justice is not just a quality that God manifests or chooses. He says that the essence of God is justice-justice is who and what God is. This theme permeates the expectations and experience of the biblical writers. Particularly in the prophetic literature, we find this emphasis dominates all else.

The prophetic tradition carries the notion of bearing witness. Not only did the prophets critique the dominant and oppressive culture, they also serve as witnesses to the harm that was being done to those who were being abused or marginalized. Paula Cooley (1996:15) writes, “Indeed, generations of prophets and judges from Moses and Deborah to Jesus have been admonished by God or have admonished the people of God to use their senses to bear witness to injustice, or conversely, they have been threatened with the ‘hardening’ of the senses as a punishment for injustice.

One of the mandates the prophetic tradition puts upon those of us who witness. This not only means believing their stories. It also means that we speak in whatever ways we can that it makes more likely that their voices will be heard and that the voices of the oppressors will not be heard. The witness-bearing tradition of the prophets works in direct contradiction response to victims of intimate violence.

One of the ways that this prophetic tradition can use is carefully listening to those who have not been heard. These are the voices that are privileged in working

with people who have been victims of intimate violence. As David Tracy (2005:16) says, “The prophetic voices of our present may be found best, as they were for the ancient prophets and for Jesus of Nazareth, in those peoples, those individuals, and those centres most privileged to God and still the least heard in the contemporary Western conflict of interpretation on naming the present: the suffering and oppressed,;” Cooley agrees that the voices of the suffering and the oppressed have both “epistemic and moral primacy” and need to be heard. This means, she says, that in order to let them be heard we have to challenge the primary symbol systems in our religious traditions that separate voice and body in such a way that abused women and children (and other marginalized people who were abused) can speak fully for themselves. She also suggests that we need to challenge doctrines, like some of those named earlier, than seem to legitimate and normalize abuse-doctrines like the atonement, glorification of suffering, and unhelpful formulations of sin and devil. Finally, she proposes that the church spend energy developing theological resources to resist violence and bear witness for those who are at risk.

A second theological resource for is the consistent biblical mandate of hospitality—hospitality to all, but especially to strangers. And in this context when we are talking about strangers we are talking about those who are most vulnerable. As Fortune and Poling write, “The hospitality tradition called upon by the community as a whole to protect the widow, the sojourner, and the orphan. These were the persons in the community who had the least resources and were most vulnerable to exploitation by others.” This religious tradition does not allow us to respond to the victims of violence only with comfort and care. It requires that we do not allow this harm to keep happening and it requires this of the whole community on behalf of all who are vulnerable. The theological mandate of hospitality will not allow us to call intimate violence a private matter or a family matter into which we cannot intrude. It calls instead for us to make sure that families are safe havens and that the structures of domination and oppression with which we are familiar in the culture at large are not reproduced in families. Families cannot be private sanctuaries where violence can occur behind closed doors—they must be held publicly accountable and

family members must be helped to know that they do not have to experience violence against them just because the abuser is a member of the family.

Perpetrators must come to know that they will not be allowed to do harm to people with whom they converts of trust, responsibility and care. We are all part of a larger body, a larger family of God, which means that we are responsible to those who are made vulnerable in places where there should be converts of trust. Having equipped ourselves with both a prophetic commitment to bearing witness and a mandate of hospitality, we can turn to a discussion of intimate violence itself—its dynamics and proposals for pastoral care and counselling for its victims.

5.15 Wife Battering

Pastors in general report that dealing with wife abuse in the church is one of the most difficult pastoral problems that they face. They feel torn between their theological beliefs, their personal experiences with the people accused of violence, and their sympathies with a victim. Even those who have additional training in domestic violence tend to blame the victim. Wood and

McHugh (1999:39) found in their researchers that only 12 percent of the pastors responding to a survey recommended arrests for barterers and only 8 percent recommended a protection from abuse order.

Wife battering is a serious problem-one might even say as an epidemic.

Some of the statistics were given in chapter 1. Estimates suggest that around four million women are assaulted by male partners every year and that somewhere between 30 and 50 percent of all female murder victims over age of fourteen are killed by a current or former spouse (compared to 4 percent of men). In addition, between 30 and 50 percent of all homeless women are trying to escape domestic violence.

Spouse abuse includes direct harm from one spouse to another as well as threats of violence in the context of prior abuse and violence against children, property, or pets as a form of threat or control. Although spouse abuse can be female to male or between partners of the same sex, the vast majority of battering is by men toward women. Studies that claim a significant

amount of battering of husbands by wives generally ignore the fact that the most of that violence is in response to or in protection against husband-initiated violence. Also, much more injury results from male to female violence.

Women who are abused often attempt to try at first to understand the violence within their existing framework of meaning. They may blame themselves, rationalize why this is an exceptional experience, or minimize the violence. Overtime, women tend to blaming themselves but have difficulty perceiving options to get out the violent situations. Many pastors, at their best, feel that the only possible solution is for the woman to leave her battering partner. In fact, it is not uncommon for pastors to base their help on the condition that the woman leaves the partner. Yet, as Walker (2000:43) notes, research demonstrates that does not stop the violence. Instead, it continues, often escalating at the time of separation to the life-threatening proportions. Some women have also become so dependent on the barterer that they believe they cannot survive without him. An important point regarding battered women, moreover, is that they may

actually be physically safer staying with the abuser, over whom they still have some influence, rather than being alone and unprotected without the ability to calm him down. Many men who batter women stalk and harass them. They do not let them go anywhere. It is important for the therapist not to make leaving the battering relationship a treatment goal. Rather the goal must be to live a violence-free environment. This may be difficult or impossible while living with the abuser, but it may be equally difficult or impossible while living apart.

When women are battered, there tends to be a somewhat predictable cycle. Walker has developed a proposal based on her research about this cycle. She suggests that there is a time of tension build-up in the relationship followed by the actual battering and abuse followed by a time of calm, maybe even remorse and care. One of the problems is that with the amount of denial and silence about battering victims, the violent spouse during the calm period may be the victim's best source of nurture and care.

Some researchers have questioned whether there is normally a time of calm and remorse, suggesting that it is a time period between violent incidents. Walker acknowledges that the periods of calm and contrition may well get shorter and shorter as time goes on. One thing that all researchers acknowledge is that violence in domestic relationships tends to escalate in both frequency and severity overtime. Women's lives are often at risk. The other thing that most researchers agree on is that spousal battering is not about a loss of control, but reflects an obsessional need for control.

Battering is about controlling and manipulating a partner, making sure that she meets the partner's needs. It is not, usually, about catharsis or a lack of anger management.

Worrell and Remer (1992:54) suggest that a victim of domestic violence needs to find safety, to get information and support for regaining her own perspective in order to make decisions about her life, and find resolution and the restructuring so that her life can become violence-free. This process may take a long time because it involves rebuilding a sense of self, a sense of entitlement to safety, and recognition of

strengths and resources after becoming convinced by her barterer that she has no resources or strengths.

Although there are many common dynamics for women who have suffered these kinds of abuses, there are also many differences. Some women will seek out counsellors in the midst of crises, but, many women come for counselling without any real consciousness that they suffered in the past. Women need to be helped to find their voices, to be believed, and to be supported as they seek to heal from the significant harm that result from the trauma of intimate violence.

5.16 Helping Women and Children Come to Voice in the Context of Intimate Violence

There are three major approaches to caring for women who have been victims of intimate violence. First, there are short-term crisis for women or children who are in the midst of intimate violence where the focus must be on the victim's safety, and the perpetrator's accountability. This is an area where, by and large, church pastors have not done well but where the needs are great. All pastors need to know how to offer pastoral care to women and children (and their abusers) when they present in crisis.

The second dimension for pastoral care in this context is how to care for women and children who present for pastoral care and counselling not in the crisis of violence, but as they seek to recover from the trauma of having been victims. These women and children as we have seen, often come to pastoral counselling without revealing, sometimes not even knowing, that there is a link between their distress and a history of abuse. Consequently, any pastoral counselling with women and children who have problems with relationships or who experience depression, anxiety or phobias, eating disorders, addictions, or a host of other seemingly unrelated symptoms need to assess the possibility of a past history (or current experience) of intimate violence. There has been great deal of debate about the risks of implanting false memories of abuse for people who have symptoms but no real memories of harm, especially in the case of child sexual abuse. J.L.

Herman, Walker, and many other well-respected feminist researchers of women's trauma suggest that it is unlikely that therapists will implant lasting memories that aren't accurate. They suggest that, over time, women will reject "memories" that aren't real for them. Nonetheless, women should be allowed to discover and name their own experiences and give narrative to the often fragmented, none verbal memories of abuse as they are able. Walker writes that "most clinicians" who work with women who

are survivors of childhood conflict abuse understand the need to go slowly in helping clients to retrieve lost memories. Yet that shouldn't make counsellors afraid to ask questions about the counselee's history of symptoms and to give signals that they will support the counselee if she has a history of abuse that needs to be explored and integrated.

The third issue is that of prevention and resistance. Individual pastors as well starting with naming it as abuse and holding perpetrators accountable at all levels. All three of these approaches to pastoral care in the context of intimate violence work together to bring individual, relational, and societal healing to one of the most damaging and costly problems of our time.

5.17 Crisis Care in the Context of Intimate Violence and Conflict

There are some basic principles in crisis care for each of these forms of intimate violence. The guiding principles, however, are safety and support. Many children and women who are in the midst of violent relationships, for some reasons named above, are unlikely to report their problems directly. Studies indicate that most women who have been battered, for example, have not reported their violence out of fear of reprisal from their barterers, self-blame, or a sense that it wasn't worth being taken seriously (she recognises that there is a strong chance that she is not going to be believed, and thus the consequences of reporting are too

great to take that chance). In addition, women and children who are battered have often been so isolated that they don't even know whom to tell. Children who are being abused are also afraid of the consequences of reporting. They usually threatened in a variety of ways in order to make sure that secrecy is maintained. They are also aware that they depend on their families for their day-to-day survival as well as for whatever emotional nurture they are able to get. This, again, makes the stakes of reporting the violence, if indeed it even occurs to them, very high. The point is, of course, that many women will present themselves to their pastors for help without volunteering the information that they have been harmed in an intimate relationship. It is up to the counsellor to make it as safe and as possible for a victim to reveal her experience of intimate abuse.

5.18 Partner Battering

The crises elements of spouse battering are very clear- the primary agenda is safe from harm. Yet, as noted above, many victims of battering are unwilling to leave the barterer for variety of reasons, including: a fear of reprisal, the safety of children, child custody problems, problems of economic support, dependency on the barterer, minimizing of the problem, putting others in danger, nowhere to go, fear of public opinion, as well as many other possible roadblocks. If a woman refuses to leave the barterer (and

notice how the burden is on the victim to build a new life while the perpetrator can live consequences-free), the pastoral counsellor needs to work with her to maximize her safety. Walker suggests that it is important for the counsellor to hear about for battering incidents: the first, the most typical, the worst, and the recent. These stories give a good clue about the patterns of violence. The women can be helped to take note of the signs that indicate an acute battering incident is about to happen. Usually there are somewhat predictable signs that the victim can learn to recognize. She can be taught how to leave before the battering actually begins.

The most important aspect of this crises care other than believing and supporting her is helping the woman develop an escape plan that is both detailed and realistic enough to get her out of the house in an emergency. She should be asked to draw a basic plan of the house and to identify rooms where the violence usually begins. She should then map out an exit plan from that room (and other likely places) that has at least two options in case one escape route is blocked. She should also have available to her any important papers, extra money, and car keys where she can get at them without searching. If she has young children, she needs to figure out how she can get them (for both their safety and for custody reasons) and, if the children are older, she needs to

arrange where and when to meet them after they all leave the house. If there are items of value in the house or pets that the woman wants to protect, she may want to take care of that ahead of time- asking someone else to take care of the pet or to store objects of her. And, as Walker concludes, the plan needs to be practised and memorized so that it becomes automatic when she needs it.

Every pastor should have this kind of knowledge and the ability to use it effectively in crises situations with victims of intimate violence. Pastors need to have done their homework so that they are not scrambling to find resources (like women's shelter, legal resources, rape crises lines, support groups, etc) during the crises moment. All pastors need to have a thorough referral list with resources they have personally evaluated so that they can be free to pay attention to the need of the person in distress. These are basic crisis procedures for the victims of intimate violence. It is common, however, for women to come for pastoral care and counselling, not in the crises of the violence itself, but as a result of the longer-term effects of the trauma.

5.19 Recovering from the trauma of Intimate violence

When we talk about the process of helping people move through the healing process of trauma recovery, it's important to

remember that the pastor may play many roles. First of all, healing care is not limited to formal pastoral counselling. Second, the pastor is not the only agent of healing in the church. And third, the pastor needs to be able to work in concert with appropriate community resources for the good of the care receiver. If the church gives clear messages through its education programs, sermon topics and illustrations, support group structures, and use of money (such as having a discretionary fund to help pay for healing resources in the community), then it is more likely that all three of these structures of healing will be able to work together for the good of the victim of intimate violence.

In keeping with both narrative theory and feminist principles, it is important in the healing process to focus on women's strengths and resources rather than assessing deficits and pathology. This is easier said than done. For one thing, counselling has been so steeped in a medical model of sickness and a behavioural model of problems that is "natural" for caregivers and care receivers alike to approach counselling with those two lenses. But women who have been victims of intimate violence generally are not in distress (even years later) because they have characterological or even behavioural deficits. They are in distress because (1) they have had minimal opportunity to process and integrate a traumatic history into the rest of their lives and (2) they have skills and strengths that were great help to them in

Surviving the violence but that know get in their way. In regard to the first reason, it is important for the caregiver to find ways to best hear the story of the violence, believing and supporting that story fully (rather than use a pathology model, which might look for inconsistencies and errors in it for the sake of symptom assessment), and helping the care receiver to make sense of it and meaning out of it for her ongoing life narrative. In regard to the second reason, the caregiver needs to assist the care receiver in discovering ways that her strengths can be used appropriately for their current context so that they do not cause further distress.

Narrative theory is helpful for both these goals. As a deconstructive method, narrative theory works to understand the sources of the beliefs and assumptions built into any person's narrative especially those aspects of the narrative that are causing distress. It is in the context of this narrative that narrative theory always has cultural analysis shared between counsellor and counselee as they work to co-author a preferred narrative. Intimate violence and its damages can only be understood in the context of a culture that uses a variety of methods to normalize it. It is within this cultural analysis that the rest of the goals for trauma recovery are set.

Judith Lewis Herman talks about several criteria for the resolution of trauma, particularly the trauma resulting from intimate violence, in a person's life. She names seven criteria for assessing that resolution:

The distressing feeling and behaviours for which she came to counselling have become manageable.

The person is able to bear the feeling associated with the traumatic memories.

The person has authority over her memories- she can elect both to remember the trauma and to put the memory aside.

The memory of the traumatic event is a coherent narrative, linked with feeling

The person's damaged self-esteem has been restored.

The person's important relationship has been re-established (as she chooses).

The person has reconstructed a coherent system of meaning and belief that compasses the story of the trauma.

Herman suggests that all of these criteria are being addressed throughout the entire care giving process.

The primary starting place for his care giving work is in listening deeply to care receiver's story and joining her in giving it voice.

This is the process of co-authoring. For so many women who have

been either childhood or adult victim of intimate violence, there have been no words and no story for this experience. For women who have survived incest, depending on their age, there may never have been words associated with the sexual abuse, only images and sensations. And, even for adult victims, a coherent narrative to hold them together.

Not only have words and voice been missing, but credibility has also been absent. For those who tried to get help or to talk about their experiences all the reasons discussed. As Fortune states, while talking about childhood abuse, “An adult who begins to remember (or, I would add, has an environment where remembering has some purpose) and acknowledge experiences sexual abuse and is ready to speak about these experiences to someone else is in the way to becoming a survivor. Justice means believing the victim’s story, though the facts may seem muddled and confused. The truth is the reality of that person’s experience of being victimized. In other words, truth is not external, but rather subjective. The counsellor has no need to investigate or figure out how much of the story is “real.” The story *is* real because it is real for the person telling it. The care giver’s responsibility is to help the story to be told and, in the process of its telling, help the person to explore the assumptions and frameworks that have made this story- with its negative

implications about her worth, goodness, and potential- truth for her. The story needs to be told, in its fullness, while being heard by both care giver and care receiver in a non determinative way.

She will need to wonder about who taught her that the abuse is her fault. She will need to look at why she was unable to get help. That is part of the deconstructive process of the story, which then makes room for her to look at parts of her story that hold the potential for finding a self that is not overwhelmed by fear and powerlessness. She will be able to find what parts of her were able to resist and survive the violence being done to her and how those aspects are still available to her in her current story.

The counsellor has to walk a fine line in this work between deep hearing of the story as the care receiver tells it and not reinforcing the fear and helplessness deeply ingrained in the victimized trauma. The care receiver must know that she is fully believed and that the caregiver has empathy for the deeply traumatizing effects of the experience without affirming her permanent status of victim. The care receiver's need for catharsis must be held in tension with her need to develop a less problematic understanding of herself and her possibilities. The work of deconstructive listening has the capacity to help the counsellor and counselee walk these fine lines.

So, in helping the counselee move toward the healing criteria listed above, the counsellor works hard to listen with appropriate empathy, maintaining the boundaries between the counselee's stories. The listening allows the counsellor, where appropriate, to externalize aspects of the story that have been unhelpfully internalized. For example, one might note, as part of the reflective listening process that as the counselee talks about a terrified child, she had to fight on a regular basis. Rather than the counselee understanding herself as fearful, the counsellor externalizes fear from being an essential part of the counselee, to bring an outside force constantly threatening her sense of well-being. Again, this line between empathic hearing and deconstructive externalizing becomes a fine, but important, one to walk.

Another helpful aspect of deconstruction comes through asking the counselee, when appropriate, where she learned to believe certain assumptions she may have about herself—for example, asking her, “who first taught you that you had had to honour your father even though he was abusing you?” Helping her to explore those kinds of sources for problematic aspects of her narrative offers doorways into a familiar, cultural, and theological analysis that will help put the counselee's story in the context of the larger stories of harm. They may also help her begin to find alternative resources.

A third aspect of deconstructive work is looking for places where there are exceptions to her problematic narrative in the midst of it and being curious about those exceptions. For example, “I’m interested in why you found yourself feeling stronger when you were talking with your grandmother”, or “I’m curious about how you were able to help your sister get out of her violent marriage? What resources did you find offer her?” In more traditional counselling approaches it is common for the counsellor and the counselee to focus almost exclusively on the coherent, dominant, and problematic narrative. This often has the unwitting consequence of “thickening” or strengthening it. The emphasis in a narrative orientation to counselling is on the exceptions or “unique outcomes” in the narrative and giving them enough focus so that they might become sources for a preferred direction.

This doesn’t mean that painful memories aren’t allowed to surface and be named. That is a key aspect of the care for victims of intimate violence. It just means that those memories aren’t allowed to stand alone when there may be resources for coping with them that were buried along but deconstructing the problematic narrative along with looking for unique outcomes should always be a part of the counsellor’s process. In this, as in all good counselling, however, the pace of the counselee should be what sets the pace of the counselling. The counsellor should

never carry the agenda of ‘getting somewhere’ but rather use her or his knowledge and skills to assist the counselee with healing from, and integrating the problematic aspects of her life that are the consequences of trauma.

5.20 Prevention and Resistance

Throughout this chapter I have discussed some of the problems that work to maintain the reality (and normality) of intimate violence. I have discussed theological problems that seem to support violence rather than its victims. I also named some theological resources to aid us in overcoming those problems. I have discussed a patriarchal culture that makes children and women “appropriate victims” because of their lesser status and power in the society. And I have discussed the reluctance of people and institutions to take up a stance of advocacy for victims and resistance towards family violence.

It is clearer to me in talking about intimate violence than in relation to any other topic that the gender training with which we indoctrinate our children must be challenged. I am firmly convinced that we train our children in ways that make intimate violence- at least in heterosexual relationships- likely, if not inevitable. We help our boys form narratives of ownership, of entitlement, of no “sissy stuff (gender polarization), of focussing

all feelings into either sexual expression or anger, of “getting ahead,” and of other male mandates that pull all boys and men at risk of a variety of problems and make them likely candidates to initiate violence. Bell hooks write that even black men, who are deprived of access to a white dominant culture’s male power at every point, learn that their one commonality with white’s male power may sexist behaviours. She writes that “black males”, who are utterly disenfranchised in most every arena of life often, find that the assertion of sexist domination is the only expression access to that ‘patriarchal power they are told all men should possess as their gendered birthright. Hence, it should not surprise or shock that many black men support and celebrate a dominant “rape and conflicting culture”. She goes on to say that there are those black male voices that stand firmly against this kind of violence against women, but they tend to be ignored by the dominant culture. She also suggests that women have learned to structure their attraction to men around how “masculine” men are thus feed into the continuation of male violence against women. This system of attraction is built out of male and female gender training and its reinforcement throughout life. Hooks suggests that women have to find ways to challenge that structure of attraction (which looks to evidence of traditional masculinity) as part of our resistance of intimate violence.

The reality is that no girl or woman seeks out violence or finds it attractive, but hooks is accurate that there is a structure of gender training that creates a false “complementarily” between men and women that heightens the likelihood of intimate violence. As has been discussed throughout this text, girls are gender trained to be responsible for the success and nurturing of relationships and to believe that, without successful relationships (whatever the cost), they are at risk of isolation and harm. Women are also trained to do mind reading- to develop forms of feelings empathy, which makes hyper, vigilant to the possible feelings and motivations of those in primary relationships with them. They tend to use that “empathy” to offer sympathetic rationalizations for men’s violent behaviour against them. Girls are also taught how to be depressed rather than angry, which takes away much of the energy that could be used for resistance. And, finally, girls are taught that they are entitled to the use of overt and direct power; their influence is to be more subtle and channelled through expressions of nurturance. These gender-training dynamics predispose women to be less able to resist intimate violence and conflicting used against them.

Given the power of this gender training to make intimate violence likely between men and women in families, one of our key areas of preventive work needs to be with our children, making sure

each gender has the tools to build strong and nurturing relationships and each has the tools to resist harm aimed against them.

Prevention and resistance have to do with dismantling patriarchy at its very heart so that our own personal, familial, institutional, and social narratives do not contribute to the likelihood of intimate violence. Consequently, when I talk about pastoral care as offering support is institutional, relational, and personal efforts to affirm and encourage the development of these alternative ways of being and interpreting while not denying the, ambivalence in that process. That means we have to be willing to deconstruct our own violence-laden assumptions-psychological, theological, linguistic, relational, vocational—and be held accountable when we act out of them. Preventive pastoral care will involve deconstructing and being held accountable for our own violence-laden core narratives (as leaders of the church) and helping, then, to support the development of exceptional nonviolent narratives in persons, church, and society. And knowing how these more overtly violent narratives are interwoven with more subtle strands of stereotypical gender training (e.g., our various forms of entertainment and some of our theological interpretations) helps us to do this deconstruction and restoring at the deep, integrative levels required for change.

The work of prevention and resistance also means not being willing to tolerate intimate violence in our congregations and holding people accountable actively and not initiated. Adams writes that “church leaders must acknowledge that they know conflict violence exists in society and, therefore, in their congregations. Are they prepared to offer helpful responses?

When clergy do name violence from the pulpit or in their other capacities as church leaders, they report surprise at the number of people who come forward who have been personally affected by conflict violence.” She concludes by suggesting that clergy, as leaders, must be ready to name the violence just as people attempting to heal the intimate violence must be ready to name the violence done against him. ⁵⁶ I think it is appropriate to ask, as we explore the development of voice in the context of intimate violence, whether or not we as leaders in the church are ready to develop our own voices, even at risk of credibility and respect, so that we might stand counter to the epidemic of harm against women and children found in intimate violence and conflict.

At the same time pastors should apply some techniques to help those who are traumatised because of marriage conflicts. This may include consultation or referral.

Referral Counselling: Referral counselling refers to a state whereby a minister is in a strategic position to assist other people

in finding competent, specialized help (Clinebell, H 12:310). The minister calls upon community resources, not in order to pass the buck, but because he wishes the best for all persons concerned.

Where to Refer?

John L. Mixon, an experienced social worker, once declared: “The two most important aspects of a good referral are: (1) a knowledge of the resources, its program, functions, intake policy, etc., and (2) the use of sound counselling procedures in interpreting the resources and the possible help the individual might expect to receive.

Pastors should begin to prepare themselves for an effective referral ministry soon after arriving to a new parish. This involves doing two things – (1) assembling a growing referral file of community resources and (2) building relationships and helping professionals. An organized referral file becomes increasingly useful as the minister accumulates information about social agencies; directories of pastoral counselling specialists, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, marriage counsellors, and AA groups etc.; phone numbers of pastoral counselling centres, emergency psychiatric facilities, mental health clinics, suicide, prevention centres etc.

A minister should check to see if the community has a welfare planning council or other community agency that provides a directory (and perhaps a phone information service) of community services. Copies of such directories should be in the pastor's study and in the church library.

Community resources include helping resources in these areas:

- Adoption and child placement
- Alcoholism
- Financial assistance, business problems
- Child guidance
- Child welfare
- Child abuse
- Crises intervention
- Day care
- Correctional institutions, deafness
- Crime and delinquency, dental services, disaster relief
- Drugs
- Education
- Employment
- Family life the handicapped
- Health
- Housing, industrial problems
- Legal assistance

- Mental health facilities minority groups, older persons
- Planned parenthood
- Problem pregnancies, retirement
- Single parents
- Sex counselling
- Speech problems,

Transients, retardation, veterans, vocational guidance, youth service. This manual also includes a directory of national resources- church related, governmental, and voluntary and section where pastors may enter their own working list of local phone numbers and addresses. Parish pastors would do well to keep a manual such as this at their fingertips.

Accurate evaluations of the competence of the various counsellors, psychotherapists, and agencies in one's community often are difficult to acquire. The reputation that therapists or agencies have among physicians, counsellors, and ministers provides a reasonably reliable guide. Beyond this it is helpful for ministers to become personally acquainted with as many as possible of their community's therapists and social agency personnel. In my experience, the most trustworthy evaluations of therapists' personal authenticity and professional competency come from direct contact with them and from observing the

outcome of referrals to them. By having coffee or lunch with such persons, visiting the local child guidance or mental health clinic, and attending the open meetings of AA and Al-Anon, pastors build relationship bridges that can prove immensely useful when they need to make referral. As they work with these persons in helping troubled parishioners, the relationship often grows stronger.

A cooperative team spirit among the helping professions of a community does not happen by accident. Someone must take the initiative. In order to do personal work optimally, ministers need such a team. What is more, pastors are in an ideal position to take the initiative in this, perhaps starting with a monthly breakfast meeting of a small group of helping professionals in one's congregation and community. Such meetings enhance communication of mutual concern and build working relationships. Participants may begin to ask the pastor for assistance in helping their clients or patients deal with value and meaning problems, as well as overtly religious issues. Thus collaboration between clergy and other professionals becomes a two-way street as it should be.

To work effectively with physicians and mental health professionals, pastors may need to resolve self-esteem and

authority problems that cause them to give their power away to these professionals.

CHAPTER 4

4.1 INTERVIEWS AND CASE STUDIES

Here I will be focussing on interviewing children about their general understanding and perception of their domestic violence. The aim is to see whether they see conflict of their parents as affecting them, who they see as responsible for it.

1. What do the children think should be done?
2. What is the effect of the conflict of their parents to them?
3. What do they consider as the most helpful form of response?

The interviews also aimed to discover what a general population of children know about domestic violence and what sense they made of it. I also aim at answering the following research questions.

1. How do children make sense of the experience of living with domestic violence?
2. What coping strategies do they use?
3. What help do they consider would meet their needs and build on their coping strategies?
4. What help do they currently get?

5. How do children and young people consider that could be improved?

4.2 METHOD

The method is qualitative to both children and parents.

1. Responses from Children age 5-16 were collected and analysed from urban and rural setting of Libode and Ngqeleni in the Eastern Cape.
2. They have to complete a questionnaire about what they know and think about domestic violence / conflict.
3. Communication was also cantered on children.

(a) Language: Language use is mother tongue

A smaller sample of children living with violent parents was interviewed individually and in groups. The research explores with children and young people's views, feelings about their experiences, the coping strategies they have adopted while living through violent situations and the ideas on the support they thought would have been helpful to them.

(b)Communication: Communication system was very sensitive in the sense that children were able to talk about their experiences having given sensitive designed approach. Age was appropriate (5-16 years). Gender considered the implications of conflict on

boys and girls. This was done in accordance to Women's Aid Federation to investigate men's and women's behaviour in a way that data would be collected and analysed. (Audrey Mullender, Liz Kelly, 2002:2).

(c) Meetings: My interview meetings were done through telephone, conferences and electronic communication to ensure thorough discussion.

(d) Place of survey: The interviews were conducted at homes and schools to identify the disruption of moving from home and school. The above Psychologically and emotionally disturbed children as a result they become violent in relating to others. The School face the difficulty of dealing with children who have moved from their respective homes, because of the result of conflicting parents or family violence.

(e) Barriers/obstacles

It was not easy to recruit boys as sample respondents. It was also difficult to get the appropriate age from diversity amongst children. Mothers feared that interviews would threaten and that interviews would be upsetting for children.

4.3 ETHICAL CONCERNS

One of the issues that most concerned me in my research was the ethics of talking to children about such a sensitive topic as domestic violence. In this research, relevant ethical issues under three headings are considered. These are: consent, confidentiality and child protection.

Children protection was further extended beyond normal statutory concern into thinking about possible harm that might be inflicted by the research process itself, if not properly thought through. It was consequently broken into three sub-issues such as arrangements for disclosure, distress and danger. Whereas disclosures and distress are referred to constantly in the literature covering the ethics of research with children, danger is an issue more specific to work on domestic violence (Audrey Mullender, Liz Kelly, 2002:29)

4.3.1 Consent

The decision I had reached was that adult consent should be sought before children were approached to give their consent, not only because of the sensitivity of domestic violence as a topic, but for the essentially practical reason that children would need to be assessed through their schools and families. I explained the research to both the adults and children concerned. In light of the

complexity of negotiating with every school individually, I the researcher decided to leave it to the head to determine the number of levels of consent that would be seen as required. Some heads felt it necessary to consult with school governing bodies; some involved the whole staff group or teachers of relevant classes some ask parent's permission, or any combination of these.

The process of seeking access gave a number of powerful adults the opportunity to silence children by ruling them out of the research, but as this phase of research constituted a large-scale of quantitative survey intended to represent all children in the relevant age group, I concluded that, provided there was no bias in the type of schools, or children that were excluded, the children I did recruit would speak for all their peers. And once I had gained access to the classrooms the children's own individual involvement was sought by giving a clear explanation of the research and its purpose and by taking particular care to ensure that children knew they did not have to participate or to answer all the questions. The children in the schools based survey were thus accorded at least 'informed dissent' (Morrow and Richards, 1996:101) made real by being given alternative things to do.

Children at home, in the qualitative phase of the research, had more active 'informed consent' in that their mothers asked them

individually whether they would like to participate before inviting the researcher to their homes. The children also had a further ‘informed dissent’ in that they could still change their minds at any point and not be interviewed. I therefore decided to make the first approach to children through their mothers because I considered it vital not to usurp the right of the woman concerned to decide what would be safe or harmful for their children so the mother talked to their children about me as a researcher or interviewer. Children were therefore interviewed without their parents, so that they could talk freely. I also told them that the purpose of the interviews was to try and make things better for them and their parents.

4.3.2 Confidentiality and child protection

I offered confidentiality within the familiar parameters of any disclosures of current risk or harm to the child. Again any child protection issue would be handled through the school’s normal procedures if it occurred. It was to be done in conjunction with the child to be referred onwards.

4.4 DISTRESS AND DAMAGE

The researcher determined that every possible measure would be taken to ensure that the researcher himself was not unreasonably distressing or in any way damaging. This I did by supporting

pupils who want to disclosure something e.g. the role of the children's teachers, both during and after the research visits.

Teachers were offered resources based on training materials to learn more about domestic violence. I was always available in the school for a time after the completion of interviews in case any child wanted to talk to the teachers individually. Thirdly, all participating children were given child line which is regarded as the appropriate support agency hence it operates a dedicated, confidential help line for children.

4.5 DANGER

The issue of danger was handled by attempting to select only children who were not living in continuing danger or families who had current supports in place and by being in a position to offer contact details of relevant agencies if needed. In order to compromise their safety, children in the sample were in families no longer living with or in current danger from the abuser. There was also small number of reconciliations or resumption of contact over a period of research, which means that the perpetrator (father) was back on the scene.

4.6 DEVELOPMENT AND PILOTING OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS WITH CHILDREN

In this case I endeavoured to work with children at all stages of research design. My questionnaires were developed in conjunction with groups of children, who also helped to draw out the themes for in depth interviews. I was open to children's own agendas and understanding (Thomas and O'Kane, 1998:35). The questionnaires and interviews schedules were piloted both with individuals and with groups of children and young people. They were able to point out any draft questions they did not understand and one or two awkwardness's in the ordering of questions which confused them. The research had first thought of seeking children's own definitions of domestic violence and then using this as the base line for answers so as to avoid directing their perceptions.

- Examples
- Some children especially the younger ones have told me that domestic violence means 'when your dad hits your mom and makes her cry'
- When your dad shouts, makes everyone frightened, and hurts your mom'

For the older children, it simply means violence between adults in the home. Children themselves advised on which questions could

be left out because they were too confusing, upsetting or ‘no good’. So, they were very helpful to me in thinking through how others might feel and were also sensitive to the fact that some children might have experienced domestic violence at home and thought this might make the child “go red, feel awful, think everyone is looking at them. Others, too, might be upset by the content, for example being asked what made them unhappy, and the children wanted to know whether anyone would be on hand at the end, and whether the teacher might give an opportunity later on to ask how everyone had found the interview questionnaire. However, the pilot helped me decide two different, age-appropriate versions of the questionnaire needed to be designed for ages 8 to 11 and 12 to 16. This helped the research to develop the gender implications. But, both older and younger participants reacted against what they saw as male-on-female bias because they knew that it was mainly men who abused women, but they wanted the questionnaire to include violence in both directions, not because they held simplistic views about mutual fighting (Mullender 1996:37).

This helped me as a research to develop questions that more recorded the young people’s own views about who does perpetrate the violence/abuse and whether a man hitting a woman is different from a woman hitting a man, rather than appearing to prejudge this.

4.7 THE SCHOOL SURVEY (PHASE 1)

The schools-based survey was undertaken in order to access a broad, general population of children. Age-appropriate questionnaires were administered to children in classroom settings. Since there is no way of knowing with certainty which children within a classroom population have lived with domestic violence in their homes and which have not? The researcher had to act on the assumption that within the sample there would be children who had these experiences and who might or might not previously have talked to someone about them. Appropriate training was suggested and offered to teachers, every teacher at participating schools. A researcher's assistant was trained to be equally carefully when introducing the questionnaire in class. Questions of consent, confidentiality, and child protection were deeply considered.

4.8. PHASE 2: THE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Here the research comprised an in-depth study or research of children known to have lived with domestic violence and were interviewed individually and in groups. The children who were seen individually were from different households. All the children were interviewed in their own homes, following contact with their mothers by letter and then by telephone. Whenever possible, they were seen on their own, in a separate room, unless

they chose otherwise. It is important in ensuring validity in qualitative research that respondents should feel able to talk openly and independently (Mahon et al, 1996), so the context and process of the interviews were very important. So I worked hard to put the children in their ease, I emphasized that a child could refuse interview, could withdraw his or her comment in any time, stop talking at any point and or decide not to answer any of the questions, the interviews were never reached but were lengthy enough to build the child's trust, again to enhance validity (Rubin, 2000). As has been noted by many researchers with children (e.g. Mahon et al, 1996), it is always impossible to know how far children are impeded by the way they perceive the researchers (adults, authority figures and so on). Like Williamson and Butler (1997), I had to use my own personal styles to engage the young people, in this case taking a warm, respectful, supportive approach. My Gerkin's understanding of shepherding, pastoral care giving and, youth work/ministry (Malan Nel, 2000), helped me reduce the social distance between me and the children to be interviewed. Some children found it difficult to speak, while others talked without stopping. Amongst sibling groups, one child was often more vociferous than the others, with perhaps another who said very little. The children were from different places and aged 8 to 13 years. A quiet space was found to conduct each group. The sessions started with refreshments and then some

name games and setting of ground rules, including reconfirming the children's consent to participate and to be tape-recorded.

Agreement was obtained to conduct the individual seated and in a relative quiet, with an attempt not to interrupt other people while they were speaking. The group/ individual discussion itself was focussed around the four key research questions outlined earlier in this chapter, but always in age-appropriate language and bearing in mind children's shorter concentration spans. The main focuses were what children think about domestic violence (what it is, why it happens), how children cope with it (themselves and other children), what sort of help children need so that they can do the things that help them cope, and how the help they get now could be made better. The interview framework for the group of children included a range of sub-que children and possible probes to ensure that roughly comparable group was covered in each group. At the end children were asked whether they wanted to hear to tape played back (which they all did), whether they feel comfortable, whether they wanted to stay and talk individually, and whether they wanted to see the children worker or researcher. They were also thanked (or appreciated) with a token (parting) gift after further refreshments. In addition to talking to children, several of whom were mothers to more than one child in the sample. All interviews were

transcribed, coded and analysed. The coding catering began with base data and whether there had been any contact with statutory agencies and/or women's organisations. This was followed by the coding for they had left home at any time and the impacts on them of this whether they had heard /seen/been aware of the violence and the impacts on them of that.

1. Whether they attributed blame and if so, to whom and why? Whether their parents had talked to them about violence.
2. Whether they themselves had ever talked to anyone about it and, if so, to whom and with what response (especially) whether this had been experienced as helpful.
3. Whether anyone had ever helped their mother, what would have helped? What they wanted now? How safe they felt?
4. Whether they still saw the perpetrator, how often? Under what circumstances, and whether or not this was fine, and what changes there had been in their lives.

4.9 SEPARATE CODING FOR INTERVIEWS WITH THE CHILDREN'S MOTHER INCLUDED

- ✓ Whether they had tried to prevent children from knowing about the abuse and if so how and what was the result?

- ✓ Whether the man had used the children in anyway within his pattern of abuse. How was the abuse carried, and what was the result? How the violence affected the children?
- ✓ Whether she had talked with her children about the abuse.
- ✓ And whether she had sought help from anyone or any agency; what were the results, and the impact to the children.
- ✓ Whether the children still see the perpetrator, and to what extent is the impact to the children.

CASE STUDY/CHILDREN OF UXORICIDE

Abstract: *When children are involved in the murder of one parent by the other, their lives are turned-upside down. They are immediately confronted with police and court interventions and by child welfare decisions. This article looks at the policy of the Dutch Child Protection Board in such cases. We consider the legal arrangements made by the Board for dealing with the child's future residence and any special need. We also consider the ways in which pastoral care giving from the shepherd depicts the families of exorcise and perceive the future relationship of the child with the surviving parent.*

Keyword: Parents; Child welfare; Netherlands; Trauma; Murder; Uxoricide

Introduction

Children of Uxoricide lose their parents through a combination of murder and incarceration. In some cases, they have observed the murder and stayed with the dead or dying parent. Also, matrimonial discord and divorce often precede Uxoricide. The arrest of the suspect parent is a further traumatic experience. The relationship with (in most cases) the father can become an additional burden. Finally, children will be taken from familiar surrounding. This article focuses on the task of the Dutch Child Protection Board (CP Board) in dealing with such cases of Uxoricide.

Accurate figures on the number of Uxoricide in which children are involved are rarely available. One example comes from the U.S.A., where Pynoos and Eth (1984) report 200 cases in the year 1982 in which children witnessed the killing of a parent in Los Angeles County. Whilst Uxoricide is an exceptional case of domestic violence, research in this field has wider relevance because it reveals features of the policy approach of child welfare agencies when investigating children in traumatic conditions.

This article analyses the role of child welfare policy in dealing with such traumatic family events. We explore the main features of pastor's advice with respect to whether to place the child in a

certain family or children's home, and their opinions about the relevance of pastoral help, the future role of the offender-parent and the involvement of children in the decision-making process.

The CP Board is a central agency in the Dutch child welfare policy. According to its mission statement, the child has the right to grow up in a safe environment and in a balanced manner. If this fundamental right is violated, the Board is supposed to take action. The Board presents petition in order to elicit judgements from the juvenile court with regard to the custody or guardianship of children. As part of this process pastors are anointed to conduct social investigations into the family. For that purpose, they may hear the child, the parent, other members of the family and relevant professionals. Petitions to the court consist of legal propositions for custody, suspension of the execution of custody, provisional guardianship, and dispossession and restriction of custody. In cases of Uxoricide, there is often an acute need to provide custody for the children. However, in this process children are represented in court.

Where the victim had sole custody, Uxoricide obviously means the end of parental authority where the CPOB Board then has to arrange for provisional authority. The Board will advise a provisional order where there is parental refusal to co-operate with the legal authority and where the Board wants to guarantee

a safe place for the child beyond the influence of the (convicted) father and his family. After a provisional order has been pronounced, the CP Board immediately starts an inquiry into the living conditions of the child. The most common advice given by the Board to the Court is to discharge the parents from his parental responsibilities. However, when the Uxoricide has not (yet) been proven there is no legal ground for relinquishment or abrogation of parental responsibilities. In such cases, if there are still strong suspicions about the role of the father then the Board may advise a family supervision order. On the other hand, according to Dutch family law, juvenile judges are not obliged to place children back with parent if his or her guilt has not been proven. The argument used for not doing so is not directed at the crime or its consequences for the relationship of the parent to the court thus varies considerably, the general policy of the CP Board is to remove parental authority from the convicted parent once guilt has been established.

We next analyse the advice that Pastors of the CP Board give in petitions to the court concerning requests for provisional and permanent custody. Such advice is influenced by how Pastors characterise families of Uxoricide. We begin this analysis by first going briefly into the literature on children who have to confront serious domestic violence.

Helping Grieve Children of Uxoricide

Domestic violence and, in the ultimate case, parental homicide can leave children with feelings of shock and fear. They often react by showing developmental disturbances: cognitive retardation, pathological mourning and social isolation. In many cases, they are absent-minded, have feelings of detachment and may show a lack of compassion. Eating disorders, sleeplessness, enuresis, etc, may be normal expressions of unhappiness in such circumstances. In later life, children of Uxoricide have a higher chance of mental disturbances. Adolescent who were exposed to family violence whilst children appear to have lower self-esteem (Ritter et al., 2002).

In this context, both children and adults have to work through the same grieving tasks (Worden, 1996). They have to acknowledge the reality of the losses and to confront the fact that things will never be the same again. They then have to resume a daily routine, to control feelings of depression and anxiety in order to resume the thread of their life. Children of Uxoricide have to feel the pain of the loss and the shame of having a parent who has (or is suspected of having) killed the other parent. They have to adapt to a new environment without their parents and to acknowledge that, in the future, they will not live in the former family home.

However, there are some differences. Small children will have limited cognitive possibilities for understanding what happened and will often have naive concepts of causality (Black and Newman 2000). Moreover, witnessing violence is quite different from being the victim of it and in some circumstances it may even be worse (Kaplan 1997). In many cases, children Uxoricide observed the violence by seeing or hearing what happened in a context of enforced passivity. This may cause extra difficulties, because the child is not distracted by personal pain and may fully concentrate on what dramatic reactions of the parent victim (Pynoos, 1996).

In such a situation, children show defence strategies in order to limit their traumatic anxieties. For example, they mitigate painful experiences by denying what had happened and avoid the topic by holding back spontaneous thoughts, by engaging in repetitious and detached reporting of family events and by producing new dramas in order to prevent themselves thinking about what had happened (Pynoos and Eth, 1985). Such children clearly need help in order to overcome their experience and to give up these defensive mechanisms. Children who have had to witness or withstand domestic violence require the same kind of assistance as other children in trouble, but they often need it more urgently, more intensively and for longer (Hendriks et al., 1993).

The nature of the child's trauma and the anticipated capacity of the child to cope with the distressing situation define its specific needs for help. Usually, the children can cope more easily with traumas in reaction to single acute events (type I). However, the children who have experienced former separations (Jaffe et al., 2001) or have been traumatised chronically (type II) (Terr, 1991) are more likely to need long-term therapy (Eland et al., 2000; see also Pynoos and Eth, 1996). Most studies merely conclude, in general terms, to the effect that such traumatic experiences as witnessing domestic violence can cause developmental disorders.

However, there is little evidence for specific forms of psychopathology as a result of such an experience (Mc Coskey et al., 1995). In cases of Uxoricide it is crucial that children are informed about tragic events, about future decisions, about legal procedures, about the residence of the convicted parent and about the place where he or she will stay. There are no psychological reasons for sparing children the facts of the case on the grounds that they would not be able to deal with them (Skolnick, 1973).

Withholding relevant information from children only leads them making up stories about what happened and provokes them to seek the truth. Nonetheless, such accounts should be suited to

their mental abilities and not be too detailed, since some accounts may encourage a sense of hopelessness (Glicken, 1998).

Children may be helped to express feelings that may be chaotic or contradictory and may therefore be hard to formulate. The very fact that helpers can find words for such feelings may reassure the child, because it enables the child to construct continuity in its disrupted world (Dolto, 1987). Complete recovery is difficult, but not impossible. Children can be helped to endure remembering the event without getting overwhelmed by such memories and to construct a coherent story of it (Herman, 1992). It is sometimes even possible to achieve post-traumatic growth (Kleber, 1999). Asking for information may also help the child, since talking through experiences helps children overcome loss (Pynoos and Eth, 1986; Black and Urbanovicz, 1987). Evaluations of debriefing programmes are not all positive (Deahl et al., 2001), but debriefing after children have witnessed domestic violence has been recommended by some (Hendriks et al., 1993; Worden, 1996; Sufermann and Jaffe, 1997).

4.10 QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESPONSES

In recent years there has been considerable academic interest in the effects of trauma on children (Saunders, 2003), with traumatic experiences increasingly recognised for their potential to participate long-term difficulties (Mabanglo, 2002). The effects of

childhood experiences of physical aggression between parents and caregivers constitute one such area focus. As empirical information about these impacts comes to light, it becomes necessary to consider complex questions about the intersection between exposure to violence and child abuse (Somers & Braunstein, 1997). This research presents an overview of findings related to outcomes in children of violence unions. The main body of review summarises the large and increasingly body of literature now existing in the field. It focuses on the prevalence of the intimate partner violence, its coexistence with child abuse, findings regarding outcomes in this population of children and possible mediating factors. In the second part of the review we consider some of the conceptual and methodological issues arising from this research, including questions of causality, mechanisms of negative impacts and possible reasons for the coexistence of child abuse and intimate partner violence. Difficulties of separating the effects of the child abuse from those of intimate partner violence are also discussed, as are explanations for the similarity in the outcomes associated with each type of traumatic experience. In the final section of the review, I briefly consider the implications of these findings in terms of policy as well as clinical practice, and outline future directions for research. Prior to commencing such an overview, it is worth considering definition, and the use of language to

describe traumatic childhood experiences. While a full discussion of the importance of language in relating to children is beyond the scope of this research, we direct the interested reader to work focussing on language in child abuse in general (Goddard, De Bortoli, Saunders, & Tucci, 2005; Goddard and Saunders, 2000) as well as language, children and intimate partner violence in particular (Goddard, Tucci & Bedi, 2005). For the purposes of this paper, I use the term “intimate” partner violence” “(IPV), assault or abuse to refer to physically abusive behaviour between partners in an intimate relationship. Although it increasingly recognised that men are victim of IPV at rates higher than previously supposed (Ridley & Feldman, 2003), we focus on the (statically) typical scenario of a female victim of assault by her male partner (McGee, 2000), who may or may not be the biological father of the children involved. To reflect the full range of experiences of IPV that is possible in childhood as well as the lack of choice entailed in such experiences, we refer to this population as children “forced to live with “IPV”. For reasons to brevity, the terms “living with” and experiencing are used interchangeable in this paper. Although it is commonly applied more broadly, we use “child abuse” to refer to physical abuse, except where otherwise noted. In addition to main manageability of content, this limitation is in keeping with the majority of the

studies in this area, which focus on possible overlaps between physical IPV (Appel & Holden, 1998).

EFFECTS OF LIVING IPV

Since reports first emerged in the 1980s (Carlson, 1984; Hershon & Rosenbaum, 1985), numerous findings have suggested negative impacts on children living with IPV. Poor outcomes cover the spectrum of childhood problems, ranging from posttraumatic reactions and mood disorders externalising (“acting out”) behaviours (Edleson), 1999). While some children living with IPV display full posttraumatic symptoms profiles (Graham-Bermann & Levendosky, 1998; McClosky & Walker, 2000), a more common pattern is the presence of symptoms such as traumatic hyper arousal in the absence of the full syndrome (Graham-Bermann & Levendosky, 1998; Levendosky, Huth-Bocks, Semel, & Shapiro 2002; Mertin & Mohr, 2002).

Physiologically, children who have experienced IPV display heightened autonomic arousal compared to clinical controls as indicated by higher resting heart rates, as well as increased hypothalamic- pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis function, an indicator of stress (Saltzman, Holden, 2005) these findings are in keeping with indexes of physiology reactivity in children suffering

posttraumatic reactions to child abuse (McDonagh-Coyle et al., 2001; Van Voorhees & Scarpa, 2004).

The presence of pervasive fear and posttraumatic symptoms is apparent in reports made by children who have experienced living with IPV:

One [nightmare] was that when I was asleep he got a knife and stabbed me. (Boy, 5 years old; McGee, 2000, 71)

I have to sleep watching two doors and with my back against the wall. (Girl, 12 years old; Mullender et al., 2002, :. 111)

Children living with IPV may also experience mood problems (Graham-Bermann & Levendosky, 1998; McClosky & Walker, 2000). Children in refuges endorse clinical levels of depressive symptoms (Davis & Clarson, 1987; Jouriles, Norwood, McDonald, Vincent, & Mahoney, 1996) and have been reported to be lonelier than the peers (McCloskey & Stuewig, 2001). In the community, children experiencing IPV report elevated anxiety, (Kerig, 1998), and depression (Qureshi & Maloney, 1997; Sternberg et al., 1993). Similarly, IPV has been associated with lowered self-worth in children (O'Brien, Bahadur, Gee, Balto, & Erber, 1997; Rogers & Holmbeck, 1997):

I wasn't very confident in myself... If people treated me badly, I would like to take it like it was supposed to happen. (Girl, aged 15; McGee, 2000, 91)

Children living with WW may have difficulties at school. Preschool-aged children violent unions have been reported to have lower verbal intellectual functioning than comparison groups, a finding found to be mediated by maternal depression and a poorer quality of intellectual stimulation in the home (Huth-Bocks, Levendosky, & Semel, 2001). Almost half Australian middle school children in refuge recruited for one study were found to have reading ages more than one year below their chronological age (Mathias, Mertin, & Murray, 1995). These findings are understandable in light of the following quote:

I'd think about mom being and I would just walk out of school and come home....I didn't like the thought of her being on hr own with him, so I stayed home all the time. (Girl, aged 15; McGee, 2000: 81)

Children living with IPV are more aggressive than their peers (Graham-Bermann & Levendosky, 1998; Jouriles et al., 2003, Wolfe, Jaffe, Wilson, & Zak, 1985).

I used to be really soft... people used to boss me around But now everything's happened, I've got a lot rougher... if someone starts on me I just lash out. (Girl, aged 15; McGee, 2000: 75)

Behavioural difficulties are apparent from a young age, with some preschool children who have experienced IPV showing clinical levels of conduct problems (Fantuzzo et al., 1991). Further there are indications that behavioural issues may persist over time, with the experience of IVP at age 2 predicting conduct problems at age 5 (Ingoldsby, Shaw, Owen, & Winslow, 1999).

Similarly, adolescent who lived with IVP as children have been found to be more depressed and aggressive than their peers (McCloskey & Lichter, 2003). Rates of juvenile delinquency are elevated in the teenagers of violent unions (Becker & McCloskey, 2002; Caputor, Frick, & Brodsky, 1999; Herrera & McClosky, 2001), while male high school students with a background of childhood experiences IVP are more likely to be violent in their own dating relationships (O'Keefe, 1997). By college age, the experience of living with IVP in childhood has been reported to be associated with higher levels of overall psychopathology (Diamond & Muller, 2004).

In summary, children who live with IPV are at risk for a range of possible difficulties. There is little evidence of a syndrome of problems reliably associated with the experience of violence within the home (McCloskey, Figueredo, & Koss, 1995) and co morbidity is frequently observed (Grych, Jouriles, Swank, McDonald, & Norwood, 2000; Wolf, Crooks, Lee, McIntyre Smith, & Jaffe, 2003) the variable nature of outcomes is likely to reflect intersections between the many different experiences of violence, individual vulnerabilities and variety of risk and protective factors.

INTERVIEWER: Children what have you heard and saw between your mother and your father?

Children: 1. Eight year old boy. I used to hear them sometimes.

12 year old boy that was behind closed doors. But I used to know and I would see bruises that she had before that.

I saw my dad fighting with mom

I saw them arguing, shouting at each other and hitting each other.

My dad used to do the hitting (10 year old boy).

Over a third reported both over hearing and witnessing abuse. These children were also the ones who were most likely to talk about threats to, and abuse of, themselves or their siblings.

He used to say, “I am going to kill you at night-time when you are asleep. “He used to come with an axe and say, “I am going to kill you, I used to get frightened. We had a lock on the bedroom doors in case he did what he said. He once made a hole with an axe in my sister’s bedroom door. (An eight year old girl).

I heard my dad swearing and I saw him grab my mom’s throat and push her against the door and later, I saw him slap her around the face and push her over the sink. He was trying to kill her (15 years old white boy).

One sibling group revealed the differences that age and children’s own choices can make. The oldest child, a boy, reported having seen little of the violence. As he had got older, his choice had to leave the house if he could. The next oldest, a girl, had the greatest awareness of the violence but had tried to avoid witnessing it and to protect her younger sisters. The youngest child interviewed, also a girl, had clearly seen more than the other two, partly because she tried to protect her mother by being present.

INTERVIEWER: So what did you do?

CHILD: Cry and say stop it and he says, ‘no I won’t’ and I started to cry

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever leave the room and go away from it?

CHILD: No

INTERVIEWER: Just stayed there?

CHILD: Yes because I like my mom, said the 10 year old girl.

Other children, were more able to detect or name conflict-often calling it 'arguing and fighting' and sometimes saw their mothers as equally, if not more, to blame for this, at least when they were young.

Examples I was about six years when I first realized mom and dad were fighting. There were lots of arguing between my parents but I didn't understand why these were happening (11 years old boy).

Another one said: do you want to know how I feel about it? It gets me all confused and muddled up. When it happens, I feel as if things are growing in my head, outwards and pressing on my own head. Do you want me to give you an example? I'll tell you a good example, but you you'll have to have lots of paper to write on when you write it down. There was a big argument one day. My dad did not want his tea. He punched my mom three times. Someone came running out. He kept kicking her. Mom was

crying and crying and then I got mad. Then we saw the police and I went to auntie's house. Have you understood it? I'm frightened. I'll be like it when I grow up. I know what she is going through and I want to help her. I get worried for her.

CHAPTER 5

5.1 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter specifically deals with the summary of the findings according to the responses of parents and children from domestic violent families in Ngqeleni/Libode district. It also reflects recommendations made by the researcher as based on the responses of the sample subjects.

The study investigated factors that cause conflicts of parents and thereby traumatising their children. The investigations were done by conducting interviews on different ages on different families. Some were conducted at home and some were conducted at school.

A clustered random sampling method was used to cater for male and female children respectively.

In this case, the researcher worked this random sampling by considering ideas, feelings and views of children in a qualitative method or approach.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

From data analysis factors that were strongly supported by the sample subjects causing conflicts in marriage were as follows

- Cultural factors
- Social factors
- Financial implications
- Jealousy and sexual jealousy
- Verbal and non-verbal aggression
- Ignorance/lack of education

5.2.1 CULTURAL FACTORS

According to the response the researcher has received from marriage partners, it became clear that beating a woman is a norm and cultural accepted in some areas like Ngqeleni/Libode area.

5.2.2 SOCIAL FACTORS

The response of parents as well as their children made it clear also that beating up a woman is socially accepted. There is a strong belief that man is the head of the house and therefore be treated like God. In this case he can do whatever he feels.

A woman is socially prohibited from saying anything. She must just accept whatever the man says. This is particularly so in our homes, churches and places of work.

5.2.3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Perhaps again between men are selfish and believe they rule the roost, they fend to keep their families permanently short of money. This extends beyond not giving their partners to live on, to taking money from them and their children. And this in term cause move conflict and trauma on children at large. (Audrey Mullender, Gill Hague, Liz Kelly, 2003; 185).

5.2.4 JEALOUSY AND SEXUAL JEALOUSY

There is a sub-theme in a number of both the children's and mothers account where the man, whether he is the children's own father or not, wants to be the centre of attention and is literally jealousy of any care given to the children or to others, including other members of the family.

5.2.5 VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL AGGRESSION

This is when there is a bitter communication between spouses includes causing psychological pain to another parson or perceived as knowing an indent (Infante and Wigley, 1986:173)

5.2.6 LACK OF EDUCATION AND PASTORAL CARE

The lack of education and pastoral care leads to lack of instruction on the meaning of marriage. This is especially now that most schools are controlled by the government and not by churches.

This has had its effect on these growing up and preparing for marriage

CHALLENGE: A vast number of children never go to school at all and receive little religious instruction at any other time.

Again, pastoral care workers are few and those that are available because overburdened and discouraged (Taylor H, 1983: 187).

According to Taylor, these few pastors often lack proper training for this task. They need further instructions themselves before they can instruct others.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS/RESEARCHERS OWN REFLECTION ON CHILDREN

5.3.1 AT HOME: And churches

-parents must understand that God is in a way involved in the “giving of children” One must see that children are a reward from God (Ps 127:3). So, they need to be catered and cared for.

The confession that God created man, is also the basis of this confession (Gen 1:26 28 and Ps

139:14-16) children are not a surprise to God. God knows about their existence, even though the ones from whom they spring are not aware of their moment of conception (Malan Nel 2000: 11).

They must be loved by both parents as God's creation.

God involves children and other young people in his coming to his people. It pleases him to use children when approaching people. They are in a special way part of religious ceremonies.

The Passover meal and the instruction by the Deuteronomy's (Deut 6) are sufficient for this.

Children are dialogically involved in these events and are not receivers of bad information. They are included in the dealings of God with his people and with people outside the community of his covenant people.

Example

A little girl tells Naaman's wife of the prophet in her own country (2 Kings 5:2-3).

David is probably a young boy in his mid-teens when he becomes involved in God's dealings with

Israel. At this age he is anointed to become King of Israel (Sam 16-17).

Daniel is according to some, an early adolescent when he refuses, at the table of the King himself to eat and drink what is set before

him (Dan 18). There are many instances of children and other young people included by God in his dealings with people.

Jeremiah is yet another example.

The New Testament also emphasizes the importance of children in the arts of God. Young men are involved in the first tragic and disciplinary act in the early churches (Acts 5). Children kneel, together with their parents, during a prayer meeting with a departing apostle (Acts 21: 5)

“Unmarried daughters” have the gift of prophecy (Acts 21: 9). They attend worship services are directly addressed in the so-called “haustafeln” (Eph 6).

This is the covenant of parents together with their children.

The covenant instructs children to obey their parents in the lord. Fathers should not provoke their children to wrath, but bring them in the nurture and admonition of the lord.

The examples mentioned above are merely instances of God’s dealing with and through children and other young people

AGAIN

-REALLY 1. Every child has the right to basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services.

2. He has the right to be protected at home from maltreatment, neglected by one of his/her parents,, abuse or degradation (Child Law Manual, G-19).

Pastors immediate responses to the traumatised child

-Must ensure that the child is safe, and feels as possible, in the immediate situation.

-Talk to the child calmly and in a matter of- fact way

-It may help the child to know that he or she is not alone in experiencing trauma.

Praise the child although not effectively, for being brave enough to disclose what had happened.

- Reassure the child, that the abuse or traumatic event was not his or her fault.

-Accept the entire child's feelings about the abuse and the abuser, even if the feelings are confused or positive towards the offender rather than tell the child how she/ he should be feeling.

- Try to ensure that the child is protected from the overwhelming responses of significant others. (Child Law Manual, D-790).

- Encourage the child to talk but do not put pressure on him/her.

-Do not give reassurance that is impossible to uphold.

-Allow for the expression of emotion; even if the emotions expressed do not appear to be appropriate by adult standards.

-Refer both caregiver and child for assessment and therapy where resources exist.

5.3.2 AT SCHOOL:

-there should be guidance and counselling teachers who will look after disadvantaged and traumatised children

-The Dept of Education should provide training and counselling skills to the teachers at all levels.

-Teacher- pupil- parent association should be effectively implemented to ensure that school environment is at least maintained similar to that of the child's home.

Parents should be allowed to visit schools whenever necessary and be encouraged to do so at all time in order to enhance their interest in their children's work, so as to improve academic performance of their children.

In this type of association, all parties should feel equal and free to communicate with ease.

5.2 CONCERNING THE TREATMENT OF WOMEN BY THEIR HUSBANDS/MALE.

All males/husbands in a marriage situation should understand that, in God's mercy, all humanity are endowed with equal capabilities, share equally in the common wealth given by God.

In common other words, whenever God is to be it in the church, home in the society, no form of discrimination among the creatures of God can ever be justified (Hassink E, 1995: 2).

Husbands in a marriage situation should understand that all human beings are children of God; no one is the child of the earth and therefore should be treated with dignity.

Females as humans have the image of God and each and every human being, regardless of age, class, gender or race, are endowed with dignity and respect.

Physical, spiritual, social, economic and cultural resources should be used to sustain all God's creatures including women. This is in line with the message of Jesus Christ, who came to give abundant life to all.

African women, therefore, see Christ as the saviour who takes them out of life-denying situation such gives them abundant life (Hassink E, 1995:2)

The pastor in particular, should encourage and allow women to fulfil their callings in the churches and responsibilities at home as equal inheritors of common wealth of God.

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