universität wien

DISSERTATION / DOCTORAL THESIS

Titel der Dissertation /Title of the Doctoral Thesis

„Pastoral Counselling in the Spirit of St Francis de Sales: A Comparative Study of Person-Oriented Spiritual Direction in St Francis de Sales and Person-Centred Counselling in Carl R. Rogers – Developing a Strategy for Pastoral Counselling in the Context of India“

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angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doktor der Theologie (Dr. theol.)

Vienna, February 2016

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt / degree programme code as it appears on the student record sheet:	A 780 011
Dissertationsgebiet lt. Studienblatt / field of study as it appears on the student record sheet:	Katholische Fachtheologie
Betreut von / Supervisor:	Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Johann Pock

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Foreword

Joy, gratitude and relief are my predominant sentiments as I finish this work. I thank God Almighty for the gift of life as well as the love with which He guides me through the years. I express my sincere thanks to my family for their love, support and prayers that have always stood me in good stead.

My thanks are due to all MSFS Provincials of the SW India Province in the last seven years who granted me necessary permission to take up this study, supported and encouraged me during the course of this research.

I am indebted to the Chorherren-Stift Klosterneuburg, Austria, which served as my 'home-away-from-home' during my stay in Vienna. I am absolutely indebted to Rev. Abbot Primate Bernhard Backovsky, Dechant Beno Anderlitschka and all members of his community for their camaraderie, unstinted support and encouragement.

Without the consistent support of Prof Dr. Johann Pock, my research guide, this project would not have been possible. I thank him for his guidance, patience, encouragement and for his personal and academic accompaniment. His keen interest in the subject matter proved a constant boost during my study years.

I express my thanks to Prof. Marianne Schlosser and Prof. Antony Kolencherry who offered me valuable guidance regarding the subject matter, especially in the chapters on spirituality. My special thanks to Dr Karl Heinz Ladenhauf, pastoral psychologist, trainer, and founder of the Austrian Society for Pastoral Psychology, for his meticulous reading of the text and offering helpful tips and necessary corrections.

I thank all the OSFS in Austria, Germany, and in the USA who supported this study through their encouragement and helpful suggestions besides granting me access to their libraries. I thank Dayanand Edappally who read through, corrected and made the manuscript readable. I remember all the participants in the survey who shared with me their frank opinions, remarks and suggestions; so too all my friends and colleagues at the University of Vienna and all the professors and staff there who supported me in my studies in various ways. I cannot forget my spiritual friends, the power of whose prayerful support I often experienced in my difficult times.

I whole-heartedly dedicate this work to all my good friends and well-wishers in Europe in gratitude for their love, friendship and support which made my stay, work and life here an unforgettable and meaningful experience.

"We must act on the minds of others as far as possible as the angels do, graciously and without coercion."[1] – St. Francis de Sales to Jane de Chantal on 14 October 1604.

"I find that when I am closest to my inner, intuitive self, when I am somehow in touch with the unknown in me, when perhaps I am in a slightly altered state of consciousness, then whatever I do seem to be full of healing. Then simply my *presence* is releasing and helpful to the other."[2] – Carl R. Rogers in *A Way of Being*.

INTRODUCTION

Much has been written in recent times about spiritual direction and pastoral counselling. The vast amount of literature available on the subject surprises researchers. This phenomenon reveals a basic truth: the topic is absolutely relevant even today. Secondly, the fact that so much research is being carried out in the field shows there is need for more. Over the years large numbers of priests and lay people alike have been entering the field of spiritual direction. And it is good, too. Spiritual direction is not the monopolistic charism of the clergy or the religious. Pope Francis teaches that 'it is a charism of the lay people.'[3]

In spite of so much stuff written and spoken about spiritual direction, no doubt even today it is difficult to find a good spiritual director. Pope Francis, fully aware of this reality, says, "It is not easy to accompany. It is not easy to find a confessor, a spiritual father. It is not easy to find a man with rectitude of intentions, in order that this spiritual direction, this confession not be a nice chat among friends but without depth."[4]

The Church has been carrying out this ministry of guiding and directing persons for almost two millennia. She has always felt the need to respond adequately to the new challenges while remaining faithful to her hallowed traditions. Since the development of counselling and psychotherapy, in spite of initial hesitation, the Church has been trying to integrate it into her ministry. Pastoral counselling developed as a result of such an attempt.

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[1] Francis de SALES, *Selected Letters*, tr. Elisabeth STOPP, Stella Niagra : DeSales Resource Centre, 2011. p. 68. « Il nous faut le plus qu'il est possible agir dans les espritz comme les Anges font, par des mouvemens gracieux et sans violence. » *Oeuvres de Saint François de Sales* (AE), Vol. XII, p. 361.

[2] Carl R. ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980 (1995 ed.), p.129. Emphasis in the original.

[3] Address by Pope Francis to Consecrated Men and Women of the Diocese of Rome, in Rome on 16 May 2015. Available online: https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/may/documents/papa-francesco_20150516_religiosi-roma.html (15.1. 2016).

[4] Ibid.

Situating this Study in Context

This dissertation makes an attempt to combine the spiritual tradition of the Church, especially that of Salesian spirituality, with the developments in the field of psychology and psychotherapy, of the person-centred approach (PCA) of Carl Rogers. Hardly any literature on this specifically combined approach, especially written in a manner that suits the pastoral context of India, is currently available. Nevertheless, there is no denying the fact that some articles written in English and in German in the recent past about spiritual direction in the Salesian tradition can be found. A few piecemeal approaches have also been attempted through short articles to compare Salesian spirituality with different therapy forms like Logotherapy and the psychoanalytical approach of Carl Jung. One of the major contributions to this topic in our time in the German-speaking area was a degree thesis (*Diplomarbeit*) by Günter Gresse at the Theological Faculty of the University of Paderborn, Germany, in 1985.[5] I have been aware of these works and have taken into account these developments while working on this dissertation.

Two recently published studies on Salesian spirituality done in India are authored by Thomas Perumalil[6] and Devasia Manalel.[7] Perumalil basically deals with topics like perfection and growth in spiritual life. Manalel, who has dealt extensively with spiritual direction in Salesian tradition, has done it from the point of view of anthropology, methodology, and the like. It is indeed a serious work in the realm of spiritual direction but has a totally different perspective from that of this work. I am firmly convinced that the present situation of India requires, in many cases, an integration of spirituality and psychotherapy; hence the need for pastoral counselling. No serious attempt has so far been made to compare or integrate Salesian spiritual direction with counselling/psychotherapy, simultaneously taking into account the special social and pastoral situation of India.

My approach in this work is totally different from the above-mentioned studies. This work has an entirely different aim. First of all, I approach the topic from the point of view of practical theology. Secondly, the main intention of this work is to explore the possibility of combining the Salesian way of spiritual direction with the person-centred approach (PCA)

[5] See Günter GRESSE, *Salesianische Seelenführung und moderne Gesprächspsychologie: Ein Vergleich. Seine Bedeutung für die Personale Begegnung im alltäglichen Miteinander*, Paderborn: 1985, (Diplomarbeit an der Theologischen Fakultät Paderborn).
[6] See Thomas PERUMALIL, *Perfection: A Salesian Perspective*, Bangalore: Indian Institute of Spirituality, 1998.
[7] See Devasia MANALEL, *Spiritual Direction: A Methodology*, Bangalore: SFS Publications, (2nd ed.), 2008.

of Carl Rogers to develop a strategy for pastoral counselling. In my opinion, pastoral counselling is an acute need in India and these two approaches should be brought together to formulate a new strategy.

India has had a long tradition of spiritual direction. The gurukula system[8] which was prevalent in ancient India is an example. Moreover, one comes across spiritual guides (*gurus*) in all religious denominations who are inspired by ancient Indian traditions. Many seekers from the West have found spiritual solace in India. Spiritual direction, therefore, is nothing new to India. Currently there is a renewed demand for spiritual direction and a pressing need for counselling in the country. An integration of spirituality and counselling and vice versa might serve the purpose as much in India as in the West. This need is much greater in India, in view of the fact that the people in India receive very little mental health care unlike in the West and other developed countries.

The campaign to attribute a spiritual dimension to psychotherapy and to incorporate spiritual interventions and practices into its practical realm has become a felt need in recent times especially in the West. The growing stock of literature in this field is a clear indication of the same. Many psychotherapists now are keen to dig into the spiritual roots of many psychological issues. This particular need is greater in the Indian context although precious little is being done about it. A successful strategy for pastoral counselling in the Indian context requires a sound spiritual basis. At the same time it should lay itself open to new insights from psychology and related social sciences. What is needed, in my opinion, is an integrated and eclectic approach. Pope Francis appeals for more intensive training and use of human sciences, including psychology, without being submerged under its onslaught: "And this can be done only by a wise man, a wise woman. But also formed! Today you cannot go only with good will: today the world is very complex and human science also helps us, without falling into psychologism, but it helps us to see the path."[9]

Research Question

This research revolves around the fundamental question, how can we develop a method of pastoral counselling suited to the context of India and based on the strong foundations of Salesian spirituality and the methods of Carl Rogers? Is it possible or desirable to bring

[8] The *gurukula* system was a typical Indian educational setup in ancient times where the disciples stayed with the guru (teacher/master) and was individually trained, guided and formed by him.
[9] Pope Francis; from his Address in Rome on 16 May 2015. (mentioned above).

them together? What are the risks involved in bringing spirituality and psychology under one umbrella? What elements can be safely taken from both of them, which areas should be cautiously handled, and what elements should be totally eliminated? What has been the attitude of the Church towards psychology and psychotherapy in the past – and at present? What lessons can one learn from the lives and methods of Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers?

Why Salesian Spirituality? It is because of my familiarity with it and my belief that Salesian spirituality could offer a relevant way of spiritual direction. And as for Carl Rogers, the author's enchantment with the psychotherapist began during work on his B Ph (Bachelor of Philosophy) thesis nearly two decades ago. Besides, the pastoral counselling movement from the beginning has been closely associated with the person-centred approach (PCA), although later it branched out and received affiliation from different schools of therapy like psychoanalysis, logo therapy, Jungian therapy, systemic therapy, etc. PCA displays transparency and openness to diversity, an eclectic approach and in the past few decades a judicious receptivity to spiritual realities. What, however, drew me at the beginning was the apparent similarity between Salesian spirituality and PCA based on their common humanistic touch and their emphasis on human qualities.

Sources and Methods

This study, basically hermeneutic in nature, is based on the writings of Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers and on numerous secondary studies on the topic. The main method applied in this work is that of hermeneutics – study and interpretation of literature in the field of Salesian spirituality and that of the person-centred approach. I have generally relied on English and German translations of the works of Francis de Sales, but at the same time, frequently referred to the original in French for greater clarity and originality. The study also involved references to a large mass of secondary literature in Salesian spirituality, PCA, spiritual direction and pastoral counselling. The research also brought me into intense discussions with a number of experts from both fields who skilfully guided me with their invaluable suggestions. The study is partly supported by an empirical survey although not based on its results.

The author has extensively drawn from the letters of St Francis de Sales, which remain excellent extant examples of his spiritual direction. True, the biographers of Francis de Sales speak of his way of spiritual direction, but their brief descriptions provide limited

enlightenment on the subject. The letters of Francis de Sales, on the other hand, allow one to experience a profound insight into the way he directed souls. Written in a uniquely personal style, they exude love and care and unfailingly infuse in the addressee courage and optimism. His pleasantly forceful manner of writing, the gentle persuasiveness that shines through his words, without ever violating personal freedom, the utter trust and confidence in God's providence and the constant assurance of accompaniment etc. make his letters extremely special. They are also full of practical spiritual wisdom and psychological insights, coming as they are from an insightful master craftsman.

Personal Interest

From a personal point of view, this study has also been inspired by the mission entrusted to me by my priestly vocation. Bishop Joseph Rey, co-founder of the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales (MSFS), commissioned the venerable Father Peter Marie Mermier, founder of the MSFS, thus: "Yours is a triple task: study St Francis de Sales; imitate his virtues, *form your method of guiding people on his: full of gentleness to sinners.*"[10] So it is the bounden duty of every MSFS to study Francis de Sales and to form a method of guiding people based on that of the Saint and the particular context.

The MSFS have a strong presence in India with nearly a thousand priests, more than a hundred educational institutions and almost two dozen pastoral centres which bring them into close contact with thousands of people on a daily basis. In the recent past it has been discussed time and again at different province levels how to train more personnel for the counselling ministry. The MSFS have unequivocally decided to engage actively in this ministry. The many pastoral centres they have opened, where pastoral counselling and spiritual direction are freely offered, are a clear indication of the execution of this decision. The background of these deliberations also partially influenced my decision to take up this study.

A Pastoral Response

There are also several others who follow the Salesian[11] tradition in India. They include religious congregations, and associations, both secular and clerical, who follow the spirituality of St Francis de Sales. Many are engaged in priestly and religious formation,

[10] As quoted in the Constitutions of the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales (MSFS), No. 9. Emphasis mine.
[11] What is meant by 'Salesian' here is: connected with or following the spirituality of St Francis de Sales (Sales →Salesian). In this work it does not refer to the Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB).

spiritual direction, preaching, pastoral ministry and counselling. There is a felt need to respond to contemporary challenges in the Salesian way. To develop a strategy to confront these challenges was a compelling need among different Salesian congregations. This study can, therefore, be viewed as a pastoral response to the challenges the Church in India faces today.

Another serious challenge raised by recent changes in society is the need for spiritual guidance and counselling, especially at the personal and family levels. The present situation of India obliges the Church to engage actively in the ministry of counselling and guidance.[12] Unfortunately, however, the inability of pastors to deal with the psychological needs and mental anguish of the faithful has created a vacuum in the Indian pastoral scenario. That many people avail themselves of the limited facilities available is a matter of satisfaction. But is this sufficient? It is perceived as a challenge to the Church. How to respond concretely to this challenge? Many have no answer. In my opinion, Francis de Sales and Rogers could point the way.

The way the pastors deal with the people entrusted to their care also needs scrutiny. I have often come across people who complain about priests' inability to deal with human beings in a humane manner. The Indian laity do not appreciate [they never really did; only tolerated in the past!] the authoritarian, bulldozing, clericalized approach of their pastors. Many priests, however, are not prepared to shed their antiquated ways of pastoral care. This is a common complaint often aired in India: priests are more often than not authoritarian, rigid, and lack basic human qualities to deal with the faithful and their problems. What they expect is to find priests who are equipped to deal with the faithful in a more humane way, with respect and empathy. The spirit of St Francis de Sales and of Carl Rogers can be a lodestar in the manner of dealing with human beings.

It is hoped that this study will contribute to the field of Salesian spirituality, spiritual direction, pastoral counselling and guidance in general. I also trust it will promote further research in these fields, which I believe is a pastoral necessity for a more effective Church in India.

[12] See The Statement of Indian Theological Association (ITA) issued on 31 July, 2015. Available online: http://www.itanet.in/ITA%20Statements2015.html (25.1.16). See especially part IV: *Pastoral Response to Contemporary Challenges* and Part V: *Specific Recommendations*, (Nos. 41-54).

CHAPTER 1

Pastoral Counselling as Continuation of the Healing Ministry of Jesus: Background, History and Importance

Introduction

Pastoral ministry is the activity of the Church in fulfilment of the command of Jesus to proclaim the Gospel and to make God known and loved in the whole world. The Church received this command from Jesus himself who founded the Church to continue his ministry in the world.[1] It involves bringing the message of joy, hope and consolation to humanity; in its joys, hopes and sorrows the Church is inextricably linked.[2]

Although in Protestant circles the pastoral ministry (*Pastoral*) is often interchangeably used with pastoral care (*Seelsorge*[3]), in Catholic theology a difference is often made between pastoral ministry and pastoral care.[4] The pastoral ministry of the Church takes different forms and shapes in responding to the needs of the times, but at all times she remains faithful to the original command of Jesus. The Church fulfils her mission, among others, through direct preaching, teaching, celebration of the sacraments, forming communities of believers and being at the service of all peoples. In this she imitates Jesus who brought God's salvation to the world, not only through his words, but also his deeds, signs and wonders and, above all, through his suffering, death and resurrection. Through her ministry the Church helps human beings in their efforts to achieve fuller development of their persons.[5] Pastoral ministry takes place not only in the Church or in an established religious context, but the care of souls can take place even in the most ordinary situations of human life. It takes different shapes and forms according to existential situations here and now. It must, moreover, be admitted that the context of pastoral care has become more complex than ever before.[6]

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[1] Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), Nos. 1-3.
[2] Cf. *Gaudium et Spes* (GS), The Pastoral Constitution of Vatican II. Nos 1-3.
[3] The German word *Seelsorge* is extremely difficult to translate. It is such an all-embracing term with different meanings. In this work I have translated this word as the following (depending on the context): pastoral ministry, ministry, pastoral care, pastoral service.
[4] Cf. Joseph MÜLLER, *Pastoral* in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, (LThK) Walter KASPER (Ed.), Band 7, Freiburg: Herder, 1998, p. 1434.
[5] Cf. GS, Nos. 41, 43.
[6] Cf. Karl Heinz LADENHAUF / Rainer BUCHER, *'Räume des Aufatmens. Welche Seelsorge brauchen Menschen heute?*' in Rainer BUCHER (Ed.), *Die Provokation der Krise. Zwölf Fragen und Antworten zur Lage der Kirche*, Würzburg: Echter, 2004, (154-176), pp. 154- 156.

1.1 Foundation of Pastoral Ministry

The primary goal of pastoral theology is to fulfil the mandate Jesus handed to the Church. This mandate is to be fulfilled in the concrete life situations of the Church and the society and in their particular cultural contexts.[7] Pastoral ministry is the 'core business' (*Kerngeschäft)* of the Church.[8] The pastoral service of the Church is firmly based on the ministry of Jesus, Son of God and Saviour of humankind. The Church continues this ministry of Jesus especially through the Liturgy and her pastoral ministry.[9] God actively seeks reconciliation with His creation through Jesus Christ. Like a shepherd He searches for and goes after the lost one.[10] His characteristics are tenderness, love, mercy, caring, and compassion. The condescension and the searching nature of God are seen in the person of Jesus. The Church has the responsibility to care for all the followers of Christ and also for the whole of humanity.[11]

The pastoral ministry should be linked to the liturgy which, in turn, should lead to proper pastoral activity. Both are mutually linked and complement each other.[12] The Church's ministry cannot be reduced to liturgical celebrations alone. Without fruitful pastoral praxis, the liturgy becomes dry, meaningless and ritualistic. Jesus, as shepherd, makes a sacrifice of himself for his sheep. Jesus commissioned his twelve apostles to be shepherds and to continue his ministry. The Church is obliged to continue this ministry of Jesus and to fulfil his command: "Give a shepherd's care to the flock of God that is entrusted to you: watch over it, not simply as a duty, but gladly, as God wants."[13] Every baptised Christian is called to be a minister in his/her[14] environment to continue the ministry of Jesus, each according to his or her calling.

Over the years, even the very concept of pastoral care has assumed a different meaning. Pastoral psychology has contributed a great deal to create this shift in focus and approach. It has helped create a broad concept of pastoral care which is not necessarily focused on a

[7] Cf. Paul M. ZULEHNER, *Pastoraltheologie. Band 1. Fundamental pastoral*, Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1989, pp. 33-34.
[8] Cf. LADENHAUF / BUCHER, *Räume des Aufatmens.* p. 157.
[9] Cf. S*acrosanctum Concilium* (SC), The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Vatican II, Nos. 5-13.
[10] Cf. Eze 34.11-16, Ps 23, Mt 18: 12-14, Jn 10:1-11.
[11] Cf. GS, Nos. 1-3.
[12] Cf. SC, No. 10. See also *Instruction on the Proper Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (S.C.R. *Inter Oecumenici*), issued on 26 September 1964, Nos. 4-8.
[13] 1 Pet 5:2. The New Jerusalem Bible (NJB, Pocket Edition), Mumbai: St Pauls, 1998.
[14] I have generally used the masculine gender to refer to persons in order to avoid the clumsy reading of the text. It does not reflect any gender prejudice whatsoever.

priest or done only by men.[15] Today the term 'pastoral ministry' has indeed expanded so broadly that a definition is difficult as it might sound restrictive.

1.1.1 Ministry of Jesus: Foundation of the Ministry of the Church

What is the basis of the ministry of the Church? It is none other than the ministry of Jesus and his command to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth and to do as he had done. Jesus set a wonderful example of his own ministry. He went about preaching the Kingdom of God to all people, especially to the poor. He urged people to conversion. He showed through his words and all the more through his deeds what the Heavenly Father is like and the nature of God's Kingdom. He set an example of love and service by washing the feet of his disciples. He brought people healing and forgiveness by curing them physically and spiritually, and instituted the Church to continue his ministry here on earth.

Jesus carried out his ministry without looking for any reward. In the same way, "Christian ministers are called to give such a self-giving service without expecting an immediate reward."[16] Every Christian secures his life when he loses it for Christ,[17] who considered it his ministry to uplift humanity, to restore to all human beings their worth and dignity as children of God. He showed a preference for the poor, a point which has been highlighted by the life and teachings of Pope Francis. From his biography:

> My people are poor and I am one of them,' he has said more than once, explaining his decision to live in an apartment and cook his own supper. He has always advised his priests to show mercy and apostolic courage and to keep their doors open to everyone. The worst thing that could happen to the Church, he has said on various occasions, "is what de Lubac called spiritual worldliness," which means, "being self-centred." And when he speaks of social justice, he calls people first of all to pick up the *Catechism*, to rediscover the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes.[18]

Christians are called to service which involves sacrifice and self-emptying. In the opinion of well-known Viennese pastoral theologian Paul M. Zulehner, the ministry of the Church today should have the following objectives as primary goals: working towards peace

[15] Cf. LADENHAUF / BUCHER, *Räume des Aufatmens.* p. 159.
[16] Ezamo MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, New Delhi: ISPCK, 2009, p. 5.
[17] Cf. Mt 19:19.
[18] From the biography of Pope Francis, from the Vatican Homepage: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/biography/documents/papa-francesco-biografia-bergoglio_en.html (15.1.2016).

(*shalom)* and liberation, giving hope, standing up for life, bringing healing, and the rediscovery of the 'people of God.'[19]

Jesus as a king and servant-God, tried to establish the Kingdom of God (Jn 18: 33-37). As a priest he offered himself up for his people as a mediator between God and human beings. As a prophet, Jesus proclaimed God's word to his people. Jesus came to serve and not to be served. This truth was frequently repeated by him (Mt 20:26-28, Mk 9:35, 10: 42-45). As servant of God, Jesus considers it his mission to bring wholeness to the lives of human beings. In his teaching, preaching and through his whole ministry he tries to reconcile men and women to himself and to the Father. His suffering was for this purpose. It is clearly shown in Jesus' Nazareth Manifesto. He considers it his duty to bring healing and liberation to the poor through the Good News (Lk 4: 18-19. Cf. Isa 61:1-3).[20]

The Church, too, has this duty to bring about bodily, psychological and spiritual healing because she bases her ministry on that of Jesus. She has to place herself on the side of the suffering people in word and deed, in her option and in her empathy for them. This is an unmistakable and clear biblical demand.[21]

1.1.2 Contemporary World and its Needs

Through the centuries the Church has proclaimed the message of the Gospel and ministered to the spiritual and temporal needs of her members and non-members. The Church has the responsibility to cater to the needs of the time. She has to read the signs of the times: "At all times the Church carries the responsibility of reading the signs of the time and of interpreting it in the light of the Gospel, if it is to carry out its task."[22] It means the ministry of the Church has to take into account the concrete needs of the people in the context in which they live. Pastoral ministry has a diaconal character. It is following Jesus by acting in his spirit and his message of the Kingdom of God. The Church has to do it today in the post-modern context. What has Jesus got to tell the people living in today's postmodern world?[23]

The times keep changing and so do the needs of the people. The needs of the people – both spiritual and material- differ from time to time, from one culture to another. Therefore, if

[19] Cf. ZULEHNER, *Fundamentalpastoral*, pp. 64-99.
[20] Cf. Ibid., pp.19-21
[21] Cf. LADENHAUF / BUCHER, *Räume des Aufatmens*, p. 160.
[22] GS, No. 4.
[23] Cf. LADENHAUF / BUCHER, *Räume des Aufatmen*, p. 162.

she has to be truly faithful to her mission of proclaiming the Gospel and working for the establishment of the Kingdom of God, she has to take into account people's joys, sorrows, and the needs of the time.[24]

The Church has always stood by her faithful in their joys and sorrows. She has strengthened them to face their difficulties, offered them courage in times of trials, consolation in bereavement and loss, and spiritual guidance in times of disorientation. In the early centuries the Church stood firmly behind the believers when they had to face persecution, apostasy and material and spiritual deprivation. Gradually there arose different types of pastoral care to cater to the different categories and groups of people. Thus, today we hear of pastoral care of the sick, the mentally challenged, taking care of the poor and the marginalized, youth ministry, caring for refugees and migrants, championing life and human dignity, individual care of souls, pastoral counselling, and much more. All these are different forms of pastoral ministry. Over the years, in the Catholic Church in the field of pastoral care, priestly monopoly has given way to active and well-trained lay people who engage themselves in different pastoral activities.[25] Experienced pastoral theologians argue that a clericalized, priest-centred and ritual-oriented Church is passé.[26]

1.1.3 Responding to the Needs of the Time

Every generation of Christians has the obligation to serve the Lord, and not follow the spirit of the age (*Zeitgeist*). But at the same time, as noted earlier, the Christians are called to serve the Lord in (our) their own times, responding to the challenges of the times and bringing his message to the present age and making known his love and mercy to the world in the context of today. Therefore, the practice of the Church should respond to the needs of the times. Pastoral Theology, therefore, deals with the basic ministry and actions of the Church in specific contexts. The Church should constantly ask herself if her ministry is relevant to the times.[27] To present Jesus in the realities of our context and our times is one of the main goals of the pastoral ministry. It also means presenting Jesus in the individual

[24] Cf. GS, No.1
[25] Cf. LADENHAUF / BUCHER, *Räume des Aufatmens*, pp. 161-162.
[26] See in this regard view-points of two important pastoral theologians in the German-speaking area. 1. ZULEHNER, *Zulehner zum Laienapostolat: "Priesterkirche" ist passe*. (15.1.16) https://kathpress.at/goto/meldung/1315688/zulehner-zum-laienapostolat-priesterkirche-ist-pass 2. Gisbert GRESHAKE, *Freiburger Theologe Greshake beklagt neuen Klerikalismus*, http://www.kath.net/news/27158
[27] Cf. Paul M. ZULEHNER mit Johannes HAAS, Andreas HELLER, Maria K. WIDL und Rupert STADLER *Fundamentalpastoral. Kirche zwischen Auftrag und Erwartung*, Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1989. p. 3.

life of every person. Pastoral ministry should help the people in the world today to ask relevant and concrete questions regarding their own lives in the light of faith.[28]

The challenges the world pose today are greatly different than a century ago or, rather, a decade ago. To respond to the challenges and needs of the present time, the ministers of the Church have to constantly update them and equip themselves anew. No wonder, many dioceses today have special teams and target groups for ministry. The Vienna Archdiocese with a vast variety of pastoral ministries is a classic example of this.[29]

The top priority of the Church in the first century was preaching the Gospel and taking care of the poor (Acts 6:1-7). In the Middle Ages the focus shifted to evangelisation of peoples, education, and training in Christian spirituality. The present-day world presents the Church with manifold challenges and tasks. Today the world is becoming increasingly secularised, families are breaking up, and new ways of life and forms of partnerships are on the rise. Human beings search frantically for their true identity in the messy world of today. The world looks rudderless in spite of all the progress and development humanity has achieved. Moreover, the world is witnessing a cultural plurality due to massive migration, intercontinental movement of refugees, free travel and employment possibilities. The Church must respond to the cultural changes taking place in an increasingly pluralistic world.[30]

1.2 Pastoral Psychology: The Psychology of Pastoral Care

What is pastoral psychology? What has it to do with the ministry of the Church? How does pastoral psychology help continue the ministry of Jesus? Pastoral psychology, when compared to several other theological disciplines, is one of the youngest branches with a modest past. It is a branch of theology which is still in the process of evolving and becoming. Pastoral psychology is a field of encounter for dialogue or creative exchange where learning takes place.[31] Pastoral psychologists are convinced that with the help of psychology, the pastor is able to understand better the crisis-ridden modern man who is struggling to come to terms with himself: "Only when the pastor understands something of

[28] Cf. LADENHAUF / BUCHER, *Räume des Aufatmens*, pp. 165-167.
[29] Vienna Archdiocese has specialized ministries for different cultural and ethnic groups (*Categoriale-seelsorge*). There are more than 25 Catholic ethnic and cultural groups in the Archdiocese.
[30] Cf. GS, Part II, Chapter II. The entire chapter deals with this topic.
[31] Cf. Isidor BAUMGARTNER (Hsg.), *Handbuch der Pastoralpsychologie*, Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1990. In Vorwort, (17-20), p. 17.

the heart and soul of the person, from the crises, conflicts, fears and also joys and hopes of the person, can he really be faithful to his vocation to be a pastor."[32]

The use of social sciences like psychology and sociology for pastoral ministry is not something totally new in the history of the Church. The Church allows the use of social sciences when they enhance her ministry and as long as they do not go against her teachings. *Gaudium et Spes* states: " In pastoral care, sufficient use must be made not only of theological principles, but also of the findings of the secular sciences, especially of psychology and sociology, so that the faithful may be brought to a more adequate and mature life of faith."[33] Psychologist and author Robert Kugelmann sees a new opening in the documents of Vatican II: "For psychology, the documents of the Vatican Council cast it and the other human sciences in a more favourable light."[34]

It is clearly a new opening on the part of the Church which is becoming more open to this science of human behaviour. A dialogue with Psychology is unavoidable, taking into account the situation today. This human science is required to help people come to themselves, realize their situation and go beyond themselves.[35] Every good human development is a work of God and should be used for the ministry of the Church. It is not unusual today to see many members of the Church, including priests and nuns, working as counsellors and therapists.

What should be the relationship between theology and psychology? It is not fair to make psychology a handmaid of theology, as many theologians would like to. Both are independent sciences, and the approach should be one of dialogue.[36] At the same time, a dialogue with psychology does not mean that theology blindly accepts all the anthropological and philosophical ideas of psychology which are at variance with Christian theology. A dialogue calls for acknowledging and accepting the differences between the two sciences and at the same time seeing critically the different views of the other. When one sees the other as a maid and oneself as master, there is no dialogue, exchange, or

[32] BAUMGARTNER, *Handbuch der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 18. Translation mine. Here I translate the German term *Seelsorger* as *Pastor* although it loses some of its relevance and meaning.
[33] GS, No. 62.
[34] Robert KUGELMANN, *Psychology and Catholicism. Contested Boundaries*, Cambridge University Press, (e-book, Kindle Edition), 2011, p. 64. [Note that the page numbers in some e-books such as Kindle Book, iBook, etc. vary depending on the instrument one uses. So this content may have another page number in another gadget].
[35] Cf. Isidor BAUMGARTNER, *Handbuch der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 18.
[36] Cf. Heribert WAHL, *Pastoralpsychologie-Teilgebiet und Grunddimension Praktischer Theologie* in *Handbuch der Pastoralpsychologie*, pp. 41-61. Here pp. 50-53

mutual learning possible.[37] Psychology cannot just be looked upon as a mere source of techniques and 'dubious' application models, but it can also at times be an 'outside prophet' for theology and pastoral work.[38] However, care must be exercised while incorporating psychology into ministry. Most schools of psychology have a particular understanding of human beings which is at variance with the Christian understanding of man and his relationship with God.[39]

Psychology challenges us about exclusively adhering to traditional and outdated methods of pastoral work. Isidor Baumgartner poses some relevant questions. How far is pastoral theology as well as practical theology really concerned with the 'care of souls' when it fails to take note of the people and their needs or fails to make them capable of loving? Why is it that the confessionals of the Church are getting emptied and at the same time there is a wild rush to the therapist's couch? Has healing and wholeness totally disappeared from confessionals or from the dialogues with the pastors? Do the faithful need psychologists for the care and healing of their souls?[40]As Freud wrote to his friend, a Swiss pastor, "what we are doing is the care of the souls in the best sense of the word."[41] Has the Church really neglected the real care of the souls in the present times? Or has the Church not been able to understand the signs of the time and respond to the needs of the time?

Healing was an important aspect of Jesus' ministry. He wanted his disciples to continue this ministry: "He sent them out to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal."[42] Pastoral psychology is to be seen as a place of learning (*Lernort*) for healing pastoral activities (*heilendes pastoralen Handeln*). And as such, it is not just a branch of practical theology but a fundamental dimension of theology itself which calls to mind the duty of theology to labour for the care of souls.[43]

It is also to be noted that the healing dimension of pastoral ministry is not to be restricted to pastoral counselling. Pastoral psychology also tries to bring out its healing power in group activities (eg., group dynamics), group work, proclamation and also in liturgy. Such

[37] Cf. WAHL, *Pastoralpsychologie-Teilgebiet und Grunddimension Praktischer Theologie*, pp. 50-53.
[38] Cf. BAUMGARTNER, *Handbuch der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 18.
[39] Cf. Heinz BRUNNER, *Menschenbilder in Psychologie und Psychotherapie* in *Handbuch der Pastoralpsychologie*, pp. 63-85.
[40] Cf. BAUMGARTNER, *Handbuch der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 19.
[41] As cited by BAUMGARTNER in *Handbuch der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 18.
[42] Lk 9:2.
[43] Cf. BAUMGARTNER in *Handbuch der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 19. The expression pastoral psychology as the basic element (German - *Grunddimension*) of practical theology is credited to Heribert Wahl. Reference to this expression and to him has been made several times in this work. I translate *Grunddimension* as basic element or basic dimension.

a ministry of healing, be it in charitable service (diaconia), preaching or in liturgical form, is central to practical theology. To the above-mentioned aspects pastoral psychology pays more attention than any other branch of practical theology. Pastoral psychology gives practical theology a new identity, competence and self-assurance.[44]

1.2.1 Pastoral Psychology as the Basic Element of Practical Theology

What is the status of pastoral psychology within practical theology? Is it an adjunct to practical theology? Or does it belong to the core of practical theology? Heribert Wahl argues that pastoral psychology should be a basic element (*Grunddimension*) of pastoral theology. It is a context where one can learn the healing power of the pastoral ministry. Therefore, it is not only a branch of pastoral theology but a basic dimension of it. Pastoral psychology has to bring out the legacy of the healing power of theology.[45]

According to Michael Klessman, pastoral psychology has three main functions: a) It serves to add a new dimension to theological knowledge. b) It serves to have knowledge of human beings. c) It helps us to have knowledge of our own selves.[46] Klessman considers pastoral psychology to be theology and psychology combined at the same time. It is theology in concrete practice. Pastoral psychology helps to have and to communicate religious experiences in pastoral counselling, therapy and in religious rituals.[47]

1.2.2 Development of Pastoral Psychology

The application of psychological insights and methods in the pastoral ministry is not something completely new. Directly or indirectly, knowingly or unknowingly, the Church has had recourse to psychological insights. One finds examples for this from the earliest times.[48] The whole development of pastoral psychology can be divided into two historical stages – the early history and the modern history.

[44] Cf. BAUMGARTNER, *Handbuch der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 19.
[45] Cf. WAHL, *Handbuch der Pastoralpsychologie*, pp. 41-59. Here pp. 49-52.
[46] Cf. Michael KLESSMANN, *Pastoralpsychologie. Ein Lehrbuch*, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchner Verlag, 2004, pp. 26-34.
[47] Cf. Ibid.
[48] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie* in *Handbuch der Pastoralpsychologie* p. 24.

1.2.2.1 From the Earliest Times to the 18th Century

One notices that in the earliest Christian communities special attention was paid to people who had biological and psychological needs.[49] Special needs of certain groups were also taken into account. Such is the case with the re-marriage of widows mentioned in 1 Cor. 7: 8-9. Care was taken not to offend the sensitivities of others in the community. The diaconal dimension of pastoral ministry was emphasized at all times in the ministry of the Church. Special attention was paid to those who deserved and needed it. A preferential option for the needy and suffering was part of the ministry of the Church from the beginning.[50]

It must, however, be admitted that there have been reservations regarding the admission of psychology into theology and ministry, especially in the Catholic Church. Some have strong reservations about accepting psychological concepts, insights, and values into the ministry of the Church because they believe the adoption of ideas from psychology tends to negate the Kingdom of God and create a 'humanistic Kingdom of God'. On the other hand, many believe it to have been part of the ministry of the Church from the beginning.[51]

Anyone who looks into the history of the Church cannot neglect the fact that even in the earliest writings of the Church one sees the elements of empathy, congruence and unconditional acceptance, conditions necessary for a counselling relationship. In the Fathers of the Church, especially in the Letters of Ambrose, Epistles of Barnabas and that of St Clement of Rome these elements can be found.[52]

1.2.2.1.1 Desert Fathers

The Desert Fathers occupy a prominent place when we consider this history. With the Tolerance Edict of Milan in 313, the persecution of Christians ended, and Christianity became the state religion, and other religions were prohibited. From the beginning of Christianity there were people who led an ascetic life of prayer, penance and works of charity with a certain detachment from the world. The Edict of Milan gradually diminished the ideal of Christian martyrdom because there was no more need for it but there was a yearning for a bloodless martyrdom. As Christianity gradually became identified with political power and its structure, these people sought a radical following of the Lord and

[49] Cf. Acts 6:1-6.
[50] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 23.
[51] Cf. David LYALL, *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1995, p. 2.
[52] Cf. Ibid., p. 3.

knowledge of the holy mysteries away from the world and its attractions and pomp.[53] That was also the beginning of religious life through a radical following of the Lord.[54]

These monks or Desert Fathers and Mothers, as they are called, were sought after by people who looked for spiritual guidance. They were looked upon as holy people who undertook the journey to find their real selves. They were believed to have fought and won the battle against themselves in the desert and thought to be in a position to help others. It was believed that their capabilities and skills were achieved through the long process of self-discovery and self-mastery. They were, in a way, psychologists of the time who could analyse the thoughts and deeds of the people who sought their help and suggest remedies.[55] As early as the fourth century, they had developed a method of spiritual direction - a method of helping people to deal with the problems of their spiritual life, which were quite similar to the modern methods of person-centred counselling.[56]

Clearly some form of 'psychological pastoral care' – such as encouraging and supporting the depressed, consoling the grieving, animating the disheartened, etc. – was part of the ministry of the Church from the earliest times. These forms of ministry were similar to today's pastoral counselling. If one looks at the earliest literature, four modes of pastoral care can be found in them – sustaining, reconciling, healing, and guiding. These elements were an integral part of the ministry of the Church from the beginning.[57]

1.2.2.1.2 Fathers of the Church and the Middle Ages

The patristic theologians, as learned people of their time, were also familiar with the prevalent 'psychological' knowledge and insights. In dealing with people and guiding them, especially of healing and liberating people possessed of evil spirits, they took recourse to the knowledge of the soul and psyche of the person. They discussed many of the issues that pastoral psychology today deals with. Tertullian, Cyprian, John Chrysostom, and later Augustine dealt with issues like the freedom of choice, the power of the will, the extent and limits of human power, how to overcome the tendency to evil inclinations, and the like. The letters of the Fathers like Clemens of Rome, Cyprian, Ambrose of Milan and

[53] Cf. BÄUMER Regina / Michael PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele. Geistliche Begleitung in der Zeit der Wüstenväter und der personzentrierte Ansatz nach Carl R. Rogers- eine Seelenverwandtschaft*?!, Würzburg: Echter, 2012, pp. 11-12.
[54] Cf. Jose KUMBLOLICKAL et al., *Religious Life: A Prophetic Vision* in *I Want Mission: MSFS - Mystics of God's Love for Prophetic Ministries Today*, Rome: MSFS Casa Generalizia, 2011, pp. 22-31.
[55] Cf. Anselm GRÜN, *Geistliche Begleitung bei den Wüstenvätern*, Münsterschwarzach: Vier-Türme, 1991, pp. 9-10; 16-17.
[56] Cf. BÄUMER / PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele.* pp. 50-64.
[57] Cf. LYALL, *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context*, p. 3.

John Chrysostom till Gregory the Great, although they are other-world-oriented, bring out skills of personal communication and guidance. Eusebius deserves special mention for his psychological insights and literature about human development.[58]

Fathers of the Church like Cyprian, Origen, Tertullian and Gregory of Nyssa show in their writings what inner attitudes and bodily composure are most suited for prayer. They knew how the body could influence the mind and consequently one's concentration in prayer.[59]

In the Middle Ages in matters concerning faith and Christian life one finds the application of psychological knowledge and wisdom of day-to-day life. In the works of learned theologians like Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure one can find many psychological insights.[60] They made many theological-psychological contributions in their writings and preaching. One also finds many psychological and person-oriented approaches in the writing of Hrabanus Maurus, Hildegard of Bingen and Petrus Hispanus.[61] In fact, Thomistic philosophy, theology and anthropology have laid a systematic and scientific foundation for modern psychology. The Catholic Church relied on Thomistic foundations to respond to the challenges posed by the modern world.[62]

Two stalwarts in the late Middle Ages were St Ignatius of Loyola and St Francis de Sales. In the retreats and spiritual exercises of Ignatius of Loyola in the 16th century we learn about the art of self-evaluation, individual guidance and conquering one's own self. St Francis de Sales was well-known for his person-oriented spiritual direction.[63] Thousands came to him for confession and spiritual guidance. In the writings of St Francis de Sales one can find many deep psychological insights intended to help Christians in their spiritual and temporal life.[64]

The Letters of St Francis de Sales, especially his letters of spiritual direction, the special object of my study for this research, show the depth of his insights into human nature, his understanding of human psyche and the special importance of empathy and personal relationship. Francis de Sales had such a deep psychological insight into the nature of

[58] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 24.
[59] Cf. Marianne SCHLOSSER, *Der Leib sei die Ikone der Seele. Gesten und Haltungen des Gebetes bei den Vätern* in *Geistvoll*, No. 2/2010, Vienna: Pastoralamt Erzdiözese Wien, 2010, pp. 8-12.
[60]Cf. Ermano PAVESI, *Pastoralpsychologie. Segen oder Fluch*? in *Vobiscum*, 3.1, Schellenberg (Liechtensteinberg): Publikationsorgan des Erzbistums Vaduz 2001, pp. 35-44.
[61] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 24.
[62] Cf. KUGELMANN, *Psychology and Catholicism.* pp.23-24. [In this book Kugelmann deals in detail with scholastic and neo-scholastic psychology. See chapters 2 and 3].
[63] This topic – person-oriented approach – will be discussed in detail in the later parts of this work.
[64] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 9.

human persons that he was able to guide each one individually and personally as needed.[65] More about St Francis de Sales will be dealt with later in this work.

One finds a more systematic and concrete application of psychology in the pastoral ministry of the Church only in the modern times. The modern times - with its openness and pluralism and, above all, with the development of psychology as an established and independent science and the emerging new pastoral situations - called for greater openness on the part of the Church and the development of pastoral psychological research and training.[66]

Moral theology is said to be the direct forerunner of pastoral psychology. Many of the questions with which moral theology dealt were pastoral-psychological in nature. Moral theology deals a lot with human behaviour, freedom of the will, influence of circumstances, extent of human responsibility and rightness and wrongness of human actions and similar topics. In this sense, moral theology is deeply connected with pastoral psychology. At the centre of all moral theological questions and research is the human being and his behaviour - many of them psychological in nature.[67]

1.2.2.2 In Modern Times

This part focuses on the development of pastoral psychology in German-speaking areas. Development in America is dealt with separately in the later part of this section. Not only pastoral psychology, but also pastoral theology and practical theology (*Praktische Theologie*) were not independent subjects until the first half of the 19th century.

1.2.2.2.1 Pastoral Medicine as Forerunner of Pastoral Psychology

As already mentioned, the development of pastoral psychology and pastoral counselling is inseparably connected with the care of the sick. Pastoral medicine further promoted the growth of pastoral psychology. Pastoral medicine supplied pastoral psychology with necessary background knowledge. A famous contributor in this area was the evangelical pastor J.C.F. Baehrens. In his research on the body-mind interaction, he already laid the foundation for the consideration of psycho-somatic elements in the field of pastoral psychology. Also, we cannot overlook another important figure, H.E. Paulinsky, who brought out detailed instructions for priests and pastors regarding absurdness, craziness,

[65] Cf. Franz WEHRL, *Schwerepunkte Salesianisher Seelenführung* in *Salesianische Studien*, Band 29, Eichstätt: Franz von Sales Verlag, 1996, p. 21
[66] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie,* p. 25.
[67] Cf. Ibid.

irrational behaviour, melancholy and such common forms of disorders and mental illness. In his instruction, he explains that many of these disorders could be prevented or healed through a good and effective approach of the priest. His manual was mainly aimed at priests in villages and remote areas where access to medical care and doctors was not easy in those times. In this sense one could say pastoral medicine was perhaps the oldest discipline of practical theology.[68] Pompey believes perhaps it was where we could find the earliest application of psychology – the oldest applied psychology![69]

F.C. Menzler, the so-called founder of pastoral medicine, brings out in his book '*The Influence of Medical Science on Practical Theology - A Contribution to Pastoral Medicine'* (Ulm, 1794) for the first time moral-psychological and pastoral-psychological treatment of pastoral aspects. The book deals with many topics that are basically psychological in nature. Four psychological areas, such as study of character, developmental psychology, motivational psychology, and social psychology are dealt with in this book. Here one finds that the then prevalent psychological knowledge and insights were used for pastoral purposes. He tried to combine these two sciences - practical theology and psychology - which were still in their early stages of development. In 1809, A. M. Vering published a book, *Versuch einer Pastoral-Medicine*[70]which also contained psychological inputs and knowledge useful for pastoral ministry. Topics dealt with include the influence of the body on thinking, that of age on man's temperament, of the season on the moods of a person, and the disorder of the psyche. A. M. Vering was a well-known scholar and physician and held lectures on pastoral medicine in Münster. He published another major work in this direction, *Psychischen Heilkunde*[71] in three volumes. Th. Schreger, M. J. Bluff, and M. Macher are the other known authors who carried out more research in pastoral medicine and paved the way for the establishment of an independent pastoral psychology in the first half of the 19th century.[72]

Interestingly, pastoral medicine dealt with more psychological questions than other medical sciences of the time. In the late 19th century two other well-known names in the field were Anselm Ricker, author of *Pastoral-Psychiatrie zum Gebrauche für Seelsorger,*[73] published in Vienna in 1888, and Ignaz Familler, author of *Pastoralpsychiatrie* (Freiburg,

[68] Cf. Adolf SLABY, *Pastoralmedizin* in LThK, Band 7, Freiburg: Herder, 1998, p. 1442.
[69] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, p.30.
[70] Roughly translated, *Attempt at a Pastoral Medicine.*
[71] Roughly translated, *Psychic Medicine.*
[72] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie,* p.31.
[73] Means *pastoral-psychiatry for the use of pastors.*

1898). Pastoral medicine as a science was basically an ecumenical enterprise. The developments were the result of an ecumenical exchange of ideas which were presented to the Evangelical and Catholic faculties.[74]

1.2.2.2.2 Pastoral Psychology and Pastoral Counselling: Early Developments

Pastoral psychology as an independent science can be traced back to Germany, especially to Würzburg. As early as 1773 in the new theology syllabus of Würzburg, it was stated, "instead of filling candidates with dry ontology, the focus should be to make them familiar with psychology and the knowledge of souls."[75] The goal of this training was to make them more aware of themselves and of their feelings and emotions and to help them become real pastors. The goal also included getting along with all classes and sorts of people and not to neglect anybody.[76] In 1779, A. J. Rosshirt, a pastoral-cum-moral theologian from Würzburg, made an attempt to connect moral theology with psychology. The first big and note-worthy work on pastoral theology in the German- speaking world came from F. Ch. Pittroff. It was published in 1783 in Prague and had a part dealing with the dialogue of the pastor in hospitals and his ministry with the sick, the dying, and the condemned. Already at that time theologians were convinced of the need for the personal training of pastors, enabling them to have a helpful relationship with the sick. The knowledge many theologians possessed was even better than the psychological knowledge prevalent at that time.[77]

Surprisingly, the history of the development of pastoral psychology was similar also in America. The development of pastoral care in America had also begun with pastoral care in the hospitals. Both movements were characterised by the concrete diaconal dimension of the pastoral ministry. More about the developments in America and its influence in the whole world will be treated in the later part of this chapter.

Another note-worthy practical theologian who contributed to the development of pastoral care was F. A. Schram. His book, *System der Pastorallehre zum allgemeinen Gebrauche der Schulen* published in 1788, contains material for training personnel to care for people pastorally in the different stages of life. The first volume lays stress on the development of suitable qualities required of pastors. It speaks of the qualities, dispositions of the heart and behaviour required for the office of the shepherd. In the second volume he explains the

[74] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 32.
[75] As quoted by POMPEY in *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 26. [Translation mine].
[76] Cf. Ibid.
[77] Cf. Ibid., p. 28.

pastoral wisdom (German, *Pastoralklugheit*) required for pastoral dialogue with people in critical situations like sickness, bereavement or imprisonment. One of the primary goals of pastoral training, according to him, should be forming the personality of the pastor suited to this ministry.[78]

In subsequent years pastoral psychology (let us say, pastoral counselling) gradually established itself according to the psychological knowledge of the time. One of the leading figures of this systematisation and structuring was Johann Micahel Sailer, one of the pioneers of pastoral theology in Germany, who later became the Bishop of Regensburg. In his lectures, published in various editions, one can read about the general rules and dispositions required for a pastoral counselling relationship. Some chapters contain important insights regarding conversations at the confessional and for counselling the sick. Like F. A. Schram, J. M. Sailer also emphasizes helpful pastoral care in the development of a well-rounded personality. A person's suitability and the acquisition of certain qualities necessary for pastoral counselling cannot be overlooked.[79]

1.2.2.2.3 In the 19th and 20th Centuries

In the beginning of the 19th century, the writings of P. M. Schenkl and D. Gollowitz contributed to the further development of this topic. Gollowitz's *Anleitung zur Pastoraltheologie* (*Introduction to Pastoral Theology*) distinguishes according to method and content, four types of pastoral conversation/dialogue: teaching, instructional, punitive and consoling. Viennese pastoral theologian Andreas Reichberger in his *Pastoralanweisung zum akademichen Gebrauche*[80] (1812), provides note-worthy pastoral psychological reflections. He narrates in this book the interior and exterior stance of the faithful (parishioners). In order to deal with the interior, one needs to know how the exterior functions. Knowledge of both interior and exterior is necessary to efficiently deal with human beings.[81]

From the second half of the 19th century onwards in the Catholic Church a discontinuity occurred regarding the training and equipping of pastors for pastoral counselling. One of those who revived a new interest in this field was a pastoral theologian from Freiburg, C. Krieg, who with his work *Wissenschaft der speziellen Seelenführung*[82] (Freiburg, 1904),

[78] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 28.
[79] Cf. Ibid., p. 29.
[80] Means roughly, pastoral instructions for academic use.
[81] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie* p. 29.
[82] Roughly translated, *The Art/Science of Special Spiritual Guidance*.

awakened anew interest in pastoral psychological themes. Decades later another Freiburg theologian, Constantin Noppel, focused on individual care of souls in the second part of his book *Aedificatio corporis Christi*. A real systematic discussion about the interaction between psychology and pastoral sciences, which made constructive use of psychological know-how and skills for the care of souls, took place only in the 1890s.[83]

Scientific research in the field of pastoral psychology gained momentum in Germany with the establishment of *Gesellschaft für Religionspsychologie*[84] in 1914. It was an attempt to make the pastoral psychological endeavour empirical and more scientific in line with developments in the field of psychology.[85] Pompey is of the opinion, although the empirical-experimental direction of pastoral psychology brought in many insights and findings for pastoral sciences, that they were not directly useful to the pastoral ministry as such. There was a lack of systematic integration and implementation of the findings in pastoral praxis.[86]

In the meantime, many of the Protestant practical theologians in Germany who were at the evangelical faculties at the universities trained themselves in psychoanalysis and did more research to integrate depth-psychology with theology. This increasing acceptance of psychology in pastoral ministry and its growth at university faculties led to the establishment of the society *Arzt und Seelsorger* in 1949 in Stuttgart and in 1972 the establishment of *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Pastoralpsychologie* (DGfP) to which later Catholics also joined. DGfP today is an umbrella organization in Germany for all pastoral psychologists, irrespective of differences based on denomination and school of psychotherapy they follow. DGfP originally had four sections: psychoanalytic, group-dynamics, clinical pastoral care and communications and behavioural psychology.[87]

The monitum[88] of Pope John XXIII in 1961[89] threw cold water on the efforts on the Catholic side to integrate psychoanalysis with ministry.[90] The efforts on the Protestant side

[83] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, pp.33-34.
[84] Means Society for Religious Psychology
[85] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, 35.
[86] Cf. Ibid.
[87] Cf. Ibid., p. 37.
[88] A monitum is an official warning of the Catholic Church, issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, (then known as Congregation of the Holy Office). For the full text of the above-mentioned monitum issued on 15.July 1961, see *Suprema Sacra Congregatio S. Officii*, AAS 53, 1961, p. 571.
[89] Robert KUGELMANN, *Psychology and Catholicism*, p. 298 (refer to explanation on footnote 65 in chapter 7 of the book). The monitum forbade priests practising or having recourse to psychoanalysis without prior permission of the competent ecclesiastical authority.

to integrate ministry with depth-psychology went on unhindered. In 1988 Walter Rebell, an evangelical NT specialist, published a book in Munich titled *Handbuch Psychologisches Grundwissen für Theologen*.[91] Another important work around this period was *Einführung in die Pastoralpsychologie,* from Joachim Scharfenberg which was published in 1985.[92]

One could easily conclude that the points emphasized by F. A. Schram and J. M. Sailer and other early pastoral theologians and pastoral psychologists are relevant even today. No pastoral counselling can be effective without the requisite personal qualities on the part of the counsellor. A century later, Carl Rogers, the great pioneer in the field of personal counselling, would tell that a counsellor should possess the following qualities without which no counselling can be successful. Rogers emphasized that congruence, unconditional positive regard, and empathy are necessary conditions in a therapeutic relationship. He calls them 'the conditions which facilitate psychological growth'. He argues that in the absence of these basic qualities in the counsellor no change is possible in the client.[93]

Similar qualities are demanded by the Catholic Church of her priests. In order to take care of the flock entrusted to his care a priest is to cultivate those qualities and virtues that help in his ministry. The Church demands that a priest should acquire those human qualities and virtues that make the relationship with his flock human, gentle and enriching. *Presbyterorum Ordinis* states, "In pursuit of this aim, priests will be helped by cultivating those virtues which are rightly held in high esteem in human relations. Such qualities are goodness of heart, sincerity, strength and constancy of mind, careful attention to justice, courtesy…" [94]

1.2.2.2.4 Concluding Remarks

Looking back at the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, we can say that pastoral psychology, especially in the German-speaking world, had a gradual development and evolution from moral theology, pastoral medicine, pastoral anthropology, and pastoral psychiatry. They helped pastors and theologians with psychological insights. None of these were, however, independent sciences. All these branches existed under the broad banner of pastoral

[90] Cf. Timothy COSTELLO, *Forming a Priestly Identity*, Rome: Editrice PontificiaUniversitaGreogoriana, 2002, pp. 258-259.
[91] Roughly translated, *The Handbook of Basic Psychological Knowledge for Theologians*.
[92] Cf. Isidor BAUMGARTNER, *Pastoralpsychologie: Einführung in die Praxis heilender Seelsorge*, Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1997, pp. ii- iv.
[93] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person. A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*, (1995 Edition), New York: Houghton Miffllin, pp. 60-63.
[94] *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (PO), Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, 7 December, 1965, No. 3.

theology.[95] As explained earlier, pastoral medicine and pastoral psychology can perhaps claim for themselves the status of the oldest forms of applied psychology. Much before the emergence of different forms of psychotherapy, pastoral psychology had developed its own methods of healing and caring for the soul.[96]

It is to be noted, however, that this interaction happened not in the particular context of pastoral sciences but in connection with the general context of the debate, or rather, controversies between psychology and fundamental theology. The development and establishment of psychology as an independent science in the late 19th century under the influence of Wilhelm Wundt who established a psychology laboratory in Leipzig in 1879 had a definitive influence on pastoral psychology. Other major developments that affected pastoral psychology and pastoral counselling were the movement of psychology in the direction of an empirical science, the increasing influence of psychoanalysis and depth psychology, and that of non-medical psychiatric therapy.[97]

1.2.2.3 Notable Catholic Contributions

It is to be noted that developments in the field of pastoral psychology were mainly a joint effort on the side of the Protestants although on the Catholic side individual efforts were made by a few individuals. One of the leading Catholic figures in this filed was Johann Micahel Sailer, Bishop of Regensburg.

The deliberate acceptance of empirical psychology in Catholic theology circles was an off-shoot of the 19th century revival of Scholasticism and Thomism as a Catholic response to the challenge of modernism. One of the leading figures of the movement was the Belgian Cardinal Desire-Joseph Mercier (1851-1926).[98] Belgium was the first centre of experimental psychology within a Catholic setting. He could well be called the father of Catholic psychology. He helped establish a psychology laboratory which later produced well-known psychologists like A. Thiery and A.M. V. Denberg. Mercier's famous book *Origins of Contemporary Psychology* was a pathfinder.[99]

Around this time, a Franciscan monk, Augustino Gemelli, a leading theologian and scholar, established a university and a psychology laboratory in Milan. The university was

[95] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, pp. 32-33.
[96] Cf. Ibid., p. 33.
[97] Cf. Ibid.
[98] Cf. KUGELMANN, *Psychology and Catholicism.* pp. 2, 38-40 & 71.
[99] Cf. Ibid., pp. 55-62. [In this book the author deals in detail with the revival of neo-scholasticism to counter the apparent threat faced by modernism and the purely empirical and scientific psychology].

one of the leading institutes of its kind in Italy. His research was focused on the psychology of the work- place. Other leading Christian psychologists in the following decades were J. Froebes, a Jesuit in Holland, and his student J. Lindwosky, professor in Cologne and Prague.[100] Willibald Demal, a Benedictine monk from Vienna, brought out a book in 1949, '*Praktische Pastoralpsycholgie*' Interestingly, one finds here the influence of psychoanalytical methods and also ideas similar to those of non-directive counselling.[101]

1.2.2.4 Friction between Psychology and the Catholic Church

The friction between theology and psychology became sourer with the growth and spread of psychoanalytical schools. Regarding their coming into existence, one could say that their goals were similar to those of the pastoral care of the Church - to alleviate the sufferings of human beings and to heal troubled souls.[102] But the psychoanalytical schools were highly critical of religion and theology. Well-known among them are Sigmund Freud, father of psychoanalysis, C.G. Jung and Alfred Adler. Many psychotherapists, especially psychoanalysts, were not well-accepted by the Church because of their anti-religious attitude. Psychoanalysis was confronting the Church with major threats on several fronts:

> Both philosophically and practically, psychoanalysis challenged Church positions. In place of neo-scholastic stress on the rationality of human soul and freedom of will, psychoanalysis uncovered unconscious motivation of precisely the kind - the sexual - that Catholic theology worried about. On the side of praxis, psychoanalysis seemed to threaten Catholic *cura animarum*, the cure of souls, in particular, the sacrament of confession. The analyst appeared as a secular confessor who would not absolve sin but who seemed to dissolve it into neurotic irrational symptoms. Such were the fears. With his writings on religion Freud threw down the gauntlet. … Freud argued for irrational roots of religious beliefs and practices in the vicissitudes of human desire, and for science and reason to replace religion.[103]

Many Catholics, influenced by psychoanalysis, began to take it positively. Although they rejected its ideological and philosophical foundations, they believed it could be accommodated into Catholic ministry. For those who were more pragmatic and practical-minded, it came in handy for pastoral ministry.[104]

There came a major setback to this interaction between theology and psychoanalysis – an in fact, all forms of psychotherapy – when Pope John XXIII prohibited through the

[100] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, pp. 34-35.
[101] Cf. Ibid., p. 39.
[102] Cf. Lothar RIEDEL (Hrsg.) *Couch oder Kirche. Psychotherapie und Religion – zwei mögliche Wege auf der Suche nach Sinn*, (Beiträge der Basler Psychotherapietage 2001), Riehen, CH: Perspetiva, 2001, pp. 7-8.
[103] KUGELMANN, *Psychology and Catholicism,* p.165.
[104] Cf. Ibid., pp. 165-169.

monitum of 15 July 1961, the practice of psychoanalysis in the pastoral ministry and for pastors. It also prohibited priests and religious from going to psychoanalysis. It was because the Sacred Congregation saw a great danger in the views held by psychoanalysis regarding the sixth commandment and matters of imputability and personal responsibility for one's actions. The psychoanalytical approach, in the opinion of the Sacred Congregation, downplayed the dimension of imputability in human actions and ignored the moral standards regarding the sixth commandment of God.[105]

The fears of the Church were not totally unfounded. The events before and after the monitum proved it. In Cuernavaca, Mexico, as many as 40 of 60 monks who took psychoanalysis left the Benedictine monastery of St Mary from 1962 to 1966.[106] The Belgian Prior of the monastery was quoted as saying that they had been put through psychoanalysis sessions against the directives of the Vatican as stated in the monitum.[107] The Vatican intervened and the Prior was suspended and held accountable. This was not an isolated case. There were other cases of religious and priests leaving their vocation after psychoanalysis. This has also been accepted by psychoanalysts themselves.[108]

1.2.3 Pastoral Psychology: Developments in America

Pastoral counselling in the USA emerged as part of the pastoral care of the sick. Anton Theophilus Boisen was the founder of such a movement. He was in the beginning ably supported by Richard Cabot. Later on it was led by pastoral theologians like Paul Johnson, Seward Hiltner, Caroll A. Wise, Wyne E. Oates, and Rollo May.[109] One must admit it was basically a Protestant undertaking. This caused a new way of guidance and direction of souls to emerge in the ecclesiastical circles which tried to combine the principles and methods of psychology with theology and spirituality. It gave way to an approach focused on the person and his needs and ushered in a new era of caring for souls which replaced the old one-way traffic characterised by authoritarianism.[110]

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[105] Cf. John J. LYNCH, *Notes on Moral Theology* in *Theological Studies*, 1962, Vol. 23. 2, (233-265), p. 233.
[106] Cf. COSTELLO, *Forming a Priestly Identity*, pp. 258-260.
[107] See the newspaper article: *Prior had Monks Psychoanalysed* in *Catholic Herald, UK*, 23.12. 1966, p. 3.
[108] Cf. Hanna WOLFF, *Jesus als Therapeut. Jesu Menschenhandlung als Modell moderner Psychotherapie*, Radius: Stuttgart, 1978, pp. 26-27.
[109] Cf. E. Brooks HOLIFIELD, *A History of Pastoral Care in America. From Salvation to Self-Realization*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, pp. 231-258. This book gives a detailed account of the development of pastoral counselling in America. It, however, deals only with Protestant history.
[110] Cf. MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, p. 151.

These pioneers were heavily influenced by psychology which was then slowly taking a definitive shape as a science in America and Europe. They wanted a better approach to diagnosing and dealing with human problems. They believed that psychology would provide a better understanding of human nature and ways of solving problems. They utilized the methods brought out by different branches of psychology such as the psychoanalytic school, behavioural school and humanistic school.[111] Two distinct strands were clearly visible in the American scenario from the beginning: (a) clinical pastoral education, and (b) pastoral counselling (as autonomous professional disciplines, influenced by Carl Rogers and other humanistic psychologists).

Two of the better-known and prolific authors towards the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, who were deeply interested in the psychological phenomenon of religion, were E. D. Starboeck and William James. William James' epoch-making books like '*Will to Believe*' (1987) and '*Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*' (1902) created great interest in religion from a psychological perspective.

1.2.3.1 Anton T. Boisen

Anton Theophilus Boisen could be called father of the pastoral counselling movement in the USA. He is the pioneer-founder of the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Movement. He was the first clergyman to supervise theology students in pastoral care and counselling.[112]

Clinical pastoral education, one of the earliest and leading branches of pastoral counselling in the USA, owes its origin to Anton T. Boisen. He led a multi-faceted life as language teacher, forester, Presbyterian minister, hospital chaplain, theologian, and finally as initiator and supervisor of training programmes in pastoral counselling for theological students. Through his efforts many Protestant Churches adopted clinical training for theology students. He wanted to overhaul the then system of theological formation because he believed it failed to use scientific methods in the study of religious experience.[113]

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[111] Cf. MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, p.151.

[112] Cf. Christopher E. De BONO, *An Exploration and Adaptation of Anton T Boisen's Notion of the Psychiatric Chaplain in Responding to the Current Issues in Chaplaincy*, PhD thesis at the University of St. Michael's College and the Pastoral Department of the Toronto School of Theology, 2012, p. 52; hereafter referred to as *Anton T Boisen's Notion of the Psychiatric Chaplain*.

[113] Cf. HOLIFIELD, *A History of Pastoral Care in America. From Salvation to Self-Realization*, pp. 244-248.

1.2.3.1.1 The Hospital Connection

The origin of pastoral counselling as we understand today can be traced back to the work done by Anton Boisen in hospitals. He himself suffered from mental illness. He had five major episodes of schizophrenia. He learnt tremendously from his own experience of illness, isolation, frustration and failure. In his autobiographical book '*The Exploration of the Inner World*' (1936) he reveals his insights into the pastoral and psychological care of people. His ideas were well ahead of his time.[114] He stated on many occasions that he was interested in an empirical enquiry into the 'theology of sin and salvation.'[115]

His programme of pastoral counselling began with a summer programme for four students in 1925. Later Boisen conducted training for theology students in a hospital in order to prepare them for ministry. His famous dictum was to see every person as a 'living human document.'[116] Being aware of the inadequacies of ministerial education, he started training more students of theology in counselling. He trained them to supplement their classroom learning with in-depth study of the persons. He challenged them to think theologically and psychologically in their encounter with persons. His tendency to see human beings as 'living human documents' has been highly appreciated and severely criticised as well.[117]

The new method and approach of Boisen caused some of his supporters to leave him.[118] In 1926, he envisaged his method of training for the future:

> Theological training for the future will be a continuous affair, with the parish as the laboratory and a person with need the main concern, and the seminary a 'clearing house' of theological tradition and formation and the supervision of methods. The attention will be shifted from the past to the present; from book to the raw material of life.[119]

He found a strong supporter for his programmes in Dr William Y. Bryan, superintendent at Worcester State University. Bryan, along with his friend and colleague Richard C. Cabot, contributed in large measure to establishing pastoral counselling as a subject. 1n 1930, Boisen suffered a mental break-down, following which Dr Richard Cabot withdraw his support to Boisen, doubting his ability to function. This conflict was instrumental in the

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[114] Cf. Lucy BERGMAN, *Anton Boisen Revisited* in *Journal of Religion and Health*, Vol. 18.3, 1979. pp. 213-229.
[115] Cf. Robert LEAS, in *The Biography of Anton Theophilus Boisen*, in the Home page of Association of Clinical Pastoral Education Inc. (30.12.15).
https://www.acpe.edu/pdf/History/The%20Biography%20of%20Anton%20Theophilus%20Boisen.pdf
[116] Cf. De BONO, *Anton T Boisen's Notion of the Psychiatric Chaplain*, pp. 130-135.
[117] Cf. LYALL, *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context*, p. 11.
[118] Cf. De BONO, *Anton T Boisen's Notion of the Psychiatric Chaplain*, pp. 38-39.
[119] LEAS, in *The Biography of Anton Theophilus Boisen*.

division of the field of pastoral counselling into two strands with different focuses in approach. On the one side, Boisen and his friends took the more clinical line and established the organisation Council for Training Theological Students. In 1932, Anton Boisen moved to Chicago and worked as chaplain in a hospital and began teaching at Chicago Theological Seminary.

On the other side, Dr Richard Cabot along with Philip Guiles opted for more counselling and in a direction more pastoral than clinical. This group greatly emphasised pastoral skills and established the organisation Institute of Pastoral Care (IPC). After three decades of separation Boisen and Cabot came together once again in 1967 as one organisation: Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). The functions of CPE were basically limited to hospitals, prisons, and offering basic courses.[120]

Boisen had always dreamed of 'breaking a hole in the wall between religion and medicine'. He believed that patients would necessarily try for a synthesis, for reconciliation, and cure. This attempt at synthesis, reconciliation, and cure, he believed, are mediated through symbols.[121] So he undertook the exploration of the inner world. He insisted that the weak and the imperfect also had a role to play in assisting the strong and the perfect. He believed in a so-called 'family of four' made up of the weak and the strong, the imperfect and the perfect.[122]

Boisen focused on the person in trouble and examined his situation, surroundings, causes of the sickness which led to his present situation, etc. He was also extremely interested in conducting research into religious experiences connected with mental illness, an interest that sprang from his own experience of mental breakdown. He wanted to know the history (*his-story*) of the person to see how a healing was possible. This goes well with his attitude of seeing a human being as a 'living human document'. Although he was deeply influenced by the psychological developments of the time, it was not his intention to 'psychologise' theology or pastoral studies. He wrote in 1944: "We are not trying to introduce anything new into theological curriculum beyond a new approach to some ancient problems. We are trying rather to call attention to the central task of the Church,

[120] Cf. LYALL, *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context*, p. 11 (See also the Homepage of ACPE for more details: https://www.acpe.edu/ACPE/About_ACPE/Our_History.aspx)
[121] Cf. Robert Charles POWELL, *Religion in Crisis And Custom: Formation and Transformation – Discover And Recovery – of Spirit and Soul*, keynote honouring Anton Theophilus Boisen, Virginia Beach, at the 9th Plenary Meeting of the College of Pastoral Supervisors and Psychotherapy on 18 March, 1999. http://www.metro.inter.edu/facultad/esthumanisticos/coleccion_anton_boisen/case_study/Religion%20in%20Crisis%20and%20Custom.pdf (15.1.16).
[122] Cf. Ibid.

that of saving souls, and to the central problem of theology - that of sin and salvation. What is new is the attempt to begin with the study of *living human documents* rather than books, and to focus attention upon those who are grappling with the issues of spiritual life and death."[123]

1.2.3.1.2 Integration of Religion and Psychology

As a pastor, professor and supervisor, Boisen tried to combine religious conviction with research, especially in psychology. He wanted to be practical and empirical in his approach to the nature of the human condition and its resolution - evil and good, guilt and forgiveness, sin and salvation. After an episode of schizophrenia, he wrote:

> I believe that God was perfectly revealed in the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. His patience with our shortcomings, his compassion upon our infirmities, his unfaltering faith in men, even his enemies, and his method of dealing with them, not through force, but through the power of love, culminating in his death upon the cross, where he died, the just for the unjust, the perfect for the imperfect, the strong for the weak…they should be willing to give their lives, the imperfect for the perfect and the weak for the strong, that the divine may be freed from its prison house of infirmity and be able to come into the world in beauty and power….I believe that the family should consist of four and not of two, of the strong and perfect and of the guardian angels who in the joy of serving and sharing in the happiness of those they love will find compensation for the sacrifices that some will always have to make.[124]

He was able to look into his own mental illness and religious experience with deep faith. He recognized from his experience the creative potentialities of crisis periods in one's life. It also proved an occasion of religious quickening in his case. He wrote: "Certain types of mental disorder and certain types of religious experience are, alike attempts at reorganization….at the peak of a human crisis there is a turning toward healing, toward reorganization, toward reconnection."[125] From his experience of schizophrenia and his theological reflections, he said he had "broken an opening in the wall that separated religion and medicine."[126] Boisen said this experience and his theological reflection on it helped him to recognize his vocation to ministry.

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[123] As quoted by LEAS, in *The Biography of Anton Theophilus Boisen*, in the Home page of Association of Clinical Pastoral Education Inc.
[124] As quoted by LEAS, Ibid.
[125] As quoted by LEAS, ibid.
[126] Ibid.

1.2.3.1.3 Boisen's Method

He suggested practical clinical experiences for the students of theology. Boisen's method of seeing the patient as a 'written human document' included garnering sufficient information about the person. Boisen also set guidelines that needed to be used in this process of garnering information. This method helped the students to reflect systematically about the human condition, both psychologically and theologically.[127]

1.2.3.1.4 Paramount Human Need for Love

Boisen was always convinced of the paramount human need for love – to love and to be loved. To love and to be loved is the best means of experiencing healing. It is the best form of therapy. Mental illness is very often the incapacity to love and to be loved. He said: "The paramount human need is for love and there is a law within which forbids us to be satisfied with any fellowship save that of the best."[128] His theology was totally communitarian and contextual.

1.2.3.1.5 Boisen's Theology

Boisen's idea of theology is practical. In an article titled *The Task and Methods of Theology* he defines theology: "Theology may best be regarded as the cooperative attempt to organize religious experience by scrutinizing religious beliefs and inquiring into the origin, meaning, and consequences of these beliefs. It is assumed in this definition that religious experience is the sensation of fellowship raised to its highest level, a bonding with God and a genuine compassion for the well-being of all humankind."[129]

In his book *Religion in Crisis and Custom* Boisen stated: "As individuals come face to face with the ultimate realities of life and death, religion and theology tend to come alive…Theology has always been concerned with the motivating beliefs of people regarding their origin and destiny and their relationship to the universe. It has dealt with that which is supreme in the hierarchy of desires and values and with the choices that favour or impede maximum self-realization."[130]

Boisen has found appreciation even in the Catholic circles. Henri Nouwen said of Boisen: "Although he did not come up with new theological insights, his new clinical approach to

[127] Cf. LEAS, in *The Biography of Anton Theophilus Boisen*.
[128] As quoted by LEAS, ibid.
[129] As quoted by LEAS, ibid.
[130] As quoted by LEAS, ibid.

these age-old questions gave it a new and fresh articulation, placing it in a relevant context and brought Theology back from the 'brains-level' to the 'guts-level."[131]

1.2.3.1.6 A Keen Listener

Boisen was gifted with the amazing gift of listening. In his opinion, every human being has a story to tell. Our sense of life comes out through the stories we narrate. Even Christian theology from the beginning, from the start of Creation, is narrative in nature. In this sense, we could say, he followed a kind of Narrative Theology. For Boisen, the insight into the living human document, the depth experiences in the struggles of their mental and spiritual life, came from listening and telling stories. By listening to the story of the living human documents, theology develops ideas with confidence. In the light of the focus on narrative theology and his new and crisp theological methodology, Boisen's contribution has important theological and psychological significance for pastoral counselling.

1.2.3.2 Seward Hiltner

Seward Hiltner was another great pioneer and a pivotal figure in pastoral counselling in the US.[132] No history of pastoral counselling can sidestep his achievements. He was an ordained minister of the United Presbyterian Church. He was a professor of Pastoral Care and Counselling in Chicago and later on in Princeton Theological Seminary. He wrote ten books and over 500 scholarly articles. His two books, *Pastoral Counselling* (1949) and *Preface to Pastoral Theology* (1958), were trend-setting in the field of pastoral care and counselling and soon became an integral part of pastoral counselling syllabus. Professional to the core himself, Hiltner stood strongly for professionalism in pastoral care. Besides heading many programmes in pastoral training, he served as consultant to several institutions. He was a pioneer in the field of theology, systematic and scientific pastoral care and counselling.[133]

Hiltner was introduced to the clinical approach by Anton T. Boisen. He, however, attempted on his own, to define clinical approach and bring it into pastoral care. He was also familiar with the existing systems of psychotherapies. He was more attracted to the psychodynamic approach as he believed it helped him to have insights into human beings. Hiltner was a friend of Carl Rogers and was also influenced by his person-centred approach, especially Roger's view that the counselee should be the centre of the

[131] LEAS, in *The Biography of Anton Theophilus Boisen*.
[132] Cf. Liston O. MILLS, *Seward Hiltner's Contributions to Pastoral Care and Counselling* in *Pastoral Psychology* Vol. 29.1. Fall 1980, pp. 8-12.
[133] Cf. HOLIFIELD, *A History of Pastoral Care in America*, pp. 340-342.

counselling process and that counselling should be person-centred rather than problem-oriented.[134]

In the 1950s there was a rapid growth and wide acceptance of clinical pastoral education. Seward Hiltner was a leading figure in the development and dispersal of this movement. He gave a new direction and meaning to pastoral theology as the theology of the practice of ministry. In his major work *Pastoral Counselling* he tried to bring the personality sciences -psychology, psychotherapy, etc. - and the religious field into a dialogue.[135]

1.2.3.2.1 A Born Counsellor

His friends and colleagues aver that Seward Hiltner was always a respected and respectable person. He radiated love and friendliness. He is one of the pioneers who influenced the field of pastoral counselling the most. Hiltner was dissatisfied with the then prevailing method of pastoral care. This disenchantment with the system of pastoral care led him to Anton T. Boisen through whom Hiltner was attracted to the clinical approach in pastoral care. His student and later colleague and friend Prof. Liston O. Mills remembers him as a zealous and committed minister who argued strongly for pastoral effectiveness and competence in ministry.[136] Hiltner described pastoral care as a "subject both broad and basic in the life of the Church."[137] He considered it his duty to prepare men and women more adequately for the exacting ministry of Jesus Christ.[138]

1.2.3.2.2 Contribution to Ecumenism

Hiltner is also remembered for his contribution to ecumenism. Some consider him to be a pioneer in modern ecumenism. He was engaged in ecumenical activities for 15 years.[139] It may be worth quoting McCord, his colleague at Princeton, on Hiltner's idea of ecumenism: "For him Ecumenism is not so much 'the noise of solemn assemblies' as it is assisting the Churches in working together to solve common problems and to meet human need. It was in this ecumenical context that he did his pioneering work in gerontology, alcoholism and human sexuality."[140]

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[134] Cf. Liston O. MILLS, *Seward Hiltner's Contributions to Pastoral Care and Counselling*, p. 9.
[135] Cf. Walter E. CONN, *The Desiring Self: Rooting Pastoral Counselling and Spiritual Direction in Self-Transcendence*, NY: Paulist Press, 1998, pp. 27-28.
[136] Cf. MILLS, *Seward Hiltner's Contributions to Pastoral Care and Counselling*, pp. 8-12.
[137] As quoted by MILLS, ibid., p. 8.
[138] Cf. MILLS, ibid.
[139] Cf. James I. McCord, *Seward Hiltner's Contributions to the Life of the Churches and to Professional Theological Education*, in *Pastoral Psychology*, Vol. 29.1, Fall 1980, pp. 13-16.
[140] Ibid., p. 14.

Liston O. Mills quotes Hiltner to illustrate how the latter understood pastoral counselling and its objective: "The focus of my concern remains where it has always been, with the people problem, and most especially with the problems of the troubled people. Any expertness I have continues to come from my *use of a theological perspective along with psychodynamic insights about people,* how they get into their predicament and what we, especially we of the Church and ordained ministry, may do to help them."[141]

Hiltner served as the director of Clinical Pastoral Education from 1935 to 1938. His focus was on theological reflection about human experience. A theology apart from concrete human experience was no theology for Hiltner. He was also instrumental in enlisting many seminaries in the work of the Pastoral Care and Education Movement.

1.2.3.3 Catholic Contributions

In the United States there were also Catholic contributions to psychology and pastoral counselling. Rev. Thomas V. Moore OSB made systematic research on the internal drives of the human person. His book *The Driving Forces of Human Nature* could be considered a standard study on the inner working of a person. He was keenly interested in studies on the priesthood and religious life. He was also involved in screening candidates to religious life to discern their motives and suitability.[142]

1.2.3.4 Period after World War II and the Influence of Carl Rogers

The pastoral counselling movement gained momentum after World War II, clearly influenced by Carl Rogers and humanistic psychology. The spread of person-centred counselling initiated by Rogers gave a new direction to pastoral counselling. Exhortation and advice were deemed out of fashion and 'self-realization' became the 'in' word. It was a clear case of the influence of Carl Rogers. For the next five decades Rogers' influence on pastoral counselling would continue. Great emphasis was laid on enhancing one's growth and developing one's potentialities.[143] Pastoral counselling was to be taken out of the level of advice-giving and exhortation to that of a helping relationship. His ideas of non-

[141] As quoted by MILLS, *Seward Hiltner's Contributions to Pastoral Care and Counselling*, pp. 8-9. [Emphasis mine]. Hiltner emphasises that without theological perspectives, his psychoanalytic insights are incomplete.
[142] Cf. Frank J. KOBLER, *Screening Applicants for Religious Life* in *Journal of Religion and Health* Vol. 3.2, 1964, (161-170), p. 161.
[143] Cf. HOLIFIELD, *A History of Pastoral Care in America*, pp. 259-260.

directive counselling, the characteristics of a helping relationship, genuineness, unconditional positive regard and empathy transformed the field of pastoral counselling.[144]

Soon Rogers' ideas became popular across the USA and his methods were soon incorporated into pastoral care courses in seminaries. The insights of humanistic psychology gradually crept into pastoral counselling. Counselling was also seen as an occasion for catharsis. Optimism, trust-worthiness of the counselee, and the freedom to change were emphasized in the process of counselling. Person-centred counselling and its ideas were obviously a reaction and response to the deterministic and mechanistic model of Freudian and Behaviourist schools respectively.[145]

The therapeutic relationship was understood as a 'plaster-cast' framework for healing. Effective counselling relationship provides a supportive environment and makes healing possible. Just as a fractured limb or bodily part is enclosed and protected in a plaster-cast till it is healed, so is a therapeutic relationship in times of trouble and problems that wound and cripple a person. The pastoral counsellors discovered several advantages in the method of Carl Rogers. It was a relatively safe method in terms of approach and not much could go wrong. As for the counsellors, no long period of training was required. It had an optimistic image of self and personhood. The self was/ is considered capable of growth and change.[146]

Although Rogers is viewed as an atheist like most psychologists, in his later work *A Way of Being* he shows awareness of the mystical and transcendental dimension of human life.[147] Russel L. Dicks, theologian, considered it a main concern to enable theologians to encounter people and to engage in pastoral dialogue with them. He believed this to be a basic capacity to be developed by theology students in preparation for ministry.[148] A further attempt to adopt and adapt the new method of therapy of Rogers was made by theologian Paul Johnson in his book *Psychology of Pastoral Care* (New York, 1953). But

[144] Cf. LYALL, *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context*, pp.13-14 [More about Rogers' contributions is dealt with in the second part of this work. Therefore, Rogers is only mentioned here in the context of the growth of pastoral counselling as a discipline].
[145] Cf. Ibid., pp. 14-15.
[146] Cf. Ibid., p. 15.
[147] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980, pp. 80-82, 90-92. [Rogers acknowledges mystical and transcendental realities many times in this book].
[148] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 37.

he modified the passive role of the counsellor as suggested by Rogers and opted for a more active I-You relationship, a dialogical method.[149]

Pastoral psychology and pastoral counselling, meanwhile, developed further in two directions in the US. One was in the direction of clinical pastoral care in hospitals and the other in the direction of pastoral counselling in the Church and social establishments. Both schools organized themselves and tried to grow independently. In 1960, the American School of Pastoral Counsellors came into being, and in 1967 the Clinical Pastoral Association and was founded.[150]

1.2.3.5 American Association of Pastoral Counsellors (AAPC)

As the pastoral counselling movement grew quickly, increasing numbers of ministers in America joined it to get themselves trained as pastoral counsellors. In 1963, the American Association of Pastoral Counsellors (AAPC) was founded. It was an all-embracing association. It included people from different denominations, overwhelmingly Protestant, and different schools of psychology like psychoanalysis, Jungian psychology, transactional analysis, Gestalt therapy and humanistic psychology. Another major association was the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education.[151]

1.2.3.6 Association for Clinical Pastoral Education

The independent existence of different groups did not last long. There took place an amalgamation of different groups in the field of pastoral counselling and pastoral care in October 1967. Four groups merged into the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc., at a meeting in Kansas City, MO. In 1969, it was recognized by the Federal Government and is today nationally recognized as an accrediting agency/association in the field of clinical pastoral education.[152]

1.2.3.7 Influence and Impact on Other Parts of the World

The developments in America were not without consequences in other parts of the world. It produced an enormous body of literature and it spread across the world. The works of American authors became normative as well as formative in the field of pastoral

[149] Cf. POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 38.
[150] Cf. Ibid.
[151] Cf. LYALL, *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context*, p. 16.
[152] Cf. Home page of ACPE: https://www.acpe.edu/pdf/History/ACPE%20Brief%20History.pdf (15.1.16).

counselling. America became the major centre for training in this field and more and more people began to flock to America for research and training.[153]

The development of pastoral counselling in the UK has also been deeply influenced by the developments that took place in the USA. Their histories are similar. It also has a close hospital connection. As early as 1910, it was thought to have a closer co-operation between the clergy who care for the sick in hospitals and the doctors. In 1959, the Scottish Pastoral Association (SPA) was founded. SPA attempted to establish co-operation in the hospital atmosphere among ministers, doctors, nurses and social workers. SPA also played a crucial role in the personal and professional development of many ministers. It imparted pastoral education for students of theology. Unfortunately, SPA had only a brief life span; but its journal *The Contact* outlived it and continued as an inter-disciplinary Journal of Pastoral Studies.[154]

Another important development in this line was the Institute of Religion and Medicine (IRM). It was established in 1962. Dr Kennedy Soddy, one of the pioneers, himself stated that IRM would not be religion-centred like SPA, although it enjoyed the support and patronage of the Archbishop of Canterbury. IRM also made valuable contributions to pastoral education and pastoral counselling. It conducted training sessions and consultations and stood for more application of psychology in pastoral training and theological formation. In the late 1960s British universities began to offer courses for developing skills for pastoral care. Diploma and certificate courses were offered in Manchester, Birmingham, Cardiff and other universities. Alastair V. Campbell introduced an undergraduate course in Edinburg.[155]

In the post-modern society, the Churches began to feel more and more the inadequacy of the pastors to deal with the complex problems of the society and the faithful. The need for more professionalism in the field was acutely felt.[156] Theology students were offered extra courses and special training during vacation. Due to these developments one could see a greater openness to secular therapies. There arose a new approach to pastoral care. Dr Frank Lake, founder of Clinical Theology Association in 1962, and author of *Clinical*

[153] Cf. LYALL, *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context*, p. 16.
[154] Cf. Ibid., pp.19-20.
[155] Cf. Ibid., pp. 20-21.
[156] Cf. Ibid., p. 22.

Theology (1966), offered courses and Clinical Theology seminars at the request of bishops. They were attended by thousands of clergymen and lay people.[157]

One of the organisations worth mentioning here and which achieved a lot in the area of pastoral counselling in the UK is the Westminster Pastoral Foundation (WPF). Initially set up in 1965 by Bill Kyle and later fully established in 1969, it is one of the largest institutions of its kind in the UK. Over the years it has become more of a secular institute, independent of any religious affiliation. The institute is today known as WPF Therapy. Another organization - Association of Pastoral Care and Counselling (APCC) - was founded in order to provide more professional pastoral care and counselling. APCC later became a division of the British Association of Counselling (BAC).

A Catholic contribution worth mentioning in the UK is the Dympna Centre founded in 1971 in London by Louis Marteau, a Roman Catholic priest. The Centre was also ecumenical in nature with many Jews, New Age Christians and members of the Salvation Army attending. It proved instrumental in the establishment of similar centres elsewhere, too. Today it is a centre that caters mainly to priests and religious.[158]

1.2.4 International Council on Pastoral Care and Counselling (ICPCC)

Influenced and impacted by the developments in the US, pastoral counselling became an international movement. Of all the movements across the world today, ICPCC deserves special mention. It is the most inter-cultural and truly international movement in the field of pastoral counselling today.

Increasingly people from other countries and continents made their way to the US for studies and training; and when they returned to their home countries they tried to establish pastoral counselling centres in their places and contexts. Many felt the need for interaction and exchange at the international level. As a result an international council came into existence in 1979 at the first International Congress of Pastoral Care and Counselling held in Edinburgh, Scotland. It was indeed a turning point in the history of the pastoral counselling movement. More than four hundred participants from different countries and continents of various denominations came together to share their views and ideas and to plan for the future. It helped the pastoral counselling movement to grow more

[157] Cf. LYALL, *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context*, p. 23.
[158] Cf. Ibid., p. 24.

international, inter-cultural and net-worked. There had been smaller and unofficial gatherings earlier but the Edinburg Congress of 1979 marked a huge step to make pastoral counselling known throughout the world. It gave a new impetus to pastoral counselling in Britain and other countries. It also caused the dispersal of the movement of pastoral counselling into several other countries.[159] The website of ICPCC states its nature and objectives:

> The International Council on Pastoral Care and Counselling is an organization of women and men desiring to respond to current needs and situations faced by people and communities in the world, through pastoral care and counselling. ICPCC exists for education, equipment and empowerment of persons and groups in the theory and practice of pastoral care and counselling. The aim is to enhance the scientific as well as the academic and praxis quality of the field of pastoral care and counselling. The intention is to promote intercultural and community care; to be engaged in interdisciplinary and interfaith networking within diverse socio-political contexts.[160]

ICPCC today plays a vital role in promoting pastoral counselling throughout the world. It considers its mission 'to inform, train, educate and inspire practitioners of pastoral care and counselling in various contexts in the world.'[161] The association is pluri-cultural in nature and open to learning from different lifestyles. Its mission includes bringing spirituality into pastoral care and counselling and upholding the spiritual dimension of this ministry. It supports and facilitates interaction between different counselling organizations. In this sense, it is extremely ecumenical in nature.[162] Although ICPCC is the most net-worked and international movement that exists today, there are many other regional and local associations and organisations with similar leitmotifs.

1.2.5 Salient Features of Pastoral Counselling Movement

Looking at the whole history of the movement of pastoral counselling, one can pinpoint some outstanding characteristics. It has become a totally inter-denominational movement with branches across the world.

[159] Cf. LYALL, *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context*, p. 18.
[160] From the Home page of ICPCC. (15.1.2016)
http://www.icpcc.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=86&Itemid=294
[161] Ibid.
[162] Cf. Ibid.

1.2.5.1 Ecumenical Nature of Pastoral Psychology/Counselling

As already seen, the pastoral counselling movement has been ecumenical in nature and outlook. The Protestants and Catholics worked together to achieve the goal of establishing pastoral counselling as an important aspect of the pastoral ministry. It should be pointed out that there were different approaches preferred by various denominations; and Catholics and Protestants showed varied degrees of openness to the findings of psychology. Pastoral psychology and pastoral counselling have remained a symbol of Christian ecumenism, although it was spearheaded by the Protestants.[163]

1.2.5.2 Attempt at Integration of Theology and Psychology

It is amazing to see how the pioneers of pastoral counselling tried to integrate theology and psychology in their attempt to develop pastoral counselling. It developed at a time when psychology was establishing itself as an independent discipline in European and American universities. These pioneers, impressed by the effectiveness and usefulness of this new social science for pastoral ministry, tried to make use of it for pastoral purposes. It is important to recall that their main purpose was not the progress of psychology or theology but the care of souls.

1.2.5.3 Lay Participation

Another important feature of pastoral counselling was the laity's participation and leadership. It was a movement initiated and sustained by strong participation of the laity. Many of the leading figures were not pastors or part of the Church hierarchy. This situation gave them the necessary freedom of thinking and acting. In the words of David Lyall, "Increasingly those who were trained by the pastoral counselling centres were lay people, particularly women. In a sense the clergy did not need accreditation because ordination gave them licence to practise whatever new skills they were acquiring. But lay people who had undergone training enjoyed no such benefit."[164]

1.2.5.4 Hospital (Chaplaincy) Connection

Be it in Germany, America, or in the UK, pastoral counselling had its roots in the pastoral care of the sick. It is where they came directly in contact with human sorrows and sufferings, and it is where the faithful needed the most personally comforting and understanding nearness and words of a pastor. Not surprisingly, pastoral counselling in its

[163] Cf. LYALL, *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context*, p. 25.
[164] Ibid., p. 27.

initial stages was deeply rooted in the care of the sick in hospitals. Pastoral counselling, with its focus on diaconal ministry, found the hospital setting ideal for its ministry.

1.2.5.5 Diaconal Nature of Pastoral Counselling

One of the important goals of pastoral counselling was its diaconal dimension. It aimed at diaconal service to the needy person. To stand by the person in his need, to understand him, to alleviate his suffering, to help him to 'better functioning' were seen as the goals of pastoral counselling. As Boisen believed, a deeper understanding human nature would contribute to better service of human beings: "Without true understanding it is impossible to render effective service, and only as one comes in the attitude of service will the doors open into the sanctuaries of life."[165] At the same time, the spiritual dimension of the person was also taken care of. As noted earlier, Seward Hiltner believed that without the theological basis, the psychological insights would be less effective and meaningless.[166]

1.2.6 Criticism against Pastoral Counselling

Pastoral counselling has contributed much to the ministry of the Church. It must, however, be admitted that the growth and spread of the pastoral counselling movement was not without criticism and rebuff. A bone of contention always was the question: How much of psychology and what psychology?

1.2.6.1 Neglect of Theology?

As more psychology and counselling came into ministry, it was pointed out that there was a consequent loss of theological focus. Arguments were put forward against the projected effectiveness of pastoral counselling. Diminished focus on theology in ministry was considered a matter of serious concern.[167] While the Protestant ministers were free from hierarchical restrictions to exercise the methods of pastoral counselling in their ministry, some pastors, especially Catholic, could not exercise it in their ecclesiastical establishments due to restrictions from the hierarchical structures of the Church.

In the 1970s, Hugh Melinsky criticised that theology was neglected in this process of the 'psychologisation' of the pastoral ministry. Moreover, the followers of some schools of pastoral counselling upheld their approach to be the only form of pastoral care. They

[165] Anton T. BOISEN, *Problems in Religion and Life: A Manual for Pastors, with Outlines for Co-operative Study of Personal Experience in Social Situations*, Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946, p. 5.
[166] See 1.2.3.2.2
[167] Cf. LYALL, *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context*, p.16.

tended to use a selective and narrow use of psychology and theology. He wondered how a 'happy marriage' was possible between two totally divergent sciences like theology and psychology.[168]

Similar criticism was raised by Robert Lambourne, medical doctor-turned pastoral counsellor, one of the founders of the Birmingham University diploma course in pastoral studies. He deplored the 'total lack of theological thrust' in the so-called dialogue with psychoanalysis. His criticism was mainly directed against psychoanalysis and its improper application without theological basis. He believed that a purely psychological approach based on the clinical, medical, psychological (psychoanalytical) model as in the USA was inadequate.[169] Pleading for a different basis for pastoral counselling in the UK, he advocates that it be more contextualised:

> My thesis, however, is that the pastoral counselling called for in this country during the next twenty years cannot be built around a practice and conceptual framework derived from professional problem-solving and prevention of breakdown. That practice and conceptual framework is based upon the clinical, medical and psychoanalytic models of the USA of twenty years ago, and it has proved inadequate. To copy it, even with many modifications would be a disaster, because not only is it not what is wanted but also because it will be an obstacle to what is wanted. An accredited hierarchical pastoral movement will be professional, problem solving or problem preventing, standardised and defined. What is required is pastoral care which is lay, corporate, adventurous, variegated and diffuse.[170]

It was a clear warning to those who tried to blindly accept psychology and psychological views without sufficient reflection or at the cost of theology. He cautioned against irrationally accepting the methods and systems of other countries without taking into account the local situation and local needs seriously. It is a warning which is valid even today! A similar view was held by Indian theologian and pastoral counsellor Dayanand D. Pitamber.[171]

1.2.6.2 East-West Difference?

Pastoral psychology as well as pastoral counselling, has been criticised for being too western. It is also to be noted that the method, way of approach, and the level of acceptance of psychology in pastoral ministry varies from West to East, from country to country. While the western culture seeks a more professional and psychological approach,

[168] Cf. LYALL, *Counselling in the Pastoral and Spiritual Context*, pp.22-23.
[169] Cf. Ibid., p. 27.
[170] Robert LAMBOURNE, in *Contact*, 1971, p. 25. Quoted by David LYALL, Ibid, pp. 27-28.
[171] Cf. Dayanand D. PITAMBER, *Some Possible Implications of Gandhi's Satyagraha for Pastoral Counselling in the Indian Context* in *Indian Journal of Theology* (IJT), Vol. 26.2, (1997), pp. 92-104.

in the East, especially in India, people seek a strong Bible-oriented counselling. Pastoral counselling, they believe, should be more rooted in the Bible and the teachings of the Church than in Psychology.[172]

1.2.7 Current Status of Pastoral Counselling and Pastoral Psychology

Pastoral psychology as well as pastoral counselling continues even today to be part of the practical or pastoral theology in most parts of the world. Pastoral psychology has not yet evolved as an independent discipline. Unlike in earlier times, pastoral psychology finds greater acceptance and welcome today. Pompey believes, "Pastoral psychology is today welcomed by majority of the pastors and theology students as proven by many surveys. Adequate training and qualification in this regard is more and more desired from the faithful."[173] Today there is mutual co-operation and networking of pastoral psychologists at the national and international levels. The Edinburgh Congress in 1979 was a huge start and a clear manifestation of this readiness.

Pastoral psychology is generally accepted today by most pastors, ministers, Church authorities and those engaged in pastoral ministry. Many faithful appreciate the pastoral-psychological approach of a pastor in dealing with them and their problems.

1.2.8 Openness on Catholic Side

Over the years, the Catholic Church has shown increasing openness to psychology and psychotherapy. In the Catholic Church, which has always been slow to accept new developments and theories, especially in the field of science and psychology, there is a more open approach and liberal thinking after Vatican II. The pastoral document *Gaudium et Spes* advocates making use of secular sciences, especially sociology and psychology for pastoral ministry and for a mature living out of our faith. It states:

> Furthermore, theologians are now being asked, within the methods and limits of the science of theology, to seek out more efficient ways – provided the meaning and understanding of them is safeguarded - of presenting their teaching to modern man: for the deposit and the truths of faith are one thing, the manner of expressing them is quite another. In pastoral care sufficient use should be made, not only of theological principles, but also of the findings of secular sciences, especially psychology and sociology: in this

[172] Cf. PITAMBER, *Some Possible Implications of Gandhi's Satyagraha for Pastoral Counselling in the Indian Context*, p. 93
[173] POMPEY, *Zur Geschichte der Pastoralpsychologie*, p. 39.

> way the faithful will be brought to a purer and more mature living of the faith.[174]

It is clearly an extraordinary openness on the part of the Church. So long as the Church has to do with human beings, their psyche, their joys and sufferings[175] the Church cannot neglect this human science which deals with human nature, human personality and behaviour.

Insofar as the pastoral ministry is also about human beings, their problems, their happiness and joys and as long as it concerns their psyche and souls, pastoral psychology becomes essential in the concrete situations of the world today. Isidor Baumgartner believes that the search for an appropriate way of pastoral care and healing ministry in today's pastoral context leads one undoubtedly to psychology and psychotherapy. The knowledge garnered and established through various means of therapy could bring the pastoral ministry closer to men and women and give theology and pastoral ministry a new dimension.[176]

Optatam Totius, the Vatican II decree on the training of priests, also advocates that in the training of future priests, their spiritual formation should be supplemented with the latest findings of 'sound psychology and pedagogy.' It states, "The standards of Christian education should be faithfully maintained by the latest findings of sound psychology and pedagogy. A prudent system of training will, therefore, aim at developing in the students a proper degree of human maturity."[177]

Subsequently in the decree it demands that the priestly candidates should be trained in addition to fulfilling their spiritual duties, in the direction of souls: "They should receive precise instruction in the art of directing souls."[178] It further states that the would-be priests should acquire qualities similar to those of a counsellor today: "In general, those aptitudes should be cultivated in the students which are most conducive to dialogue amongst men. They include the willingness to listen to others, and the capacity to open their hearts in a spirit of charity to the various needs of their fellowmen."[179] In order to be able to do this effectively, they should be able to use the findings and aids of psychology and other social sciences. That is stated in the following number: "They should be taught to use correctly

[174] GS, No. 62.
[175] Cf. GS, No.1.
[176] Cf. BAUMGARTNER, *Pastoralpsychologie: Einführung in die Praxis heilender Seelsorge*, p. ii.
[177] *Optatam Totius*, (OT), Vatican II Decree on the Training of Priests, No. 11.
[178] Ibid., No. 19.
[179] Ibid.

the aids provided by pedagogy, psychology and sociology, in keeping with the regulations of ecclesiastical authority."[180]

The Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests, issued in 1994 by Pope John Paul II, calls for a human formation of priests, meaning that they should acquire human qualities and virtues that help them in their ministry. Regarding human formation, it says:

> This formation is extremely important in today's world, as it always has been. The priest must never forget that he is a man chosen among men to be at the service of men. To sanctify himself and carry out his priestly mission, he must present himself with an abundance of human virtues which render him worthy of esteem by those around him. In particular he must practice goodness of heart, patience, kindness, strength of soul, love for justice, even-mindedness, truthfulness to his word, coherence in the duties freely assumed, etc. It is likewise important that human virtues be reflected in the priest's social conduct, correctness in the various forms of human relations, friendships, courtesy, etc.[181]

1.3 Pastoral Counselling: Introduction, Definition and Scope

After taking a general view of the growth and development of pastoral psychology and the interaction of psychology with theology, now it is time to turn attention to the special area of my concern - pastoral counselling. Pastoral counselling is one of the areas where psychology is so concretely and effectively applied in the pastoral ministry.

1.3.1 Etymology

Originally counselling meant a piece of advice given by informed or experienced persons. The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) defines counselling and psychotherapy broadly thus: "Counselling and psychotherapy are umbrella terms that cover a range of talking therapies. They are delivered by trained practitioners who work with people over a short or long term to help them bring about effective change or enhance their well-being."[182] As the definition shows, the term counselling is today used as an umbrella term which covers a wide spectrum of therapies.

Counselling in the traditional sense normally included information, education or insight for practical life. Wisdom Literature from the Old Testament could be understood as counsels

[180] OT, No. 20.
[181] *The Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, issued by Pope John Paul II, on 31.01.1994, No. 75.
[182] Home page of BACP: http://www.bacp.co.uk/crs/Training/whatiscounselling.php (10.1.2016).

for day-to-day living. It is not only in Christianity we find such elements of counselling in religion. Most religions have the tradition of sages, gurus, rishis and mullahs to help the faithful. They help in times of crises and troubles. Sometimes help rendered consists in just listening to them. A person to whom the faithful can open up fully and unreservedly is found in most religions. It could be a confessor or spiritual director in Christian tradition; a guru or sage in Hindu tradition; a mullah or religious teacher in Islam. The tradition of guru (spiritual guide) is well established in India. In the modern world, impersonalized and secularized, the need for a person who listens and understands has become urgent.[183]

Pastoral counselling has a special identity of its own. It is based solidly on theological foundations. It cannot be totally identified with any particular school of psychology or psychotherapy, but at the same time pastoral counselling tries to be modern, up-to-date and professional in its approach: "Yet pastoral counselling cannot be, and in fact is not, entirely synonymous with analytic, behaviouristic or even humanistic psychology. It must have a distinct philosophical approach to the same problems and properly conceived, it will defy the derogatory term 'unprofessional.'"[184] Pastoral counselling tries to base itself on the common ground that theology and psychology together share. In spite of all the differences, there exist many common grounds for theology and psychology. Natale opines, "Psychotherapy is a perspective on healing; it tries for change, it tries to offer something better. Theology also has a perspective on healing. In fact, because it attempts to explain the healing of all humanity in historical salvific act, Theology may be rightly considered the epitome of the healing process…"[185]

In the post-modern world, an authoritarian way of functioning or guiding has no place; nor does just dishing out pieces of advice help. The role of the counsellor changes according to situation, tradition and culture. The core of this ministry is to help the counselee to help himself.[186] Pastoral counselling is generally regarded as counselling in the context of Christian ministry. In Protestant circles, terms like Biblical Counselling and Christian Counselling are more frequently used than the term 'pastoral counselling' which is preferred in the Catholic context. *The Catholic Encyclopaedia for Theology and Church*

[183] Cf. MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling* p. 149.
[184] Samuel M. NATALE, *Pastoral Counselling. Reflections and Concerns*, NY: Paulist Press, 1977, p. 15.
[185] NATALE, *Pastoral Counselling*, p. 15.
[186] Cf. MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, p. 150.

defines pastoral counselling from a client-centred view based on the methods of Carl Rogers and the efforts of Seward Hiltner.[187]

Pastoral counselling is an integral part of the pastoral ministry of the Church. Pastoral counselling is a specific activity, more directed towards an individual with specific needs. The specific needs may mean he is going through a depression, frustration, bereavement, loss, sickness, relational problems with God or neighbours.[188]

In my approach for this work, I see pastoral counselling as the application of psychology, especially secular counselling psychology and its methods in a Christian, especially Catholic, pastoral context. It takes for granted that psychological principles and methods are used. It also presupposes that the context of this counselling is particularly Christian and pastoral, which presupposes the Christian faith and practices.

1.3.2 Biblical Foundation of Pastoral Ministry

Can pastoral counselling be traced back to the ministry of Jesus? Jesus invited those who were suffering and in sorrow to come to him. The Church has received the same obligation to continue this ministry of showing special care and concern for the oppressed, distressed and persons in pain - physical or psychological. The instruction given by Jesus to his disciples also includes the care of souls (Mt 10:6ff, Mk 6:8ff, Lk 9:3ff, 10:3ff). This is a command not only to preach but also to bring wholeness and healing to human lives. Seward Hiltner speaks of three types of pastoral care: healing, guiding and sustaining.[189] Clebsch and Jaekle added one more dimension - reconciling - to this list: healing, guiding, sustaining and reconciling.[190]

In the Biblical understanding of counselling, the Holy Spirit is the ever-present guide in every counselling process. In the Pauline writings we read about the obligation to exhort, encourage and to help others with patience and tolerance: "And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the idlers, encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, be patient with them all" (1 Thess. 5:14). Pastoral counselling takes the spiritual elements seriously: "Pastoral

[187] Cf. Isidor BAUMGARTNER, *Pastoral Counceling* [sic] in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (LThK), Band 7, Freiburg: Herder, 1998, p. 1434.
[188] Cf. MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, p. 151.
[189] Cf. Seward HILTNER, *Preface to Pastoral Theology*, Nashville: Abingdon, 1958, pp. 89-174.
[190] Cf. William A. CLEBSCH / Charles R. JAEKLE, *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964, pp. 32-66.

counselling by its essence focuses on the spiritual element of the person by use of religious resources without neglecting its holistic approach in understanding persons."[191]

Healing is a work of God. God, who created the world and the humans, protects them and is constantly at work bringing creation to its final destination. He brings holistic healing to the groaning creation. Bringing healing to the oppressed was an important ministry of priests and prophets in the Old Testament. During his ministry on earth, Jesus brought holistic healing to human beings. He healed not only the body but also the mind and soul of the person. Jesus' act of healing was a symbol of bringing salvation to the people. He was a holistic healer. Pastoral counselling is an aspect and continuation of this ministry of Jesus.[192]

Most pastoral counsellors use insights from human sciences. Ezamo Murry says, "The science of human behaviour is within the milieu of God's wisdom."[193] In the ministry of pastoral counselling, scripture and science come together as a useful tool to help a human being. The most commonly used schools of psychology by pastoral counsellors are psychoanalysis, client-centred approach, Gestalt therapy, Logotherapy, rational emotive therapy and systemic therapy. A pastoral counsellor should have the following basic qualities: rapport with the client, disciplined listening, empathic understanding, confidentiality and genuineness. Pastoral counselling is an attempt in this direction. It tries to integrate spirituality, theology and psychology in a holistic manner. It tries to integrate the good and helpful methods of psychology and social sciences in the concrete ministry of the Church.[194]

Renowned pastoral counsellor Howard J. Clinebell states that pastoral counselling is "the utilisation of a variety of healing (therapeutic) methods to help people handle their problems and crises more growthfully [sic] and thus experience healing of their brokenness."[195] Over the years, pastoral counselling has become an integral part of pastoral ministry and pastoral care. Unlike secular psychotherapies, pastoral counselling cannot leave the ultimate meaning of life out of its purview. Clebsch & Jaekle aver that, "The ministry of the cure of souls, or pastoral care, consists of helping acts, done by representative Christian persons, directed toward the healing, sustaining, guiding, and

[191] MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, p. 174.
[192] Cf. Ibid., p. 153.
[193] Ibid., p. 154.
[194] Cf. Ibid., pp. 164-168.
[195] Howard J. CLINEBALL, *Basic Types of Pastoral Care & Counseling: Resources For The Ministry of Healing & Growth*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989, p. 26.

reconciling of troubled persons whose troubles arise *in the context of ultimate meanings and concerns*."[196]

1.3.3 Faith Resources in Counselling

Pastoral counselling is a specific area within pastoral care and pastoral ministry. It is a ministry centred on an individual or a group or focused on a specific problem. Pastoral counsellor is a trained person who understands the dynamics of human growth, human relations, and has the know-how to help others. Three of his important tasks are healing, guiding and sustaining.[197] For this task he takes recourse to faith resources, too. When used appropriately, faith resources can be very effective, but an indiscriminate use can do more harm than good. The counsellor should be prudent and sensible even in the use of scripture and prayers. A misplaced enthusiasm can do more harm than good. To make artificial and exploitative use of the scriptures, faith resources and religious rituals are not in keeping with the spirit of ministry of the Church.[198]

Murry, speaking basically from an Indian perspective, because of his decades-long experience in India, argues that the following points should be taken into account in pastoral counselling: The counsellor should accept the person totally. The counsellor should never try to manipulate the counselee in any way, psychologically, morally or religiously. The person should never be coerced into something or forced to take offers. The personal freedom of the individual has to be respected. The pastoral counsellor should employ genuine human qualities such as affection, love, trust and acceptance. In pastoral counselling the counsellor should never enforce his own agenda. Freedom of the person has to be respected at all levels. God is the source of this freedom, and the counsellor is there only to help the client within the limits of this freedom.[199]

1.3.4 Jesus as Model Counsellor

How can an encounter or a conversation bring about healing and change in the lives of people? One finds many wonderful examples in the life of Jesus. Jesus while encountering people and having a conversation with people of all categories - his disciples, followers, officers, sinners and people regarded as outcastes - brings about healing, a new attitude to

[196] CLEBSCH / JAEKLE, *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective*, p. 4. Italics mine.
[197] Cf. MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, p. 164.
[198] Cf. Ibid., p. 158.
[199] Cf. MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, p. 166.

life and change in their lives. His very life and actions were therapeutic in nature.[200] This is the fundamental duty of pastoral counselling: to bring about this healing and change in the lives of people by encountering and holding a dialogue with them.

Gary R. Collins, a well-known American Protestant psychologist of today, believes that Jesus was a wonderful counsellor: "Jesus Christ is the best model we have of an effective 'wonderful counsellor' whose personality, knowledge, and skills enabled him to assist anyone who needed help."[201] What is more amazing is that Jesus used a variety of methods to help people, depending on the situation and the person. Sometimes he spoke directly, at other times he was a passive listener, sometimes more client-centred and frequently he also confronted and challenged people.[202]

Some Old Testament references to Jesus present him as a counsellor. Isa. 9:6 speaks of the 'wonderful counsellor'. In various places in the Bible one comes across Jesus as a person who had deep knowledge of human nature and was imbued or gifted with the qualities of a psychological helper. The gospels give numerous examples of Jesus leading people to a deeper understanding of themselves, others and God. He responds to the personal needs of people. His approach - one could say, in today's parlance - is person-oriented. The Bible shows how Jesus, in several encounters and dialogues with people, emphasized the need for:

- A new look at the reality and the situation (Jn 3:3 - Jesus is somebody who enlightens others. Here Jesus gives Nicodemus a new insight, a new direction in life).
- Change of attitude and a new philosophy of life (Jn 4: The woman at the well. Jesus as a real counsellor).
- The need to move away from a life of sin (Jn 8:11 - Woman caught in adultery - 'go and sin no more').

1.3.4.1 Therapeutic Nature of Jesus

The gospels are full of examples of how Jesus used encounter and dialogue as a method to bring about healing and salvation. Take for example, Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well, (Jn 4: 3-42), Jesus and Zacchaeus (Lk 19:1-10), Jesus with the disciples on their way to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-19). In all these examples Jesus brings them to a new realization of themselves and a consequent change in their lives. Jesus does it gently, by patient listening, probing and responding. His empathic approach as well as understanding of their feeling

[200] Cf. Hanna WOLF, *Jesus als Psychotherapeut. Jesu Menschenhandlung als Modell moderner Psychotherapie*, Stuttgart: Radius, 1989 Edition, pp. 9-14.
[201] Gary R. COLLINS, *Christian Counseling. A Comprehensive Guide*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson, (3rd Edition), 2007, p. 29.
[202] Cf. Ibid., p. 30.

helps him to win their hearts. He establishes a genuine relationship through his dialogue. He helps them to have a new image of God. He is able to give them new hope and confidence and a new perspective on reality.[203]

1.3.4.2 Jesus' Knowledge of Human Beings

Jesus had a thorough understanding of human beings. He could read their thoughts. He was a man of intense inner perceptivity and intuition. Col 2:3 speaks about the wisdom and knowledge possessed by Jesus: 'in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.' John 2: 24-25 speaks of Jesus' knowledge of human beings and their inner thoughts and feelings: "But Jesus did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all men and needed no one to testify about anyone; for he himself knew what was in everyone." Jesus' gut feeling about human beings was correct.

1.3.4.3 Person of Jesus

The very personality of Jesus played a central role in his helping of people. Gary Collins says, "Basic to Jesus' style of helping, however, was his personality. In his teaching, caring, and counselling, he demonstrated those traits, attitudes, and values that made him effective as a people-helper and that serve as a model for us. Jesus was absolutely honest, deeply compassionate, and highly sensitive and spiritually mature in all his dealings with people."[204]

In the gospels, on various occasions, Jesus appears like a therapist who heals people. He encounters people as a dialogue partner or as a narrator of stories and parables. One can experience Jesus in the gospels as one who challenges us. An encounter with Jesus changes the partner drastically - his views on his own self and of the other, of God and the Kingdom of God. Often through his dialogues Jesus brought about a change of self-image in the person, which is crucial for a successful living.[205]

Those who are involved in spiritual direction can profit greatly from the method of Jesus. Jesus did not have a fixed therapy method or style of helping people. He did not belong to any school of therapy. He dealt with each individual according to his gut feelings and his intuition. It is difficult to copy his method, but we can draw inspiration from it. Jesus sent his Spirit upon his disciples, and he asked them to heal the sick and drove out evil spirits.

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[203] Cf. MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, pp. 176-178.
[204].COLLINS, *Christian Counseling*, p. 30.
[205] Cf. Anselm GRÜN, *Jesus als Therapeut. Die heilende Kraft der Gleichnisse*, Münsterschwarzach :Vier-Türme Verlag, 2011, p. 7.

A personal encounter with Jesus in our sufferings and psychological problems can bring a healing touch. A meditation on the words of Jesus can bring about change in our lives.[206]

1.3.4.4 Some Examples of Jesus' Healing Encounter

The gospels show us how Jesus encountered people, spent time with them, engaged them in dialogue, listened to them patiently and helped them change their lives. He brings liberation to the lives of people who are in moral laxity, physical deprivation, spiritual emptiness, etc. Jesus always stressed the importance and worth of the person and upheld human dignity that comes ultimately from God. He also understands human frailty (woman caught in adultery, Peter who denied him) and helps them to overcome them. Jesus has a holistic approach to healing. He helps people reconcile with God, with themselves and with others. Forgiveness is a major element of this reconciliation with God and self.[207]

1.3.4.4.1 Jesus and the Samaritan Woman: Jn 4:1-42

John 4: 1-42 narrates in detail how Jesus encounters this woman from Samaria at the well and how he gradually leads her to insight about God, the nature of worship and to a change of life. Jesus shows in this encounter that he had deep psychological insights into human nature. In his free encounter with this woman from the Samaritan area Jesus breaks the barriers of purity and class distinctions. He breaks many Jewish religious and social taboos.[208]

His physical need to drink is at the moment greater than all other needs. The doubtful question of the woman, 'why do you ask me?' means much more than the words apparently mean. It reflects a certain distance, the anxiety and uncertainty of the woman and even her perplexity at the unusual behaviour of this Jew. But Jesus slowly gains her trust and takes the conversation to a deeper level. The conversation goes beyond physical into a spiritual level, over the physical need of Jesus (i.e., his thirst and the need for water) into the spiritual need of the woman (i.e., her thirst for meaning in life and for eternal life).[209]

Jesus had a truly methodical, systematic approach to this woman just like a counsellor. As the first step, he encounters her in a friendly manner and accepts her. Then he begins to establish rapport with her which in turn gives her confidence to share her eventful life with

[206] Cf. GRÜN, *Jesus als Therapeut*, p. 8.
[207] Cf. MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, p. 177.
[208] Cf. David L. McKENNA, *The Psychology of Jesus*, Texas: Word Books, 1977, p. 128.
[209] Cf. McKENNA, *The Psychology of Jesus*, p. 128.

him. Jesus' disciplined listening and his unconditional loving acceptance causes catharsis in the woman.[210]

The woman gradually begins to address Jesus 'sir', showing him her respect and acknowledging his authority. Jesus is not a total stranger anymore. Jesus, like a counsellor, waits till she gets enough faith and trust in him and gradually probes her personal life. Jesus is not too curious or 'pushy' but he waits for the appropriate moment to broach the topic of her personal life with a view to helping her and leading her to a new insight and awareness.[211] Jesus makes her responsible for herself, her actions and her life. He helps her make an evaluation of her life. Her realization 'you are a prophet' and her desire to divert the subject matter to worship of God, shows her discomfort with her own self and the inner need for a change, which Jesus perceives. Jesus does go further into personal details. In all his interaction with her, Jesus shows extreme sensitivity to the woman. He initiates in her the desire to change.[212]

Jesus also reveals to her the transcendental dimension of human life. He makes known to her that he is the Messiah whom she has been awaiting for her salvation. Her openness and receptivity brings her salvation. What we have seen here in this encounter of Jesus with the woman is worth interpreting in the context of pastoral counselling:

- Jesus accepts her totally as she is with full respect for her individuality;
- He respects her as a human being with dignity and worth;
- He invites her to retrospection but without forcing her in any way;
- He leaves her the choice to accept or to reject.[213]

These are qualities which are indispensable in the context of pastoral counselling. Further, if we analyse the text, we can say Jesus acknowledges this woman as a unique and worthwhile person with potential for growth and wholeness. That is the reason why Jesus let her go out of herself to begin a new life. Jesus leads her to confess her inner need for change. He provides insight into her inner life in order to come out with a new future. He even allows her to have a positive guilt feeling which can bring about a healing in the

[210] Cf. MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, p. 176.
[211] Cf. McKENNA, *The Psychology of Jesus*, p. 129.
[212] Cf. Ibid., p. 132.
[213] Cf. Ibid., pp. 134-135.

person.[214] In his dealing with her, Jesus becomes the 'significant other' (Harry S Sullivan) in the life of this woman in bringing her out of her mire of disoriented life.[215]

Jesus also helps the Samaritan woman to achieve self-realization and encourages her to re-orient her life. She is enabled to have a new approach to life. The unconditional acceptance provided by Jesus to the woman - with her background with all its shady dimensions and her life-situation - helps her look into herself. It is important to note that Jesus does not force her in any way, but only makes her realize what is most important in her life.[216]

1.3.4.4.2 Walk to Emmaus with the Disciples (Lk 24: 13-35)

Here we see how Jesus encounters two men who are perplexed, disappointed and deep in sorrow. He does not cut short their talk or walk. Seen from a psychological point of view, he wants them to talk it over, become more aware of it. Jesus lets them see the situation from different perspectives and helps them release the tension created by the events. This talking out leads them to a cathartic process, helping them to vent their pent-up emotion. Sometimes the expression of painful emotions through words and tears helps one to come to terms with the situation.[217]

1.3.4.4.3 Parables of Jesus as Counselling Sessions

In the parables of Jesus reveal the therapeutic quality of his teaching. Jesus was a master narrator and he used parables regularly to bring home to the people the message of the Kingdom. Spiritual teachers and psychologists claim that the parables of Jesus have a great therapeutic power. They give us a change of perspective with regard to our self-image and our understanding of God. The parables could be considered as counselling or a kind of conversation therapy. What do they achieve? Anselm Grün gives us a few examples:

a. Through them, Jesus tries to free the people from their pathological image of God and distorted and destructive self-image.
b. Through the parables Jesus motivates and encourages the depressed and the discouraged.
c. They offer us a new perspective on life.[218]

[214] Cf. McKENNA, *The Psychology of Jesus*, p. 136.
[215] Cf. Ibid., p. 137.
[216] Cf. MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, p. 180.
[217] Cf. Ibid., p. 181.
[218] Cf. GRÜN, *Jesus als Therapeut*, p. 9.

Our idea of God has a lot to do with the success or failure of our lives. In his approach, Jesus tried to change the perspectives of the people from within, without moralising or patronising. The parables, when properly used, are even today a great help in spiritual guidance and counselling. The message of Jesus, in the parables in particular, leads one to a level where one feels accepted and loved by God.[219]

The therapeutic manner of Jesus is most evident in the healing narratives of the gospels. Jesus' dealing with each person was different. He does not use just the same method to deal with different people. We get insights into 'the different methods of therapy' in the healing narratives.[220] They challenge us to come to Jesus with our brokenness. They also challenge us to encounter people with the power of the Spirit and to lift them up. Through them Jesus invites all to rid themselves of their pathological image of God - as revengeful, wicked and eager to punish. Most of the therapy methods function through conversation and dialogue. It is not uncommon even today that the therapist narrates stories and anecdotes to the client to point out something to him. The narration of stories was originally the method of therapy in the olden times. Jesus was indeed a skilled narrator and orator and people listened to him with rapt attention.[221]

Parables form the central part of Jesus' teaching and narrations. These parables were part of his therapy methods. Through his parables, Jesus prods and moves us to think. The parables of Jesus intend to create an inner change in the listener. The listener is fascinated by the words of Jesus and without his knowledge he is led to a higher level - new knowledge of God and of self and to an inner change. Jesus handles a variety of psychological themes in the parables – how to overcome fear, guilt, disappointment, helplessness, etc. These are also themes dealt with in psychotherapy and counselling. The parables invite the listeners to deal constructively with such important themes that affect life.[222]

The Church has for a long time infused a feeling of guilt in the minds of people, which was not always helpful. What is mostly prevalent today is the other extreme: people deny it totally. Not to accept or to totally suppress the emotions of regret and guilt is to deny totally a reality, which is part of human nature. Grün quotes the Munich psychiatrist Albert Görres who believed that one who does not have a sense of guilt loses something very

[219] Take, for example, the parable of the loving father (prodigal son).
[220] Cf. GRÜN, *Jesus als Therapeut*, p.10.
[221] Cf. Ibid., p.12.
[222] Cf. Ibid., pp. 13-15.

integral to human existence and being. The suppressed feeling of guilt itself appears in different other forms like anger, fear, temper and compulsion.[223]

Grün, who helped thousands of people with guidance and spiritual direction, gives an example how one should look at the parables anew and be helped by their therapeutic value. He says the parable of the cunning servant (Lk 16: 1-8) has helped people in spiritual direction to overcome guilt feelings. The approach of Jesus is to be friendly with people and to heal them through this approach. Grün claims the essence of this parable is to infuse the courage to go ahead boldly in life and have the guts to lead a normal life in the society associating and socializing with others.[224] The Word of God can be a powerful tool in pastoral counselling. It has the power to move people, to inspire and encourage them and to lead them to a new life.[225]

1.3.5 Paradox of Pastoral Counselling

The field of pastoral counselling is indeed paradoxical, more so when a priest assumes the role of a counsellor. He has to strike a fine balance between the prejudiced role of a priest as moralizer and that of a permissive therapist. It is quite likely that a conflict of roles can arise between the two vocations. On the one hand, the (Catholic) priest is bound by obedience to the Church and her authorities. The teachings of the Church in some way restrict his freedom. A therapist is generally considered to be a person who enjoys complete freedom of thought and one who advocates total personal freedom. There can be many issues of conflict such as divorce, contraception, abortion, euthanasia, etc., where he may hold a different opinion. Other controversial issues include celibacy, obedience, etc. Natale, as priest and counsellor knows this dilemma: "Thus the tension between proper clinical behaviour and priestly responsibility seems to be real indeed, and repeated instances of such unresolved conflict are apt to be severely discouraging to the pastoral counsellor. In short, the entire dilemma arises from the fact that those in the pulpit tend to be identified with morality, while those in the analytical chair are supposed to be on the side of the id."[226]

[223] Cf. GRÜN, *Jesus als Therapeut*, p. 16. (See also Albert GÖRRES, *Kennt die Psychologie den Menschen?* München: Piper, 1984, 2nd Edition, p.193)
[224] Cf. GRÜN, *Jesus als Therapeut*, pp. 17-19.
[225] For more of this topic see 5. 4. 4 in this dissertation. (Cross reference made to avoid needless repetition).
[226] NATALE, *Pastoral Counselling*, p.13.

1.3.6 Essentials and Goals of Counselling in a Christian Context

It is true that counselling in a Christian context can be different than in a secular context, although the tools and skills employed may more or less be the same. The goals of counselling may vary when the counsellor and counselee are believers and have a common basis in faith and morals.

One of the greatest dangers in pastoral counselling is the tendency to moralise and to dish out solutions, often with reference to the Bible. It should be more of 'where are you?' than 'there you are!'[227] This general tendency to be judgemental and moralising poses a great danger to the whole process of pastoral counselling. It makes pastoral counselling unscientific, unhelpful and against established professional standards. On the other hand, there is a need to engage in serious dialogue and not to dish out ready-made solutions, easily jumping into conclusions and trying immediately to solve problems like an expert.[228] Instead, he should help the counselee to delve into his own self, analyse the problem, think it over from various angles with the help of the counsellor and come out with self-discovered solutions. This helps the counselee to own up his problems and to resort to his own resources to solve them. Psychologists call this process in counselling 'self-exploration'. This should be ably supported and guided through the 'probing' of the counsellor.[229]

Trust is another important element in pastoral counselling. It is not easy to get to know who people really are and what their real problems are. It takes time and trust: "Finding out where people really are, which usually turns out to be far removed from the problem they initially presented, takes time, care and commitment. Too many counsellors think they have immediate biblical answers for everyone; they tend to say, 'there you are,' before they know what the real problem is."[230] There is a need for creating a friendly and health-inducing atmosphere, helping the person in his self-exploration with probing, finding out the cause of the problem and searching for his own solutions and way-out. Kirwan says, "The best way to avoid such mistakes is, in effect to ask, 'Where are you? I want to

[227] Cf. William T. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling. A Case for Integrating Psychology and Theology*, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1984, pp. 119-121.
[228] Cf. Ibid., pp. 119-121.
[229] Cf. J. M. FUSTER, *Personal Counselling*, Mumbai: St Pauls, 2008 Edition, pp. 51, 59. (J. M. FUSTER, an American Jesuit, the former founder-director of Xavier Institute of Counselling, Mumbai, is one of the pioneers of counselling in India. He offered many training programmes and courses to promote counselling in India. For details about his programme see J. M FUSTER, *Training Courses in Personal Counselling*, in *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, Vol. 2.1,1979, pp. 39-51).
[230] KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, pp. 120-121.

understand what your problem really is.' It is vital that on every level of interpersonal action the Christian community adopt a 'where are you' rather than a 'there you are approach.' "[231]

1.3.6.1 Secular Goals

Pastoral counselling is also a form of counselling. It follows the basic principles and methods of secular counselling. In this sense, pastoral counselling has also secular goals, in addition to the spiritual and pastoral goals. In the opinion of Ezamo Murry, the goals of pastoral counselling include some of the following secular elements:[232]

a) Reducing undue tension: It can be achieved through catharsis, relaxing and releasing pent-up inner feelings by sharing with the counsellor. Sometimes free expression of feelings and thoughts to a trust-worthy person helps one to get over depression and pent-up feelings. It helps the better functioning of a person.

b) Resolving conflicts: Pastoral counselling helps also to resolve harmful conflicts arising out of relational problems and uncontrolled hostility. Many people today experience conflicts at personal, familial and social levels. Pastoral counselling offers great help in this regard from a spiritual point of view.

c) Self-understanding, self-acceptance and self-actualisation: Better functioning is an important goal in pastoral counselling. It is possible only through improving the self-understanding and self-acceptance of the counselee by infusing a new sense of worth and creating a better self-image in the person. The person should love and accept himself because God loves and accepts him. The counselee has also to be helped to find self-fulfilment and achieve self-actualisation. In a pastoral setup the transcendental dimension of the human being should not be neglected.

d) Informative function: Pastoral counselling also helps to bring out the internal resources within the person for his fuller development. Another important goal of pastoral counselling is to provide the counselee with information, clarification and insights so that he can make a 'smart' (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely) choice. It also includes making known to the counselee the position of the Church on certain matters and issues and the teaching of the Church.

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[231] KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling,* p. 121.
[232] Cf. MURRY, *An Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling,* pp. 166-168.

1.3.6.2 Non-Secular Goals of Pastoral Counselling

Most pastoral counsellors and authors agree that pastoral counselling has to be differentiated from secular counselling. Although pastoral counselling uses many psychological principles, skills and methods of secular counselling, they are obviously also different. The goals and some essential features distinguish pastoral counselling from secular counselling.

The goals of pastoral counselling include helping the client to:

a. attend to the religious and spiritual needs and related problems;
b. try to find out the impact of religion on day-to-day life;
c. make use of resources to cope with life, change and bring about healing; and
d. make informed decision on what role religion and spirituality should play in life.[233]

Kirwan speaks of the following aspects of pastoral counselling which have to be included in its process in addition to the normal secular counselling goals and methods.

1.3.6.2.1 Spiritual and Emotional Growth

One of the main goals of pastoral counselling is the spiritual and emotional growth of the counselee. This can be achieved through the 'therapeutic' relationship with the counselee, helping him with discernment and sometimes through constructive confrontation in the light of faith and through the immediacy of the therapeutic relationships. Kirwan says, "As the counsellor confronts the client in this way, judiciously discloses doctrinal precepts, and strives for immediacy in the therapeutic relationship, the client will come to a better self-understanding and internalize biblical principles which will result in spiritual and emotional growth."[234]

Like in spiritual direction, it is one of the main objectives of pastoral counselling to help a person to deepen his relationship with God. In the opinion of Kathleen Heasman, "Pastoral counselling has a further dimension to add, since the counsellor seeks as well to strengthen the person's relationship with God… The pastoral counsellor, unlike the social worker, does not keep his beliefs to himself, but, on the other hand, he does not introduce them indiscriminately, but only as a part of the counselling process and when the person is ready to receive them."[235]

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[233] Cf. James M. NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, New York: Springer, 2009, p. 501
[234] KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 158.
[235] Kathleen HEASMAN, *An Introduction to Pastoral Counselling*, London: Constable & Co, 1969, pp. 56-57.

1.3.6.2.2 Imparting a Sense of Belonging

In Christian counselling, the counsellor should impart to the counselee a sense of belonging. In a good pastoral counselling, the counsellor should reaffirm the Christian identity of the counselee with a sense of belonging. The counselee should feel, "I belong to the counsellor and the counsellor belongs to me."[236] This is a feature that is emphasised also in a person-centred approach. Through his empathy, genuineness and unconditional positive regard, the counsellor imparts a sense of belonging to the counselee.[237] In the initial stages of counselling, the counsellor is expected to establish rapport with the counselee to gain his trust and to impart him this sense of belonging: "The goal of this first stage of the process is to get the counselee to experience a sense of trust in the counsellor and eventually, a feeling of belonging to the family of God."[238] This belongingness is even more seen in spiritual direction.

In the difficult moments of one's life, one is much relieved to know that one is not alone. The counsellor, the community and the Church should stand by this person and give him/her a sense of belonging. It could be expressed as follows: " When the other is with me I feel I am not alone, I feel understood, not in some detached way, but because I feel he knows what it is like to be me. I realize that he wants to see me as I am, not in order to pass judgement on me, but to help me…" [239]

At the creation of human beings, God instilled this sense of belonging into their hearts. God Himself is in communion. The three persons belong to one another. God has created human beings as persons who are essentially communion-oriented.[240] Dutch theologian Bavinck says, "The deep human need for a sense of belonging is already clear in the story of Adam….His nature inclines to the social - he wants company. He must be able to express himself, reveal himself, and give himself. He must be able to pour out his heart, to give form to his feelings. He must share his awareness with a being who can understand him and can feel and live along with him…" [241]

What are the factors that could create a sense of belonging? Kirwan considers four factors essential to create a sense of belonging. They are empathy, genuineness, warmth and

[236] KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 121.
[237] Cf. Peter F. SCHMID, *Personale Begegnung. Der personzentrierte Ansatz in Psychotherapie, Beratung, Gruppenarbeit und Seelsorge*, Würzburg: Echter, 1989, pp. 209-216.
[238] KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 121.
[239] Milton MAYEROFF, as cited KIRWAN in *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 121.
[240] Cf. Peter F. SCHMID, *Im Anfang ist Gemeinschaft. Personzentrierte Gruppenarbeit in Seelsorge und Praktischer Theologie*, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer,1998, pp. 36-38. See also pp. 42-43.
[241] Herman BAVINCK as cited by KIRWAN in *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 124.

concreteness. These attitudes are considered central to the approach of humanistic psychology. The three pillars of the person-centred approach according to Carl Rogers are: genuineness, unconditional positive regard and empathy. In subsequent chapters I shall discuss them at length.

1.3.6.2.3 Discernment

In the Catholic tradition discernment is an important goal of pastoral counselling and spiritual direction. The counselee tries to discern the will of God through the help of the counsellor. This practice can be found in the earliest traditions of the Church. In Salesian tradition discernment is one of the most important elements of spiritual direction.[242]

1.3.6.2.4 Edification

Edification is the means of bringing home to the counselee Christian values and principles. This element of pastoral counselling varies greatly from the secular counselling and therapy, as the latter does not accord great importance to informing the client about values and principles. In pastoral counselling, when a client has to take a decision, the counsellor informs him of the pros and cons of the same from a Christian point of view. A Christian pays heed to the values of the Gospel and Christian principles in his life. Therefore, a Christian counsellor has to be a learned person who has a strong faith and is familiar with Christian philosophy, theology and morals. This was one of the conditions[243] stressed by St Francis de Sales in choosing a spiritual director.

According to Kirwan, these are the essential components of Christian edification:

a. *Doctrinal self-disclosure*: This means revealing Christian truths to the client without obstructing him and without disturbing the therapeutic flow. It has to be done without being authoritarian or sermonic.[244]
b. *Confrontation:* The purpose of confrontation is not to rebuke or to put the counselee down, but it is, "the bringing together of growth-defeating discrepancies in the client's perceptions, feelings, behaviour, values, attitudes, and communication to compare and examine them."[245] There are different types of confrontation: didactic, experiential, strength confrontation, encouragement to action, etc. Every confrontation should be characterized by empathy, tentativeness and care.[246]

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[242] Cf. Richard J. SWEENEY, *Discernment in the Spiritual Direction of St. Francis de Sales*, in *Review of Religious*, Vol. 39.1, 1980, pp.127-141.
[243] Cf. John P. CONNOLLY, *Basic Principles of Spiritual Direction* in *Salesian Studies*, Vol. 11. 2, (80-92), Wilmington, Delaware: Salesian Institute, 1964, pp. 88-92.
[244] Cf. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, pp. 150-152.
[245] Ibid., p. 153.
[246] Cf. Ibid., pp. 152-155.

c. *Immediacy:* It "helps to speed the process and enables the client to deal with unresolved problems swiftly."[247] There is an inherent danger in immediacy. If not used prudently and efficiently, it can produce anxiety, and being overly direct can be harmful.

Pastoral counselling and spiritual direction often use self-examination and evaluation of life. American psychiatrist Kenneth Mark Colby believes re-constructing and re-living experiences can be a learning experience: "A skilled counsellor repeatedly assists clients to recollect, reconstruct, and re-experience events that have caused current problems. In reliving those events as it were, the counselee "undergoes literally hundreds of modifying learning experiences."[248]

1.3.6.2.5 'Diakonia' / Service

Diakonia – love in action - is another important goal and motive of pastoral counselling. Kirwan proposes this as the final stage of Christian counselling. Christians are called to serve one another:

> After a sense of belonging has given the counselee enough confidence to risk self-exploration and edification has led to the internalization of biblical principles, externalization – moving from one's own self and away from preoccupation with one's own needs – can take place. The goal of this stage of Christian counselling is effective living: the ability to handle the social and emotional dimensions of life. Self-destructive pattern will no longer hold sway; new spiritual resources will be discovered and utilized.[249]

If one looks at the whole process Kirwan suggests for pastoral counselling, it seems to be structured like this: The first stage of that preparatory exploration helps the counselee to explore himself, make a general examination of himself and to see himself in the totality of his being. The next stage seems to be that of correcting his life with the help of biblical principles and the internalization of the same, and finally living out the biblical values in his life and in the service of others.

1.3.7 Different Schools of Psychology used in Pastoral Counselling

What are the different schools of psychology used in pastoral counselling? Do counsellors have a preference for a particular school? What are the different schools found to be more effective in pastoral counselling? Pastoral counselling makes use of practically every major branch of psychology depending on the need and the situation. While most counsellors

[247] KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p.157.
[248] Kenneth Mark COLBY as cited by Kirwan in *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 158. (Original in Kenneth Mark COLBY, *A Primer for Psychotherapists*, 1951, p. 121).
[249] KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 158.

stick to their own particular schools, a good many make use of an eclectic approach, making use of methods from different schools.

1.3.7.1 Psychoanalysis, Depth Psychology and Cognitive Schools

Psychoanalysis and depth psychology are based on the methods developed by Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Eric Fromm and others. They lay emphasis on one's development in childhood and the childhood influences on the later development of the person and the importance of unconscious drives. They use methods like interpretation of dreams, catharsis, transference, free association, bringing the unconscious to the conscious level, etc. in therapy.

It is true that religion and religious life deal with the unconscious too. This fact cannot be denied. Understanding suppression and repression in the unconscious helps us to come to terms with our own selves and shadows and to accept them. The Psalmist often asks God to search his heart to find out its inner state (Ps 139: 23-24). It is sometimes difficult for us to know what lies deep in our hearts. We need the help of a person or God's direct intervention. The Rational Emotive Therapy of Albert Ellis challenges us to check and rationalise our belief-system.[250]

1.3.7.2 Behaviourist School

The Behaviourist school deals with how human behaviour is learnt and how modification can be made to it. It stresses a person's external, observable behaviour. It is based on the experiments of Ivan Pavlov and John B. Watson. Behaviourism was developed further by Bandura and Skinner. Watson is considered the founder of the behaviourist school. The schools deals primarily with the 'doing' dimension of the personality - the therapy form is called behaviour modification - removal of the patient's undesirable symptoms and working towards desirable behaviour. The Behaviourist school deals mainly with what is directly observable.

Behaviourist school is hugely popular today. However, some aspects of the behaviourist school come into conflict with Christian principles, especially when it comes to the matter of human freedom and that of responsibility. A mechanically- or reflex-driven understanding of human behaviour goes radically against the Christian understanding of human freedom, responsibility and human dignity. William Glasser, founder of Reality Therapy, stresses the individual's current behaviour and his or her responsibility for that

[250] Cf. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 59.

behaviour. He believes that only personal responsibility for one's actions and a new plan of behaviour will result in positive change, which requires personal freedom, dignity and free will.[251] However, there are also many therapists who make use of the behaviourist approach to improve human behaviour, because behaviour modification is one of the important concerns of the behaviourist school. Their methods could be used to deal with de-addiction, freedom from compulsive behaviour, etc. From a Christian point of view, Jay Adams speaks of the 'de-habituation of sinful behaviour patterns.'[252]

1.3.7.3 Humanistic School

Carl Rogers is one of the founders, main proponent and the primary spokesman of the humanistic school of psychotherapy. It is also known as 'the Third Force', in contrast to psychoanalysis and behaviourism. Rogers had a great impact on the counselling field. Pastoral counselling received a boost from the methods of Carl Rogers, especially from his person-centred approach to counselling.[253]

Although Rogers is not known to be a believer ever since he became a psychologist, many authors believe many of his ideas and views are compatible with the Christian faith/doctrine.[254] As the person-centred method of Carl Rogers forms the central part of my thesis, more about Rogers and his method will be dealt with in detail in subsequent chapters.

Maslow is another humanist psychologist who brought out the idea of self-actualization, hierarchy of needs and the characteristics of a self-actualized person. In spite of the many differences on philosophical and psychological grounds, they are also many views and principles similar to Christian principles.[255] Both Rogers and Maslow stress on the person's being, which is similar to the biblical focus on the heart, the inner core of the person (Prov 4:23, Lk 6:45, Mt 12:34, 15:19, Mk 7:21-23). Nelson tries to present the different schools of counselling and psychotherapy generally used in pastoral counselling graphically as follows:[256]

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[251] Cf. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 62.
[252] Cf. Jay E. ADAMS, *A Theology of Christian Counseling,* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, pp.160-165.
[253] Cf. Peter F. SCHMID, *Personale Begegnung*, pp. 209-216. The whole book, especially the whole of Chapter 5, deals with this topic in detail.
[254] Cf. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 60.
[255] Cf. Ibid., pp. 60-61.
[256] NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, p. 488.

Approach	Representative figure	Causes of pathological behaviour	Mode of change
Psychodynamic	Freud, Adler, Fromm	Unconscious drives, personality structures, social factors	Transference, Catharsis
Humanistic	Rogers, Maslow	Environmental barriers to growth	Non-directive listening and reflection
Behavioural	Watson, Skinner	Learning Environment	Modification of environment or reinforcement
Cognitive	Ellis, Beck	Dysfunctional beliefs and thought patterns	Thought restructuring
Interpersonal	Weissman	Grief, Role disputes, Interpersonal skill deficits	Analyse current relationship and losses, form new relationships

Although different schools of psychology and psychotherapy have their own contributions to make, Christian counsellors should be selective in adopting a method or school. They should base their philosophy and psychology on what is compatible with the gospels and Christian beliefs, and employ corresponding methods in pastoral counselling. To quote Kirwan again: "Christian counsellors should pay primary attention to the schools of counselling that stress inner development through personal relationships, the schools of therapy stressing the 'knowing' and 'doing' dimensions of personality do have contributions to make."[257]

The Christian approach to modern counselling theories should be assessed on the basis of personal relationship because the Bible speaks of healing and new life through relationship

[257] KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 60

– relationship to God and to other human beings. A second criterion should be growth and maturation, and, thirdly, on the being of the counsellor.[258]

1.3.8 Different Counselling Positions

From the Christian point of view, the different counselling positions of the counsellors are judged in terms of their approach to faith. There are different ways in which a Christian looks at the different approaches to counselling.

1.3.8.1 Kirwan's View

The four major counselling approaches proposed by William T. Kirwan, well-known author in pastoral counselling, are the following:[259]

1.3.8.1.1 Un-Christian View

This approach totally neglects God, theology and spirituality, and stresses only psychology. This view is held by a majority of mental health professionals. It is basically an atheistic approach. It not only neglects God, but also mostly negates God. Many modern psychotherapists fall under this category.

1.3.8.1.2 Spiritualized View

This is the opposite of the above view. Here everything is seen in terms of God, faith and scriptures. This approach is also insufficient because it is over-spiritualized, simplistic and naïve. It tends to neglect the developments in the field of social sciences, including psychology and to turn a blind eye to research findings.

1.3.8.1.3 Parallel View

This is a neutral view. It does not negate faith or beliefs or religious practices, but at the same time tolerates no interference in the praxis. They hold the view that both psychology and theology/faith should remain totally independent of each other.

1.3.8.1.4 Integrated view

This is the approach preferred by most pastoral counsellors. It tries to bring harmoniously the truths of the Bible and psychology into the practice. This view, however, presupposes that both the counsellor and the client are open to faith or at least not against it. The integrated view, just as the term suggests, tries to integrate both psychology and faith.

[258] Cf. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 57.
[259] Cf. Ibid., pp. 20-21.

Kirwan believes there can be cooperation between psychology and Christianity. Many psychological findings reveal truths already found in the Bible.[260]

1.3.8.2 Nelson's View

James M. Nelson, another American psychologist and author on pastoral counselling, holds similar views on the different approaches of pastoral counsellors to psychology, or vice versa. He classifies the different approaches to pastoral counselling as follows:[261]

1.3.8.2.1 Integrative Approach

This is the method preferred by most Protestant and Catholic pastoral counsellors. In this method a Christian psychologist tries to combine the knowledge and techniques of psychology with Christian beliefs and apply them for an integrative approach in counselling, trying to take the best from both fields.

1.3.8.2.2 Traditional Approach

This approach bases itself on the teachings from the Bible, beliefs and practices of the Christian tradition, and values them as superior to psychological concepts which are viewed with suspicion. They rarely use methods which are purely psychological in nature.

1.3.8.2.3 Integrative Approach to Theistic Psychotherapy

One of the famous approaches in the field is the theistic psychotherapy of Richards and Bergin.[262] They reject reductionism, naturalism, and scientism, and accept theism and transcendence. They hope their system will be helpful while working with people who have problems such as depression and addiction: "This approach prefers an explicit minimizing strategy in which the counsellor is explicit about their values but also respectful of the autonomy of the clients and their beliefs."[263]

In this method, the therapist is open to spiritual intervention; but the therapist does not use spiritual intervention when he feels it is not needed or when he thinks it is not useful or when the client does not want it. This discernment and assessment is central to theistic psychotherapy: "Theistic psychotherapy begins by establishing basic rapport, trust and a working alliance with the client, conducting a religious assessment and setting appropriate

[260] Cf. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 21.
[261] Cf. NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, p. 501.
[262] For details refer to P. Scott RICHARDS / Allen E. BERGIN, *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy*, Washington DC: APA, (2nd ed.), 2005. Reference to this book has been made later in this work.
[263] NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, p. 501.

goals. The core goal of the approach is to 'help the clients experience and affirm their eternal spiritual identity and live in harmony with the Spirit of truth' (…)."[264]

1.3.8.2.4 Biblical Counselling

Biblical counselling is more radical and traditional in its theological outlook and counselling methods. Some of the followers of this method are Stantson L. Jones, Richard E. Butman, David Powlison and Jay E Adams. Ardent followers of this method base their counselling and guidance strongly on the Bible and biblical principles and tend to neglect or minimise the use of psychology in counselling. They question many key tenets of psychology and attribute no great value to them. They see psychology more as a liability than an asset in helping relationships. They advocate a return to the traditional biblical model of soul care.[265] The pastoral counselling prevalent in India, especially in the charismatic centres, could fall into this category. Their method of counselling is purely based on the Bible and the interpretation of Bible verses for the client.

1.4 Psychology and the Church

Decades ago, the Church and psychology treated each other like enemies. The Church was always sceptical about the psychologists. It was perhaps due to the over-emphasis many psychologists put on sexuality, sexual drives, the hidden motives of the psyche and their attitude towards the Church as an agent of repression and suppressor of human freedom. Freud is a classic example in this regard. It was also partly due to the undue emphasis many psychologists placed on human potentiality, thereby threatening the need of God or negating the power of the Sacraments.[266]

Is a dialogue possible between psychology and religion in spite of the numerous differences between them? How can these two sciences, whose outlook and approach are sometimes poles apart, be brought together? How can theology, a sacred science, and psychology, a purely secular and empirical science, work together? Many theologians and psychologists argue that there are many similarities and a common ground between theology and the social sciences. They both can be, to some extent, called 'applied anthropology'. In fact, when we look at history, the priest, the healer, the magician and

[264] RICHARDS / BERGIN (1997) as quoted by James M. Nelson in *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, p. 501
[265] Cf. NELSON, Ibid., p. 502.
[266] Cf. KUGELMANN, *Psychology and Catholicism*, pp.165-169.

later the psychotherapist belonged to the same family. Is not psychotherapy - which sometimes tries to deny its past which is intimately connected to the pastoral praxis of the Church - a 'child of pastoral care,'? asks Karl Heinz Ladanhauf, an Austrian pastoral theologian and pastoral psychologist.[267]

Natale argues that both sciences have a common goal: to heal human beings. Theology goes still deeper, because it aims also at redemption:

> Psychology is humanity's attempt to heal humanity, while Theology is an attempt to bring into focus the way in which we are healed by God. For the secular psychotherapist, the goal of his effort is to effect behavioural change; for the priest it is to elucidate the redemptive act. Yet both disciplines and their followers pursue identical ends: to cure humanity's alienation; to make humanity somehow psychologically and existentially whole again.[268]

One knows from history that many of the extreme views of psychologists like Freud about religion have proved to be wrong in the course of time. In spite of marxism, psychoanalysis, secularism and materialism, religion has a positive effect on the lives of the majority of people on earth even today. In spite of the many denouncements and predictions about its imminent death, religion continues to exist and influence people. Like any other science or human enterprise, psychology is in a process of growth and development, too. It involves learning by trial and error and making mistakes in that process. Notwithstanding the perspectival differences and the controversy regarding methods, psychology and psychotherapy can converge with theology, especially practical theology on diaconal pastoral ministry.[269]

1.4.1 Relationship between Psychology and Christianity

The Protestant Churches have more freely and readily accepted psychology and psychological findings than the Catholic Church at the beginning of the development of psychology. John Calvin made a strong appeal for accepting the truths discovered by the sciences even if it comes from the wicked. In his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 2.2.15-16[270] he says:

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[267] Cf. Karl Heinz LADENHAUF, *Praktische Theologie und Humanwissenschaften*, in Herbert HASLINGER (Ed.), *Praktische Theologie. Grundlegungen*, Mainz: Matthias Grünwald, 1999, pp. 279-291. Here pp. 279-281. (See especially the part *Psychotherapie*)
[268] NATALE, *Pastoral Counselling*, p.16.
[269] Cf. LADENHAUF, *Praktische Theologie und Humanwissenschaften*, p. 282.
[270] John CALVIN, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book 2. Chapter 2. Available online: http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes.i.html (20.1.2016).

> Therefore, in reading profane authors, the admirable light of truth displayed in them should remind us that the human mind, however much fallen and perverted from its original integrity, is still adorned and invested with admirable gifts from its Creator. If we reflect that the Spirit of God is the only fountain of truth, we will be careful, as we would avoid offering insult to him, not to reject or condemn truth wherever it appears. In despising the gifts, we insult the Giver….. Therefore, since it is manifest that men whom the Scriptures term carnal are so acute and clear-sighted in the investigation of inferior things, their example should teach us how many gifts the Lord has left in possession of human nature, notwithstanding of its having been despoiled of the true good… But if the Lord has been pleased to assist us by the work and ministry of the ungodly in physics, dialectics, mathematics, and other similar sciences, let us avail ourselves of it, lest, by neglecting the gifts of God spontaneously offered to us, we be justly punished for our sloth.

This openness to science and psychology was seen in the Protestant circles much earlier than in the Catholic. Certain psychological and physical laws are part of our make-up and cannot be ignored. At the same time, revelation cannot be reduced to reason and psychological research, and vice versa. 'God requires obedience to both reason and revelation.'[271] Stanley E. Jones argues for an integration of Christianity and psychology because they have a lot in common: "Eventually the psychological discipline and the Christian discipline must coincide. For when psychology becomes truly psychological and Christianity becomes truly Christian, they must meet and help each other."[272]

It is true that the Catholic Church has had an antipathy towards psychologists. The Church alone was not at fault for this. Kugelmann justifies Church's initial antipathy: "The philosophical presuppositions of some prominent psychologists … (were) antithetical to the Catholic faith. Some psychotherapeutic practices, in how they encouraged patients to think and act, were called immoral by some Church officials and by some Catholic psychologists."[273]

Over the years there has been a change in the attitude of the Catholic Church towards psychology and psychological research. Many, however, believe that the Church has not done enough to integrate the modern developments in the field of psychology and other social sciences into her ministry. Application of the fruits of these new developments can bring people betterment and healing. This, however, does not mean that she has to accept all the weird theories and methods of modern sciences that sometimes go against her faith

[271] KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counselling*, p. 30.
[272] Stanley E. JONES, as quoted by William T. KIRWAN in *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counselling*, p.31. (The original appears in Preface in H.W. DARLING, *Man in Triumph*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1965, p. 8).
[273] KUGELMANN, *Psychology and Catholicism*, pp. 1-2.

and practices. It means that she should be open to the use of those methods which do not go against her faith and morals.[274]

The Second Vatican Council encourages the study of psychology and other social sciences during the training of priests. *Optatam Totius* advocates, "They should also be taught to use the aids which the disciplines of Pedagogy, Psychology, and Sociology can provide, according to correct methodology and the norms of ecclesiastical authority."[275]

What do theology and psychology have together? Over the years, both have tried to come over their inimical approach to the help of the human person. In recent times we see more rapprochements between the two. This is true in the case of pastoral theology. Psychology and theology can be mutually helpful when they treat each other with mutual respect. When it is not the case, it can lead to 'dubious psychology' in pastoral ministry and 'problematic theology' in the field of psychotherapy.[276] When we look at human beings as holistic beings with body, mind and soul and the complex problems faced by them, we realize that the need for psychology is great. Psychology offers lots of practical help for day-to-day living which help the pastoral ministry of the Church. Pastoral psychology today tries to reduce the tension between these two disciplines.[277]

Isidor Baumgartner and Walter Fürst believe that psychology can surely help theologians and pastors to understand and appreciate human beings better and to interact smoothly with them. Many of the human and pastoral problems have psychological basis.[278]

Some believe that the recent boom in psychotherapy is partly to fill the vacuum created by the fall of religion and religious structures in the modern world. This could be seen in the concepts used by various psychologists such as archetype, true and false self, self-actualisation, identity, identity crisis, etc. These are, to some extent, semi-religious concepts.[279] Kugelmann believes that psychology today tries to present itself as an ethical science. It promises to help people, solve their problems, stand by them in their sorrows, etc. In this sense, psychology claims to be diaconal and other-oriented. Psychology tends to address our whole life-span and how and what we should do. It tends to 'direct' and

[274] Cf. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counselling*. See especially part I *Christianity and Psychology* where the author calls for a healthy integration of Theology and Psychology, although from a Protestant perspective.
[275] *Optatam Totius* (OT), Vat II Decree on Priestly Training, No. 20.
[276] Cf. LADENHAUF, *Praktische Theologie und Humanwissenschaften*, pp. 290-291.
[277] Cf. Michael DIETRICH, *Handbuch.Psychologie und Seelsorge*, Wuppertal: R.Brockhaus, 2000, p. 26.
[278] Cf. Isidor BAUMGARTNER / Walter FÜRST, *Leben Retten. Was Seelsorge zukunftsfähig macht*, München: Kösel, 2000, pp. 125-128.
[279] Cf. LADENHAUF, *Praktische Theologie und Humanwissenschaften*, p. 281.

'guide' our lives. He says ironically, "… and so psychology is an ethical science, ethics being the discipline that seeks to know how we should live our lives."[280] If this claim of psychology is true, then the areas of psychology and pastoral ministry are overlapping.

There have been changes in the mutual relationship between religion and psychology/psychotherapy in recent years, especially in the second half of 20th century and later. In the late 19th century and early 20th century the relationship was one of exclusion and mutual suspicion. At this time, the field was actually dominated by psychology. People like Freud, Skinner, Rogers and others were gladly accepted without questioning. But in recent times this domination of psychology has given way to a more level-playing field.[281] There is an increasing realisation that psychology alone cannot help human beings and stand by them in their problems. That is the subject matter of a later chapter.

1.4.2 Biblical Perspective on Human Beings

Before I deal with the topic where theology and psychology can work together, it is important to see if there are common grounds for such a working together. That poses some questions. Does biblical anthropology in any way match with that of the psychologists? Are there psychological elements in the Bible? How does the Bible see God and human beings? Is psychology, as well as psychotherapy, effective at all, as it claims to be?[282]

Christians believe in a personal God. God created the world and the human beings. Nothing in the world comes into existence through sheer chance. God is real, and so is the world. Christians also believe in what is beyond the observable physical reality. They believe in God's goodness and love for each human being. Christian theology upholds personal freedom and individual responsibility. Christians can and must be open to the psychological findings of the non-Christian scientists in so far as they do not go against Christian beliefs and when they are not prejudiced against Christianity. Every scientist has his own presuppositions. His thinking, working and research are based on his

[280] KUGELMANN, *Psychology and Catholicism*, p.1.
[281] Cf. NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, p. 508.
[282] At this point it is important to draw your attention to a book: James HILLMAN & Michael VENTURA, *We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy – And the World's Getting Worse*, San Francisco: Harper, 1993. It is a very satirical treatment of Psychotherapy, but makes a difficult reading for those who are not familiar with North American culture.

presuppositions.[283] Many Christian thinkers and psychologists believe that ultimately all truth springs from God.[284]

The human being is presented in the Bible as a holistic being having body, soul, spirit and mind. Man is subject to spiritual, psychological and physical laws. Every human being, if we want to understand him well, must be studied as a bio-psycho-spiritual being. This reality has sometimes been denied by theologians and even Christian counsellors. Some counsellors and theologians emotionally deny the relevance of psychological laws to the Christian life. They take an over-spiritualized view, totally neglecting the psychological aspect of human life.[285]

1.4.3 Need for the Study and Application of Psychology

Most experienced counsellors are of the opinion that we should avoid extreme positions. Positions which hold that only psychiatry can help human beings and God and His Word has nothing to do with psychological healing of man as well the view that ' nothing but the Bible' can help man in his problems are not helpful and are to be avoided.[286]

It is to be noted that the Bible does not rule out human knowledge in the process of helping human beings. Psychological laws and insights are an integral part of the creation order and are assumed in the Bible. The Bible lays stress on establishing healthy and loving human relationships, an ingredient to psychological healing. The Bible deals with in detail - in its own way and in line with the knowledge of the time - how to form a personality, how to encounter people who are affected by sadness and grief, and what attitudes could bring us happiness and joy, etc. God's Word and divine revelation do not regard psychology as useless, and, therefore, there is a need to have an integrated approach.[287]

Many are hopeful that a dialogue between theology and psychology will do more good in the future. Both can help each other to understand human beings better. Neither religion nor psychology has a perfect understanding of the human being who is a mystery. When

[283] Cf. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, pp. 25-26.
[284] Cf. Ibid., p. 26.
[285] Cf. Ibid., p. 33.
[286] Cf. Ibid., p. 34.
[287] Cf. Ibid., pp. 34-35.

both theology and psychology come together, a better understanding of the human being is possible.[288]

1.4.4 Valid Use of Psychology

What use of psychology in Christian ministry can be considered valid? Is it possible at all without doing harm to Christian theology? Kirwan argues strongly that it is not against Christian theology to legitimately use the findings of psychology in pastoral counselling. Psychology helps pastors and Christian helpers to have a better understanding of human nature and common disorders like depression, relational disorders, melancholy, etc. Spiritual people also experience crisis and psychological problems. That one has faith and leads a spiritual life does not mean that he is free from psychological illnesses.[289] Spiritual authors and masters speak about the 'dark night of the soul' (St John of the Cross), 'spiritual dryness' (St Francis de Sales), and similar harrowing experiences. Human problems cannot just be pushed aside as results of sin, or lack of faith or as God's punishment, as many naïve Christian counsellors think.[290] The purpose of the study and use of psychology in ministry should be to enhance the Christian ministry and not to depreciate it: "Study of psychology can add to our understanding of the human condition and of the Christian life. Christians need a holistic perspective from which to view problems. Psychology can give us insights about ourselves and about God's influence on our lives, insights that we might not otherwise experience."[291]

Science and psychology today help us to understand the human being better than ever before. Research into the workings of the brain has revealed how various physical factors can affect and shape the emotional makeup. Many illnesses which were formerly thought to be spiritual and purely psychological have a genetic background to them. The tendency of some radical Christians to see all mental illness as caused by faulty relationship with God is totally unscriptural and unscientific. The proven, established facts of biology and psychology must not be neglected. Therefore, there is a great need for integration and openness on the part of those who are engaged in the ministry of helping others. Both the

[288] Cf. NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, p. 508
[289] Cf. T. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 68.
[290] Cf. Ibid., pp. 64- 67.
[291] Ibid., p. 67.

sciences should, therefore, be reconciled. Such reconciliation expands horizons and opens up new possibilities.[292]

Pastoral counselling should never be identified with proselytising or attempt at religious conversion. It should not be a place of chicanery or cheap 'faith-healing'. Christian counsellors should not be proselyters, but should reveal God's unconditional love and acceptance in their relationship with others.[293] Natale believes a sensible integration theology and therapy can contribute to the healing ministry of the Church: "Like the linking of faith and reason, of religion and science, the joining of Theology and Therapy offers infinite possibilities to humanity for the alleviation of cursed human brokenness and tragic alienation."[294] To be what God has created us to be, is the principal thrust of the biblical teaching on human personality. Change of heart, according to the Scripture, is possible only through relationship with God and with other human beings. A Christian approach to a specific method should look for these three criteria: (a) focus on personal relationships, (b) therapeutic results in terms of inner growth and maturation, and (c) the 'being' of the counsellor. How they relate to the clients is more important than what they know or do.[295]

1.4.5 Psychological Themes in the Bible

A common ground for interaction between theology and psychology can be found in the numerous psychological topics dealt with in the Bible. Surprisingly, much before the emergence of psychology as a science, the Bible had dealt with many themes that psychology deals with today. The Bible contains a great deal of information on the human personality. Our longing for a sense of meaning and purpose in life and human emotions like anxiety, anger, guilt and freedom from guilt, depression, are common themes in the Bible. Bible texts are today frequently used in personal counselling.[296] For example, psychotherapists today realize the value of the Psalms in counselling, especially in releasing negative emotions.[297] The human need for love, trust and relationship is an oft-repeated theme in the Bible. The first part of the Book of Genesis contains themes like

[292] Cf. NATALE, *Pastoral Counseling*, p. 17.
[293] Cf. Ibid., p. 25.
[294] Ibid., p. 26.
[295] Cf. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, pp. 69-70.
[296] Cf. RICHARDS / BERGIN, *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy*, 2005, (2nd ed.), pp. 257-262. I have used the 2nd updated Edition of 2005. Therefore, all the references will be to this edition, unless otherwise noted.
[297] Cf. Dominick D. HANKLE, *The Therapeutic Implications of the Imprecatory Psalms in the Christian Counseling Setting*, in *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, Vol. 38.4, 2010, pp. 275-280.

loneliness, companionship, love, intimacy, meeting biological and psychological needs, inner happiness and satisfaction.[298] Hankle believes that passages from the Scripture can give expression to the concrete life experiences of the people: "A therapist can draw on the scriptures to assist clients in giving voice to emotional difficulties they have experienced."[299]

One of the most important themes in the Bible is relationship.[300] God has created human beings to enter into a relationship with God and with others. Relationship forms, thus, the core of human existence. Relationship is also a central theme in psychology, especially in counselling. God has created human beings with emotions, feelings, drives and needs. He lives not alone but in relationship with other human beings. As Jiddu Krishnamurti said, 'Nobody can live in isolation. To live is to be related.'[301] This psychological dimension of human beings is in the plan of God; and so is the science that studies this aspect of human beings. Kirwan warns, however, that by using psychology in pastoral ministry one should not neglect the spiritual and scriptural dimension of Christian life: "The Bible reflects psychological realities; it does not ignore psychology. In particular, it is aware of the importance of interpersonal relationships. In counselling people in mental and emotional distress, then, it is imperative to couple scriptural truths with psychology."[302]

The commandments of God are also relational in nature. The ultimate goal of the Commandments of God is a loving relationship with God and other human beings. In Christian understanding, it is ultimately a relationship, the relationship with Christ that brings about significant change in the person. The transformation of the heart is core to the Christian understanding of relationship. The heart is changed through a relationship with Christ.[303]

The Bible presents the heart as the centre of the human person. The human being is treated as a bio-psycho-spiritual being in the Bible. Emotions have great importance and are part and parcel of human existence.[304] Therefore, human beings need to learn to handle them in a healthy and constructive manner. Covering up or suppressing does not help: "By seeing emotions or feelings as a key aspect of the heart, we see that they are also a key part of

[298] Cf. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 38.
[299] Dominick D. HANKLE, *The Therapeutic Implications of the Imprecatory Psalms*, p. 276.
[300] The topic of relationship is treated at length in the later chapters.
[301] Jiddu KRISHNAMURTI, Eighth public talk in 1945, Ojai, California. Available online: http://www.jiddu-krishnamurti.net/en/1945-1948-observer-is-observed/krishnamurti-the-observer-is-the-observed-45-08 (10.1.16)
[302] KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 37.
[303] Cf. Ibid., p. 53.
[304] Cf. Ibid., pp. 46-47.

one's being. As a key to being, they are of vital importance in the life of the Christian. Regrettably, as stated earlier, emotions have been unjustifiably de-emphasized in the Evangelical Church."[305] Kirwan is clearly against any de-linking of emotions and feelings from the human person. He believes, according to the understanding of the Scripture, they all belong to the person and should not be detached. He is convinced that, "a counsellor who refuses to work with a client's feelings will be of little help in such cases."[306]

1.4.6 Psychological Dimension of Human Existence

To understand and help human beings we need to have a holistic approach, taking into account all dimensions of his existence - biological, psychological and spiritual. There are certain areas of human existence where psychology has its own limitations.

Every human being is also a psychological being. It is also true of a person who believes in God. Therefore, he comes under the gamut of religion and psychology, too. "Every member of a religious tradition is an embodied, psychological being who is subjected to the biological, relational and social forces that are studied by the psychologists. Failure to recognize this fact and take advantage of the knowledge and critical perspective provided by psychology would be unfortunate."[307]

There are several areas of human life where psychology can be of great help. The research done on different fields of psychology like human development, importance of childhood and its influence on later stages of life, human behaviour patterns, development of character, prejudice and authoritarianism in religious individuals, etc., have qualitatively affected human life.

Interestingly enough, the Bible contains a great deal of information and insight into the human personality and man's psychological functioning. It deals in detail with human acts like knowing, feeling and doing. Being is the principal thrust of the biblical teaching on human personality.[308]

[305] KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, p. 51.
[306] Ibid., p. 52.
[307] NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, pp. 507-508.
[308] Cf. KIRWAN, p. 57.

1.5 Challenges in the Application of Psychology in Ministry

The application of psychology and psychological principles and methods without sound religious and spiritual basis has its own dangers.[309] Many, enamoured by newness and the initial appeal, have been eager to jump on the bandwagon of pastoral counselling without sufficient theological and spiritual roots. They are later disenchanted by the lack of depth in many approaches used in pastoral counselling. Nelson laments, "This new approach to pastoral care and counselling was pragmatic or skill-oriented, although attempts were made to retain some type of Christian orientation … Its focus on skills meant that the whole movement as a whole had no theoretical or conceptual base in either theology or psychology, although ideas from humanistic and psychoanalysis were quite important."[310]

It must be admitted that over the years there has also been a disenchantment with psychology and its methods. The initial enthusiasm and the fervour seemed to die out by the end of the 20th century: "Theologians became increasingly uneasy with psychological models of pastoral care based on self-realization and professionalism, and pastoral counsellors began to look beyond the humanistic model for inspiration."[311]

It is true that many mainstream psychotherapy schools do not accept any divine or spiritual dimension to it. Their approach is purely secular and empirical. So they leave out God and the spiritual dimension in counselling even if the client is spiritual-oriented. That does a major disservice to the client and to his expectations. Proponents of theistic psychotherapy are well aware of this problem. Richards and Bergin observe, "No mainstream secular psychotherapy orientation acknowledges the possible existence of God and spiritual realities, let alone makes faith in God's loving and healing influence the foundation of its theory and approach."[312]

Famous American bishop, perhaps the most well-known American Catholic, Fulton J. Sheen was a vehement critic of psychoanalysis. He believed it was destructive and ineffective and weakened the human will.[313] He went even to the extent of saying that the practice of psychotherapy – at a time when many Catholics were taking it up, including

[309] More about the dangers of the application of psychology, the methods of integration and related topics are dealt with in the fifth chapter of this work. My purpose here is to introduce the theme.
[310] NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, p. 485.
[311] Ibid., p. 486.
[312] RICHARDS / BERGIN, *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy*, p. 154.
[313] Cf. KUGELMANN, *Psychology and Catholicism*, pp. 26,101, 183, 192.

priests - could not have even one point in common with Christianity, it was irreligious and hedonistic.[314]

Leading Methodist theologian Albert Outler believed psychology should be approached and applied very critically. In his opinion, psychology is to be treated not only as an ally but also as a rival– ally, as long as it deals with health, well-being, skills of relationship, practical wisdom etc.; as a rival because it brings with it a different worldview inconsistent with Christian theology and worldview.[315] Outler argues that the humanistic view undermined Christian beliefs, and he stood strongly against any alliance between the two. He also advocated the rejection of scientism. In his own words, "… the effect thus far, in three centuries of militant secularism, is modern man's disenchantment, despair and mass demoralization. Man's secularized devotion to 'humanity' has not turned out to be more actually humane than his old-fashioned sinful inhumanity to man."[316] Some of the major issues where Christian belief goes directly against psychology are:

a). *Philosophy regarding the meaning and goal of human life*: Psychology sees no life beyond here and now. From a psychological point of view, a good and healthy life is the ultimate goal of human life.

b). *Neglect and negation of God*: Many Christian thinkers and theologians reject the reductionist and naturalistic philosophy of psychology which thinks science is all, nature is self-contained and self-intelligible and, therefore, God has no place. Albert Outler was particularly against the humanistic world-view.[317]

c). *Many schools of psychotherapy, especially psychoanalysis, are shaped by Enlightenment and purely secular values*: They advocate that a 'good life' here and now is the only goal of human life. We can achieve it through our own efforts. Most schools of psychotherapy denounce religion and religious practices as irrational and superstitious.[318] In my survey some of these points were strongly reflected, too.[319]

Some believe that in the present situation there is an imbalance between psychology and pastoral theology in the field of pastoral psychology. They believe psychology has dominated the scene and that we should have the courage to bridle psychology and to disengage it from theology. The boundaries have to be strictly respected. A healthy development sometimes requires that the two subjects are not too dependent on each other. Le Ron Schults says, "We cannot hold it all together. We cannot let it fall apart. This

[314] Cf. KUGELMANN, *Psychology and Catholicism*, pp. 193-195.
[315] Cf. NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, p. 486.
[316] Albert OUTLER, *Psychotherapy and the Christian message*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954, p. 254.
[317] Cf. NELSON, p. 486.
[318] Cf. Ibid., p. 486.
[319] The result of the survey is added at the end of this work. It brings out in detail some of the inherent dangers of incorporating psychology into pastoral ministry.

tension is part of human life. Too often our efforts at integration are driven by an inordinate desire to hold onto old psychological and political patterns that have held us together - or by an inordinate fear of their disintegration."[320]

Many believe that if pastoral psychology - counselling, in particular - is to be successful, it has to get rid of the extreme views of individualism, narcissistic hedonism, and reductionism which have been highlighted by positive psychology and have proved detrimental to social structures. There is a need to move to a Christian psychology and spiritual direction within mental health and religious circles. In James M. Nelson's own words, "If psychology was to be of help to the pastoral counsellor, its practical wisdom must be separated from a naturalistic worldview."[321]

Will the psychologists do that? Is it not the duty of the pastoral workers to do so? Should they not be more selective and eclectic in their approach? Other theologians like Don Browning, a professor at the University of Chicago, and Terry Cooper have criticized the pragmatic pastoral counselling approach of Clinebell which they believe endanger Christian theology. They are open to psychology in pastoral care but at the same time want pastoral care to be modelled after classical authors like Gregory the Great and Luther. These authors are responsible for initiating a movement towards a Christian Psychology. They also emphasize the need of spiritual direction within mental health and religious circles.[322]

1.5.1 Spiritual and Religious Issues in Counselling and Psychotherapy

Frequently clients do not separate moral or religious issues from psychological ones. But most therapists are careful not to be affected by spirituality in their interaction with their clients. Religious issues can thus become a source of conflict or alliance between the therapist and the client.

When the therapist and the client belong to two different cultures, the former needs to have a strong multi-cultural sensitivity. Cultural differences can give rise to cultural conflict. In many countries like India, religion is for most people a key aspect of life. In such cases, religion can help in exploring and giving valuable information about the client. Religion is

[320] Le Ron SHULTS, *Disintegrating Psychology and Theology*, in *Journal of Psychology & Theology*, Vol. 40.1 (21-25), 2012, p. 25.
[321] NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, p. 487.
[322] Cf. Ibid., p. 486.

potentially a helpful resource, and can affect the outcome of therapy (positively or negatively). In the case of many, religion encourages positive life-styles, and gives them hope and support. Some clients even request religious practices or exercises to be included in the therapy, and many want to discuss religious issues in the therapy. In some cases religious issues can be central to the problem faced by the person.[323]

1.5.2 Counselling and Therapy with Religious Clients

While dealing with people who are strongly religious, spiritual and religious issues are very important. Religious clients, especially women, prefer to have religious counsellors who share their views. Moreover, they also like religious intervention in counselling. Whether it is crucial to the outcome is still not clear.[324]

Sometimes religiosity is seen as lower levels of mental illness by psychologists, rationalists and atheists. Daniel Dennett, a modern philosopher and cognitive scientist, compares religion to 'the common cold without' which man could live better.[325] But this is not the opinion of the majority. There are many who think that it is important to take the religious and spiritual dimension of the client seriously. Nelson is of the opinion that a total neglect of religion in the process of counselling, when the counselee wants it, is neglect on the side of the counsellor: "This suggests the possibility that a two-tiered approach to spiritual and religious issues in counselling may be necessary, with an accommodative approach available for highly religious individuals. An unwillingness to discuss religious and ethical concerns with this group could be a kind of negligence."[326]

In cases in which the counselee desires to have religious and spiritual inputs, care should be taken to direct the counselee to a pastoral counsellor or to a spiritual guide. In the context of India, a priest or a pastoral counsellor is the first person a Christian or Catholic turns to when he has a problem.

Nelson also advocates a more active use of religious exercises and activities, if needed. When the client desires and consents, such interventions like reading of the scriptures, prayers, meditation, confession, worship, use of religious imagery, etc., they could be used according to the discretion of the counsellor. But one should keep in mind that explicit

[323] Cf. RICHARDS / BERGIN, *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy*, pp. 5-8.
[324] Cf. NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, p. 494.
[325] BBC Interview with Daniel DENNET on 28.3.2013. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-radio-and-tv-21947207 (22.01.2016).
[326] NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, p. 494.

religious strategies should be used only with extreme prudence and to a minimum because of the ethical issues involved. Some believe that Jungian therapy provides the possibility for working with people who are spiritual but not religious because it involves or deals with many spiritual issues. Nelson believes that cognitive behavioural therapy is also congruent with a religious approach because it stresses the importance of belief and is practice-oriented.[327]

1.5.3 Extreme Views to be Avoided

One of the major problems regarding the dialogue between theology and psychology is the extreme view held by both sciences. Psychology sometimes promotes extremely individualistic and narcissistic views at the expense of the society. Religion, on the other hand, sometimes totally neglects individual and his legitimate needs in preference to the society and its needs. Psychology has also often been criticised for over-emphasising the identity of the person at the expense of relationality. A balanced approach is needed: "Religious traditions offer great resources for the solution of many modern problems, and psychology can offer assistance in this endeavour. The human person is both an individual person and a relational being. Thus we need to avoid the extremes of an individualism that ignores the necessity of social relationships and a collectivism that ignores the uniqueness of the individual."[328] This is a generally accepted position in dialogue.

Science and religion can benefit from the ideas and methods of post-modernism provided they avoid extremes. The importance of the individual and community will have to be explored by religion and psychology.[329]

1.5.4 Is Christian Religious Psychotherapy Possible?

Some psychotherapists, who are deeply Christian, have in recent decades searched for the possibility of a form of psychotherapy that is deeply Christian-rooted. Is it possible to have a specifically Christian and religious psychotherapy? Most secular approaches trivialize the problem of human brokenness. The reality of sin is one that has been neglected by almost all psychologists. This is neglecting one aspect of human existence. The exclusive and narcissistic approach does not lead a person to God or his fellow humans. Therefore, there

[327] Cf. NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, p. 498.
[328] Ibid., p. 511.
[329] Cf. Ibid.

is a need to combine psychology with Christian religion. Efforts have been made to create a Christian psychology. One of them worth mentioning is the Society of Christian Psychology in the US which publishes the journal *Christian Psychology*.[330]

Theistic therapists have made more or less successful attempts in this direction. Theistic therapy sessions are based on positive values, and God is seen as an available resource for healing, growth and progress. If needed and desired by the client, they use explicit spiritual techniques such as prayer, theological discussions and forgiveness. Consultation with religious leaders is also considered healthy and appropriate.[331]

In order to function effectively, the therapist should also be prudent enough to take into account the situation of each individual client and the cultural traditions. It is difficult to generalise as to what is effective for all people and all cultural groups. Richards & Bergin advocate familiarising oneself with the local values and traditions: "There may be some therapeutic religious practices that are unique to individual religious traditions. We hope that therapists who have an expertise in specific traditions will identify and apply in therapy those religious and spiritual practices that have the greatest therapeutic value for clients from those traditions."[332]

1.5.5 Limitations of Psychology

All counselling theories are centred on their own philosophical presuppositions which lie at the root of their thinking and acting. Each theory has its own philosophical presuppositions regarding the nature of the human person and the meaning of life. The nature of behavioural change is shaped, controlled and determined by this worldview. It is also true of every human being. Every human being is influenced by his own worldview and presuppositions. In the same way, each psychologist takes a view that suits his worldview and philosophy.[333]

Psychology has its own limitations in matters concerning the deeper aspects of life such as the goal, purpose and meaning of life. Matters like values or morals cannot be sufficiently dealt with by psychology. The study of human nature and behaviour need not necessarily

[330] This society is an association of Christian psychologists and psychotherapists. Its journal called *Christian Psychology* (formerly *Edification*) focuses on psychological and philosophical issues from a Christian standpoint. www.christianpsych.org
[331] Cf. RICHARDS / BERGIN, *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy*, pp. 251-279.
[332] Ibid., p. 279.
[333] Cf. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, pp. 22-23.

give it a positive meaning. Many prominent psychologists have had a negative approach to life and negated the spiritual dimension of human life. That, however, does not mean that their methods were wrong or that the Christians should abstain from using their methods and discard their findings.[334]

1.6 Context of India and the Need for a Specific Pastoral Counselling Approach for India

The Indian pastoral context is unlike any other in the world. The religious, social and cultural situation of India is totally different from that of Western or African countries.

In the context of India, a priest is often the first person a believer approaches when he has a personal problem or one in the family. He goes especially to those priests who, they believe, have a special charisma or, at least, are willing to listen to them patiently. Often the faithful who have problems are recommended to the parish priest for dialogue and counselling by their friends and relatives. People open themselves up to a priest with faith and trust because they think he is trustworthy and a person of God. In reality, he plays the role that a counsellor or psychotherapist plays in the western world.

Indian society suffers from many mental health problems such as depression, suicide tendency, subject abuse etc, although this prevalence is often neglected by society.[335] There is a desperate need for counselling in in India. Indian psychologists have felt this need in the recent times more urgently:

> With the world around changing so fast, families in India are caught up amongst many developments for which they were not prepared. The difference in the pace of life, in values and in the capacity to adapt differs between the parents and their children but it remained unattended. As a result there is a great need for some kind of interventional help. Especially now, with growing epidemics of physical and mental illnesses, there is much more need for this. Even the government is looking out for models of

[334] Cf. KIRWAN, *Biblical Concepts for Christian Counseling*, pp. 63-64.

[335] For details refer to some of the studies done by National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru. For example, Meghana SINGHAL / M. MANJULA / K. John VIJAY SAGAR, *Development of a school-based program for adolescents at risk for depression in India: Results from a pilot study*, in *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 10 (2014), pp. 56-61. See also, Jocelyn LIM CHUA, *Tales of Decline: Reading Social Pathology into Individual Suicide in South India*, in *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* (2012) 36, pp. 204-224. (This article refers specifically to the high suicide rate in Kerala, the nation's so-called suicide capital.

> intervention and the counsellors need to wake up and equip themselves if they want to impact the country in a very significant way. [336]

People have a negative attitude towards mental illness. Moreover, many think it is scandalous and shameful to be mentally sick, and as a result most people tend to deny and hide it from the public. They are afraid of the social stigma that is associated with mental illness and personality disorders. People in the rural areas are the worst affected.[337]

There is an acute shortage of mental health personnel in India. As a result, very few people seek professional help. This scenario is exploited by many untrained counsellors, visionaries, charismatic preachers and lay counsellors. Some studies have come to the conclusion that stress and isolation are the major causes of suicide in India.[338] In such a situation, with some training, a priest can play a constructive role. It is not any extraordinary skills that the priest requires nor do people expect high levels of professionalism from him. However, they expect to receive certain relief and consolation when they have a dialogue with a priest. They expect to be listened to and understood. They look up to a priest as someone with whom they can share everything in confidence.

Surprisingly, in many parishes and retreat centres (especially in Kerala) there are people who claim to be counsellors without any training or background knowledge of counselling and still having enough clients! The role of a priest in this regard is enormous. The field of pastoral counselling has not been sufficiently attended to by the Church in India. As a result there are many pseudo-counsellors going around, who claim to have visions and revelations, doing much harm to ordinary naive people. I do not intend to judge them, but one tends to ask oneself: how many of them are genuine and how many bogus?

Pastoral psychology offers a ray of great hope in this field. Pastoral psychology, pastoral counselling to be specific, offers basic training in counselling skills and equips one to encounter and bring healing to people. As Heribert Wahl remarked, pastoral psychology becomes an integral dimension of pastoral theology and pastoral ministry in the above-mentioned context.

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[336] Radhika SOUNDARARAJAN / Aruna BALACHANDRA. *Urgent need for indigenous models of counselling* in *Counselling: Theory Research and Practice*, Nov Rattan SHARMA / Ashok K KALIA / Akbar HUSAIN (Eds.), New Delhi: Global Vison, 2008, (205 – 211), here p. 209. See also (in the same book) Mala SHARMA / Surila AGARWAL, *Need for Counselling*, pp. 23-35.

[337] Cf. Archana VERMA / Alok KUMAR, *Neurocysticercosis Presenting as Acute Psychosis: A Rare Case Report from Rural India*, in *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 6, (2013), pp. 611-613.

[338] Cf. S. D. Manoranjitham / A. P. Rajkumar / K..S Jacob, et al, *Risk factors for suicide in rural south India*, in *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 196, (2010), pp. 26-30.

In India, too, pastoral psychology is in its infancy. People in India today are experiencing more brokenness in their lives than ever before. Due to the uncontrollable rate of modernisation, industrialisation and economic development, the traditional values and the slow and quiet life-style that an average Indian had, are giving way to a fast-paced, wealth- and comfort-oriented - and as a result a more stressful - lifestyle. This trend is reflected in the Church, too. The youth and the families are the most affected. The Church has a responsibility to help her flock. Unfortunately, there are few institutes that give training in this field. Many are running after relaxation techniques, yoga, meditation and such 'spiritual methods' offered by gospel preachers, 'Christian healers,' sanyasis, avataras (incarnation of God), godmen, god-women and gurus, many of whom are bent on exploiting the innocence of the simple, uneducated and gullible people.[339]

Concluding Thoughts

In this introductory part of this dissertation, we have seen that the ministry to suffering humanity - in whatever form - comforting human beings, standing by them in their sufferings and trying to alleviate them, was an integral part of the ministry of the Church. The ministers of the Church have always had recourse to the best available knowledge and methods of the time for this ministry. The confessional was one of the most important 'places of therapy' for centuries. Until the modern times, the Church was the most important intellectual and cultural centre, and this advantage was put to good use of this ministry. With the advance of natural sciences and social sciences, new means and techniques of helping human beings and solving their problems emerged. The development of psychology as an established science contributed in large measure to it. After a long period of resistance the Church finally opened herself to psychology.

Psychological insights do not entirely belong to modern psychology, as their practitioners today tend to claim. One finds numerous psychological insights in works of Christian literature, be it in the *Confessions* of St Augustine, or the *Retreat* of St Ignatius, or in the works of St Francis de Sales.[340] Therefore, there is a need to extract these elements in a systematic and scientific manner for the pastoral ministry of the Church.

[339] Many Hindus believe many of the so-called godmen, for example Satya Sai Baba, are real incarnations of God. In Hindu tradition, incarnation is said to take place from time to time.
[340] Cf. BAUMGARTNER / FÜRST, *Leben Retten. Was Seelsorge zukunftsfähig macht*, p. 131.

My attempt in this dissertation is to focus on the method of St Francis de Sales and to compare it with the Rogerian method of counselling. When, however, we apply psychology in our ministry we should not forget that psychology has its own limitations and shortcomings and that the purpose and meaning of human existence can never be fully explained at the purely theoretical or empirical level of psychology. Vital questions of human existence lie beyond psychology where only theology can provide answers.[341] In applying psychological insights and methods, one must be careful not to blindly copy western practices of counselling and psychotherapy in the context of India. The counselling and psychotherapy methods currently used in the West are the typical features of and results of the social developments and modernisation in the West[342] which is not always the case with the Indian social realities.

Tracing the history of pastoral psychology and pastoral counselling makes it clear that the application of psychological insights was in use in the ministry of the Church from the beginning. It is nothing new, as some think. The focus of the Church, however, was on the diaconal and healing dimension of this ministry rather than on its professional dimension. In the present time, to be effective, it requires this professional dimension, too. At the same time, the spiritual dimension of this ministry should not be lost sight of. Training to be personally suitable and the development of necessary qualities are called for.

One can never underestimate the importance of empathy, unconditional positive regard and genuineness in a human relationship. This has been highlighted by the person-centred approach (PCA). These 'relationship attitudes' play a vital role in the dealings of a pastor or priest with his people. Most of these qualities can be learnt by training and improved by practice. The teachings of the Church encourage priests – and everyone in ministry - to strive for that goal.

[341] Cf. DIETRICH, *Handbuch. Psychologie und Seelsorge*, p.30.
[342] Cf. LADENHAUF, *Praktische Theologie und Humanwissenschaften*, pp. 280-281.

CHAPTER 2

Francis de Sales: A Pastor after the Heart of Jesus

Introduction

Francis de Sales is known in the Church as a saint, spiritual director, writer, mystic, Doctor of the Church, and as a model of pastors. He remains one of the most-read spiritual authors to date. He is also one of the best-known spiritual directors in the history of the Catholic Church, acknowledged even by Popes as the 'wisest guide of souls.'[1]

His spiritual direction has to be understood in the total context of his life and pastoral ministry. Francis de Sales had a pastoral heart after the heart of Jesus. As priest, bishop and spiritual guide, he became all to all. What is less known in the Church, however, is his missionary spirit. Francis de Sales was also an effective missionary. His missionary spirit inspires the Church even today.

This chapter has two major divisions. The first part deals with the times of Francis de Sales, his family, background, education and what influence they had on him. While dealing with the approach and method of spiritual direction which Francis de Sales followed, it is important to see it in the whole perspective of his times and his pastoral ministry. Knowing what influences shaped his life and thinking and what kind of a pastor he was helps one to get a better idea of this great pastor and his pastoral spirit. No man can be fully understood apart from his background and the influences that shaped his life. Therefore, effort has been made to look into the background that shaped his life from childhood to his later life. This part also discusses topics like his education, spiritual and psychological growth, and his vocation to the priesthood.

The second part deals mainly with his pastoral spirit. His pastoral guidance and spiritual direction cannot be seen outside of his whole pastoral ministry. In fact, it was an integral part of his pastoral ministry as priest and bishop. It should be taken into account that Francis de Sales was a product of his time; and, as such, he was influenced by the times

[1] Cf. Pope Pius IX, *Dives in Misericordia Deus*, Apostolic Letter to the Universal Church proclaiming St Francis de Sales a Doctor of the Church, 16 Nov 1877, translated by Daniel G. GAMBET. Here the Pope also refers to his predecessors Popes Clement IX and Benedict XIV and to what they said on St Francis de Sales. Available online at the home page of the Salesian Center for Faith and Culture, managed by the Oblates of St Francis de Sales: http://web1.desales.edu/assets/salesian/PDF/PiusIX-Dives.pdf. (7.1.2016). This home page functions as an online resource library for Salesian spirituality and contains many works of Francis de Sales, translations and numerous articles on Salesian spirituality: www.web1.desales.edu.

and, in turn, he also influenced his times and the ages to come. His knowledge, his thinking and his approach were far ahead of his time.

PART I

2.1 Life and Times of Francis de Sales

Francis de Sales was born and lived in a turbulent time – politically, economically and religiously. Politically, Savoy was an independent dukedom, but often occupied by France. The Savoyards were proud of their independent identity and expressed it publicly. This can also be seen often in the writings of Francis de Sales. There was political turmoil all over Europe on the lines of religious affiliation. The Savoyards remained firm Catholics.

E. J. Lajeunie gives us one of the best and the most authoritative biographies of Francis de Sales. He treats his life basically in three parts: the formation of the saint, his priestly and missionary activity, and his apostolate as bishop. Lajeunie states at the outset that his biography is the result of meticulous research. It is mostly based on dispositions at the remissorial proceedings for his canonisation and other reliable sources.[2] I see his life from the point of view of practical theology, spirituality and psychology, these being my main concerns in this dissertation.

2.1.1 Early Life and Influences

Psychologists and sociologists argue that a human person is partly a product of his genetic endowment and partly of his environment. It is partially true in the case of Francis de Sales. The young Francis was formed by his family and its environment.

The father of Francis de Sales, Monsieur Boisy (François de Boisy) and his brother Louis de Sales lived together in their castle. Francis was born on 21 August 1567. He was the

[2] Cf. E. J. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales. The Man, the Thinker, His Influence*. Translated by Rory O' SULLIVAN, Vol.1, Bangalore: SFS Publications, 1986, in Foreword, pp. XII-XIV. This is considered to be the most authoritative and reliable biography of St Francis de Sales. It consists of two volumes. Hereafter referred to as Lajeunie. For the biography part of Francis de Sales, I depend mostly on E. J. Lajeunie. In tracing the life and spirit of this saint, I have relied basically on Lajeuine. References have been made to various other biographers, too. They include Andre Ravier, (English and German versions), Antony Mookenthottam, Dirk Koster, Michael Müller, and a few others.

first of thirteen children.[3] Many of the siblings did not survive. His mother was only sixteen at the time of his birth.[4] She was a devout woman and even before his birth she had consecrated her first-born to the Lord in the presence of the Holy Shroud of Turin. Francis de Sales also had a special devotion to the Shroud of Turin.[5] His mother wanted to bring him up in faith and good Catholic traditions. As he was born premature, in the seventh month of pregnancy, he was a delicate baby at birth. Perhaps it was because of his delicate health, he was baptised immediately after birth on 28 August in the parish of Thorens. His delicate health was a concern for the whole family.

At the time of the birth of Francis de Sales, the family enjoyed high reputation and nobility in the Savoyard society. The family was called the 'Lords of Sales' because they had certain administrative and political jurisdiction over the district of Thorens. The Sales were the immediate vassals of Lord Campey. The family had risen to higher nobility due to their own efforts, hard work and diligence, especially of his father Monsieur de Boisy.[6]

2.1.1.1 Political and Religious Situation

As mentioned earlier, it was indeed a time of political and religious turmoil. It was the time of the Protestant Reformation which was spreading in France, Savoy, and all over Europe. Francis I, King of France, and Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, were locked in a bitter rivalry. Francis de Sales had to constantly experience this reality of rivalry between the king and the emperor. Europe, and the whole world, to some extent, was being re-shaped on the lines of religious affiliation. Charles III, brother-in-law of the emperor, was the Duke of Savoy, and the king of France was afraid that he would ally with the emperor, and out of this fear he occupied parts of Savoy and blocked the Alpine passages. Only small parts of the independent dukedom were left with the duke under his control. On these accounts, the relationship between the duke and the king was unfriendly. Francis I, father of Francis,[7] was sent by Viscount de Martigues[8] to fight as a sergeant alongside the troops

[3] Cf. Anne HOFFMANN, *Mit der Kraft des Lächelns: Aus dem Leben von Franz von Sales*, München: Don Bosco Medien GmbH, 2006, p. 8.
[4] Regarding the age of Frances de Sionnaz at the birth of Francis de Sales, there is some lack of clarity among the authors. Lajeunie believes she was only fourteen when Francis was born (See E. J. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales* Vol. 1, p. 14). But Andre RAVIER believes the marriage took place in 1566 when Francis' mother was fourteen. (See Andre RAVIER, *Francis De Sales: Sage & Saint*, tr. by Joseph D. BOWLER, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988, pp. 15-16). What seems to be true is that she was a very young woman at the time of Francis' birth. It was not unusual in those times for such young women to get married and to have children.
[5] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 15.
[6] Cf. Ibid., pp. 4-5.
[7] Both the father and the son were called Francis, not a totally uncommon practice in those days.

of Francis I, King of France. He had even established contact with the court of the King. As part of the nobility, he was highly respected and held in esteem. When Emperor Charles V invaded France in 1543, he fought for France against the emperor. He was considered a fine horseman and a nobleman in every sense. In 1546, when peace returned to France after the Treaty of Andres, Francis' father returned to Savoy. He wanted that his son also follow his footsteps and reach even higher positions in political circles.[9]

His stay and work in France had influenced Monsieur Boisy; however, he always kept his identity as a French-speaking Savoyard.[10] Although the Savoyards were French-speaking, they were not French nationals in those days. They zealously kept their separate identity as Savoyards. The new duke, Emmanuel Philbert, beat the French in 1557 and won back many districts of Savoy which were lost to France earlier. In 1559, through a treaty, he established peace with France. After his return to Savoy, Monsieur Boisy remained in the service of Viscount de Luxemburg – the Martigues. He became the administrator of the whole estate. He was also a negotiator for the Duke of Savoy.[11]

2.1.1.2 Childhood in a Healthy Family

His father was a strict but kind and generous person. The de Sales family used to give daily alms to the poor. The children of noble families in those times were brought up in strict conditions. The young Francis was not spared lashes or other methods of punishment common in those days. The motherly tenderness and the fatherly strictness helped in the formation of Francis.[12] He learnt his kindness from his parents, especially his mother. He had a heart for the poor from his childhood, and this noble quality remained with him till the end of his life. He learnt in his early years in the family a love for human beings and a strong sense of justice.[13] Lajeunie says, "From childhood he was determined never to exploit the weaker; this universal love for people will be one more facet added to his reputation as a saint; his parents were the original influence."[14]

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[8] Francis worked sometime as procurator and deputy to the Viscount de Martigues. Martigues is in southern France. A viscount had certain administrative and judicial powers. This work brought Francis to France, although he was a Savoyard.
[9] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 7-8.
[10] Cf. Ibid., p. 8.
[11] Cf. Ibid., p. 9.
[12] Cf. Andre RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage & Saint*, tr. by Joseph D. BOWLER, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988, pp. 17-19.
[13] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 19-22.
[14] Ibid., p. 23.

The respect and love for human beings that he learnt at home had a profound influence on Francis. He learnt a humanism which sees all human beings positively, respects them, treats them kindly and helps them concretely in their needs. His humanism was not a purely idealistic trait. This idea of humanism was to hold sway over his whole life. Francis de Sales was from childhood a very thoughtful person; he was noticed for being calm and attentive. He seemed to have had a precocious awakening of his interior life. This habit of reflecting helped him to have a personal approach to God and religion.[15]

2.1.1.3 His Mother and Her Influence

Of all the persons who influenced his life, his mother was the most important. He received his first Christian formation from her. She was also his first 'formator' in spiritual matters. Francis, in turn, had a tender love for his mother. His first phrase is believed to be, "God and my mother love me so much."[16] Madam de Boisy was much attached to Holy Mass and went to attend it often and received Communion regularly - something which Francis de Sales also cherished throughout his life. He also had an intense devotion to the Holy Eucharist, which he said is the 'sun of all spiritual exercises.'[17] She taught her first-born all the basic prayers even before he started attending school. She was inclined to over-protect him. She tried to keep him away from impertinent servants, bad company and violent activities and games. Monsieur de Boisy, his father, was at times annoyed at the exaggerated piety of his mother. He believed too much of 'feminine piety' would not help his son to be a man of the world.

Madam de Boisy was a person who tried to integrate faith and life. Saint Jane de Chantal, the spiritual daughter and friend of Francis de Sales, said of her:

> She was one of the most estimable women of her time known to me; her soul was noble and generous, pure, innocent, and simple. She was the true mother and tender guardian of the poor; modest, humble, and kindly to all, calm and gentle in her household; ruling her family wisely, and taking care to bring them up in the fear of God; frequently approaching the divine sacraments of holy confession and Communion; and, out of the devotion and reverence which she bore to her blessed son, she became his spiritual daughter.[18]

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[15] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 20.
[16] Ibid., p. 23.
[17] Francis de SALES, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, tr. & ed. by Antony MOOKENTHOTTAM, Armind NAZARETH & Antony KOLENCHERRY, (4th ed.), Bangalore: SFS Publications, 2005, Part II, Chapter 14, p. 112 (Hereafter abbreviated as *IDL* in this work. When page numbers from *IDL* are cited, it is from this edition).
[18] Jane de CHANTAL, *The Depositions of Jane de Chantal in the Cause of the Canonisation of St Francis de Sales,* (published as part of the Library of St Francis de Sales, this volume contains two parts. Part I - *The*

She was in many respects a model for Francis. Inspired by the holy example of his mother and through the influence of his own interior life from early on, Francis' vocation to the priesthood was taking shape. He wanted to give himself to the service of God. He even wanted to receive tonsure but that was denied to him by his father, because in line with the customs and prevalent tradition, the eldest son was seen as the heir apparent to the family estate and the successor of the father.[19]

2.1.2 Secular Education

When he was six years old, along with his three cousins - Amed, Louis, Gaspard de Sales - he was sent to school at La Roche. They stayed in the house of the school master, Monsieur Domax, and under the direction of Pierre Batailleur, a learned man from Annecy. There were other friends and relatives at the school. He had a thirst for learning. While other children played, he was more interested in reading. From 1573 to 1575 they completed their primary schooling. In the school he was seen as a charming, docile and affable boy.

2.1.2.1 Annecy College

After the primary school, he and his cousins were sent to the Annecy High School, and later to Annecy College.[20] Although M. de Boisy wanted to send his son to Paris for further education, the Duke of Savoy had forbidden anyone to study outside his dukedom because of the "venom of heresy" that was spreading in France.[21] So anyone who wanted to study outside the dukedom had to obtain an exemption.[22] The Annecy College was run by the Dominicans and their influence in the college was strong. His teachers found Francis as a young boy, 'impelled by a great desire to learn,' meticulous and hard working.[23]

As it was customary in those times, he learnt grammar, French and Latin, which were part of the normal school curriculum. Here Francis came into contact with the splendour of well-chosen words and learnt to use the language efficiently. He honed his skills further to

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Mystical Explanation of the Canticle of Canticles by St Francis de Sales, and Part II – *The Depositions*). London: Burns & Oates Limited, 1098, p.56. Hereafter known as *Depositions*.

[19] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 40.

[20] One should note that the system of schooling in those days was totally different from what it is today. Although we use terms like Primary School, High School and College to refer to the school system, they are to be understood differently. We are not to compare them with the present system of schooling or university.

[21] We have already seen that in spite of the spread of Protestantism in neighbouring France and Switzerland, Savoy remained staunchly Catholic.

[22] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 26.

[23] Cf. LAJEUNIE, Ibid., p. 28.

use refined French, which he had learned from his early childhood in the school. French had been adopted as the language for official documents. It was also used for preaching in the church, although Latin was the language of liturgical services. Francis knew the importance of the language and he was keen to learn it well. It became extremely useful for Francis later on in his preaching and writing.

During his stay in Annecy, he established his first contacts with humanism and humanists in Savoy. French Humanism was spreading across France, and Savoy was not spared of its influence. Many of the prominent figures of the Savoy circle of humanism were either related to or friends of the Sales family. The de Sales family was also part of it. French Renaissance as well as French humanism was alive in the de Sales family, too. Francis' father, Monsieur de Boisy was also aware to what extent secularism could be embraced. He was firmly rooted in his faith. It has been said that the Calvinists wanted to win him over. But his proverbial response was to ask how he could belong to a religion younger than himself by twelve years.[24]

Francis, although taken up with humanism, was at the same time aware of the danger inherent in it. He realized from a young age that humanism also had the power to lead one in the wrong direction. The allurement of worldly humanism had its dangers. He knew how it could lead to indifferentism and pose danger to his faith. This risk was prevalent and people were already puffed up with pride about their little knowledge of humanism.[25] He was convinced that the spirit of secular humanism had to be tempered by faith and virtues. Human beings are not perfect, and no humanism can negate the reality of sin and human weakness. That would be illusory. Francis was well aware of the evil and imperfection present in himself and in all human beings. Later on, in Paris he would come closer to this frightening reality. He had his own weaknesses to fight, such as quick temper, his tendency to have scruples and the many imperfections that the environment exposed him to. Lajeunie says:

> Francis certainly had no illusions. He knew his outbursts, his 'fiery' temperament, and was discovering the weakness and emptiness which lies in the depths of the human heart. He also had to endure the fatigue which makes us abandon 'the race half-way there.' And he says that he fell into 'unavoidable sins and imperfections that company' brings us. He would say to himself: you are inclined to evil; the company of evil people will lead you

[24] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 34.
[25] Cf. Ibid., pp. 30- 35.

> astray. In the long run what will the empty knowledge of this world bring you? ...[26]

How these fears would become painfully true during his studies in Paris! He also understood that something so pure as love could also have inherent dangers in it: "Quite early in life Francis experienced the ambiguity of love. When he was only eleven, he said to himself, 'Francis, you are inclined towards evil; evil company will be your ruin.' Confronted with the allurement of worldly humanism, he had taken a defensive position."[27] Francis completed his studies in Annecy in 1578 and was ready to enter university now.

The early life of Francis de Sales highlights some points for consideration:

- the importance of family and a good upbringing;
- Francis' approach to integration;
- careful but open approach to secular values and their inculcation into the Church; and
- how discernment and prudence are absolutely needed.

Consideration of his childhood reveals the importance of family in the life of a person. Psychologists are of the view that healthy childhood and good upbringing are important for the growth of a person.[28] In the Catholic tradition, family is the first school where the child is educated in faith and morals and where he/she learns to love God and the other.[29] Francis received a good education in his childhood which laid a solid foundation for his life and future, helping him to finish his studies with a double doctorate.

Francis tried from his childhood to integrate his learning into his life. He was impressed by humanism, but did not want to take it as it is. On the other hand, he tried to integrate it with faith and tradition. Even as a young man, Francis was aware of the dangers of extremism – extreme humanism which drives man far from God, extreme spirituality which drives man from God and fellow human beings and which seeks refuge in rituals and flight from the world, extreme activism which drives one away from God and spiritual roots to work, success and achievement at any cost. His approach was one of integration. He was strongly against blindly accepting worldly values even though it sometimes appealed to the emotions and the intellect.

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[26] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 41.
[27] Ibid., p. 32.
[28] Cf. Joseph GOLDSTEIN / Anna FREUD / Albert J. SOLNIT, *Beyond the Best Interests of the Child*, New York: The Free Press, 1979, pp. 3-27.
[29] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC), Nos. 2201-2213, especially 2201-2206.

Francis knew that it is God who shapes each individual. To be open to God's grace working in every person is the most important element in spiritual growth. That is what made Francis de Sales a great saint.

2.1.2.2 Studies in Paris

On his return from Annecy, his father wanted to send him to the College of Navarre in Paris. It was the college where the nobility and the princes studied. From a religious point of view, however, it was not an ideal place for Francis. He preferred to study at the College of Clermont, a college run by the Jesuits, known for discipline, humanism and religious spirit. He had to resort to his mother once again to present his wish to the father and the latter yielded to his wishes.[30]

In September 1578, he came along with his cousins to Paris for higher studies. A diocesan priest, Fr Deage, accompanied them. He was to stay with them, help them and act as a guardian and private tutor to them. He was also a kind of spiritual director to them. Fr Deage was a demanding taskmaster. He was difficult to deal with but at the same time whole-hearted and loyal. He wanted the best for his students.[31] Some biographers mention that in addition to caring for the boys, Fr Deage was to pursue his doctoral studies in Theology at the University of Sorbonne in Paris.[32]

On the way to Paris, they saw all along desecrated churches, ransacked pilgrimage centres, statues and relics pulled down. The ravages of war and the aftermath of it on the Catholic Church were clearly visible. Francis was deeply affected by the sight of this vandalism.

Francis' study as well as stay in Paris was to have a great impact on his life – academically, intellectually and, above all, spiritually. Now he was out of the protective environment of his family and his homeland Savoy. He was in a big city full of attractions, intellectual and sensual offers and at the same time of big churches, monasteries and ecclesiastical institutions. It was altogether a new experience for Francis.

[30] Cf. Antony MOOKENTHOTTAM, *Saint Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, (2nd ed.), Bangalore: SFS Publications, 2003, p. 33.
[31] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 42-43.
[32] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *Saint Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 33.

It was a time of tension between the 'Catholic League' under the leadership of Spain and the Protestants - the Huguenots and Malcontents - in France. King Henry[33] exercised certain control over all the educational institutions in the country, even on those that were privately owned and managed. The king wanted only French citizens to be posted in all educational institutions, although, in fact, there were very few from outside France.[34]

Clermont College, a well-known college in Paris, was run by the Jesuits. It was known for its 'silence, piety and discipline'. It was the bastion of 'papism.'[35] The College was founded in 1560 and ever since had remained faithful to the Roman Catholic Church. The Jesuits had always sided with the Roman Church. The king had his own apprehensions. He was afraid that they were siding with the Catholic king of Spain and there was a pervasive atmosphere of suspicion between the Catholic Church and the king. Sometimes, the Catholics were seen as spies of the Spanish king.[36]

What was the attitude of Francis towards the animosities prevalent between the groups at that time? How did he react? Francis strongly disliked this atmosphere of violence and suspicion. Later on, in his ministry, too, he avoided violence, even when he was provoked to the limits. He kept himself away from the frenzy of 'the League', too. He was a man of moderation, a characteristic that would colour his whole life. He concentrated on what he was to do, unaffected by the political turmoil of the time – to focus on his studies and spiritual growth.

2.1.2.2.1 A Fervent Student in Paris

As already mentioned, the studies and his stay in Paris were to have a great impact on the life of Francis de Sales. What did he actually study in Paris? In the first three years, i.e., 1578 to 1581, he did courses on grammar which was followed by courses in humanity, rhetoric and Greek. At the end of these studies, probably a Degree was conferred on him which allowed him to study further. His life as a student was characterised by order, methodical approach and depth.[37]

[33] King Henry III ruled France from 1574 to 1589. Though he was a Catholic, he took a neutral stand on religious matters. He was hunted by the Catholics and Protestants during the Wars of Religion and was murdered by a fanatic Catholic in 1589.
[34] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 47.
[35] Cf. Ibid., p. 46.
[36] Cf. Ibid., p. 47.
[37] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage & Saint*, pp. 27-30.

The ancient languages of Greek and Latin and their literature were part of the curriculum in those days. Rhetoric too was an important element of college education. Rhetoric included finding arguments, exposing one's views orally and in writing. In short, mastery over language and its efficient application through oral and written forms was integral to education at that time.[38]

From 1584 to January 1588 his studies probably included courses in philosophy, mathematics, cosmology, natural history and a deeper study of ancient languages like Latin, Greek and Hebrew.[39] Francis would later admit that he learnt Latin well but his knowledge of Greek was wanting. French was not much emphasized in the college. It was only tolerated. The main purpose of learning French was for translation. Francis, however, focused on French. He took up an intense study of French, his mother tongue and vernacular language. Francis made himself familiar with French authors like Montaigne, Claude de Seyssel, and poets like Du Peron, Desportes and Ronsard. He had realized the importance of the vernacular language for Catholic apostolate.[40] Later, Victor de Saint-Genis would speak of Francis de Sales' style: "He blends Amyot's gravity, Montaigne's natural unexpected gifts, and Ronsard's oddities with his own personal attractive shrewdness."[41]

The College had well-known teachers for philosophy. They included Jerome Dandini and Francis Suarez. During these classes he learned to think critically and to evaluate. His studies concluded with a higher degree equivalent to a Master's degree today which would enable him later in Padua to enrol for a Doctorate in Law.[42]

Francis' education in Paris was not limited to intellectual pursuits alone. He also learned skills required for the nobility. So Francis learned horse riding, fencing, dancing, etc. He had to learn these skills out of obedience to his father who wanted his first-born to be a full-fledged gentleman fit for the noble society. Apart from all these, he also learned theology purely out of personal interest. He attended the theological classes at Sorbonne.[43] He had always cherished a great desire for the priesthood. As there was a lot of academic freedom regarding the choice of subjects, he chose subjects according to his liking and his

[38] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 48-49.
[39] Cf. Ibid., pp. 48-49.
[40] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 52-53.
[41] As quoted by LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 53.
[42] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales : A Formative Biography*, p. 34.
[43] Cf. Dirk KOSTER, *Francis de Sales*, Noorden, (The Netherlands): Bert Post, 2000, p. 25.

future vision. During this period he also came into contact with Christian mystics like Catherine of Siena.

2.1.2.2.2 Life in Paris at that Time

Dirk Koster, another important biographer of Francis de Sales, describes the situation in Paris in those days: 'Paris was the frivolous heart of fashion and gallantry.'[44] Koster narrates further, "The students can [sic] choose their own quarter and each college had its own exclusive circle. The Italians drank their fiery wine, fought duels, and abducted girls. The Germans got drunk on beer in their own bars. They all spoke their own language. The common language was Latin, not French. Most students belonged to the aristocracy and entered the college hall accompanied by their personal tutor, as a sign of nobility."[45]

Francis kept himself away from all these worldly attractions and enticements. He was not attracted to this kind of student life.[46] There may not have been much time left for Francis for other activities during his student life in Paris.

2.1.2.2.3 Encounter with Humanism

The atmosphere at Clermont College was characterised by an air of freedom. The Jesuits were liberal in their approach. They allowed students to come into contact with the liberal spirit of the time - with humanism and French Renaissance. This liberal spirit, however, should not be taken for laxity or total absence of control. They were at the same time strict and faithful to the Catholic faith and traditions.

In Paris, Francis got more opportunities to come in closer and deeper contact with humanism. The Jesuits who ran the College were open to humanism and they made immense efforts to Christianise the humanism of the Renaissance. Protagonists of this movement included known Jesuit humanists like Jacques Simond and Bernadin Castori. Humanism created its own problems for the Jesuits, too. It created a new concept of the world and man. By promoting the ancient literary tradition, the Jesuits had indirectly promoted humanism. In this situation, a deeper influence of humanism on Francis was unavoidable.[47]

[44] KOSTER, *Francis de Sales*, p. 24.
[45] Cf. Ibid., p. 25.
[46] Cf. Ibid.
[47] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 54.

There was an apparent paradox. Perhaps it was with the intention of helping the students to choose and to learn the best that the Jesuits at Clermont preferred the ancient authors to the Fathers of the Church, because they believed that the former group was rhetorically and linguistically superior to the latter. The Jesuits at the same time wanted to battle the humanism that was incompatible with the Christian religion. It was indeed a difficult challenge.[48]

In the opinion of the humanists, the ideal life was life according to nature. Life according to nature often sounded like a life without grace. Such a philosophical approach was also supported by Montaigne. The young people were split between the two worlds: the world of the classroom - the classical world of literature, humanism, freedom, and that of the chapel - sermons, catechism, pious exercises. Religious instructions were meagre and superfluous. It created a dichotomy of values for the young people who were enjoying the freedom of the college away from the controlled atmosphere of their families. It surely affected many students. The young Francis also experienced this dichotomy and feeling of being torn apart.[49]

2.1.2.2.4 Francis' Attitude towards Humanism

In 1583, just before Lent, Francis experienced a crisis within himself, caused through pagan humanism. Francis was, in the first place, highly critical of pagan humanism. He felt that it was clouding his judgement. He tried to overcome it by intensifying his study of the Fathers of the Church. He realized soon that he was more inclined to the humanism found in the Scriptures and in the Fathers. His main effort was to try to integrate humanism and theology. Therefore, he wanted to develop a humanism which was in line with the gospels. He was already laying the foundation for his Christian humanism, which was to later influence the field of spirituality and spiritual guidance in the Catholic Church.[50] Although he was familiar with classical authors like Aristotle, Plato, Cicero and others, he preferred the Christian authors to them. Lajeunie says, "If Francis persisted in his studies of humanities, it was not because he loved 'the affected refinements of rhetoricians,' but to better express 'truths transmitted by fishermen.'"[51] Francis did not have any attachment to any school of thought. He preferred a critical and eclectic approach to blind acceptance of any philosophical school.

[48] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 54-55.
[49] Cf. Ibid., p. 56.
[50] Cf. Ibid., p. 57.
[51] Ibid., p. 59.

A person who had a strong influence on Francis was Jean Maldonat, a great humanist, Latinist, theologian and exegete. He was one of his professors at Clermont. Maldonat impressed Francis deeply because he could perfectly combine humanism and theology. His integrated approach was well appreciated and it turned out to be for young Francis a guiding light. He loved to take his approach.[52] His ultimate goal was a Christian humanism based on the gospels and the Fathers of the Church. In order to understand the Christian position he delved deeper into Christian tradition. He engaged himself actively with St Thomas Aquinas and Catherine of Siena. He was intent on developing a Christian humanism.

2.1.2.2.5 Growth in Spiritual Life

Another important development which Francis experienced in Paris was growth in spiritual life. In the midst of the world, surrounded by intellectualism, sensuality and all sorts of corruption, he tried to be spiritually rooted. His personal devotion to the Blessed Virgin became more intense. He became regular in his spiritual exercises - Communion, regular confession, etc. Although, on the one side, he was confronted with secular humanism, on the other, he tried to be more faithful to his spiritual life. Francis gradually built up a disciplined spiritual life based on regular spiritual exercises. During his studies in Paris, he was specially touched by the lectures on the *Canticle of Canticles* by Gilbert Genabrard. He was indeed carried away by his new and creative interpretation of the *Canticle of Canticles*.[53]

Francis was pious by nature. It was something he had inherited from his mother. It had also its drawbacks. His piety at times touched the boundaries of scrupulosity. At that stage it was a piety which was greatly oriented to sweetness and consolations. Lajeunie opines, "This youthful piety was genuine, but it was a stylized piety. The devotion was authentic, but it was a Baroque devotion, a devotion of extraordinary sweetness."[54] Such a piety would soon be tested and rectified.

2.1.2.2.6 Crisis in Paris

Life has its own crises in every stage of growth. Soon in his life Francis was to experience one of the major crises in his life. Biographers trace it back to many causes. The worldly life of the students in Paris, the loose moral life of the noble youth which he witnessed all

[52] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 60-61.
[53] Ibid., p. 62.
[54] Ibid., p. 64.

around, his young age and his attractive features and the unedifying life of the nobility, and added to all that, his own scrupulosity contributed its own share to it.[55]

As a young man, Francis was blessed with attractive features. He was a handsome young intelligent man with excellent features. His peers freely courted girls without any scruples, and it was an accepted practice of the nobility then. Francis kept himself away, keeping himself from all possible dangers. But there was an inner conflict within him. He was torn between the flesh and the spirit and between his personal convictions and peer behaviour.[56]

All that he saw in the courts scandalized him. His ideals were on one side and the reality of humanness on the other. Loose life in the court characterised by dancing, courting and all the accompanying vices was not strange to the young nobility in Paris in those times. Francis used pious means to combat these evil inclinations. He was literally confronted with the 'attractiveness of the corrupt world.'[57]

At the deeper level of his spiritual life, Francis confronted a spiritual dilemma. Now being exposed to the world and all the dogmas of Lutherism, he was also shaken. He was influenced by the doctrine of predestination of Luther which was spreading at that time. Slowly in Francis grew a feeling that he was predestined to perdition. He was overcome by his imagination and the fear of being predestined to hell. Lajeunie narrates this situation clearly:

> As part of court society, and with the attractiveness of vice which he tried to conquer, Francis could see himself as no different from others. The attraction seemed to prove that he was on the royal road to perdition. His imagination got the upper hand. He believed that he was predestined to hell by God's infallible judgement. 'He fell prey to great temptation, says Saint Chantal, and to extreme distress of mind. He felt absolutely sure that he was damned, and that there was no salvation for him, and this paralysed him.' This anguish lasted for six weeks, from December 1586 to January 1587.[58]

It was not a mere transitory feeling. Most human beings often experience temporary crises in life. It was not such a crisis. It had paralysed his functioning. It caused him mental and spiritual agony:

> The trial was intense. 'His ill-founded convictions never ceased.' The horror that he felt was 'not so much that of the torments of hell as of being for all

[55] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 65.
[56] Cf. Ibid., p. 65.
[57] Cf. Ibid., p. 66.
[58] Ibid., p. 68.

> eternity the enemy of God,' says President Amelot, his confidant. 'His mind was so damaged that he nearly fell ill. The more he resisted the temptation and tried to hold on to divine mercy, the more *fixed* idea penetrated his soul.' … He was becoming the victim of an obsession, very much part of his moral crisis.[59]

Most biographers almost agree on the details of the crisis, although they may present it variously. Koster also presents it in a similar fashion, but more succinctly:

> Francis led a semi-monastic and austere life in Paris. The question of predestination as propagated by Luther and his followers was a lingering question in his mind. He was not unaffected by the same. This question deeply disturbed him. … During his stay in Paris, he was suddenly overcome by the crushing thought: I belong to be damned! I will enter eternal night! …The tension was unbearable. He became so restless, overcome by stress and depression. It lasted a few weeks. Finally in the Dominican Church, in the chapel of the Black Virgin, he made a prayer of total surrender and prayed the *Memorare* and he was instantly healed. He also made a vow of chastity and dedicated himself completely to God.[60]

Another biographer, Michael de la Bedoyere, also has a similar opinion of the crisis Francis de Sales experienced in Paris. In his opinion, life in Paris was the entry of Francis into the world. He experienced the world from an unprotected atmosphere. He was a serious young man and the new world was open to him with its temptations and sins. He also came to know of immoral priests in Paris who led shameful and infamous lives. They were totally ignorant and debauched. Later on, as Provost, he would tell his priests that 'knowledge is the eighth sacrament' for a priest. As a 19-year-old student with high ideals and deep piety, he experienced a spiritual and moral anguish.[61]

Such was the crisis he experienced in Paris. Almost all the biographers sketch in detail his crisis in Paris and treat it seriously as it has had such an effect on his later life. Later on, in his spiritual direction, he was able to help people who had had severe crises in life through his own experience. Writing to Baron de Chantal on her crisis in life, Francis de Sales mentions the mental agony he experienced due to anxiety and scrupulosity. He writes to her, "You do not feel firm, constant or resolute. There is something in me, you say, that has never been satisfied, but I don't know what it is…. Meanwhile, I wonder whether the

[59] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 68.
[60] KOSTER, *Francis de Sales*, pp. 26-27.
[61] Cf. Michael de la BEDOYERE, *Francis de Sales*, London: Collins, 1960, pp. 12- 27.

blockage is caused by too many desires thronging in your mind. *I have suffered from this illness*."[62]

This experience of severe crisis lasted from December 1586 to January 1587. What could have been the causes? Lajeunie believes the following could be the reasons. Psychologically speaking, Francis had cherished a superhuman ideal. His scrupulosity and over-enthusiasm made him an easy prey to a temptation of this sort. Moreover, he had a natural tendency to anxiety. He feared that the company around him would lead him astray. He was also overtaken by the theological pessimism that his lack of perfection would lead him to perdition. It is also likely that he falsely understood the doctrine of pre-destination in those young years. Consequently, he had an overwhelming feeling that he was destined for hell. It would still take him time to fully understand the theological truths and boundless mercy of God and to place all his faith and trust in the Lord. Lajeunie also mentions that the bad company around him in his student circle could have caused in Francis this depression and mental agony and the fear of being predestined to hell. Moreover, from his childhood, Francis had a tendency to be scrupulous.[63] It was an experience of the 'Dark Night' for him.

2.1.2.2.6.1 Overcoming the Crisis

It is edifying and interesting to note how he overcame this severe crisis. There was no personal counselling or psychotherapy or personal management programmes in those days. Almost all the biographers report that he overcame this crisis solely through prayer and his total abandonment to the will of God. He knelt before the statue of Our Lady and made a heroic act of total surrender to God in the chapel of Our Lady in the church of the Dominicans. He opened his heart to God. He committed his soul and all his intentions to Divine Providence. Finally he recited the *Memorare* and was instantly healed. Lajeunie hands over to us his prayer of total surrender to God that he made in this church:

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[62] Francis de SALES, *Selected Letters*, translated with an Introduction by Elisabeth STOPP, Second Edition, Stella Niagra, New York: De Sales Resource Centre, 2011, p. 78. Emphasis mine. One finds the original in the Annecy Edition of the works of St Francis de Sales known as *Oeuvres de Saint François de Sales. évêque de Genève et Docteure de l'Eglise, Edition complété.* 27 volumes. Here Vol. XII: *Lettres - Volume II*, p. 380. The complete Annecy Edition consists of 26 + 1 (index) volumes. The whole series has been prepared by the Visitation Nuns in Annecy from 1892- 1937. Hereafter referred to as *AE* (This quote is part of the letter written by Francis de Sales to Baronne de Chantal on 21 November 1604, at Annecy. It is not quite sure which experience he is referring to here, probably to his scrupulosity that caused his crisis in Paris. It is undoubtedly true that his crisis in Paris was one of the most influential and moulding experiences he had ever had).

[63] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 68.

> Whatever may happen, O God, you who hold all things in your hand, whose ways are justice and truth, whatsoever you may have decreed concerning me in the eternal secret of your predestination and reprobation, you whose judgements are unfathomable, you who are ever Just Judge and Merciful Father, I will love you always, O Lord, at least in this life! At least in this life will I love you, if it is not given me to love you in eternity![64]

Lajeunie speaks of the positive result of this trial and the effect of his total, heroic and humbling surrender: "Pure love was born in his heart; the sickness was gone. Still such self-denial did not drive out hope. In fact, a more purified hope was also brought to life, a hope that relied on the goodness of God, not on the goodness of man to God. It is one of the most profound aspects of the Salesian mentality. His optimism is not based on the worthiness of human nature, even when sanctified by grace."[65] Like other biographers, Bedoyere also records that Francis overcame his crisis through his intense prayer and total submission to the will of God.[66] It was a crucial experience in his life that shaped the rest of his life. Jane de Chantal also describes in her *Testimony* the crisis and how he overcomes it:

> Our Blessed Founder told me once, in order to console me in some trouble, that when he was a student at Paris, he fell into a state of great temptation and extreme agony of mind. It seemed to him certain that he was reprobate, and that for him there was no hope of salvation, thoughts which overwhelmed him with anguish, especially when he remembered that the lost cannot possibly love God, or see our Blessed Lady…. One day, however, when it pleased Divine Providence to deliver him... Kneeling down before one of Our Lady's altars, he noticed a prayer pasted on to a board, beginning: *Remember, most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection*...; he said it all through, then rose from his knees, and at that very instant felt himself perfectly and entirely cured, and it seemed to him that his disease fell at his feet like the scales of a leper.[67]

Many people experience such moments in life that change the rest of their lives. For example, Buddha experienced enlightenment meditating under a tree. For St Paul, it was a fall from a horse and a consequent meeting with the Lord. Ignatius of Loyola experienced it in the reading of the Bible. Life remains never the same after such experiences. For Francis this crisis was the turning point in his life.

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[64] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 71.
[65] Ibid., p. 72.
[66] Cf. BEDOYERE, *Francis de Sales*, pp. 26-27.
[67] Jane de CHANTAL, *St Francis de Sales*. *A Testimony by St. Chantal*, tr. & ed. by Elisabeth STOPP, Maryland: Faber and Faber, 1967, pp. 59-60. (Hereafter referred to as *Testimony*). Italics in the original.

Francis was now a free man, full of enthusiasm. His devotion was not any more centred on himself. He was inspired by his masters St Augustine and St Thomas Aquinas. He began a total renewal in his life. He began to avoid more and more the possibilities of bad company and worldly parties, dances, theatre, etc. His devotion to Our Lady became more intense. He promised to pray the Rosary and the M*emorare* daily.

2.1.2.2.6.2 Learning from the Crisis in Paris

Looking closely at the events concerning the crisis in Paris, one realizes that it was not only a spiritual crisis but also a moral and psychological one. It lasted a few weeks. That it lasted a few weeks reveals that it was not a passing emotion or a temporary feeling. He experienced such an intense pain, agony, desperation and misery that it paralysed him for weeks. He resorted to intense prayer and surrender to overcome this crisis. Finally, he was healed through prayer and surrender.

Francis also made use of this crisis experience. He learnt a lot for his future life and for his ministry of guiding and directing people later on. As mentioned earlier, he referred to this experience in his letter to Jane de Chantal.[68] He learnt, above all, to deal gently with himself in crises and never to lose hope. Being gentle with oneself and recollected is important in a crisis. In order to make use of our inner resources, one has to be gentle with oneself in crisis situations. This piece of advice will often be repeated by Francis de Sales in his spiritual letters and conferences. In Salesian tradition, it is important to avoid the occasions of sin rather than struggle to come out of them.

2.1.2.3 Doctoral Studies in Padua

After the crisis and strengthened and ennobled by it, he continued his studies in Paris. In 1588, he completed his studies and returned to Savoy. His studies in Paris would enable him to pursue his doctoral studies later in Padua. Back home in Savoy, his mother wanted him to stay at home, but his father dreamed of a great career for his elder son. His father had a dream of making him an official in the court. After a short stay at home, he was sent to Padua in November 1588 for further studies in Law. He studied civil and ecclesiastical law. His younger brother Gallois was also sent with him. His faithful and time-tested tutor Deage accompanied him once again, this time to Padua.[69]

[68] See 2.1.2.2.6 (Refer to this part in this work for details; done to avoid needless repetition).
[69] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 75.

On 26 December 1588, he enrolled at the University of Padua as a French-speaking Savoyard. The study in Padua lasted nearly four years, from 1588 to 1591. During this period he also studied Theology. One of the first things he did in Padua was to look for a spiritual director. He found a Jesuit priest, Fr Anthony Possevin. Fr Possevin was a writer, orator, theologian and an ecclesiastical diplomat. Possevin was for Francis a great friend and guide. He opened his heart to him. He helped Francis greatly in his discernment. He also confirmed him in his vocation to the priesthood.[70]

In January 1591, he fell seriously ill with fever and dysentery and was at the point of death. He was declared "lost" by the doctors. He received the Viaticum and extreme unction as there was no hope of healing.[71] Jane de Chantal tells in her *Testimony* that Francis, upon being asked where his body should be buried, replied his body should be given to the surgeon for the purpose of dissection. But to everyone's happiness and surprise, he was miraculously healed.[72]

Francis was always an intelligent and hard-working person. These qualities remained with him till his death. On 5 September 1591, he completed his studies with great success and received his Doctorate. He was greatly appreciated by all the professors. After the completion of his studies he went on a pilgrimage to Loretto and some other towns in Italy. February 1592 saw him return to Savoy. Francis had, from his childhood days, cherished the desire to become a priest. He had not yet made it known to his father. Now Francis was a Doctor in Civil Law and Ecclesiastical Law. He was fully eligible for priesthood. His father was now almost seventy. Would it be a heavy shock for him if he revealed his desire to him? Will he be able to bear it? Francis was not sure.[73]

2.1.3 Difficult Path to Priesthood

Francis was now back from Padua in his house in La Thuille, at the southern tip of the Annecy Lake. It was time for him to get settled in life. His father dreamed of good alliances for him. But Francis felt in himself the growing desire to belong to the Church.

[70] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint*, p. 36.
[71] Cf. Ibid., p. 41.
[72] Cf. CHANTAL, *Testimony* p. 62. For a different translation, see also *The Library of St Francis de Sales - Part 1*: *The Mystical Explanation of the Canticle of Canticles* (by St Francis de Sales) *Part II: The Depositions of St Jane Frances de Chantal in the Cause of the Canonisation of St Francis de Sales*, translated by Henry Benedict MACKEY, London: Burns & Oats Ltd, 1908, pp.199-200. Hereafter known as *Depositions*. This translation is much older and the language is coloured by old style and grammar.
[73] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint,* pp. 47-48.

During his years in Paris and Padua this desire had not dwindled but only intensified. He had decided to consecrate his life to God. Francis did not know how to make it known to his father. His father was still dreaming of a big career for his son and expected him to take over the family soon.[74]

In order to please his father, Francis enrolled himself as an advocate at the Bar of Chambery. He temporarily yielded to the wishes of his father to avoid a direct confrontation. Francis preferred to wait and win over his father gradually through love and patience. Patience and gentleness were always central to his approach. At the same time he was firm in his desire to become a priest and did not want to be in any way side-tracked.[75]

His father was getting old and wanted to leave the whole estate to his elder son to administer. Things went even that far that his father arranged a meeting with a lady in order to fix an alliance for him. Out of respect for his father, Francis agreed to meet her but he had decided firmly to abide by the vow of chastity he had made in Paris after his crisis. He saw it as his duty to obey his father. At the same time, he confided everything to his spiritual father. The marriage had already been agreed by the families, but the agreement was broken due to lack of interest on Francis' side.[76]

Nothing could divert Francis from his resolution to become a priest - not even the beauty and charm of a young woman, nor wealth and prestige nor glory and honour. There arose a golden chance for Francis to pursue his desire to become a priest. The Provost of Geneva Cathedral, a Doctor of Law, died on 14 October 1592, and Bishop Granier suggested that this office be occupied by Francis, who was well-qualified for the post. It was a highly respectable office and the Bishop felt that having Francis - now Doctor in Civil and Canon Law - in this post would be a great support for him. Francis also hoped it would be a golden chance to win over his father.

2.1.3.1 God's Timely Intervention

On the one side, preparations for making him Provost were underway. On the other, yielding to the desire of his father, he had enrolled himself at the Bar in Chambery. While returning from Chambery, after enrolling himself at the Bar, a mysterious event took place which was interpreted by Francis as a sign from God. While leaving Chambery, he fell

[74] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 126-127.
[75] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint*, p. 49.
[76] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 127-128. (See also RAVIER, pp. 48-49).

down from the horse and the scabbard got detached from his belt and formed a cross. Francis saw this as a divine intervention.[77] He interpreted this incident as God's call to leave the work at the Bar and to enter the priesthood.

Meanwhile, a letter conferring Senatorship on Francis in Turin was brought by Baron d'Hermance. This was a special favour done to Francis, who was not even thirty, because such high posts were reserved only for senior and experienced lawyers. The Duke was convinced of the exceptional qualities of Francis. It complicated the situation for Francis. His father would have preferred such a political post to an ecclesiastical one for his son. He had always dreamed of such a high post for his son. It was also one of his goals behind getting Francis highly educated. Francis now felt that he could not hide it anymore from his father and that he had to reveal his intentions to him.[78]

2.1.3.2 A Dream Fulfilled

The procedure for the Provostship was in progress in Rome. The papal bull arrived in Annecy on May 7, 1593. Francis knew that he had come to a stage where he had to make up his mind. He won the support of his mother who promised to stand by him. Louis de Sales, cousin of Francis de Sales, also pressurised Francis' father into yielding to the wishes of his son. Finally, he allowed Francis to follow his vocation to the priesthood. Andre Ravier narrates the situation: "Mme de Boisy courageously supported her son's request. M. de Boisy grew silent; he wept, and finally said to Francis: 'Do then, by God's command, what you say inspires you to do.' And he added – with the generosity of his faith: 'I give you my blessing in His name.' He then shut himself in his study."[79]

The following day, 10 May 1593, Francis received cassock in the church of La Thuille. On May 12, he took charge as Provost and went to meet Bishop Msgr. Claude de Granier. Francis renounced his rights as the eldest son and the title of the Lord of Villarogot. From now on, he would be just Francis de Sales. On 19 May, on the first day of his retreat in preparation for ordination, he received tonsure. In June 1593, he received the minor orders, on 18 September 1593, Francis was ordained deacon and three months later on 18 December 1593 ordained priest by Bishop de Granier in the cathedral of Annecy. He

[77] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 134.
[78] Cf. Ibid., pp. 135-136.
[79] RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint*, p. 52.

celebrated his first Mass on 21 December. After Christmas he was installed as Provost, to which he had already been named.[80]

PART II

2.2 Pastoral Spirit of Francis de Sales as Priest, Missionary and Bishop

Francis de Sales was a passionate pastor. His life was characterised by missionary zeal, compassionate approach to his people, and devotion to the Church. This part deals with some of the basic characteristics of his pastoral spirit.

2.2.1 Francis de Sales as Provost

The diocese of Geneva was ruled by princely bishops. In the heyday of the Reformation, the reformers chased the bishop and his chapter and confiscated their properties. So they took refuge in Annecy, hoping to return to Geneva someday - a hope which remains unfulfilled even to this day. The Duke of Savoy could never take control of Geneva city and restore Catholicism and as result it remained for ever the stronghold of Calvinism.

Soon after taking charge as Provost, Francis addressed his canons proposing a re-conquest of Geneva. But how, everyone wondered. The Provost was clear how to do that:

> We must bring down the walls of Geneva with charity; we must invade by *charity*; we must invade Geneva with charity; we must recover Geneva with charity… I do not propose to you iron or that powder whose odor and stench reminds us of infernal furnace… Let your camp be the camp of God. It is by hunger and thirst, endured not by our adversaries but by ourselves, that we must repulse the enemy…[81]

Such was the plan he had of re-conquering Geneva. His method was not one of violence and war, but of love and charity. This attitude, the power of love, charity and gentleness can be seen in every act of Francis, especially in his ministry as a priest and bishop, in his guidance and every act throughout his life. The way to win back those who left the portals of the Church was one of love and charity. He insisted also on genuine witness to Christian

[80] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 139.
[81] RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint*, p. 57. *(iron or that powder* means weapons and gun powder).

life. As a priest, Francis devoted himself to the spiritual renewal of Annecy. The spiritual needs of the people were the highest priority for Francis as a pastor. He visited the sick, the poor and the imprisoned.[82]

2.2.1.1 A Passionate Preacher

Francis was also a passionate preacher. Even before his priestly ordination, as a sub-deacon he had held preaching sessions.[83] He was appointed by his Bishop as "general preacher". He preached on all major feast days. He was fully convinced of the need to preach from the heart. He was aware of the poor condition of preaching in those times and believed that it badly needed a renewal. Preaching was a big spectacle in those days. In many cases, there was hardly any true preaching. People came to the preaching not because they understood it or the preaching touched their lives. They went to the preaching out of curiosity to see the preacher and his mannerisms. The Word of God was not the focus of the preaching, but that of the preacher. It was a show of punditry which had nothing to do with the lives of the people. Whenever he had an opportunity to preach, Francis 'mounted the pulpit'.[84] More about his preaching will be dealt with later in the chapter under the topic 'his approach to mission.'[85]

2.2.1.2 A Compassionate Confessor

The young Provost was the most sought-after confessor. He was a confessor with enormous listening capacity and the power to convert the hearts of the penitents. His patient listening was with a purpose: to help the penitent to get rid of the weight of his heart due to sin and to gather enough strength to begin again.[86] The Provost took the ministry of reconciling sinners earnestly. He knew how important it was to reconcile sinners to God and to humanity. Therefore, he made it easy for the penitents to make their confession. He made them welcome, prepared a proper place and treated them with extreme gentleness and warmth. He had his confessional at the very entrance of the cathedral of Annecy in order to facilitate easy access for the people.[87] Jane de Chantal in her testimony describes what kind of a confessor Francis de Sales was:

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[82] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint*, pp. 58-59.
[83] Cf. Ibid., p. 55.
[84] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 165. (See also CHANTAL, *Depositions*, pp.166-172).
[85] See 2.3.2
[86] Cf. François CORRIGNAN, *The Spirituality of Francis de Sales: a Way of Life*, tr. by Joseph D. BOWLER / Lewis S. FIORELLI, Bangalore: Indian Institute of Spirituality, 1992, p. 30.
[87] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint*, p. 58.

> I declare that our Blessed Founder was altogether beyond compare in his charity and zeal as a confessor. He gave himself completely and unstintingly to this holy work, and the only limit or measure he set himself was the need of those who turned to him; he used to leave everything else for that, unless he was busy about something still more important for God's glory, because he realized how very much this sacrament can help souls. Every Sunday and feast-day crowds of people used to come to him - men and women of high rank, ordinary citizens, soldiers, servant girls, peasants, beggars, people who were ill, full of sores, stinking of squalid diseases – he welcomed them all with the same love and kindness. He never turned anyone away, however objectionable.[88]

The confessional is such a wonderful place where the priest can show God's forgiving love concretely to a penitent. Humanistic psychologists have proved that human qualities play a great role in the process of helping a person. Person-centred therapy as proposed by Carl Rogers states that empathy, unconditional positive regard and genuineness can cause change in a person.[89] Long before Carl Rogers, Francis de Sales knew the importance of these human qualities in ministry, especially in his ministry of reconciliation and of spiritual direction.

Jane de Chantal hands down to us how kind he was to the penitents and how admirably he could empathise with them. "He gave penitents plenty of time to explain themselves fully and say everything they wanted; he never hurried people. Besides being available on the days mentioned, he used to leave everything when a call came, whatever the day or time….And to encourage his penitents and make them less shy, he used to say to them: 'Don't make any difference between your heart and mine; I'm yours, our souls are one and equal'."[90]

Those who were poor and objectionable received special care from him. Jane de Chantal, who knew his heart, testifies further: "I firmly believe that he received such people with even greater charity in his heart and gave them an even warmer welcome than those who were well off and attractive; and he used to say that this was where one could really show

[88] CHANTAL, *Testimony*, p. 127.
[89] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1995. See Chapter 3: *The Characteristics of a Helping Relationship*, pp.39-57. A summarised and precise treatment of these essential conditions for counselling can also be seen in *The Basic Conditions of the Facilitative Therapeutic Relationship* by Carl R. Rogers in *The Handbook of Person-Centred Psychotherapy and Counselling*, Mick COOPER, Maureen O'HARA, Peter F. SCHMID and Gill WYATT (eds.), Houndmills, Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007, pp. 1-5. More about this topic can be found in the subsequent chapters, i.e., IV and V, of this dissertation.
[90] CHANTAL, *Testimony*, p. 127.

one's love. He had time for children too, and made them feel so much at home that they were pleased to come back to him."[91]

This description of Jane de Chantal shows not only his nature at the confessional but also his attitude and approach to people in general. The attitudes and qualities which he painfully developed since his childhood stood him in good stead as a confessor. His empathy with the penitents, his capacity to go down to their level, his gentleness towards sinners, his listening skills and his almost supernatural capacity to understand human nature helped him become an excellent and most sought-after confessor of his time.[92]

2.2.1.2.1 Francis' Therapeutic Skills in Dealing with People

Seen from today's perspective, one could say that Francis de Sales was a 'therapist.' His method and approach were far ahead of his time. He was so therapeutic in his method and approach although counselling and psychotherapy were unknown in his days. Francis de Sales had the rare skill of directing souls which attracted many to him. He was so empathic and trustworthy that people completely trusted him and opened their hearts to him. "Only God knows how many souls His Divine Majesty drew to Himself through the agency of the Blessed, for people thought there was no one like him for kindness, for love of God and skilful direction; that is why they flocked to him from every quarter. When it got around that he was passing through some town, or going to stay in the country with friends, he always had to hear general confessions; and as he said, people used to save up their most secret problems of conscience for him, things they found hard to tell anyone else."[93]

How therapeutic Francis de Sales was! How could people ever reject such a priest at the confessional? People flock even today – even in the Western world - to a confessor who they find empathic, understanding and merciful, and who helps them to renew their lives. They want to get rid of the heaviness in their hearts and seek help.[94] Has the Catholic Church in the present age lost this ministry to psychiatrists and psychotherapists? One could perhaps say that the failure of this ministry today is partially due to lack of knowledge and experience people have about this liberating sacrament and partially due to lack of trained and rightly-motivated priests who are able to perform this ministry well. Doesn't Francis de Sales give us a direction in this regard? Practising psychiatrists and

[91] CHANTAL, *Testimony*, p. 127.
[92] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint*, p. 58.
[93] CHANTAL, *Testimony*, p. 129.
[94] Cf. Hinrich BUES, *Pater Bernhard: Nur die Liebe heilt!. Erzählungen über das Wirken Gottes in meinem Leben*, Heiligenkreuz, Austria: Be & Be Verlag, 2015, p. 182.

psychotherapists suggest that in spite of the differences, there are many similarities between psychotherapy and confession. Both help the person to accept the reality and to begin anew.[95]

2.2.1.2.2 His Empathy

Francis as a confessor had such an empathy which helped people of all ages and ranks to feel at home with him. He was available to all people – rich and poor, educated and uneducated, men and women, well-dressed noblemen and shabbily-dressed peasants. Many biographers speak of his exceptional skills for guiding souls and moving penitents. He made it a point to be available for confession very often. Sometimes he remained from dawn to noon at the confessional. Lajeunie gives us a graphic description of his ministry at the confessional:

> As soon as he was a priest, with his Bishop's authorisation, he had a confessional erected in the cathedral near the main entrance… on feast days he sometimes remained there from sunrise until noon, a throng of people around him; he was there for them only: men and women, "young and old, poor and rich, noblemen and commoners, strong and weak, healthy and sick"; if he had any preference, it was not for "fine people in lace", but for the sick, the peasants, the uneducated, the dirty etc. "He often lent his handkerchief to poor penitents weeping from sorrow for their sins." A lowly woman, blind from birth, would come to confession; as soon as he saw her "feeling her way along her own" he would rise and help her to the armrest in his confessional. She had such a delicate conscience that the saint, confessing her, admitted he envied her. Similarly, he would take the arm of a poor cripple, half paralysed, and help him "into a comfortable position", and then listen to him "with incredible patience.[96]

2.2.1.2.3 His Listening Heart

Francis de Sales also had great conversational skills which helped him in the ministry of reconciliation. He knew how to listen, what to listen to, and what to talk, how to talk and how to instruct them without bossing over them or moralising. "Everyone was loud in their praises of his conversational powers, and all who knew this great servant of God considered his talk extraordinarily agreeable and pleasant… various people of standing, who knew him and had been his travelling companions, could not praise him highly enough for his saintly, instructive and most delightful conversations."[97]

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[95] See the report on *Psychotherapie & Beichte* Fachtagung der Religiosität in Psychiatrie und Psychotherapie Institut (RPP**)** 16. 10. 2010, Heiligenkreuz Austira. Details on homepage : http://rpp2010.org/ and http://rpp2010.org/Pressespiegel More related topics and downloadable materials available at : http://rpp-institut.org/ (14.1.16)

[96] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 162-163.

[97] CHANTAL, *Testimony*, p. 139.

What helped Francis to be so effective in dealing with his folk? What was the secret of his success? Francis' long years of study helped him enormously in his ministry. His familiarity with literature and humanism gave a special human touch to his ministry. His knowledge of Civil and Canon Laws was a great asset to his ministry.[98] He put into practice what he asked his priests to do, namely, to acquire knowledge and to use it in daily ministry and life. He had asked his priests to see knowledge as the eighth sacrament for a priest. He exhorted his priests: "My very dear Brothers, I implore you to attempt seriously to study, because knowledge, to a priest, is the eighth sacrament of the hierarchy of the Church. [Without it] a greater misfortune happens to the priest than when the Ark [of the Covenant] is found in the hands of men who were not Levites."[99]

The ideal that he cherished of a priest was that the priest is a man of God, man of the Church and man of the people. He avoided extremes and tried to combine his spiritual life and priestly activities harmoniously. To listen to the faithful with understanding, empathy, patience and love is, according to Francis de Sales, an important aspect of a priest's ministry.

2.2.1.3 Formator of the Laity

As priest and later as bishop, Francis de Sales was totally engaged in the formation and guidance of the laity. As seen already, he had a preference for the poor and the downtrodden. But the elite were not neglected, either. The elite in those days were so dispersed and dismantled and, therefore, it was difficult to undertake something with them. In September 1593, he founded the Confraternity of the Holy Cross to organise the laity:

> The confraternity was no pious gathering of women chanting litanies. It was a meeting of the elite in an offensive mood; the Bishop was at its head and among its founders…. It was open to lay people on the warpath against "heresy" and "free thinking". The Provost's parents were among the first to become members. "A great number of people", of "every social rank" joined, Michael Favre tells us, with very great piety… Rolland testified to numerous conversions of sinners.[100]

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[98] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, pp. 88-89.

[99] Francis de SALES, *Exhortation to Clerics: That They Should Apply Themselves to Study*, tr. by Thomas F. DAILEY, http://web1.desales.edu/assets/salesian/PDF/ExortationstoClerics.pdf (14.1.16)
See AE, Vol. XXIII, pp. 303-305. « Pour cela, mes très chers Frères, je vous conjure de vaquer sérieusement a l'estude, car la science, a un prestre, c'est le huitiesme Sacrement de la hiérarchie de l'Eglise et son plus grand malheur est arrivé de ce que l'Arche s'est trouvee en d'autres mains que celles des Levites. [Cf. 1 Sam 4:3-11]. » pp. 303-304.
http://web1.desales.edu/assets/salesian/PDF/ExortationstoClerics.pdf (14.1.16)

[100] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 171. Rolland was the faithful servant of Francis de Sales.

What did they do? What was their mission? They were actually trying to live out the faith in most concrete ways and also to attract others to it, being lamps lit on the hill-top.[101] The confraternity tried to galvanize the lukewarm Catholics into action:

> The confraternity vigorously began its offensive against lukewarm Catholics, for its first objective was to "reform" consciences; it constituted the first battalion of "the devout" dreamed of by the saint… on those solemn days, and on the second Sunday of each month, these new crusaders prayed all day, each one in turn, an hour before the Blessed Sacrament exposed. Many people received Communion that day and were invited to do so at the masses celebrated every Sunday for the confraternity. Hence the well-known trend towards frequent Communion and 'devotion.' The confreres, moreover, promised to love one another, to give an example by visiting the sick, prisoners, and showing interest in the poor; assisting those awaiting capital punishment and burying them; bringing to the prior's notice the needy and the poor. The idea was, in a word, to erect a bastion against egoism, indifference and ritual routine.[102]

Francis de Sales tried to organise the laity to renew themselves in faith. It is interesting to note that he tried to make use of pious associations to revive the faith at a time when such associations were practically on the decline or were dormant. He was firmly convinced that the faith must also take external expressions or else it would die a natural death. To this end, he moderately supported and encouraged popular devotion. This thinking is clearly evident in his organisation of Forty Hours adoration.[103]

Francis also strongly supported frequent Communion for lay people - something uncommon in those times. Within a year of his ordination he was much loved and known. He took many initiatives, which other priests did not. His personal qualities made him loved and appreciated. Francis became a prominent figure in the diocese. It was a great achievement of his that he could draw around him the intellectual youth of the day through his preaching and personal approach:

> His personal qualities had turned him into a leader. He was the orator in demand: he was listened to, invited to speak, called to the provinces… He was no braggart; he was in possession of the art of oratory, but also spoke with his heart and his learning, his knowledge of theology was vast, deep, solid, clear; added to which, his perceptive psychology helped him aim his arrows unerringly…on another level, Francis de Sales was drawing around him the intellectual youth of the day…This was the theology of a pastor, an

[101] Cf. Mt 5:14.
[102] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 171.
[103] Cf. Francis MOGET, *Church & Laity during the Time of St Francis de Sales: A Historical Survey,* in *St Francis De Sales and Laity*, Antony KOLENCHERRY (Ed.) Bangalore: SFS, 1987, pp. 57-70.

> apostle, a practical down-to-earth, straightforward theology that appealed to the courage of youth.[104]

This young, zealous provost was not spared of jealousy and misunderstandings. His fellow priests worked against him. Some people, especially his own priestly colleagues, were not happy at his success. Since as provost he worked closely with the Bishop, he had many enemies, too. As a result, there were attempts to drive a wedge between him and the Bishop. He was misrepresented to the Bishop as ambitious and as a hypocrite who wanted to take over the diocese and reform the clergy. Many of the diocesan clergy stood strongly against any change or any reform of the clergy. The Bishop was hurt and disappointed at the malicious campaign. Francis also felt hurt at the happenings. The Bishop, however, trusted Francis entirely and appreciated well his efforts.[105] "The provost was pained but not disturbed; truth, he thought, is like a beard: The more it is cut, the better it grows. He waited peacefully for the moment of truth."[106]

Francis was a pastor with a strong sense of justice. His knowledge of law and justice would surely have influenced him. He stood strongly against any form of injustice and exploitation. He helped widows and other helpless persons to their justice.[107]

2. 2.1.4 Man of Prayer, Interiority and Study

In spite of his busy schedule, Francis was a man of prayer, reflection and deep interiority. His daily life was rooted in prayer. He was extremely careful not to be lost in activism. He knew well from childhood the primacy of spiritual life. He remained always faithful to his daily prayers and meditation. His active life was deeply founded on an intense spiritual life.[108]

In this regard, it is fitting to turn to Lajeunie, what he has garnered from different testimonies, especially at the canonization. It gives us a glimpse of his spiritual and intellectual life: "He never wasted time; he knew its worth perfectly, how to make the most of it. Order, method, and constant labour, were his secret from his early days. 'He would rise at daybreak, retire very late, rarely before 11:00; sometimes he was obliged to work

[104] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 175.
[105] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, pp. 91-92.
[106] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 176.
[107] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 89.
[108] Cf. Ibid., p. 90.

until an hour after midnight.'… He seemed 'untiring' at his work, especially for things that came under his responsibility. 'He was never idle.'"[109]

Even as a young priest, Francis was assiduous. He knew the value of time and dedicated all his free time to study and further learning:

> As soon as he had time to himself, it was to study, meditate and pray. Since his return from Padua, he had given up law to apply himself only to theology… he meditated on scripture unceasingly in the old Vulgate, in the Greek of the *Septuagint* which he consulted for difficult or doubtful passages. For the Psalms, he used the Hebrew in Genebrard, and read Chrysostom and Augustine, Jerome for Saint Matthew; Ambrose for Saint Luke; …he continually studied the two great luminaries of theology, St Thomas in his *Summa* and Saint Bonaventure in his *Commentaire de Sentences*… He always had on his table the Acts of the Council of Trent… the Apostle seeks nourishment before giving nourishment.[110]

Lajeunie continues to show us how faithful Francis was to his spiritual life in spite of all his daily activities. One of the things Francis always cherished doing was his meditation. It is something that he also recommended to all who sought his help. For him meditation was an occasion to unite himself with God. Meditation has become an unavoidable ingredient in the daily routine of many today. But much before meditation became a trend or fashion as it is today, Francis knew its worth and practised it frequently:

> Besides study, he was faithful to meditation. He was happy to belong to God (XII, 311). He meditated daily, Sundays sometimes exempted, as he rose before daybreak if he foresaw the pressure of work… for that period of the day belonged to God and should not be curtailed. … This is worth examining. He assuredly belonged to everybody, but his plans had to be harmonized with the law of prayer, it is worthy of note. He told Quoex "very privately" that whatever he had to do he never omitted "partly or wholly" his daily devotions...One evening in Allinges castle he will be grieved at being unable to say Compline for want of a candle. Later, as bishop, and overburdened with work, in order to avoid troubling his servants, he will pretend to retire and after their departure, he will rise "noiselessly" to finish his prayers…Among these devout exercises was the rosary that he had vowed to say every day. His love for the Virgin, especially after visiting Loretto, was dear to his heart… Prayer at any price; that was the foundation on which the young prelate based his actions right from the very beginning of his apostolate.[111]

His study and spiritual reading included the Scripture, the Fathers of the Church, the great Doctors like St Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventura, Bellarmine, etc. As noted earlier, he was an

[109] G. PILLIOD as quoted by LAJEUNIE in *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 152-153.
[110] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 153.
[111] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 153-155.

ardent lover and follower of the Fathers of the Church, and he quoted them often in his preaching and writings. Loyalty to the Church and the tradition of the Church was central to his life. All his writings and preaching were totally in line with the teachings of the Church.

Concluding Remarks

Francis de Sales as a priest and provost was imbued with the pastoral spirit. He brought a new life into the ministry of penance and reconciliation. We could say that he was a confessor as well as a counsellor. Through his personal qualities and the effective use of his pastoral skills he could move the hearts of the people.

It is so inspiring to see that the busy provost was also an avid learner. Knowledge, for him, was the eighth sacrament.[112] Francis always had a quest for knowledge, but it was not merely for the sake of knowledge, but knowledge for ministry. He advocated and practised it in his life that a priest should never stop learning. Updating oneself in knowledge and skills is important not only in the secular world, but also in the ministry of the Church.[113]

2.3 Francis de Sales as a Missionary

Francis de Sales is most known as an author, founder and spiritual director. A less known side of his life is that of his mission work. He worked as a missionary to bring Catholicism back to the whole region of the Chablais which had gone over to Protestantism during the Reformation.

2.3.1 The Chablais Mission

Francis de Sales spent four years as a missionary in the Chablais. He did not venture into a foreign land where Christianity was unknown or sail across the seas to do missionary work. His field of mission was his own diocese. The Chablais was part of the diocese of

[112] Cf. Francis de SALES, *Exhortation to Clerics: That They Should Apply Themselves to Study*.
[113] Cf. Hermann STENGER (Ed.), *Eignung für die Berufe der Kirche. Klärung- Beratung- Begleitung*, Freiburg: Herder, 1988. (Roughly translated, *Qualifying for Ministry in the Church. Clarification-Guidance-Accompaniment*). More reference to this book will be made later in this work.

Geneva. After his successful missionary work there he earned the title 'The Apostle of the Chablais.'[114] What was the situation of Catholicism there? How did Francis work there?

2.3.1.1 The Chablais: 'The Lost Territory'

The Chablais which lies about 15 miles from the Lake of Geneva (Lake Leman) was occupied by the Protestants. The whole district was influenced by the Calvinists in Geneva, the hotbed of Calvinism, and turned Protestant. Savoy and the Duke remained strongly Catholic during the Protestant Reformation. In1589, the Bishop sent 50 priests to re-establish the parishes and to start Catholic worship. The reaction of the Protestants was violent. In 1591, all the priests were banished and the churches burnt down.[115]

2.3.1.2 Venturing into a Dangerous Mission

In 1594, Bishop de Granier wanted to send priests once again to the Chablais to try to establish the Catholic Church. The Bishop called for a synod to ask for more volunteers. The response was disappointing - nobody came forward! The recent atrocities committed by the Protestants in this area – the terrifying invasion, chasing away of priests, total desecration and destruction of churches and presbyteries - were still fresh in their minds. Nobody was willing to go there again because there was a serious threat to their lives. The risk was too perilous. Although he was the Provost, next to the Bishop in authority and rank, Francis de Sales took up the mission in September 1594 with his cousin Louis de Sales.[116] Many, including his father, dissuaded him from going. He said to his son, "My poor child, to try to convert the Chablais in the present circumstances would be sheer madness."[117] He said to his father "This is a laborious task, it is true, and there is no denying it, but why are we wearing theses cassocks if we do not want the responsibility?"[118]

On 14 September 1594, Francis and his cousin Louis landed in the Chablais and took their residence in the castle of Les Allinges. Thonon was the headquarters of the Chablais but the whole area had turned so Calvinistic and hostile to the Catholic faith that it was difficult for the missionaries to stay in Thonon. The castle was situated on a small hill and was protected by soldiers. The missionaries went daily to Thonon and returned by evening.

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[114] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 320-321, 339-340. See also RAVIER, p. 91.
[115] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint*, pp. 61-63.
[116] Cf. Ibid., pp. 63-64.
[117] As quoted by LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 183.
[118] As quoted by MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 98.

Francis and Louis were met with great hostility as they landed in the mission. The hardships that the young missionaries had to endure were almost unbearable. The winter was harsh, and without proper chapels or presbyteries the young priests were exposed to untold miseries. On a winter night, in the bitter cold, Francis had to spend the night in a derelict chapel. On another winter night he had to tie himself to a chestnut tree the whole night in order to save himself from wolves.[119]

2.3.1.3 Beginning the Mission with the 'Remnant of Chablais'

There were a few Catholics who had remained faithful to the Church. They were scattered over a large area. Due to the hostile situation they never came out in the open. The primary task of the missionaries now was to establish contact with them and to bring them together. Gradually they were able to find some of their faithful. It was important to instruct them in faith. Due to long years of neglect and lack of pastoral care, they were Catholics only in name. They began working with a small group of Catholics and instructed them. During his first preaching on Sunday, September 18, four days after landing in the Chablais, Francis stated that God's people needed pastors sent by God Himself.[120]

The Protestants reacted angrily and showered abuses on the 'Roman priest.' Louis, his cousin and companion in the mission, was frightened. Undeterred by the hostilities and threats from the Protestants, Francis went on preaching every Sunday to the small congregation of six or seven who gathered in the Church.

In the beginning Francis used a rather attacking style of preaching, directed against the Protestants. But he slowly turned from his style of preaching to an edifying one. He preferred to take a conciliatory tone and presented himself as a peace-loving orator.[121] He slowly understood the power and value of gentleness which can move more hearts than aggression or invectiveness in speech. This lesson was to remain with him till the end of his life.

The Protestants decided in their assembly to chase out the 'papists', to force them to pack up and retire. Francis came to hear of it. The young priests, however, were not willing to give up. Writing to Louis Favre, Francis makes his mind clear, "... but this will never happen… We are absolutely determined to work without ceasing in any way, to leave no

[119] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 227.
[120] Cf. Ibid., p. 188.
[121] Cf. Ibid., pp. 189-190.

stone unturned, to *implore, to reprove with as much patience and science* as God will give us."[122] What an inspiration for pastors even today faced with manifold difficulties!

The opponents spread calumnies against him as a magician and sorcerer. They tried to alienate people from him. People were forbidden to meet him and talk to him. So Francis had to take new initiatives to communicate his message. He began to write short notices explaining the Catholic faith and left them at the doors of houses. Francis wrote a series of meditations on the articles of the Creed defending the Church and explaining the Catholic faith, and he slid them under the doors of the houses. This gesture was well appreciated and there was a high demand for them. This action lasted for a year from January 1595 to January 1596. After his death, these notices were published as a book, *The Controversies.*[123] Centuries later, in 1877 declaring St. Francis de Sales a Doctor of the Church, Pope Pius IX stated that this book is "a full and complete demonstration of the Catholic religion."[124] For this 'journalistic and mass media enterprise' of Francis de Sales, Pope Pius XI declared him patron of journalists and writers in 1923.[125]

In October 1596, Francis had to visit the Nuncio and the Duke in Turin. The latter had promised financial help and support. The Duke sent him back with a load of promises but, in fact, Francis received no help, except tax exemption for some poor families which he had begged for. Not even the debts that he incurred for the mission were reimbursed. In spite of the disappointments, Francis continued with his missionary activities in the Chablais. There was a steady growth in the number of Catholics. After two years of hard work he was able to win over enough people and to renew the first church - St. Hippolytus - in Thonon and to celebrate Mass for Christmas in 1596. He could move the hearts of the people through his preaching. He celebrated three Masses on this day.[126]

Francis preached on every possible occasion. People flocked to his sermons out of curiosity and interest for the person, although they were forbidden to do so. So Francis had to go to the people. On a market day, Francis preached for two hours about the Catholic

[122] As quoted by LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 190. Emphasis as in the original.
[123] *The Controversies* (*Les Controverses*) forms the first volume of the Annecy Edition of the Complete Works of St Francis de Sales, *Oeuvres de Saint François de Sales. évêque de Genève et Docteure de l'Eglise, Edition complété,* (*AE). The Controversies* (sometimes also known as *The Catholic Controversies*) is the first 'book' by Francis de Sales. He was not yet thirty as he completed writing these pamphlets directed at the Calvinists, aimed at defending the Catholic Church and trying to get the Calvinists back to their original faith.
[124] Pope Pius IX, *Dives in misericordia Deus*.
[125] Cf. Pope Pius XI, *Rerum Omnium Perturbationem*, Encyclical of Pope Pius XI on St Francis de Sales on 26.01.1923.
[126] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, pp. 133-136.

faith in a public place.[127] His preaching was the most important instrument for re-converting the Chablais. He taught catechism to those who were interested, explaining the faith in the simplest way. On Ash Wednesday, 1597, he celebrated the Ash Wednesday liturgy and imposed ash on the people. The Protestants mocked him and called him a sorcerer and magician. The Friday following the Ash Wednesday, the Protestants tried to attack him. He had to hide himself in a house to escape.[128]

In 1597, he re-opened the parishes of Les Allinges and Cervens. More prominent people returned to the Catholic fold. Still more parishes were ready to come back. Now burdened with more work, Francis and Louis had to look for more collaborators. With the arrival of much-awaited collaborators - Frs Esprit de Beaumes, Cherubin, and Antoine de Tournon, all Capuchins of the Lyons Convent and some other priests - Francis and Louis diversified their activities. Although the new colleagues brought a great deal of relief to Francis and Louis, they had a different style of functioning. They were not so gentle, simple, pleasant or persuasive like Francis. They preferred to deliver fiery sermons and consequently often landed in trouble.[129]

Added to the hostility of the people and the shortage of funds, there was another major threat. There was a great fear of an impending attack on Savoy by King Henry IV. Francis' father was against his son working under such dangerous conditions and he put pressure on the bishop to call him back.[130] Problems were mounting on the financial side, too. Francis had no money to sustain himself or the mission. Although he expected help from the Bishop, nothing came. The bishop himself was poor, and Francis was aware of it. Although the Duke promised to help, he allotted no funds due to political compulsions.[131]

This was one of the most trying times for Francis de Sales in his entire life. During this period, he prepared himself spiritually - prayed, fasted and did penance, more than his body could bear. On the one side, he faced disappointment and a sense of helplessness and, on the other, lack of money, support and the persuasion to leave the mission from his family, relatives and friends.[132]

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[127] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p.126.
[128] Cf. Ibid., pp.142-143.
[129] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1 pp. 268-270.
[130] Cf. Ibid., pp. 191-192.
[131] Cf. Ibid., pp. 205 ff.
[132] Cf. *Introduction to the Devout Life* (*IDL*), in *Biography of St Francis de Sales*, p. 5.

2.3.1.4 His Attitude towards Protestants

Francis' way of dealing with the Protestants is noteworthy. He did not have any ill feeling or malice towards them. Instead, he tried to reach out to them. He wanted to enter into a dialogue with them and discuss questions of faith with them. 'He was an enemy of their error, but a friend of their persons.'[133] There are many examples which show how his gentleness and friendly nature had a positive influence upon his enemies.

2.3.1.5 A Reflection

The mission in the Chablais sadly reminds one of the present situation in some parts of Europe, where sometimes in the huge cathedrals and churches just a dozen or so people come for the Sunday Mass and where people are often totally indifferent to the Church and religious matters. In spite of the disappointing scenario, can the Church do something to improve the situation? Is there any ray of hope in this hopeless condition? Does not the approach and missionary enterprise of Francis de Sales inspire the Church even today?

It is perhaps important for the Church to consider the means and methods Francis used to win over the Protestants. His convincing arguments, thought-provoking points on faith, could bring about the conversion of people. Besides being a good preacher, writer and orator, Francis was also personal in his approach to the people. Even his enemies could not resist his personal and person-oriented approach. He was also shrewd in establishing contacts with important and influential people which, in turn, convinced ordinary people to follow suit. Francis was also a pastor who went after his people. Since the people did not come to him, he made use of all methods to go after them like the Good Shepherd who goes after the lost sheep. As Pope Francis says, the shepherds should have the 'odour of the sheep.'[134] Francis de Sales used his vast knowledge for preaching, writing, arguing and presenting the true faith.

2.3.2 His Approach to Mission

What did Francis do to make his missionary work in the Chablais a huge success? How could he get relapsed Catholics back to the Church? A study of his approach could also be relevant for the present time.

[133] MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 143.
[134] Cf. Pope Francis' homily on Chrism Mass on 28.03.2013.

2.3.2.1 Active Missionary with Deep-Rooted Spirituality

Francis was, no doubt, an active missionary. Without engaging in tireless action such a work would not have been possible. But that was not the only reason for his success. His work was firmly sustained by his deep spirituality. Ravier speaks of his method:

> Slowly, patiently, Francis worked: his hope was in God. He prayed, fasted and mortified himself. His daily Mass, celebrated at what a price, we know, was his great source of courage. He treated with respect and charity those Protestants who kept away from him, and above all he took them seriously. For them he studied, wrote, and preached because it was the Gospel, the Scriptures, and the Church that he had to present in all their purity so as to make them accessible. By speech, undoubtedly, but especially by his entire life and faith, the priest had to reveal to his separated brothers the spirit and the heart of Jesus Christ.[135]

Even though he was fully engaged in activities, his life was deeply rooted in God. He knew well that without basing his life in spirituality, his efforts would not bear fruit. Even if they did, they were not the fruits desired by him and they were to be at his own personal and spiritual expense.

2.3.2.2 Constant Personal Renewal

The main means of personal renewal for him was his intense devotion to the Holy Eucharist and the sacrament of penance. Daily celebration of the Eucharist was of the greatest importance for Francis. In spite of all the difficulties – sometimes he had to crawl across the river Dranse on a plank in winter - and adverse weather, he celebrated the Holy Mass. This devotion impressed others, even the Calvinists.[136] Every month he visited his spiritual director for confession and guidance. He highlights frequent confession as an essential means of spiritual progress.[137] Lajeunie speaks of 'The Triple Bond' that sustained his life in the most difficult of times in the Chablais - prayer, alms and fasting. "Faced with the toughness of the impenetrable mass to convert, he resolved to resort to spiritual weapons: "Prayer-alms-fasting," he said, "are the three strands that make the rope too strong to be broken by the enemy."[138]

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[135] RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint*, pp. 76-77.
[136] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 129.
[137] Cf. Francis MOGET, *Church & Laity during the Time of St Francis de Sales: A Historical Survey* in Antony KOLENCHERRY (Ed.), *St Francis de Sales and Laity*, Bangalore: SFS, 1987, pp. 57-70. Here p. 69.
[138] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 197.

The difficulties, disappointments and failures did not put Francis down. He remained patient, hopeful and optimistic and continued his work - an important attitude in personal growth and in guiding people.[139]

2.3.2.3 Encounter, Dialogue and Debates with Protestants

How did Francis deal with the Protestants? The Catholic Church in those days knew nothing of ecumenism or ecumenical dialogue. France was a hotbed of rivalry between the Catholics and Protestants in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There was no friendly attitude between the groups. One should understand that Francis was a product of his time and the thinking of the Church influenced him. Like other Catholics, he believed that the Protestants were pagans and needed to be converted to Catholicism in order to be saved.

Francis was aware that most Protestant pastors knew very little of their faith. Francis, on the other hand, was well-versed in Catholic theology through his education. On every aspect of faith he could successfully debate with others. Francis called the Protestants to public debates to discuss the faith. Very often the Protestants would not respond. They could neither stand up to his eloquence nor present their new-found faith adequately. That caused many people to lose faith in the Protestant ministers and to return to the Catholic Church. Francis explained to them clearly, convincingly and in simple terms the Catholic faith.[140]

2.3.2.3.1 Prominent Re-conversions to Catholicism

As a result of Francis' personal encounters and the contacts he established and through his preaching and his amiable nature, some prominent persons could be won back to the Catholic fold. This served as a catalyst for others who were still undecided and created a domino effect. Pierre Poncet, a well-known lawyer in the region, was one of them.[141] Another prominent conversion was that of Antoine de Saint-Michel, the brother-in-law of Baron d'Hermance, also known as D'Avully in 1596. This prominent convert, a Lord by title, played an important role in the mission of Francis in the Chablais. The conversion of Lord Avully made a deep impact on the Protestants and Catholics alike. Avully was a learned and extremely headstrong Calvinist. He returned to the Catholic faith on 19 February 1596 in Thonon and made a public abjuration in Turin in the presence of the

[139] Cf. Martin E.P. SELIGMAN, *Learned Optimism. How to Change Your Mind and Your Life*, New York: Vintage Books, 2006, pp. 254-258.
[140] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, pp.126-128.
[141] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 204.

Nuncio. This conversion was a milestone in the progress of Francis' mission in the Chablais. It shook the faith of the people in Calvinism.[142]

Lord Avully was instrumental in obtaining necessary political support for the mission. He came to the conferences of Francis and had had many personal dialogues with him for over a year before he chose to become a Catholic. He stated publicly that nobody had ever convinced him like the provost de Sales. His public conversion shocked the ministers in Geneva.[143]

The Protestants were further shocked when Francis held a public dispute with Antoine de La Faye, the apparent successor to Beze, but who could not stand up to the arguments of Francis de Sales, and he 'got angry and broke off the dispute.'[144] This event provided a great impetus to conversions in Thonon. A growing number of people wanted to know more about Catholicism. Most of them had known about Catholicism only from the Protestant ministers. It gave Francis a new opportunity to present Catholicism and to refute Protestantism. People came to know that many Protestant ministers could not defend their new-found religious beliefs before Francis. People began to doubt the authenticity of the Protestant religion.[145]

Receiving the Protestants back to the Catholic fold was an enormous task for Francis. It entailed taking care of their spiritual needs, being available to them and clearing their doubts and reservations. On 23 April 1597, he wrote to Nuncio Riccardi: "These brothers, these new Catholics, have exhausted me by their general confessions, but I have experienced a tremendous consolation seeing them so pious."[146]

2.3.2.3.2 Meeting with Theodore de Beze

At the request of Pope Clement VIII, Francis met Theodore de Beze, head of the Calvinists in Geneva and successor to Calvin three times, in 1597. Beze had shown signs of mildness in his approach to Catholicism. In the Catholic circles it was considered perhaps a sign for unity. King Henry IV and the Pope were aware of this change of heart of the "Patriarch of Geneva".[147]

[142] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 122.
[143] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 230-232.
[144] Ibid., p. 233.
[145] Cf. Ibid., pp. 232 -235.
[146] As quoted by RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage & Saint*, p. 84.
[147] Cf. RAVIER, Ibid., pp. 82-83.

Earlier attempts to meet Beze privately were not successful. Finally, the first encounter took place on 3 April 1597. It was a cordial meeting, although those who had knowledge of the meeting, said that Beze lost his temper once on a certain issue.[148] There were two more meetings between the two. The second meeting took place on 3 July and it too was cordial. For the first meeting Francis was accompanied by Louis de Sales and for the second by Antoine Favre and two others. The details of the third meeting are not known except that Francis made known to Beze the offer of the Pope to pay him a pension in case he converted. It was meant to look after himself because the converts were not eligible to any pension in those times. The apparent intention to bring Beze back to the Catholic faith could not be achieved.[149]

2.3.2.4 Popular Piety and Devotions

One of the most important popular faith events that Francis undertook to bring people back to the Catholic fold was the use of popular piety and devotions. Notable among them was the 'Forty Hours' devotion.

2.3.2.4.1 Forty Hours Devotion

What was the so-called Forty Hours devotion? Originally it was meant to be a spiritual festival - "*Oratio sine intermissione*" (uninterrupted prayer) for the revival of faith. The Forty Hours devotion was not something Francis invented. It is traced back to Milan in the 1530s, and was approved by Pope Paul III.[150] This devotion spread quickly all over Europe. Forty Hours was popularised by Philip Neri, Ignatius of Loyola and Charles Borromeo. All these three saints were held in high esteem by Francis de Sales.[151] Being a product of Jesuit education, Francis was familiar with it – at least theoretically, and must have heard of its efficacy from the Jesuits. He must also have been aware of this devotion taking hold in different parts of Europe at that time.

2.3.2.4.2 Francis de Sales and Forty Hours

True, the Forty Hours devotion was not something that Francis de Sales had invented. He, however, modified it to suit his particular situation. In the Chablais, the Forty Hours was a celebration of faith with adoration, procession, veneration of the cross, preaching, music, bonfire, and enacting biblical scenes. It could be described as a kind of popular mission, a

[148] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage & Saint*, pp. 83- 85.
[149] Cf. RAVIER, Ibid., pp. 86- 87.
[150] See *Forty Hours Devotion* in *Catholic Encyclopaedia:* http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06151a.htm. (07.1.16).
[151] See *What is Forty Hours Devotion?* in www.oblates.org/.../fortyhours devotion/fortyhours (10.1.16).

public demonstration of faith and religious fervour combined with popular celebrations. The Eucharistic celebration and a procession with the Blessed Sacrament were central to the celebration. There was altogether a festive atmosphere and the people were filled with religious fervour. There were numerous lights, bonfires, music and singing. Biblical scenes were enacted. It was a spiritual and temporal celebration.[152]

The success of the Forty Hours in the Chablais was mainly due to the creative and innovative approach of Francis. Instead of making it a purely spiritual celebration, he made it an occasion for him to have access to the people, who would not otherwise turn to him. The public witness of faith and open-air conversion by prominent people moved many others to return to the Catholic Church. Moreover, many understood and experienced first-hand that the Catholic faith was not as dry and monotonous as the Protestants had made it out to be. Forty Hours attracted a huge number of people and it turned out to be a great success. Many people began to leave Calvinism and return to the Catholic faith.[153]

2.3.2.4.3 Forty Hours Devotion and Renewal of Faith

Forty Hours in the parish of Annemasse aroused popular enthusiasm and strengthened the faith. As a result, more conversions followed. He introduced Forty Hours also in other parishes. When Forty Hours was held in Thonon in 1598, it was also attended by the Bishop. For the first time after the Reformation, Confirmation and Holy Orders were administered there. It also included the Eucharistic procession, one of the central elements of the whole celebration. Francis carried the Blessed Sacrament. On this occasion many people publicly abjured Calvinism. These celebrations were successful, effective and popular.[154] For the second phase of the Forty Hours, even more guests were present. They included, in addition to the bishop, the duke and the papal delegate, Cardinal de Medici. The Cardinal was given a grand welcome in the town hall. The Bishop narrated the activities of Francis and the whole developments in the mission to the papal delegate. The duke introduced Francis as the '*Apostle of the Chablais*' in the following words: "My Lord, he whom I am representing to you is the *Apostle of the Chablais*; you see here a man blessed by God and sent from heaven to us. Inflamed by great zeal for the salvation of

[152] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 146.
[153] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 287-289. (See also MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, pp. 146-149).
[154] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage & Saint*, pp. 90-95.

souls, he came into this province with the utmost courage and not without great peril to his life, to spread the word of God, and plant the cross of our Lord."[155]

The Protestant pastor Pierre Petit made his abjuration before the papal delegate, the duke and the bishop. The duke encouraged the people of the Chablais to return to the faith. Thus Forty Hours here turned out to be a grand success. Since Forty Hours was introduced in the Chablais, fifty-six parishes returned to the faith. Every parish and every head of family returned to the Catholic Church. It was a great achievement, and Francis was greatly appreciated for taking initiatives that brought the faithful back to the Church.[156] On 15 November 1603, Francis wrote to Pope Clement VIII: "…formerly we could hardly count hundred Catholics in all the parishes together. Now hardly so many heretics could be found."[157]

2.3.2.4.4 Reflection

A pastoral reflection on his ministry in the Chablais could be profitable even for the present times. Francis was absolutely effective in responding to the needs of the time. He found out what was needed to bring the relapsed back to the Catholic fold, and he carried it out with all determination. His personal approach, his way of dealing with the Protestants, his knowledge and wisdom, his effective preaching and popular devotions and, above all, his personal witness through his holy life bore abundant fruit. All the popular devotions he employed and supported were strongly backed by his preaching and the full support of the hierarchy of the Church. In his nearly five years of ministry (1594-1598) he re-converted nearly the whole region back to Catholicism. This discernment of the right method for evangelization, the zeal to follow it up and, above all, to support it with one's own authentic and holy life is the need of the time today. The Church is faced with a similar situation in the present times – loss of faith, scandals in the Church, shrinking Catholic population, total indifference to faith, all-pervading secularism, etc. How does she respond

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[155] RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage & Saint*, p. 91. Emphasis mine.

[156] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, St *Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, pp.149-151.

[157] Francis de SALES, Letter to Pope Clement VIII in *Oeuvres de Saint François de Sales*, AE, Tome XII : *LETTRES – Vol II*, pp. 228-239 ; here pp. 238-239. For the German version, see *Deutsche Ausgabe der Werke des Hl Franz von Sales* (*DA*), *Band. 8, Briefe IV: Korrespondenz im Überblick*, translated, selected, introduced and edited by Franz REISINGER, (2nd ed.), Eichstätt: Franz Sales Verlag, 1999, pp. 89-93; here p. 92. The original letter to Pope Clement VIII was written in Latin. It reads as follows: *Itaque, ut rem magnum paucis dicam, ante duodecim annos in sexaginta quator parrochiis urbis Genevae vicinioribus, murisque illius, ut ita dicam adjacentibus haeresis publice docebatur, ac ita universa occupabat ut nullus Catholicae religioni locus superesset. Nunc autem totidem iisdemque locis Ecclesia Catholica extendit palmites suos, ac ita viget ut nullus haeresi locus sit relictus; cumque antea ne centumquidem viri in tot parrochiis Catholici apparerent, nunc ne centum quidem haeretici videantur, sed quique Catholicae fidei sacra flunt celebranturque, adhibitis unicuique parrochiae propriis curionibus)* AE, XII, pp. 237-238.

to the present situation? What can the Church do today to bring people back to her fold? What is relevant for today – preaching, popular devotions or the use of the modern media? Can the Church ever neglect the importance of individual witness and personal holiness? Every Catholic needs to think about it today in the face of the difficulties faced by the Church.

2.3.2.5 Preacher: Power of the Spoken Word

One of the great assets that Francis de Sales possessed was his style of preaching. As priest, provost, missionary and bishop, he was a passionate preacher. As seen already, Francis had begun to preach even before his priestly ordination. His skill and his style steadily improved. He became a much-wanted preacher in Savoy and the whole of France. He was invited to many places to preach and everywhere people flocked to listen to his preaching.

2.3.2.5.1 Francis' Style of Preaching

Francis was a preacher par excellence. What made his preaching so successful? His preaching won hearts because he was preaching from the heart. He explained the Catholic faith in a simple, easily understandable way to the people. He had the rare combination of simplicity, clarity and depth. It is good to listen to Francis himself: "Our words must set aflame, not by shouts and unrestrained gestures, but by inward affection. They must issue from our heart rather than from our mouth. We must speak well, but heart speaks to heart, and the tongue speaks only to men's ears."[158]

Francis' style of preaching did not remain the same all the time. He modified and improved it from time to time. We see a gradual change in his preaching style during the different stages of his ministry. As a missionary in the Chablais, he focused more on the defence of the Church, the Creed and instruction in faith. He strongly defended the Catholic faith and

[158] Francis de SALES, *On the Preacher and Preaching*, translated and with an introduction and notes by John K. Ryan, Washington: Henry Regenery Company, 1964, p. 64. This was originally a long letter written by Francis de Sales to Cardinal Andre Fremyout on 5 October 1604, in reply to his request to give him guidelines on preaching. It was officially published for the first time in 1626 in the first collection of his letters. This letter appears in *AE*, XII, pp. 299-325. « Le souverain artifice c'est de n'avoir point d'artifice. Il faut que nos paroles soyent enflammees, non pas par des cris et actions desmesurees, mais par l'affection intérieure; il faut qu'elles sortent du coeur plus que de la bouche. On a beau dire, mais le coeur parle au coeur, et la langue ne parle qu'aux oreilles ». p. 321. For the German version, see *DA*, 12, pp. 29-49. „Unsere Worte müssen entflammt sein, nicht durch Schreie und maßlose Aktionen, sondern von innerem Feuer; sie müssen mehr von Herzen kommen als aus dem Mund. Man hat gut reden, aber das Herz spricht zum Herzen, die Zunge spricht nur zu den Ohren." p. 46.

refuted the errors spread by the Protestants on the Eucharist and other sacraments. His preaching was also theologically based.[159]

Francis de Sales believed in the power of the spoken word. He said, "Words are alive on your lips, on paper they are dead."[160] He confronted the Protestant ministers and challenged them to discussions. In his preaching and discussions, Francis focused on the Scripture and simplified it, which the Protestants often could not do.[161] As bishop, his preaching became more fatherly, based more on the love of God and the human response to it. It also dealt with themes like the call to holiness, preparing for various holy seasons, etc.[162]

2.3.2.5.2. His Objectives in Preaching

What should be the objectives of preaching, in the opinion of Francis de Sales? Should preaching be used to show off one's knowledge? Or should it be used to fill people with fear of hell, punishment and eternal damnation? His understanding of preaching differed greatly from the popular notion of preaching prevalent at that time. For Francis, some of the main goals of preaching should be the following:

- *To defend the faith and Catholic doctrines against Protestant onslaught*. This has to be seen in the context of the Reformation when the Catholic faith and teachings were vehemently attacked by the Protestants. In order to defend the faith, Francis says, the preacher should use solid arguments to establish the faith and to refute Protestant claims.
- *To explain the faith in simple and correct manner to ordinary people*. Preaching should not be meant only for the learned and the intellectuals. More than for the learned, the simple people need preaching, and it should be done in a manner, style and language understandable to them.
- *Another objective of preaching should be the communication of God' love for humanity*. The preacher should try to bring out the intensity, depth and the extent of God's love. The deep awareness of God's love for humanity and our love for Him should induce a change of heart in the listener.
- Finally, the ultimate goal of preaching should be the *conversion of heart* in the listener.[163]

Lajeunie comments on his style of preaching: "Here we see a ray of the classical style breaking through in his text. From these beginnings, Francis de Sales, with his touching account, speaking from heart to heart with his straightforward art, his radiant clear

[159] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 169.
[160] As quoted by LAJEUNIE, Ibid., p. 199.
[161] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 200.
[162] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 2, pp. 54-56.
[163] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 166-170. [One should, however, take into consideration that this opinion of Francis de Sales given here is mainly influenced by his missionary work in the Chablais].

thinking, suffused with the warmth of his love, awakened in his little corner of Savoy a militant fervour which we must watch as it spread over the countryside."[164]

2.3.2.5.3 Personal Contact as Prelude and Postlude to Preaching

When Francis was in the Chablais, he used his personal contact and his loving approach to attract people to his preaching. Francis used gentle persuasion as his method to move people. He established contacts with a few elite, educated, relapsed Catholics. They came to listen to his preaching. Francis believed that they were capable of spreading the message effectively.

In the beginning, he preached rather aggressively and enthusiastically, attacking the Protestants and trying to disprove them. Gradually he changed his style and became milder in his use of language and focused more on using persuasive language. He focused himself on the Catholic faith and the explanation and validity of the same. His persuasive use of language is also equally noticeable in his letters.[165] Although he boldly defended the Catholic faith and courageously espoused the position of the Church, he avoided offending others. So, gradually even the Protestants began flocking to his sermons. Through his preaching he tried to remove their prejudices against Catholic priests ('papist priests'). He understood that preaching was the best tool to clear their doubts and misunderstanding and to explain the faith in the simplest way through comparisons and practical application in the language of the ordinary man.[166]

His Lenten sermons in Paris in 1602 had made a great impact on the people there. The King wanted to hear him, and at his request Francis preached before him.[167] He was instantly acknowledged as a good preacher. In the following years also he preached in Savoy and many different parts of France.[168] His preaching moved hearts, and people wanted to place themselves under his direction. Many people who listened to his preaching

[164] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p.170.
[165] Cf. Elisabeth STOPP, in the 'Introduction' to the book, *St Francis de Sales*: *Selected Letters*, (2nd ed.), Stella Niagra: De Sales Resource Center, 2011, p.19. Stopp speaks of Francis' persuasive style here: "He wrote trenchantly, confidently, neatly rounding off the clear statement of the profoundest truths with all energy needed for polemics, but always charitably, already showing that secret gift of persuasion which characterizes all his later work and most especially his letters." p. 19.
[166] Cf. Benedict MACKEY, *St Francis de Sales as Preacher: A Study*, translated from French by Thomas F. DAILEY, Bangalore: Indian Institute of Spirituality, 1993, p. 29.
[167] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p. 432.
[168] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 2, pp. 416-417, 495-497.

were moved by it and sought his guidance. His Lenten sermons in Dijon in 1604 had impressed many, and some of them would later seek his spiritual guidance.[169]

2.3.2.5.4 'Preaching as a Bishop's Principal Duty'

Francis de Sales believed it was the duty of all ordained ministers to preach, each according to his capacity and knowledge. He was convinced that a bishop is duty-bound to preach. He said, "To preach is a bishop's principal duty."[170] Lajeunie speaks of his preaching as bishop: "The bishop returned from these apostolic journeys confirmed in his idea that evangelical perfection is accessible to the people, that no one is excluded, that it should be preached to all, but clearly, simply, with love and by example."[171]

Many priests today are afraid to preach. They believe they do not have enough knowledge to preach. In the opinion of Francis, it is enough to have sufficient knowledge of the doctrine. Extraordinary knowledge is not required. One cannot have all the knowledge in the world and one cannot be familiar with all the doctrines. However, one should have ordinary knowledge of what one is preaching. One should have the courage and guts to begin. No one should aspire to be a great preacher overnight. One becomes a preacher by preaching.[172] It is not necessary to have all the knowledge or to know all the doctrine, but at the same time one should be humble enough to leave out the subjects one is ignorant of or incapable of dealing with.[173]

In the opinion of Francis de Sales, the real success of preaching is not to make a big show, as many thought in those days. It lies somewhere else. "When people leave the church after a sermon they should not be saying: what a fine preacher! What a wonderful memory! What a clever man! What a beautiful choice of words! On the contrary, their comments should be, how sorry I should be for my sins! How good God is, how just! And so on. The only real proof of the preacher's success a person can give, after being greatly impressed by a sermon, is the practical tribute of a better life - so that they may have life, and have it more abundantly."[174]

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[169] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 462-463.
[170] SALES, *On the Preacher and Preaching*, p. 23.
[171] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 496-497.
[172] Cf. SALES, *On the Preacher and Preaching*, p. 24.
[173] Cf. Ibid.
[174] As quoted by Vincent KERNS, *Pulpit and Pew. A Study in Salesian Preaching*, Visakhapatnam: SFS Publications, 1976, p. 40. (See also LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 164-170).

2.3.2.5.5 Preaching in Paris

In 1618, when he was in Paris with Cardinal Maurice at the behest of the duke for a diplomatic mission with King Louis XIII of France, he was asked by the Oratorians to preach on the feast of St Martin in their church. Francis took up the offer. He had already established himself as a preacher. The king, queen, the court, bishops, scholars and other prominent persons in the city came to hear him preach in the church of the Oratory. Vincent de Paul was among them. He was impressed by his preaching and he expressed it, too: "The servant of God's fervor shone forth in his intimate familiar talks. Those who listened to him appeared to hang on his lips. He knew how to adapt to the capacities of each and every one and regarded himself as under an obligation to all… as I thought this over my mind, I felt such admiration, that I felt to see in him the man who the best ever represented the Son of God living on earth."[175]

Vincent de Paul was much edified and struck by the kindness and goodness of the Bishop of Geneva. He says, "… we felt him overflowing with love for God and men; this love was felt in the hearts of those listening to him and they all spoke of 'their intense joy' … I kept saying to myself: How great is God's goodness! O Lord, how good you are! God, how good you are, since Bishop Francis de Sales, your creature, is himself so filled with love."[176]

Through his preaching he was also able to convert some Protestants. More than his preaching and oratorical skills, what moved the hearts of the people was his character and saintliness. Some called him a saint. A number of people prized his things as relics. People could see that Francis de Sales imitated Christ so closely in his life. During his stay in Paris he also held conferences for the clergy which were successful and were of great importance for the renewal of the clergy. Although it was meant for the clergy in the parish ministry, many others like abbots, religious and doctors were present.[177]

Francis made abundant use of examples, similes, comparisons and imagery in his writing. He also advocated the use of comparisons, similes and imagery in preaching. He said comparisons "have an inestimable efficacy to enlighten the understanding and move the

[175] As quoted by LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. II, p. 415.
[176] As quoted by LAJEUNIE, Ibid.
[177] Cf. LAJEUNIE, Ibid., p. 417.

will."[178] This special quality of Francis de Sales is rightly appreciated and acknowledged in the Church. Pope Pius XI remarked on the preaching of Francis de Sales:

> In fact, St. Francis preached so well that his sermons were but "an exposition of the grace and power which dwelt within his own soul." His sermons, since they were largely made up of the teachings of the Bible and of the Fathers, became not only a source of sound doctrine but were agreeable and persuasive to his hearers as well by reason of the sweetness of the love which filled his heart. It is not surprising then that such a great number of heretics returned to the Church because of his work and that, following the guidance of such a teacher, so many of the faithful have, during the last three hundred years, attained a truly high degree of perfection.[179]

2.3.2.6 Writer: Power of the Written Word

Why did Pope Pius XI in 1923 declare St Francis de Sales patron of journalists and media workers? What earned Francis this title? He lived at a time when there was no mass media as we understand it today. It is because he used the written or print medium to communicate the Gospel and to defend the Church. He is one of the shining examples of persons who made use of the mass media for the ministry of the Church. His creativity and ingenuity helped Francis to respond to the needs and difficulties in life.

2.3.2.6.1 Creative Use of the Pen

It is said 'Necessity is the mother of invention.' A zealous and creative person always finds ways to reach his goal. In spite of all his efforts and loving approach, sometimes it was not possible for Francis to get people to listen to his preaching. This situation forced him to use his creative power in thinking and writing. He had already mastered French during his long years of studies. He was also adept at making use of his knowledge of French in preaching and writing. Through his study of humanism and French authors he had mastered the effective use of the language.

When the people were forbidden by the Protestant authorities to meet Francis or to talk to him, he could not sit idle in such a situation. So he had to act. Zeal for the mission and his love for the people moved him to try out new ways of communicating with them. Herbert Winklehner describes the situation in his article: "Yet all his efforts met with no success since the majority of the people hesitated to listen to him speak, let alone listen to him preach. So the idea came to him to use the newly invented printing press and the popular

[178] SALES, *On the Preacher and Preaching,* p. 50.
[179] Pope Pius XI, *Rerum Omnium Perturbationem,* encyclical of Pope Pius XI on St. Francis de Sales, 26 Jan 1923, No. 32. Through this encyclical Pope Pius XI declared St. Francis de Sales the patron of journalists and writers.

medium of pamphlets to his own purposes. If people will not come to my sermons, thought Francis, then I have to bring my sermons to the people. The pamphlets helped him do that."[180] It is contested whether he wrote them personally by hand or got them printed. Lajeunie believes they were handwritten.[181]

These short notes explaining the Catholic faith were simple in style, language and manner. This action proved effective and fruitful. Francis slid their copies under the doors of houses. He also displayed them as placards in public places. These tracts explained different aspects of the Catholic creed, proving the authenticity of the Catholic Church, defence of the Holy Cross, etc. He called them *Meditations* or *Memorial*. They were later published as *Controversies*.[182]

In a years' time he brought out 85 pamphlets which explained the doctrines of the Church and defended her in the face of virulent attack by the Protestants. Francis was using a novel method for evangelisation and getting the message across to the people. He was using a new type of mass media for evangelisation. This is the reason why in 1923 Pope Pius XI declared St Francis de Sales patron of journalists and media workers.[183]

2.3.2.6.2 Writing for a Sacred Purpose

One of the main purposes of Francis de Sales in taking up the 'flyer campaign' was to defend the Church and her faith. He used his brilliant style not only to defend the Church and her doctrine but also to expose the errors of the heretics. His explanation of the true faith and the defence of the Church done in such an elegant manner attracted the people to his sermons.[184] To quote Pope Pius XI again: "In truth, the many explanations of doctrine and the arguments which he has marshalled in orderly array, are worthy of all praise. With these arguments, to which must be added a subtle and polished irony that characterizes his controversial manner, he easily met his adversaries and defeated all their lies and fallacies."[185]

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[180] Herbert WINKLEHNER, *St Francis de Sales: The Patron of Journalists*, translated from German by Eugene KELLY and edited by Thomas DAILEY, (originally published in the 2003 Volume of the magazine *Das Licht*, Eichsätt: Franz Sales Verlag. Published in English by the Salesian Center, Niagara), p. 3.
[181] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Francis de Sales*, Vol. I, pp. 202-203.
[182] Already referred to in this work; for details see the footnotes under section 2.3.1.3.
[183] Cf. Pope Pius XI, *Rerum Omnium Perturbationem,* Nos. 22-23.
[184] Cf. WINKLEHNER, *St Francis de Sales: The Patron of Journalists,* pp. 3-4.
[185] Pope Pius XI, *Rerum Omnium Perturbationem,* No. 24.

Pope Pius XI also found in the *Controversies* a demonstration and defence of the Catholic faith. He says in his Apostolic Letter, "*Controversies*, in which unquestionably there is to be found a full and complete demonstration of the truth of the Catholic religion."[186]

2.3.2.6.3 His Style and Language

Francis had a talent for writing. Elisabeth Stopp who made a detailed study of his works, especially his letters, remarks, "He wrote trenchantly, confidently, neatly rounding off the clear statement of the profoundest truths with all the energy needed for polemics, but always charitably, already showing that secret gift of persuasion which characterizes all his later work and most especially his letters."[187]

This view is also supported by Winklehner who argues that Francis' writing, most especially his letters, were person-oriented and reader-oriented, taking into account the situation of each individual person:

> Not only does his language fascinate, but also Francis de Sales could almost effortlessly place himself in the shoes of those he addressed. His style varied according to who his reader was. The very same topic was handled in totally different words and examples with a cloistered nun than with the president of the parliament of Bourges or the scholarly Jesuit, Possevino. But one thing is for certain - his letters always exhibit a high degree of respect, which Francis de Sales wanted to express to each individual. The inquiry each one made, regardless of what it might be, is important to that person and therefore to him. Thus, he tried to take the matter at hand as seriously as if it were the most important thing in the world.[188]

All his works display his powerful but at the same time persuasive use of language, exuding charity and openness, wonderful use of imageries and examples from day-to-day life, simplicity of style and elegance. His language was also characterised by pleasantness. Pope Pius XI says:

> Although at times his language appears to be somewhat strong, nevertheless, as even his opponents admitted, his writings always breathe a spirit of charity which was ever the controlling motive in every controversy in which he engaged. This is so true that even when he reproached these erring children for their apostasy from the Catholic Church, it is evident that he had no other purpose in mind than to open wide the gates by which they might return to the Faith. In the *Controversies* one readily perceives that same broad-mindedness and magnanimity of soul which permeate the books he wrote with the purpose of promoting piety. Finally, his style is so elegant, so

[186] Pope Pius IX, *Apostolic Letter* on 16 Nov 1877.
[187] Elisabeth STOPP in 'Introduction' to *St. Francis de Sales: Selected Letters*, p. 19. (already quoted in this work).
[188] WINKLEHNER, *St Francis de Sales: The Patron of Journalists*, pp. 6-7.

> polished, so impressive that the heretical ministers were accustomed to warn their followers against being deceived and won over by the flatteries of the missionary from Geneva.[189]

The Pope is full of appreciation for the style of Francis de Sales. Through his dignified style Francis could move the hearts of people. "He was also accustomed to illustrate his thoughts by an almost infinite variety of metaphors, examples, and quotations taken for the most part from the Holy Scriptures, all of which gave the impression that what he wrote flowed no less from his heart and the depths of his being than from his intellect….He wrote at all times in a dignified but facile style, varied now and then by a marvellous acuteness in thought and grace of expression, and by reason of these qualities his writings have proven themselves quite agreeable reading…"[190] Pope Paul VI also praises the style of Francis de Sales in his writings:

> Even more than the art of dialogue, he had a remarkable talent for writing. The books which he wrote are marked with an authentic wealth of doctrine, a profundity of thought, a natural beauty adorned with grace! That which he treats proceeds with measure: he pleases, instructs, moves in the highest degree. When he writes, the reader has but one fear, as did the listener when he was preaching; it is that he will finish much too soon. …[191]

Francis composed the *Controversies* at a relatively young age and in a situation where he had no access to a library or to many books of reference. As a young priest he proved that he had a talent for writing.[192] Lajeunie believes that given a choice, Francis would have preferred writing books to administering his diocese. Writing was a ministry close to the heart of Francis de Sales.[193]

2.3.2.7 The Power of Personal Touch

Another important characteristic of Francis' ministry was his personal touch which he established and maintained with people. The success of his mission in the Chablais was also due to the personal contacts he established with people. It might be important to consider this point as it forms a central part of the Salesian approach to mission and ministry. To work in a foreign and unfriendly atmosphere was not easy for the young missionaries Francis and his cousin Louis. To get access to the people, who were forbidden to meet them, was a daunting task.

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[189] Pope Pius XI, *Rerum Omnium Perturbationem***,** No. 25.
[190] Ibid**.,** Nos. 12, 15.
[191] Pope Paul VI, *Sabaudiae gemma*, Apostolic Letter on the 400th Anniversary of the Birth of St Francis de Sales on 29 January 1967, translated by Neil KILTY, The Salesian Centre for Faith and Culture.
[192]Cf. WINKLEHNER, *St Francis de Sales: The Patron of Journalists.*
[193] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Francis de Sales*, Vol. II, p. 445.

He tried to establish personal contact with people as the first stage of ministry. Francis, undeterred by the difficult and hostile atmosphere, went around on foot and lost no chance to meet with people. He lovingly encountered and got into conversation with them.[194] He walked through the streets and tried to create personal contact with people. It was difficult for the people to resist Francis. His gentleness and pleasing manners attracted people to him. They found it difficult to turn away from his compelling personal characteristics like gentleness, warmth and empathy. Francis knew well the magnetic power of these human qualities. Those who came to him and got to know him, found him irresistibly personal and welcoming. Francis also employed these qualities generously in his guidance of souls and encouraged everyone to acquire them.[195]

Having established personal contacts, it was easy for Francis to invite them to come to his preaching and liturgical services. His fervour and interiority radiated warmth. Radiation of this warmth and gentleness had a purpose – to win their souls. His extreme gentleness attracted people to him. He was a man for all.[196] Lajeunie puts it aptly: "A condition of its success depended on the spirit that the saint was able to gradually create through his personal contact; this appears to be the essential point. After their various stormy fits of anger, the Chablaisians never forgot this Salesian spirit; this spirit would remain in their memories, a consolation and an enlightenment."[197]

2.3.2.7.1 Francis: A Person with a Healing Touch

In considering the personality of Francis de Sales, one of the striking things that comes to the fore is his healing touch. Looking at his personality, one could say he had all the qualities required of a personal counsellor or psychotherapist. Francis de Sales, even in an inimical territory, was a pleasant person to deal with. The person and manners of Francis were appealing and irresistible. In the person-centred approach of counselling empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard are considered pillars of the therapeutic process. These qualities can be clearly seen in Francis. In his dealings with people, he did not have any prejudice or pre-judgement. He had no malice towards anyone; he exuded cheerfulness and positive energy. He was also an extremely welcoming person. His

[194] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Francis de Sales*, Vol.1, pp. 194-195.
[195] Many chapters in *Introduction* (IDL) are devoted to the acquisition of these qualities. See, for example, Part 3, Chapters 1-9. (See also Devasia MANALEL, *Spiritual Direction: A Methodology*, Bangalore: SFS, 2005, pp. 300-305).
[196] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p.198.
[197] LAJEUNIE, Ibid., p. 194.

pleasantness would help people to calm down. Mookenthottam says, "The pleasant, peaceful and cheerful manners of Francis calmed the people."[198]

Even the Protestant ministers, who were opposed to him, were impressed by his gentleness and manners. He wanted to contact them and discuss with them matters of faith. He was "an enemy of their error but a friend of their persons."[199] Some of the testimonies about Francis de Sales throw more light on this topic. Lajeunie quotes one of them: "With his extreme gentleness and condescension, he encouraged the humblest to address him… and was approachable for them as for the highest in rank."[200]

Another testimony shows how he was one among his people and how he shared their lives. It tells he was able to identify himself with the people. Lajeunie notes: "He would talk to anybody, show interest in their work, health, sorrows and joys of all." He adds, "He was among them but remained discreet; he knew how to bide his time, never insisted inconsiderately, nor "made game" of anybody. Thus, day by day, he slowly won over "those good people's" affection; he enticed all sorts of persons to talk over points of religion with him; he began to be "relied upon"; everybody, "noblemen, commoners, working people" commenced loving him."[201]

2.3.2.7.2 Pastor among His Folk

The success of the Chablais mission, as seen already, could also be partially attributed to the approach of Francis de Sales. His gentle and loving manners and personal approach played a great role. He endeared himself to the people. His dedicated service there would earn him the title, the *Apostle of the Chablais*.[202] Francis knew well that without getting to know the people and having personal contact with them, he could not be effective. In fact, he was there only for that purpose - to get in touch with them, to care for them, to bring them back to the Church. To fulfil this great challenge he had to imitate Jesus who went on foot on the way in Galilee and Judea:

> Francis had only one unique model in his apostolate by personal contact: Jesus travelling the countries of Galilee and Judea; not only did he carry him in his heart, he kept him in his head; he took inspiration from his gentleness, his kindness, his forthright speech, his loyalty; so, first and foremost, Francis

[198] MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: Formative Biography*, p.136.
[199] Ibid., p. 143.
[200] As quoted by LAJEUNIE, *Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p.198.
[201] As quoted by LAJEUNIE, Ibid.
[202] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage & Saint*, p. 91. (See also LAJEUNIE, *Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, pp. 320-321, 339-340).

> was the perfect courteous gentleman; his object was to do good even to the neglect of his advantage. On principle, he usually travelled on foot; walking enabled him to meet artisans near their shops and peasants on the way to their fields. Thus, a basic relation from man to man could be established; he wished to be one man among other men and to offer to all a pleasant and friendly attitude. Slowly but surely, he will make them love him and thus breach the wall that his opponents had tried to build around him. His secret lay in multiplying relations with people after the first established contact. One sympathetic ear would bring along another and each new friend spread his influence abroad.[203]

Such was the way the saint found his way into the hearts of people. The approach, but in a more intensive way, will be treated later in this work. In the latter part of this work, efforts will also be made to see the similarities between the approach of Francis de Sales and that of modern person-centred psychotherapy. Interestingly, one finds many similarities between the two.

2.4 Two Important Meetings

There are two important meetings in the life of Francis de Sales which changed the course of his life. One was in Rome and the other in Paris. These two meetings also speak of his person, his personal attractiveness and how he was appreciated and loved even by the Pope and the King. Francis won the hearts not only of peasants and ordinary folk but also of nobles, royals, the highest ecclesiastical authorities in Rome and even of the Pope.

2.4.1 Francis in Rome: Meeting with the Pope and the Examination

In 1597, the health of Bishop de Granier of Geneva deteriorated and he was thinking of making Francis the co-adjutor bishop. It was also the desire of the Duke. The bishop could not take up his *ad limina* visit to Rome and he wanted to send Francis instead as his representative. In November 1597, when Francis was about to leave for Rome, he fell seriously ill and could not take up the journey. He left for Rome only in November 1598. Pope Clement VIII gave him audience after Christmas.[204]

In Rome, Francis was also examined on 22 March 1599 for nomination to the bishopric. It was already clear that Bishop de Granier was looking for a successor in Francis. Francis did outstandingly well in the examination by answering brilliantly all the questions put to

[203] LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. 1, p.194.
[204] See The biographical sketch of St Francis de Sales in *IDL*, p. 5.

him by the learned men of the day, which included Cardinal Frederic Borromeo, Cardinal Robert Bellarmine (later Saint and Doctor of the Church) Baronius and Borghese. The Pope was so overawed by his answers that at the end of the examination he came down and embraced Francis to show his appreciation and admiration.[205]

Three days later, on 25 March, he assisted at the Mass of the Pope, which was a special privilege and a sign of appreciation and acceptance. Lajeunie speaks of a mystical experience which Francis had during the Mass.[206]

As things were slowly appearing better, a war broke out between France and Savoy in August 1600. Savoy was invaded by France. Savoy became a vassal of the King of France. The bishop and the coadjutor were now subjects of the king. It was a delicate situation for Francis and the whole diocese. The situation in the Chablais caused great concern to the Bishop and Francis. Chablais was overrun by the army of King Henry IV. They feared that Protestantism would return to the Chablais. The commanders stationed there were predominantly Protestant. But the King promised that Catholicism would be protected. In spite of the war and atrocities by the soldiers, most of the converts remained faithful.[207] After Lent in 1601, Francis returned to the Chablais mission. In spite of war and occupation, conversion to Catholicism continued in the Chablais.

2.4.2 Francis in Paris: with the King

In 1602, Francis was sent on a diplomatic mission by Bishop Granier to meet King Henry IV concerning some ecclesiastical matters. Francis' stay in Paris was a turning point in his life. He was returning to Paris after fourteen years. He reached Paris on 22 January 1602. He was astonished by the changes that had taken place in these years. The College of Clermont, where he had studied, was now closed for good. He met the Nuncio. One of the main intentions of Francis was to get revenues to re-establish parishes in Gex, a part of the Geneva diocese. His mission was a failure. He was even accused of treason and taken to the king. But the king realising his innocence let him go free.[208]

The king came to know of Francis' work in Paris and was greatly pleased. Francis preached before the king on 14 April 1602. He was deeply impressed and wanted to keep

[205] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol.1, p. 358.
[206] Cf. Ibid., p. 363.
[207] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, pp. 162-163.
[208] Cf. Ibid., pp. 166-167.

Francis in Paris. He even offered to make him the Archbishop of Paris when the see fell vacant. But Francis was not willing to leave his poor diocese in Geneva. Years later, in 1608 the Archbishopric of Paris was once again offered to Francis who replied that he was ready to obey the king only if Pope Paul V had wished it.[209] The king held Francis in high esteem. It is said that the king spoke of the coadjutor as "the Phoenix of Bishop" or again "as a rare bird on this earth."[210]

In the opinion of Ravier, there were many common qualities between Francis and the King: "The two men had certain qualities in common: finesse, wit, good common sense that went right to the essentials, a 'round simplicity' and a certain charm that no one could resist… only they made different uses of these shared qualities."[211] During his stay there, he met the king many times, made a profound impression on him and the court but his mission did not bear the expected fruit. Francis returned from Paris apparently without success but with plenty of success on several other fronts.

2.5 Rise to Fame in Paris as Preacher and Spiritual Guide

Francis had to remain in Paris for many months, much longer than expected. Although his diplomatic mission in Paris had failed, he was greatly successful on another front - preaching. As a preacher, Francis became instantly successful. His preaching converted many people and helped him to establish contact with influential people.

Francis' fame as preacher spread instantly. During his stay in Paris he was much sought after by the people there. Meanwhile, he got the opportunity to interact with a group of people whom he had pastorally helped. It was a group of learned and saintly people who met in the house of Madam Acarie, wife of a magistrate. This was a group of intellectuals with a mystical tendency. Francis associated often with this group. It is also likely that he helped and guided them in spiritual matters. During this time he also developed friendship with Madam Acarie. She was a spiritual woman with mystical experiences. She wanted to take Francis as her spiritual director. Francis wanted to be only her confessor as she already had a spiritual director. The Acarie circle had a profound influence on Francis. His

[209] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p.178.
[210] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage & Saint*, p. 112. (For more details see, pp. 108-116).
[211] Ibid.

experience in this spiritual circle also proved enrichment for Francis.[212] On his return to Annecy, he received the sad news that Mgr. de Granier had passed away. In November 1602, Francis received the papal bull of his nomination as Bishop and on 8 December 1602, he was consecrated Bishop of Geneva in the church of Thorens. In spite of his busy life and activities, Francis always led a life of prayer and maintained a spirit of contemplation. He was firmly convinced that the spiritual basis of life should not be shattered by the ups and downs of life.

Concluding Remarks

The life and work of Francis de Sales is a great inspiration for missionaries all over the world. Francis shows through his own work what approaches are needed, what steps could bring fruit, how to get along in an inimical atmosphere. His missionary spirit has inspired many founders of religious orders. Fr Peter Marie Mermier, founder of the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales (MSFS) is one of them. While starting a missionary, religious congregation, he stated that the missionaries should be imbued with the spirit, approach and spirituality of St Francis de Sales. The constitutions of the MSFS says: "Our Founder, Father Peter Mermier, was inspired by the missionary zeal of St Francis de Sales, the great Apostle of the Chablais and a great master of the spiritual life."[213]

If one looks critically at the ministry of the Church today, one notices that an all-pervasive 'impersonalism' has crept into her. Ministry, administration of the Church, and care of souls have frequently become business-like and devoid of compassion or gentleness. Does it have the power to attract or to appeal to the hearts of the people? There seems to be an urgent need for the personal formation of the clergy and all who are in pastoral care. Pastors today need to acquire and develop necessary qualities which help them to be with and to identify themselves with the faithful. Pastoral ministry in our millennium requires that pastors sense the "odour of the sheep"[214] as Pope Francis says. Some of the qualities shown by Francis de Sales in his pastoral work are useful, nay, indispensable for ministry in today's world.

[212] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, St *Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, pp. 174-176. Regarding Madam Acarie, she persevered in her intense spiritual life. After the death of her husband, she joined the Carmelite Order as a lay sister. Her own three daughters entered the same Order. She was also instrumental in bringing the Discalced Carmelite Order to France.

[213] *Constitutions of the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales* (MSFS - Fransalians), Rome: 2007, No. 5.

[214] Pope Francis, Chrism Mass homily on Holy Thursday, 28 March 2013. Benno ELBS, Bishop of Feldkirch (Austria) has dealt with this topic in detail in his well-known book, *Im Stallgeruch der Schafe. Wege Pastoraler Arbeit im 3 Jahrtausend*, (roughly - non-literal - translated, '*Having the Odour of the Sheep: Ways of Pastoral Ministry in the Third Millennium*'), Vienna: Styria Premium, 2014.

CHAPTER 3

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION IN SALESIAN TRADITION

Introduction

There is no denying that St Francis de Sales is one of the best known spiritual directors in the history of the Catholic Church. Francis, as a guide and spiritual director, has been an inspiration to many, even to Popes. In the words of Pope Pius IX:

> Our predecessor Clement IX, of holy memory, regarded Francis' teaching to be of such value that, before he was Pope, he said that de Sales through his celebrated writings had fashioned a kind of holy arsenal for the benefit of souls and, after he became Pope, he approved this antiphon in Francis' honor: 'Our Lord filled Saint Francis with the Spirit of understanding, and Francis supplied an abundance of teaching for God's people.' Benedict XIV, of holy memory, in agreement with his predecessors, hastened to affirm that the works of the Genevan Prelate had been written with a divinely acquired knowledge. Relying on the authority of Francis, he resolved many difficult questions and called Francis '*the wisest guide of souls.*'"[1]

Pope Benedict XVI said in one of his audiences dedicated to St Francis de Sales, "Yet above all, St Francis de Sales was a director: from his encounter with a young woman, Madame de Charmoisy, he was to draw the inspiration to write one of the most widely read books of the modern age, *An Introduction to the Devout Life.*"[2]

As already seen in the previous chapter, Francis de Sales was an exceptional pastor imbued with the Spirit of Jesus. That chapter also dealt with his person-oriented and salutary way of working among his folk. This chapter deals specifically with his spiritual direction - the underlying ideas, his philosophy and understanding of human beings, his method and approach and the specific characteristics of the Salesian approach. To understand his method of spiritual direction well, it is important to look at spiritual direction in the tradition of the Church.

[1] Pope Pius IX, *Dives in Misericordia Deus*. Emphasis mine.
[2] Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience on 2 March 2011. *An Introduction to the Devout Life* (*Philothea*) is the most widely read spiritual classic of Francis de Sales. It has been translated into many languages and has constantly been in the best-seller list of Christian Literature.

3.1 Spiritual Direction in the Tradition of the Church

Recent decades have shown a growing interest in spirituality and spiritual direction. The period has witnessed an integration of spirituality into professional psychology and vice versa.[3] Many books on spiritual direction have been published. Empirical researches have been done on its efficacy as well as drawbacks.[4] There have been institutes and associations set up to train people for spiritual direction. One such classical association is Spiritual Directors International (SDI).[5] Numerous journals in this field bear testimony to this fact.[6]

3.1.1 What is Spiritual Direction?

Spiritual direction deals with the mystery of the love-relationship between God and man. It is basically an interpersonal relationship in which one person assists another to develop and come to greater maturity in the life of the Spirit, that is, the life of faith, hope, and love. It is an interpersonal relationship with a 'triangular dimension' in which a person (the directee[7]) assisted by another (the director) tries to discern and follow the will of God. It has a triangular dimension because three persons are involved – directee, director and the Spirit (God). The essential method of spiritual direction is conversation. The main tasks of spiritual direction are outlined as follows: to help the individual discern the will of God, to have self-knowledge and self-acceptance, to help one to detach from one's ego and to follow the will of God.[8]

Pope Francis in his address to the religious in May 2015 stressed the need for for spiritual direction. He also emphasized that it a ministry open to the laity. He makes it clear that the

[3] Cf. Gary W. MOON, *Introduction to Special Issue on Spiritual Direction: Part One*, in *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, Vol. 30, No. 4, 2002, CA, USA: Biola University, pp. 261-263.

[4] Cf. Hermann –JOSEF WAGENER / Klaus KIEßLING, *Empirischer Zugang zu Geistlicher Begleitung. Erste Ergebnissequalitätiver Forschung*, (roughly translated, *Empirical Approach to Spiritual Direction. The First Results of a Qualitative Research*) in *Wege zum Menschen* (WzM), No. 60, 2008, Göttingen: Vadenhoeck & Ruprecht (V&R unipress), pp. 323-333. This empirical study of spiritual directors has emphasized the need for pastoral psychological insights for spiritual direction.

[5] See for details: http://www.sdiworld.org/

[6] Cf. Janet K. RUFFING, *Recent Literature and Emerging Issues in the Ministry of Spiritual Direction*, in *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 2001, pp. 99-107, published by John Hopkins University, p. 99.

[7] I use the word 'directee' in this work to refer to one who receives guidance in spiritual direction, for lack of a better word. Terms like 'client,' or 'counselee' have different connotations and may lead to misunderstanding. Sometimes the word 'spiritual child' is used, if the context requires it.

[8] Cf. Ephrem NARICULAM, *Spiritual Direction and Formation: A Pneumo-Psychic Approach*, in *Indian Journal of Spirituality* (IJS), Vol. XVI, No. 3, (336-379), 2003, p. 339. IJS is published by Indian Institute of Spirituality (IIS), Bangalore-10.

charism of spiritual direction is not limited to the clergy or the religious. He believes that it is primarily charism of lay people. men and women, religious and non-religious: " 'But it is a charism of lay people.!' Spiritual direction is not an exclusive charism of the presbytery: it's a charism of the laity! In early monasticism lay people were the great directors."[9] Pope Francis also reminds the superiors that have the obligation to get sufficient people trained in this field:

> When the superiors see that a man or woman in that congregation or that province has that charism of a spiritual father, they must try to help them to be formed, to perform this service. It is not easy. … The superiors have the responsibility of looking, in the community, in the congregation, in the province, for those who have this charism, to give this mission and form them, help them with this. To accompany on the path is to go step by step with the consecrated brother or sister.[10]

3.1.1.1 Some Contemporary Definitions

Sandra Schneiders gives a simple, direct and contemporary definition: "Spiritual direction could be defined as a process carried out in the context of a one-to-one relationship in which a competent guide helps a fellow Christian to grow in spiritual life by means of personal encounters that have the directee's spiritual growth as their explicit object."[11]

In the words of Poulose Mangai, "The goal of spiritual direction is to help one to find God in one's life and respond to that presence with one's whole being. Spiritual direction also helps one to discover the vocation of one's life in the plan of God. It deepens one's relationship with God and ultimately leads one to find rest in God."[12] Writing specifically about spiritual direction in the Roman Catholic tradition, Gene Barrette defines spiritual direction, "… as the help or guidance that a person (directee) seeks and another (director) gives over a period of time in the process of growing in a relationship with God. This process unfolds under the continual impulse, inspiration, and action of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual direction, therefore, involves three persons: the directee, the director and the Holy Spirit."[13]

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[9] Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to Consecrated Men and Women of the Diocese of Rome, in Rome on 16 May 2015. https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/may/documents/papa-francesco_20150516_religiosi-roma.html (11.1. 2016)

[10] Ibid.

[11] Sandra SCHNEIDERS, *The Contemporary Ministry of Spiritual Direction*, in Kevin G. CULLIGAN (Ed.), *Spiritual Direction: Contemporary Readings*, Locust Valley, NY: Living Flame Press, 1983, (41-56), p. 46.

[12] Poulose MANGAI, *Spiritual Direction: Lights from the Early Church - Part 1*, in *IJS*, Vol. XVI, No. 4, (422-454), 2003, p. 424.

[13] Gene BARRETTE, *Spiritual Direction in the Roman Catholic Tradition*, in *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 2002, Vol. 30. 4, (290-302), p. 290.

He says further that in the Catholic tradition, spiritual direction takes place in the context of the tradition of the Church and of the sacraments. It is also a relational process which involves a deeper discernment of the will of God and a greater openness to the Spirit. "Christian spiritual direction becomes specifically Roman Catholic when done within the context of the Catholic Church's understanding of Scripture, is connected to its sacraments, and is aware of the teaching and guidelines that have protected and fostered a variety of spiritualities over the centuries of the Church's history."[14] He also emphasizes the relational nature of spiritual direction. "Spiritual direction is a relational process in which the director and directee develop attentiveness to the action of the Holy Spirit in the person seeking direction."[15]

Barry and Connolly's definition of spiritual direction lays emphasis on the relationship with God and living out this relationship with all its consequences. Since living out this relationship is not always easy, a person requires help on his way: "We define Christian spiritual direction, then, as help given by one believer to another that enables the latter to pay attention to God's personal communication to him or her, to respond to this personally communicating God, to grow in intimacy with this God, and to live out the consequences of the relationship."[16]

God is always present in spiritual direction. He is the third 'invisible' person in such a relationship. The relationship between the director and directee is oriented to and focused on God. Barry and Connolly also consider the relationship with God the core of spiritual direction: "For us, spiritual direction is concerned with helping a person directly with his or her relationship with God. It may well be that in each of the human problems mentioned earlier the most fundamental issue is that relationship and its underlying questions: 'Who is God for me, and who am I for God?' "[17]

3.1.1.2 Spiritual Direction and Pastoral Counselling

There have been numerous instances of misunderstanding and confusion between spiritual direction and pastoral counselling. Although the two are related, they are not the same. Spiritual direction has an entirely spiritual character and may or may not use psychological insights. Pastoral counselling, on the other hand, as the term indicates, tends to apply the

[14] BARRETTE, *Spiritual Direction in the Roman Catholic Tradition*, p. 290.
[15] Ibid.
[16] William A. BARRY / William J. CONNOLLY, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, (2nd ed.), Harper Collins e-books (Kindle), 2014, p. 8.
[17] BARRY / CONNOLLY, Ibid., p. 5.

insights, know-how and methods of psychology and psychotherapy. Some approaches are more psychological, and others less so. Spiritual direction is to be differentiated from pastoral counselling and spiritual counselling. Carolyn Gratton makes a difference between spiritual counselling and spiritual direction:

> These guides (with listening hearts) attempt to make connections between an ultimate direction or 'flow of all that is' and the concrete life circumstances of both themselves and the people who seek them out. If spiritual counselling is the goal, they focus on the longing human spirit as it struggles for meaning in its personal life field. If, however, spiritual *direction* is sought, they aim further at awakening the heart to participation in the Mystery's self-communication within the guidelines laid down by specific revealed tradition. Thus spiritual direction in any place or time is always nuanced by cultural differences as well as by potential variety of faith and form traditions.[18]

In my approach I see spiritual direction as a relationship that exists between two persons in a pastoral context - one seeking help and the other helping - with a view to discerning God's will and leading a fuller Christian life. The directee who seeks help and the director who offers to help him and the God-centredness of the whole process are integral elements of this relationship. In the Catholic context, spiritual direction is concerned with helping the directee in his/her relationship with God. That is one of the ultimate goals of spiritual direction.[19]

3.1.2 A Short History of Spiritual Direction in the Catholic Church

Spiritual direction is not anything new in the history of the Church. It has been an integral part of the ministry of the Church over the centuries. Authors like Erasto Fernandes and Carolyn Gratton are of the opinion that the source of spiritual direction can be traced back to the ministry of Jesus who is presented as a guide, mentor and counsellor in the New Testament, especially in the Gospel of John.[20] One could even consider Jesus as a spiritual director. No doubt, Jesus, with his deep insight into and a great understanding of human nature, could help a large number of people. To encounter people, to listen to them with empathy, to show them concern and love and to help them with his kind words filled with understanding and consolation was integral to the ministry of Jesus. Jesus' ministry was

[18] Carolyn GRATTON, *Spiritual Direction*, in Michael DOWNEY (Ed.), *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1993, (911-916), p. 912. Emphasis in the original.
[19] Cf. BARRY / CONNOLLY, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, pp.1-12.
[20] Cf. Erasto FERNANDES, *Spiritual Direction or Pastoral Counselling or both?* in *IJS*, XIV, No. 4, 2001, pp. 392-418.

God-centred and he led people to God and helped them experience God's love, kindness, mercy and healing touch. No one who approached Jesus with an open heart or sought his help and intervention was ever turned down. Jesus gave a new lease of life and a new approach to all who approached him with openness. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that Jesus, the 'Wonderful Counsellor' of God,[21] is the best model of spiritual direction. All other spiritual directors can only be imitators of Jesus. Jesus' dialogue with Nicodemus[22] at night trying to explain to him the need for being born again is a classic example of spiritual direction.

Barrette claims that spiritual direction is largely biblical and based on the ministry of Jesus and the New Testament writings especially the pastoral letters of Paul and the writings of John.[23] This view has been supported by several other authors, too. Christian spiritual direction takes its origin from the Hebrew Scripture and the ministry of Jesus and the Apostles. It took diversified forms in the fourth century through the Desert Fathers and Desert Mothers. From the sixth century, it underwent many changes.[24] In the history of the Church, the first concrete examples of spiritual direction after the time of Jesus can be traced back to the time of the Desert Fathers and Desert Mothers. Numerous people faced with the problems of faith, daily life, and personal crisis sought the guidance and advice of these holy men and women.[25] Regina Bäumer and Michael Plattig argue that in the desert fathers and desert mothers of early Christianity, we find the earliest form of systematic spiritual direction.[26]

Of the early Church Fathers, Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine were considered great spiritual directors.[27] From the sixth century to the 13th century, the guidance of souls was exercised mostly within the Sacrament of Penance; but during this period the Dominicans,

[21] Cf. Isa 9: 6.
[22] Cf. Jn 3:1-12.
[23] Cf. BARRETTE, *Spiritual Direction in the Roman Catholic Tradition*, p. 291.
[24] Cf. GRATTON, *Spiritual Direction*, p. 912.
[25] Cf. Michael PLATTIG, *Sag mir ein Wort, wie ich gerettet werden kann. Ursprung und Entwicklung geistlicher Begleitung- eine ‚Grobskizze'* in, *Da kam Jesus hinzu..... (Lk 24:15). Handreichung für geistliche Begleitung auf dem Glaubensweg*, Bonn: Secretariate der Deutschen Bischofskonference, 2001, (25-47). Here p. 25.
[26] Regina BÄUMER / Michael PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele. Geistliche Begleitung in der Zeit der Wüstenväter und der personzentrierte Ansatz nach Carl R. Rogers – eine Seelenverwandtschaft?!*, Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 2012 Edition. p.10. (There is an in-depth treatment of the subject matter in the following pages of the book).
[27] Cf. MANGAI, *Spiritual Direction*, in *IJS* XVI, pp. 394-395.

the Rhineland mystics and great saints like Anselm, Catherine of Siena, Bernard of Clairvaux and Bonaventure practised extra-sacramental direction.[28]

In the Middle Ages, the role of the spiritual director was often brought into question. St John of the Cross (1542-1591) stressed that it was the Holy Spirit who moved the hearts of the people, and the spiritual director was only a signpost or guide who showed the way. He said this because many spiritual directors, mostly priests, were imposing their own ideas and views on the directees. He strongly warned them against standing in the way of the working of the Spirit.[29] One could even say that he already practised a form of person-centred counselling, much before Carl Rogers ever thought of it!

The 17th century, after the Protestant Reformation, saw a revival of interest in spiritual direction. The faithful, especially the laity, were looking for guidance and practical suggestions which would help them in their spiritual growth. There were not many who were competent enough to help them. Feeling the need, there arose some spiritual directors who wanted to help the faithful in living out a true and authentic Christian life in their own life situations. Francis de Sales was the foremost among them. Francis, through his unique style of guiding people in all walks of life, brought about a great renewal in the practice of spiritual direction. He insisted on freedom of the spirit and took seriously into account the life situation of the person. For him, spiritual direction was a relationship of two souls based purely on human uniqueness and freedom.[30]

Another focal point after the Council of Trent was helping Christians to lead a devout life. It was indeed a reaction in line with the counter-Reformation. The focal point was to lead a life pleasing to God. The element of catechising the directee was also taken into account. These elements can also be seen in the direction of Francis de Sales.[31]

3.1.3 Spiritual Direction Today

The practice of spiritual direction underwent a period of decline in the 18-19 centuries, in the sense there was no outstanding literature or guide during this period. There has been a

[28] Cf. PLATTIG, *Sag mir ein Wort*, p. 31.
[29] Cf. Ibid.
[30] Cf. Alexander T. POCETTO, *Freedom to Love: A Close Reading of St Francis de Sales' Letter of 14 October 1604 to Jane de Chantal*, published in *Human Encounter in the Salesian Tradition*, Rome: International Commission on Salesian Studies, 2007, pp. 125-144.
[31] Cf. PLATTIG, *Sag mir ein Wort,* p. 33.

renewed interest in recent times. The influence of psychology, especially in the last two centuries, has had its own unique impact on spiritual direction.[32]

Of late, in recent decades, there has been a renewed interest in spirituality and spiritual direction. It has gained greater currency not only in Catholic circles, but also in other denominations and religions. More people from different walks of life are taking up this as a vocation and as a profession.[33]

In today's world, one cannot neglect the influence exercised by modern physical and social sciences like philosophy, psychology, sociology, etc. They have changed the worldview of human beings, especially in the last few centuries. There is a need for an integrative method and approach that incorporates anthropological, sociological and psychological discoveries and methods. That is the need of the hour.[34] People like Adrian Van Kaam, Brian Thorne and Kaus Kißling, Michael Plattig and many others have tried to integrate psychology into spirituality to develop a fresh approach to spiritual direction.[35] In his approach to spiritual direction and spiritual self-direction, Van Kaam was mostly inspired and influenced by the person-centred approach of Carl Rogers.[36]

Gene Barrette also argues for integrating the findings and insights of psychology and other social sciences into the ministry of spiritual direction and pastoral ministry, without losing the centrality of spirituality and God's word. There has to be an integrative and balanced approach:

> Today anyone working in the field of spiritual guidance and pastoral ministry is neglectful if he or she ignores the findings of psychology, just as that same person is neglectful if he or she tries to do the ministry independent of the centrality of God's word (...). Spiritual direction does build on the process of psychological development towards human maturity, but it takes the process further. The material and goal of psychotherapy is healthy relationship with self, others, and the world.[37]

3.1.3.1 Spiritual Direction as a Vocation

Being a spiritual director or directress is not something we can just learn. It involves possessing a certain charism and charisma given by God and its recognition by the person.

[32] Cf. FERNANDES, *Spiritual Direction or Pastoral Counselling or Both?,* p. 395.
[33] Cf. BARRY / CONNOLLY, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*. In the *Preface*.
[34] Cf. GRATTON, *Spiritual Direction,* p. 913.
[35] Most of these authors/psychologists mentioned here are in the line of Person-Centred Therapy (PCT).
[36] Cf. Mathew PURAYIDOM, S*piritual Self-Direction and Transcendent Formation according to Adrian Van Kaam*, Aluva, India: Greyfriars Publications, 2003, pp. xi-xviii.
[37] BARRETTE, *Spiritual Direction in the Roman Catholic Tradition*, p. 299.

Spiritual authors today believe that nobody can claim or boast of his status as a spiritual director. The reasons for which a spiritual director is approached today are many. It varies from just a spiritual talk to an intensive spiritual friendship.[38] Spiritual direction has to be seen as a vocation in the Church. It is a special call 'to stand in the place of the Lord as both a prod and a source of light'.[39]

Modern social sciences have obviously affected the way spiritual direction is imparted over the last few decades. More recent insights into the development of the human being, the psychosexual dimension of man on spiritual growth, the current insights into the interrelation of mind, body and spirit, the modern interpersonal skills, etc. offer tremendous help to spiritual directors. The complexity of the matter also forces the spiritual director to acknowledge his own boundaries and limits and to accept the fact that he is called upon to constantly update himself.[40] This view has also been confirmed by empirical research.[41]

3.1.3.2 The Demand for Spiritual Direction Today

Plattig and Bäumer are of the opinion that there is a great need for spiritual direction today. An increasing number of people in the modern world, due to stress and disorientation, are seeking the guidance of a competent spiritual guide. With the emergence of pastoral psychology, there are opportunities to get trained in this field.[42] It is true that many Catholics are still hesitant to go to a therapist whose approach is purely psychological or psychotherapeutic. Many prefer to go to someone with a Christian and spiritual orientation, who can guide them in matters of faith, too. Spiritual direction to an extent also satiates the (post-)modern man's thirst for spirituality and his search for meaning.[43]

3.1.3.3 Need for an Integrated and Eclectic Approach

Over the years, spiritual direction has taken a more Spirit-centred and person-centred turn: "Rather than being someone who wilfully makes things happen or controls another person, today's spiritual director is more likely to allow the Spirit to take the lead."[44] The present

[38] Cf. Rudolf PROKSCHI / Marianne SCHLOSSER (Eds.), *Sag mir ein Wort. Geistliche Begleitung in den Traditionen von Ost und West,* Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 2007, pp. 9-12.
[39] GRATTON, *Spiritual Direction,* p. 915.
[40] Cf. Ibid., pp. 914-915.
[41] Cf. Hermann-JOSEF WAGENER / Klaus KIEßLING, *Empirischer Zugang zu Geistlicher Begleitung. Erste Ergebnisse qualitativer Forschung* in *Wege zum Menschen* (WzM), No. 60, (2008), 323-333.
[42] Cf. BÄUMER / PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele,* pp. 222-225.
[43] Cf. Ludger-Ägidius SCHULTE, *Der Sehnsucht nach Gott ein Gesicht geben. Wozu geistliche Begleitung*? in *Vater, sag mir ein Wort*, pp. 159-175.
[44] GRATTON, *Spiritual Direction,* p. 915.

time is characterised by plurality of cultures and inter-disciplinary approach. This is also reflected in the field of spiritual direction. Due to the inter-culturality of present-day life and the use of inter-disciplinary methods, spiritual direction today has become more intercultural and eclectic.[45]

Spiritual direction, to be more effective, has to be context-specific, too. This view has been echoed by Erasto Fernandes in the context of India, and he stresses the need for a systematic approach to spiritual direction today. "An ever-increasing number of people who seek spiritual guidance due to the complexity of life, search for meaning in a confused world, stress of modern life, etc. call for a relevant, meaningful and systematic approach to spiritual direction."[46]

3.1.4 The Situation in India

Spiritual direction is a great need in the Indian pastoral context. In India people are generally and traditionally spiritual. The tradition of searching for a guru[47] in personal life is common in the Indian tradition. The spiritual orientation of people and deeply-rooted traditions accord great respect to gurus, priests and the so-called men of God. This makes spiritual direction a very important ministry in India.

India has one of the lowest rates of psychiatrist presence in the world. There is a great shortage of trained therapists and counsellors in the field. Most of those who are trained in India, unfortunately, leave for foreign shores in search of better salaries and working conditions. There is only one psychiatrist for every 400,000 persons.[48] According to a WHO report on mental health, 11.6% of all mental health cases originate in India. That is one of the highest in the world.[49] Unfortunately, this fact often goes unnoticed and neglected in a country where mental illness is still a hush-hush subject.

Due to the pressures of modern living, increasing industrialisation and urbanisation, the people of India are getting over-stressed, depressed and vulnerable to different mental disorders. Many take recourse to suicide. The southern Indian state of Kerala has the

[45] Cf. GRATTON, *Spiritual Direction*, p. 915.
[46] FERNANDES, *Spiritual Direction or Pastoral Counselling or Both?* p. 397.
[47] The Sanskrit term 'guru' (also used in almost all Indian languages) means master, teacher, etc. In the Indian Christian tradition, Jesus is sometimes treated and portrayed as 'Guru' (= master, Lord, teacher, the Wise One).
[48] Cf. Sushruth JADHAV, *Re-inventing India's Mental Health Care* in *UCL Cultural Consultation Service and International Links*. Available online at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ccs/international-activities/mental_health_care.pdf
[49] Cf. Mental Health Atlas 2011, by World Health Organisation (WHO). See p. 57.

dubious distinction of being the suicide capital of India.[50] Studies have also revealed some of the major risk factors for the high rate of suicide in the south [this could apply to whole India] are psychosocial stress and social isolation rather than psychiatric morbidity.[51] India faces a unique situation because unlike in the West, where people tend to admit mental illnesses and mental disturbances and seek help, such illnesses are frowned upon in India. It is a matter of shame and people tend to hide it, which makes it all the more difficult to seek help. But the silver lining is that many Christians and families are - unlike in the West - willing to share their problems with a priest. That makes the role of a pastoral counsellor or spiritual director vastly important and totally relevant.

The Church has much to do in this context of brokenness and disorientation in the society. The Catholic Church in India and different religious congregations are also becoming more aware of their responsibility to help the people in this particular need and to emphasise the ministry of spiritual direction and pastoral counselling.[52]

3.2 Francis de Sales as Spiritual Director

St Francis de Sales is undoubtedly one of the best and most read spiritual directors of the Catholic Church.[53] In spite of his busy schedule as Bishop, he spent many hours meeting people, guiding them and, above all, writing letters of spiritual direction - one of the most common ways of guiding souls at that time. He also spent considerable time instructing his priests and giving spiritual conferences to the Sisters of Visitation, whose order he had co-founded with Jane de Chantal. Francis de Sales had such a deep psychological insight into the nature of human persons that he was able to guide each one individually and personally as needed. In the words of Jane de Chantal, who herself was his directee and who knew him personally for long years:

[50] Jocelyn LIM CHUA, *Tales of Decline: Reading Social Pathology into Individual Suicide in South India* in *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, Vol. 36. 2, June 2012, pp. 204-224. Kerala is paradoxically the most developed state in India with the highest standard of living. The state is often considered a model of development for other states.

[51] Cf. MANORANJITH S. S. / RAJKUMAR A. P. / THANGADURAI P. / Prasad J. / JAYAKARAN R. / JACOB K. S., *Risk factors for suicide in rural south India*, in *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 2010, Vol. 196. pp. 26-30.

[52] See the report in *daiji world*, a Christian online newspaper from Mangalore, India, on 18.10. 2013. *Kerala: Carmelites Educate Friars in Spiritual Direction*.
http://www.daijiworld.com/news/news_disp.asp?n_id=195852 (12.1.16)

[53] Cf. Pope Benedict XVI on St Francis de Sales. General Audience on 2 March 2011.

> Of all the gifts which our Blessed Founder received from God, that of the discernment of spirits was one of the most eminent … People from all parts came to him for enlightenment in difficulties of conscience. I know that many Prelates, Heads of Religious Houses, Monks, Parish Priests, private Gentlemen and Lawyers, Princes and Princesses and persons of all ranks, rich and poor, from different provinces came to him for this purpose. The number of souls directed by him in the way of Christian perfection is almost innumerable… When he passed through any town he had such a reception as no one else ever received. Even the most experienced spiritual Fathers came to consult him, and sent their penitents to him to be enlightened in the most difficult points of the spiritual life … The holy Bishop had such penetrating insight into the souls of men that when he was consulted, either personally or by letter, on matters of conscience, he discerned with extraordinary delicacy and clearness the inclinations and secret moving springs of those souls, and spoke in terms so precise, definite, and intelligible, that he made them understand with the greatest ease the most intricate and lofty matters relating to spiritual life. This is very plainly seen in his published Letters. I know this of my own experience, but others have also told me so.[54]

Here in this chapter I have tried to bring together some of the most outstanding characteristics of spiritual direction as followed by St Francis de Sales, with special focus on his letters of spiritual direction. My focus has also been to explore how Francis de Sales guided people to see God's will in their day-to-day lives and how he helps them grow in holiness in the given circumstances of life.

Taking into account the number of people he directed (guided), the unique methods he used, the number of letters of spiritual direction he wrote, it is clear that spiritual direction was an important ministry for him because he believed that it was the primary duty of the Bishop to lead his people to holiness.[55] That he did all this while being the bishop of a vast diocese in a very difficult time speaks volumes for his achievement.

It was not only ordinary people who sought his guidance. Bishops, priests, abbots, religious, princes, gentlemen, ordinary people, his own servants and persons of every rank sought his guidance.[56] He was able to orient himself to them and their life-situation to help them effectively. This personal approach is something special to the Salesian method of spiritual direction. In a world of impersonality and materialism, characterised by loss of human worth and personal touch, it is the duty of the spiritual director to speak to the heart of the directee and to uphold his or her dignity as a child of God.

[54] CHANTAL, *Depositions*, pp. 189-191.
[55] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *St Francis de Sales*, Vol. II, p. 262.
[56] Cf. Ibid., pp. 262-263.

As Francis de Sales was a busy bishop, it was neither always easy nor possible for him to find time for personal conversation. In his own words:

> As this age is very peculiar, expect that many will say that only members of religious orders and persons concerned with devotion should give such special guidance regarding the devout life; that this work requires more leisure than is at the disposal of a bishop who is entrusted with a diocese as burdensome as mine; that it is too great a distraction for the mind which should be used for important matters. My reader, I tell you with St Denis that guiding people to perfection is the task mainly of bishops...[57]

Spiritual direction is a task Francis de Sales took to heart. He says in the Preface to *Introduction*: "The guidance of persons individually is a difficult task, I admit, but one which brings comfort as in the case of people gathering crops or picking grapes, who are happiest when they have plenty of work to do and heavy burdens to carry."[58]

In order to help these people – laity, religious and even bishops – who sought his guidance, Francis wrote personal letters of spiritual direction. Later on, when the pressure of work made writing personal letters almost impossible, he began writing articles on different topics meant for many people, and they were circulated. They were meant to help them lead a spiritual life living in the world but at the same time not being affected and contaminated by the world. These letters and articles were later on published as '*An Introduction*' (*Introduction à la vie dévote*) as what is now known as '*An Introduction to the Devout Life'.* It is also known as *Philothea* in some languages. It was first published in 1608. Ever since, it has remained in the best-seller list of Catholic classics.[59]

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[57] Francis de SALES in the Preface to *An Introduction to the Devout Life*, p. 28. AE, Tome III: *Introduction a la vie dévote*, p. 9, (Cet aage est fort bigearre, et je prévois bien que plusieurs diront qu'il n'appartient qu'aux religieux et gens de dévotion de faire des conduittes si particulières a la pieté ; qu'elles requierent plus de loysir que n'en peut avoir un Evesque chargé d'un diocese si pesant comme est le mien; que cela distrait trop l'entendement qui doit estre employé a choses importantes. Mais moy, mon cher Lecteur, je te dis avec le grand saint Denis qu'il appartient principalement aux Evesques de perfectionner les ames, d'autant que leur ordre est le supreme entre les hommes ..) The collected works of St Francis de Sales are published in French as *Oeuvres de Saint François de Sales, Évêque de Genève et Docteur de L'Eglise. Edition Complète.* It was prepared by the Visitation Sisters in Annecy and appeared over a period of time from 1892 to 1937 in 26 volumes (plus and Index). They are usually known as *Œuvres* and often abbreviated as OEA or AE. I use the abbreviation *AE* (Annecy Edition) to refer to *Œuvres*.

[58] Francis de SALES in the 'Preface' to *IDL*, p. 29. See AE, Tome III: *Introduction a la vie dévote*, p. 10. «C'est une peyne, je le confesse, de conduire les amesen particulier, mais une peyne qui soulage, pareille a celle des moissonneurs et vendangeurs, qui ne sont jamais plus contens que d'estre fort embesoignés et chargés.»

[59] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *St Francis de Sales*, Vol. II, pp. 255- 257. There are different views regarding the letters that form part of *Introduction*. Some believe that although majority of the letters were addressed to Madame Charmoisy, it is a work of compilation and editorial process done by Francis himself.

Pope Benedict XVI said about *Introduction*: "Above all, St Francis de Sales was a director: from his encounter with a young woman, Madame de Charmoisy, he was to draw the inspiration to write one of the most widely read books of the modern age, *An Introduction to the Devout Life*."[60] He also refers to another masterpiece from Francis de Sales called, *The Love of God* (*Traite de l'amour de Dieu*) and his letters of spiritual direction. He says further that Francis de Sales had insight into human hearts and human emotions: "In reading his book on the love of God and especially his many letters of spiritual direction and friendship, one clearly perceives that St Francis was well acquainted with the human heart."[61]

3.2.1 Some Examples of His Long-Standing Guidance

Examining some of the examples helps one to understand the way Francis de Sales practised his spiritual direction. Francis had a unique way of guiding people. It was not in the same way or with the same methods that he guided different people. He guided some people for a long period of time but some others only for a short while. Some were guided through personal meetings. This was the case with many of the Visitation Sisters. He also gave them regular conferences to guide them. Some of his talks are extant even today and published as *Spiritual Conferences*.[62] Some others, mostly laity, were guided personally and through letters. Each one was guided according to his or her need and for the period of time they needed his help.

As already noted, some guidance and direction took long years. With them he established a sort of therapeutic relationship in order to help them. The relationship with Madame de Charmoisy, Madame Brulart and Madame de Chantal are examples of this. One gets an idea of this spiritual relationship from the letters written to these women.[63]

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[60] Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience on 2 March 2011, in the Vatican.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Cf. Francis de SALES, *AE, Tome VI: Les Vrays Entretien Spirituels*. An English translation of the same has been published by SFS Publications, Bangalore: *Spiritual Conferences* Vol. I (1995) and Vol. II (1998), both translated by Ivo CARNEIRO.
[63] I have often used the English and the German translation of the Letters. For English translation, I have mostly used the following works: 1. Francis de SALES, *Selected Letters*, selected, translated and edited by Elisabeth STOPP, Stella, Niagara, USA: De Sales Resource Center, 2001. 2. Francis de SALES, *Thy Will be Done. Letters of St Francis de Sales*, Manchester, New Hampshire (USA): Sophia Institute Press, 1995. 3. *The Library of St Francis de Sales, Vol.1, Letters to Persons in the World*, translated by Henry Benedict Mackey, London: Burns & Oats, Ltd., 1894. 4. Francis de SALES & Jane de CHANTAL, *Letters of Spiritual Direction*, tr. by Peronne Marie THIBERT, selected and introduced by Wendy M. WRIGHT and Joseph F. POWER, New York: Paulist Press, 1988.

3.2.1.1 Madame Louise de Charmoisy

Who was Madame de Charmoisy? She was born Louise de Chatel. She hailed from an aristocratic family in Normandy. As a young girl, she came to Paris as the governess of the Duchess of Guise. In Paris she got married to the Lord of Charmoisy, a relative of Francis de Sales. She married him at a young age.[64]

It is believed and reliably established that the letters of spiritual direction that Francis wrote to Madame de Charmoisy form the core of '*An Introduction to the Devout Life*.'[65]At the request of Father Fournier, a Jesuit, the letters Francis wrote to her were submitted back to him and he compiled and edited them into a book. The 'raw material' for the spiritual classic *An Introduction* is thus the letters of guidance Francis de Sales wrote to her.[66]

3.2.1.1.1 Her Life: A Life Full of Ups and Downs

Madame de Charmoisy was familiar with court life which exerted positive and negative influences on her. Unusual for her times, her marriage was a love affair. After marriage the couple moved to Savoy, the birth place of Lord Charmoisy, where he owned several castles and lots of property. But her life was not an easy one. Her husband was often away on tours and the management of the old castles fell entirely on her shoulders which was indeed burdensome. As a lady hailing from a big city, she had to get used to life in lonely palaces away from cities. Although occasionally she accompanied her husband to Paris, she felt lonely and desolate. Adding to her troubles, she fell sick often. Since her husband was a cousin of Francis de Sales, there existed a close friendship between them and Francis. The Charmoisy family had stood by Francis and helped him in his difficult mission in the Chablais. The young wife was also soon taken into this circle of friendship with Francis de Sales.[67]

For German, the German Edition of the Complete Works of St Francis de Sales: *Deutsche Ausgabe der Werke des Hl Franz von Sales* (referred to as DA in this work) was prepared, edited and published by Franz REISINGER and published by Franz-Sales- Verlag, Eichstätt, Germany, in 2002. *DA* contains the translation of all the books of the Annecy Edition (AE) in 12 volumes. The letters to Charmoisy are in the sixth volume: *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*. *DA*-Vol. 6.

[64] Cf. Francis de SALES, *Briefe II: Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, DA, Vol. 6, pp. 24-25. In these pages we find a short biographical sketch of Madame de Charmoisy prepared by the editors.

[65] Cf. Francis de SALES, AE, Tome III: *Introduction à la Vie Dévote*. This book is known as *Philothea* in German-speaking areas. For details regarding the origin of *An Introduction*, see *Philothea*, DA, Vol.1, pp.19-22. In these pages the editors describe the development of *An Introduction* (*Philothea*) as a book. Another good description can be found in the Bangalore Edition, 2005, pp. 17-21.

[66] Cf. Angela HÄMEL-STIER, *Frauen um Franz von Sales*, Eichstätt: Franz von Sales Verlag, 1954, p. 29.

[67] Cf. Ibid., pp. 31-33.

The young couple had three children, two sons and a daughter. One of them, who had Francis as the godfather, died young. Francis had a special affection and attachment to him. That he was attached to the family and that he enjoyed the complete trust and confidence of the family is evident from his letter of 20 May, 1606.[68] Francis de Sales and Madam Charmoisy had a common spiritual friend – Madame de Chantal.[69]

The life of the Charmoisys soon fell into tough times. Her husband fell out of favour with the Duke of Nemours, in whose court he had served for a long time, and he was placed under house arrest in Marclaz for quite some time. During this period Francis stood by Madame Charmoisy and the family and helped them in all possible ways. Francis wrote many letters to the Duke of Nemours for the release of Monsieur Charmoisy because he was convinced of his innocence. Since he was a busy bishop he could not meet the family often or personally be with them, but he wrote many letters of assurance, guidance and support. His letters show that they brought them comfort and consolation and that they often sought his guidance. How consoling it must have been for the family to know that a bishop stood by them in their difficult times!

3.2.1.1.2 Her Personality

Madame de Charmoisy was a remarkable woman characterised by great courage, clear thinking, meticulous in the performance of her duties, at the same time full of womanly goodness, spirit of sacrifice and empathy.[70] Her regular correspondence with Francis de Sales and Madame Chantal must have been a great source of support for her in her busy life.[71] Angela Hämel-Stier remarks in her book: "Her life was full of duties, activities, sufferings, difficulties and disappointments. She had to accept the royal path of crosses and self- denial."[72] Madame Charmoisy remained brave and courageous through all these difficult times and, guided and supported by the great Bishop, she schooled herself in equanimity, composure and trust in God.[73]

One knows precious little of her religious life. Karl August de Sales states that she was a serious, brave and courageous woman gifted with deep intelligence. She was also known to

[68] Cf. SALES, *Seelenführung Briefe an Laien*, DA, Vol. 6, pp. 55-56. (See also AE XIII, pp. 179-181). In many cases I have tried to give cross references from English, French and German versions to promote easy reference and further research on the topic. As noted earlier 'AE' stand for Annecy Edition and 'DA' for German Edition. They are followed by volume number of the respective edition.
[69] Cf. HÄMEL-STIER, *Frauen um Franz von Sales*, pp. 33-36, 50.
[70] Cf. Francis de SALES, *Briefe II: Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, pp. 24-25. (In the *Einführung*).
[71] Cf. RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint*, p. 122.
[72] HÄMEL-STIER, *Frauen um Franz von Sales*, p. 39. Translation mine.
[73] Cf. Ibid., pp. 51- 53.

be extremely conscientious and meticulous, faithfully trying to fulfil household duties and obligations. She was blessed with discretion, determination and 'reservation'.[74]

3.2.1.1.3 Francis Takes up the Guidance of Madame de Charmoisy

Authors are not quite sure as to exactly when she placed herself under the direction of Francis de Sales. Letters and reports of other people state that Madame Charmoisy experienced a spiritual conversion in 1604 and she dedicated herself to God. It has been so reported by Jules Vuy. It is said after listening to the preaching of Bishop Francis she placed herself under his guidance. It could have been as early as 1604 or later in 1607.[75]

One thing is clear: Francis stood by her through thick and thin – when her husband fell out of favour with the Duke, when he was ill and after his death he guided her especially to come to terms with her changed circumstances. Under his guidance she found direction, consolation and meaning in life.[76]

Unfortunately, in the entire works of Francis de Sales '*Oeuvres*'[77] there are few letters of Madame de Charmoisy which point to the fact that as Francis was closely associated with her and her family, she would have received most of the direction and guidance personally from him.[78] The other reason could be that *An Introduction* itself is for most part a 'structured re-working' of the letters Francis de Sales wrote to Madame de Charmoisy and others like her who sought his direction.[79] However, from the letters and other sources available we get the following major themes in this long spiritual relationship and spiritual direction.

3.2.1.1.3.1 Building up a Relationship on Trust

One of the clearest expressions of the deep trust and confidence that existed between them is seen in the letter written by Francis to Madame Charmoisy on 20 May 1606[80] from Annecy. It is one of the earliest extant letters of Francis to her. Even though it is one of the earliest letters, we find therein elements of total trust and confidence in each other: the basis of any mutual relationship.

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[74] Cf. HÄMEL-STIER, *Frauen um Franz von Sales*, pp. 36-38.
[75] Cf. Ibid., pp. 36-37.
[76] Cf. SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, pp. 24-25.
[77] *Oeuvres* refers to the Annecy Edition (AE) of the works of Francis de Sales.
[78] Cf. SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, pp. 24-25.
[79] Cf. Francis de SALES / Jane de CHANTAL, *Letters of Spiritual Direction*, tr. by Peronne Marie THIBERT, selected and introduced by Wendy M. WRIGHT and Joseph F. POWER, New York: Paulist Press, 1988. In the Introductory part, p. 24.
[80] Cf. SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, pp. 55-56. (See also AE Tome XIII: *Lettres – Volume III*, pp.179-181).

Francis begins the letter by asking for forgiveness in that he had accidentally opened a letter written to her by her husband but mistakenly brought to him. As soon as Francis understood that the letter was not meant for him, he forwarded it to her. In this letter he asks her forgiveness for inadvertently opening her letter. The beginning part of the letter itself shows the close friendship, openness and trust which existed between them. Francis says he could have hidden this mistake from her, but trusting that she would understand him, he openly shares the matter with her. He writes, "My dear daughter, I could have easily hidden my mistake from you; but I trust your goodness more than my cleverness in hiding it. Dear loving cousin, trust me further as faithful in everything concerning my service to you. I am prepared to serve you my lifelong more than any other person on earth."[81]

In this letter Francis insists that she is free to share all her joys and sorrows with him and he remains always faithful to her. He infuses through this letter such a confidence and trust in her that she can turn to him in all her needs. In the latter part of the letter, he also promises her his prayers and remembrance, especially in the most holy Eucharist. This is something typical of Francis that he promises people prayers and remembrance in the Eucharist. He takes their intentions and petitions to the altar. His approach in the letter is typically friendly, affirming love and infusing hope.[82]

He tells her that he cannot help telling her that she should entrust herself to God in all her affairs. He feels impelled to give her some exercises (practices) of the heart and soul because of the love and care he has for her. He advises her against going on foot to St Claude, taking into account her poor health. It is to be noted that Francis de Sales does not demand from his directees any type of mortification which they are not capable of or which brings great harm to their bodies. He always demands moderation in physical mortifications but at the same time he requires from them mortification of their hearts.

[81] SALES, *Seelenführung Briefe an Laien*, p. 55. Translation mine. By 'service' Francis de Sales means, spiritual guidance. „Ich hätte leicht meinen Irrtum verbergen und von Ihnen unbemerkt halten können; aber ich vertraue mich lieber Ihrem Wohlwollen an als meiner Geschicklichkeit. Halten Sie mich, meine liebe Frau Cousine, auch weiterhin für stets ganz treu in allem, was Ihren Dienst betrifft, denn das werde ich mein ganzes Leben lang sein, mehr als irgendein anderer Mensch auf der Welt." « J'eusse bien peu rabiller la faute et la vous rendre imperceptible; mais j'ayme mieux me confier en vostre bienveuillance qu'en mon artifice. Et ne laisses pas, je vous supplie, Madame ma chere Cousine, de me croire fort fidelle en tout ce qui regardera vostre service, car je le seray toute ma vie autant que nul homme du monde. » AE, XIII: *Lettres - Volume III*, p.180.

[82] Cf. SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 56.

Mortification has to be done in the heart and in the right spirit.[83] He ends the letter with a blessing.

3.2.1.1.3.2 Appreciating and Encouraging Her

Francis de Sales always showed a great appreciation for his directees (spiritual children). This is evident in his letters and conferences. He always highlighted the good in his directees to show that they are God's children. God's love for human beings is deep in our hearts.[84] Therefore, every human being is good and must be appreciated. Francis was never shy to show this appreciation of human beings, especially of his directees. In all her letters he addresses her with terms like 'my dearest and precious sister and cousin', 'my dearest daughter', etc. He shows her that she is dear to him and expresses it clearly.

Already by 1608, there seems to have matured a deep spiritual friendship between the two. The letter Francis de Sales writes to her on 21 August 1608 from Saint-Rambert reveals this deep spiritual relationship. He writes to her that the further away he is from her, the more inseparably his spirit is united with that of hers.[85] He encourages her to be faithful in her love to Jesus and to be steadfast in her decision to love and serve God. Francis reminds her of her holy decisions. This letter seems to have been written in a hurry. It is basically a letter of encouragement and support. This letter also has a reference to Jane de Chantal. Francis mentions to Madame Charmoisy that he is going to see her dearest sister.[86] He also tells her that he would be sharing with Madame Chantal about the situation of her soul.[87]

In his letter of 5 April 1607 to Chantal, Francis expresses a deep appreciation of Madame Charmoisy. He refers to her as being true to God. Francis had showed Madame Charmoisy deep appreciation, genuineness and acceptance. In a letter to Msgr de Villars, Archbishop of Vienne, Francis states that Madame Charmoisy has a 'virtuous and beautiful soul.'[88]

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[83] Cf. Ibid. „Glauben Sie mir, wenn Sie sich daran gewöhnen, diese Hingabe nicht nur mit dem Mund, sondern auch mitdem Herzen ganz tief und aufrichtig zu vollziehen, werden Sie wunderbare Auswirkungen daraus verspüren."

[84] Cf. Rom 5:5.

[85] Cf. SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 59. „In dem Maße, als ich mich nach außen hin von Ihnen entferne, wendet sich mein Geist umso häufiger dem Ihren zu, von dem er unzertrennlich ist.". « A mesure que je m'esloigne de vous selon l'exterieur, mon esprit retourne plus fréquemment ses yeux du costé du vostre, d'avec lequel il est inséparable… » AE, XIV, *Lettres –Volume IV*, pp.58-59. In this letter he addresses her 'Madame ma tres chere cousine' (p. 58), 'ma chere cousine, ma fille' (p. 59) etc. He concludes the letter with 'vostre tres fidelle et tres affectionne serviteur.' (p. 59).

[86] Francis writes ‚Ich bin auf dem Weg zu dieser teuren Schwester.' (p. 59). (= roughly translated, 'I am on the way to this precious sister'). This is a reference to Madame Chantal.

[87] Cf. Ibid.

[88] Cf. HÄMEL-STIER, *Frauen um Franz von Sales*, pp. 36-38.

Since Francis is at the moment pressed for time, he advises her to write to the former Abbess of the Monastery of St Katherina in Annecy, who could be of great help to her. He requests her prayers for him on the occasion of completing 41 years. Here we should also appreciate and at the same time admire the openness, genuineness and freedom with which Francis deals with his directees.

3.2.1.1.3.3 Leading Her to Self-Acceptance

There can be no spiritual direction when the directee does not accept himself as a person, as a child of God. It is also one of the goals of counselling to help the person to accept himself. A person who is always at war with himself cannot make progress. Brian Thorne, psychotherapist and spiritual guide, says, "Christians believe that at the centre we find God who is the ground of our being. Intimacy with the centre, therefore, must always be a relationship of love, a loving self-acceptance born not of complacency or arrogance but from a sense of the presence of God within."[89]

Madame de Charmoisy ardently wanted to lead a devout life. She felt that her life as the wife of a courtier would stand in her way of perfection. Francis encourages her to accept her life and her present vocation. He assures her that a devout life can be practised under any circumstance and in any environment. Her life as the wife of a courtier should in no way stand in the way of her devotion. Francis wants her to integrate devotion with life. There is no need to run away from her present life or retire entirely to her castle. In fact, the whole book *An Introduction* is based on the assumption that an authentic Christian life can be lived out in any circumstance of life.[90]

Francis encouraged her to accept and love her vocation as the wife of a courtier. She was obliged to go back to the court, although she did not like it. She was totally uneasy about it. Francis emboldened her to be faithful to the plan of God for her.[91]

Madam Charmoisy's testimony at the canonization process bears witness to it. She quoted the words of Francis de Sales to her that gave her hope and courage, and encouraged her to have confidence in God, "Take courage, my child. Do not be afraid that you will fall back because of this. If you are faithful to God, he will never fail you. He will give you enough

[89] Brian THORNE, *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment: Bridging Faith and Person-Centred Therapy*, Wiley: Kindle Edition, 2012, p.19.
[90] See the 'Introductory Part' in SALES / CHANTAL, *Letters of Spiritual Direction*, p. 55.
[91] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, pp. 219-221.

time to make your spiritual exercises, as well as to do everything else that you have to do, even if He has to stop the sun and the moon."[92]

Francis wrote to her on 28 March 1613[93] from Annecy when her husband fell out of favour with the Duke in whose court he had worked for a long time, and was placed under house arrest. For Francis, accepting our lives and yielding to the will of God means also accepting the ups and downs of life. The vicissitudes of life are a great challenge to faith. That is where one is most tested. This letter reveals many therapeutic qualities of Francis de Sales. It clearly shows his genuineness and empathy. He tries to console her and to stand by her. He tells her to prove her love for the Lord in this difficult time of her life. Francis wants her to be calm and poised in this troubled time. It does not help to be agitated and disturbed even though it is a painful situation. He tells her that he will be extremely relieved if she is at peace at this moment.[94]

Francis tells her that she should accept the will of God and have faith in Providence that the internment of her husband will lead to her spiritual good. Even in the most difficult situations she should not lose hope and try to see the positive side.[95] Francis knows how difficult her situation is. He tells her although he likes to console her in this situation, he does not know how to do that. He prays that the Lord himself should be her consolation.[96]

Here in this letter one can see how open and genuine Francis was with his directees. A priest or pastor finds himself in similar situations often. This is a situation which people in the field of guidance, especially priests, are quite familiar with. It is often difficult to find proper words to console with. One is at a loss, not knowing what to do. What help often are the personal qualities of the counsellor such as genuineness, openness and empathy. More about this will be dealt with in subsequent chapters.

For Christians, trials and difficulties have another dimension – the eschatological aspect of suffering. In suffering, we take part in the suffering of Christ and also become heirs with him. Francis further refers to Acts 14: 21[97] to show that trials and difficulties help us on

[92] As quoted by MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 210.
[93] Cf. SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, pp. 59-60. (See also AE Tome XV: *Lettres - Volume V*, pp. 365-366).
[94] Cf. SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 59.
[95] Cf. Ibid., p. 60.
[96] Cf. Ibid.
[97] Acts 14:22 is more appropriate. Here Francis quotes wrongly. Acts 14:22 reads, "They put fresh heart into the disciples, encouraging them to persevere in the faith saying, 'We must all experience many hardships before we enter the Kingdom of God.'" (The New Jerusalem Bible, Indian Edition, 1998).

our way to the Kingdom. Towards the end of the letter, Francis encourages her again to have courage and fortitude and to place her trust in God who will never leave her. However, it is not a dry hope Francis offers. It is also moving to note that at the end of the letter Francis promises her to do all within his power to get her husband released.[98]

3.2.1.1.3.4 Leading Her to God and Intimacy with Him

One of the important roles of the spiritual director is to guide the directee to God and to help him/her to be more open to God and God's will in his/her life. In order to achieve this purpose, the person has to develop an intimate relationship with God. The spiritual director plays a great role in this regard.[99]

In the letter dated 20 March 1608 from Rumily, Francis tries to lead her to detach herself from the world and to attach herself to God. As a wife and mother, she should try to achieve it while living in the midst of the world and not running away from it. She should turn her heart and mind to God from time to time, try to live in God's presence and live like a mystic in the world, deeply immersed in His presence.

She feels forced to lead an active life due to her vocation. She complains to him that she does not have long hours for meditation although she would like to have it. He writes to her, "You are in a place where you don't have much time for meditation… so God comes more often to your heart to strengthen you with His presence."[100] Francis replies to her that he is not surprised that she is getting sick of the world as God allows her to enjoy His presence. He tells her, "When you have tasted divine things, worldly things can hardly hold any attraction for you."[101]

Francis leads her to further detachment and holy indifference. He tells her we should only tolerate and bear the vanity of the world but should not get lost in it. We should have our love and attachment only to the truth. The letter suggests that apparently one of her friends had died. Francis encourages and emboldens her telling that we should never be afraid of

[98] Cf. SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 60. „Haben Sie guten Mut, meine liebe Tochter, setzen Sie Ihr Vertrauen fest auf Ihn, dessen Dienst Sie sich geweiht und hingegeben haben, denn er wird Sie nicht verlassen. Inzwischen werde ich mich von ganzem Herzen bei allen dafür verwenden, Ihrem Gatten zu helfen, von denen ich meine, daß sie Einfluß haben und die etwas mir zu Gefallen tun wollen, um ihn freizubekommen."

[99] Cf. Ludger- Ägidius SCHULTE, *Der Sehnsucht nach Gott ein Gesicht geben. Wozu geistliche Begleitung?* In Rudolf PROKSCHI / Marianne SCHLOSSER (Eds.), *Vater sag mir ein Wort. Geistliche Gegleitung in den Traditionen von Ost und West*, Würzburg: Echter, 2007, pp. 159-175. See especially pp. 167-169.

[100] SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 56. Translation mine. (See also AE, Tome XIII: *Lettres: Volume III*, pp. 381-383).

[101] Ibid., p. 57.

death. “It is true, my dear daughter, when we see our friends dying, we should indeed weep over them and mourn for them a bit because of our sympathy and commiseration, but we should do so in quiet patience. Let us profit from this passing by preparing ourselves well for our own.”[102] The letter ends with a positive note that the departed one in the last year of her life was more devout, which should be seen as a sign of God’s kindness to her.

3.2.1.1.3.5 Help in Coping with Loneliness and Depression

The letter of Francis to her around the end of March 1608[103] gives an indication that Madame Charmoisy had to constantly struggle with scrupulosity and depression. Her venial sins and imperfections seemed to have put her down from time to time and due to which she fell into depression. She also seemed to have occasionally suffered from spiritual dryness. Francis had written to her a few days earlier.[104] This letter is written immediately after that. Francis seems to know her heart and her situation. It is a short letter to enliven her and to encourage her to continue her ‘fight’ without giving up.

Francis begins the letter saying he feels compelled to write in order to help her to respond to her situation. He cannot let her remain in the depression she is in. He cannot neglect her. What we see here is genuine care as well as unconditional support for the directee.

One of the causes of her depression was apparently her sense of imperfection. He tells her not to be let down by her venial sins and imperfections. Our failures are occasions for us to humiliate ourselves before God. He tells her that we must hold fast to God, not to ourselves.[105] The tendency to give up prayers and spiritual exercises in times of depression is great indeed. So he tells her not to give up her spiritual exercises in despair. Here Francis de Sales acts like a therapist encouraging and inspiring her to go on. It is important in dealing with people who suffer depression to help them to stay ‘in action.’ Modern

[102] SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 57.
[103] Cf. Ibid., p. 58. (See also *AE*, XIII, pp. 383-384).
[104] Note that the previous letter was written around 20 March 1608.
[105] „Demütigen wir uns stark, meine liebe Cousine, meine Tochter; geben wir zu, daß wir sofort verwundet und durchbohrt wären von allen möglichen Sünden, wäre Gott uns nicht Panzer und Rüstung. Halten wir uns darum fest an Gott, indem wir unsere Übungen fortsetzen; das sei unsere Hauptsorge und alles andere sei nur nebensächlich. Im übrigen müssen wir immer Mut haben; und wenn uns eine Erschlaffung oder Schwächung des Geistes zustößt, dann eilen wir zum Fuß des Kreuzes, stellen wir uns in seine heilige Ausstrahlung und wir werden zweifellos dadurch gestärkt und wieder aufgerichtet werden.“ *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 58.

psychology tells us that in dealing with depression it is important to have an experiential approach, and the therapist should take the role of a teacher-guide.[106]

Francis encourages her that in spite of all her failures and the difficulties she faces, she should not give up, but should trust in God. Have courage. Don't lose your courage. Francis knows her situation and her condition well and he knows that it is quite likely that in times of weakness and powerlessness (psychologically put, depression), that one gives up easily. Francis tells her to turn to the Cross for strength and confidence. He promises her remembrance in the Holy Mass and requests her to do the same for him. He encourages her to live courageously and cheerfully with Jesus in her heart.[107]

It is also edifying to see how Francis encourages her with positive strokes. What she experiences is a typical human struggle with sin and imperfection which most human beings have in life. But her particular situation and her scrupulosity make it more complicated and leaves her depressed. In such situations the presence of a spiritual friend can indeed be very consoling.

The death of her husband exacerbated her physical, spiritual and psychological condition. It was much more than sadness or sense of loss. In modern psychological terms we could say she suffered from depression or anxiety disorder. American Psychological Association (APA) defines:

> *Depression* is more than just sadness. People with depression may experience a lack of interest and pleasure in daily activities, significant weight loss or gain, insomnia or excessive sleeping, lack of energy, inability to concentrate, feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt and recurrent thoughts of death or suicide. Depression is the most common mental disorder. Fortunately, depression is treatable. A combination of therapy and antidepressant medication can help ensure recovery.[108]

Depression is even today one of the common disorders pastoral counsellors encounter in their ministry. Depression often needs empathic and person-oriented handling and extreme care in dealing with the person. Francis de Sales was able to do that with Madame Charmoisy. Francis helped her gradually to get over her anxieties and to live in the presence of God. He assured her that she was not alone in the world. He stood by her and

[106] Alvin R. MAHRER, *Dealing with Feelings of Depression*, in *Clinical Strategies for Becoming a Master Psychotherapist*, William T O'DONOHUE / Nicholas A CUMMINGS / Janel L. CUMMINGS (Eds.), Boston: Elsevier Academic Press, 2006, (167-187), p. 182.
[107] SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 58.
[108] Definition as given by American Psychological Association: http://www.apa.org/topics/depress/index.aspx, (10.1.2016). Emphasis mine.

assured her that the most difficult moments of life would also pass. Thus he could instil hope and courage in her.

3.2.1.1.3.6 Helping Her to Cope with Bereavement

In 1618, Monsieur Charmoisy was sent by Karl Emmanuel, Duke of Savoy, as envoy to Switzerland. He was away for a long period, which meant Madame Charmoisy had to be once again alone and away from her husband. He returned in autumn 1618, and he died immediately thereafter on 28 October. Due to her illness, she could not be present at his deathbed. Immediately on hearing of his death, Francis de Sales, who was also away in Paris, wrote a letter to her from there in November 1618, comforting her and the family.

Francis, at the beginning of the letter, frankly acknowledges complete bewilderment, shock and speechlessness. He knows well that words do not help in such a situation, but his nearness, his assurance of prayers, and his promise that he is with her would help. He does not want to use too many words to console her. He says he does not know what to do. He cannot but keep thinking of and praying for her: "I do not know what I should say to you…I cannot but keep thinking of you and praying for you...all the same, I do not know what I should do or say to you…"[109]

In many letters of Francis, we see this frankness and openness. We see in him what person-centred therapists call genuineness. He expresses his feelings freely, shares with them in the way he feels when he judges it to be appropriate.

He says he is praying for her in this difficult situation. He cannot but keep thinking of her and praying for her: "My very dear cousin and daughter, I cannot but think of you, my heart does not want to do anything other than to communicate to your heart, but it does not know how to do it, as it itself is affected as your heart…my very dear daughter, the Holy bridegroom of our souls wants that we try to understand all the happenings in our life as the providence of God…" [110] He tells her further in the letter that in the truthfulness that we owe God, to give her heart to God and to surrender completely to Him. Francis de Sales admits that he doesn't know how to console her more.[111]

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[109] SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 60. Translation from German is mine. (AE, Tome XVIII: *Lettre –Volume VIII*, pp. 311-312. « Mon esprit ne peut cesser de penser en vous, ma très chere Cousine, ma Fille, et ne voudroit faire autre chose que de vous parler en la façon qu'il peut, et ne sçait néanmoins que vous dire, estant, comme le vostre, encortout estonné … »).

[110] SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 60.

[111] Cf. Ibid., p. 61.

He gradually leads her to think of eternity. He tells her to remain faithful to God in this most difficult moment and not to lose herself in sorrow and grief.[112] He concludes the letter assuring her personally that he is with her. He tells her that he is devoted to her more than ever before and he is totally united with her in spirit in this difficult time.[113]

To console a person who has lost his beloved or the most intimate person in life like spouse or parents is not an easy task. Often words do not help. The difficult situation of consoling at the death of a loved one is experienced by priests. It is indeed a difficult situation. What one can do is to be with and to assure the person. People in deeply religious cultures like in India find comfort in the Scriptures and in religious practices. Many Christians find hope and consolation in the Bible. The best that one can do is often to be with the person and to assure him nearness and prayers.

3.2.1.1.3.7 Constant Accompaniment and Genuineness in Relationship

Since her husband's death, Madame Charmoisy became more independent and on her own. Now she had to take her life totally into her own hands. When he was alive, she was rather reserved and unobtrusive, limiting herself to her duties. Now she had to be more active and come out of her husband's shadows.

Her son, Henri de Charmoisy, turned out to be a great concern for her. He was now the biggest worry in her life. He did not possess any qualities of his father or of the family. Henri was not in any way extraordinarily gifted nor did he show the maturity or responsibility of his age. In spite of all that, she gave him full freedom in the family and in all his affairs. Even as a young man, without earning his own income, he travelled freely around Europe at the expense of the family. His parents thought in vain that it would make him a more honourable man. Francis helped Madame Charmoisy to find a good educator and guide in Monsieur Leaval. However, Henri was never dependable. He created further problems for his mother. Her anxiety, solicitude and concern for him are clearly visible in her letters to him.[114] In her admonition, warning and persuasion to guide her son, she is

[112] Cf. SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 60.
[113] Cf. Ibid., p. 61. „Seien Sie wahrhaft ganz die Seine und der wird, glauben Sie mir, ganz der Ihre sein. Ich meinerseits kann nicht mehr sagen als sonst, aber wenn ich es sagen dürfte, würde ich sagen, daß ich unwandelbar mehr denn je, bedingungs- und- rückhaltlos, ganz der Ihre bin." (AE, XVIII : *Lettres - Volume VIII*, p.312. « Soyes bien toute sienne et, croyes moy, il sera tout vostre. Pour moy, je ne puis pas dire plus que jamais, maiss'il se pouvoit dire, certes, je dirois qu'inséparablement, plus que jamais, je suis, Tout vostre, sans condition ni reserve… »).
[114] Cf. HÄMEL-STIER, *Frauen um Franz von Sales*, pp. 56-57.

strongly influenced by the ideas reflected in the spiritual classic *Introduction*, which was written to her by Francis.[115]

It is also important to note that in the letter to her on 10 November 1621, Francis writes in a rather reprimanding manner that her son Henri should be better dressed and should appear more decent befitting his status as a nobleman. Francis admits that he had written to her a day before but since he considered it an important matter, he felt it necessary to write. He writes to her, "My dear cousin, my daughter, I wrote to you day before yesterday. But I must take you to task a bit because my nephew is dressed neither suiting his rank nor his office. It not only causes him agony to see his companions better dressed, as is the case, but this behaviour will be thoroughly criticised by his own friends, some of them have spoken to me very severely about that. My dear sister, as long as we live in the world, we should subject ourselves to the laws of the world, if it does not go against the commands of God."[116]

The contents of this letter stand in strong contrast to what Francis de Sales remarked to Madame de Chantal upon their first meeting in 1604 at Dijon.[117] On this occasion, Jane, newly-widowed and strongly desirous of entering religious life, was presented to Francis de Sales. Francis noticed that she was finely adorned with jewels and elegant dress. So Francis really had to ask her whether she was intent on re-marrying or willing to leave the world to serve God. He told her, if she was planning not to re-marry and intending to dedicate herself to God, then she should "take the signboard down."[118] Compare the two situations. On one occasion he demands modesty from a widow who intends to dedicate herself to God and, on the other, he demands from a man (through his mother) that he be properly and decently dressed in keeping with his status and job. He believes that if he fails do so, it affects his image among his friends and consequently he could suffer personal problems. He demands from the mother, Madame Charmoisy, in this letter that she should take more care to see that her son is properly dressed in accordance with his status and role.[119]

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[115] Cf. HÄMEL-STIER, Ibid., p.58. As noted earlier, the major part of *IDL* is believed to be the letters written by Francis to help her in spiritual growth.
[116] SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 61. (See also AE, Tome XX: *Lettres – Volume X*, pp. 172-173).
[117] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Francis de Sales*, Vol. II, pp. 276-278.
[118] Ibid., p. 277.
[119] Cf. SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 61.

This is also a classic example of how person-oriented Francis de Sales was in his direction/guidance. Each person should live and act as demanded by his or her status and role. We cannot have a general rule that applies to all in the same way in the field of spiritual direction. Each person has to be directed, keeping in mind the directee's personal context and life-situation.

Madame Charmoisy tried all methods with her son to get him to the right path – from gentle persuasion, giving good example and even using strong words. She referred him to Francis de Sales, too. She also tried to help him through her other friends like President Favre, Monsieur Boisy, brother of Francis de Sales. But Henri was not willing to mend his ways.[120] Henri married totally against his mother's will. It was customary in those days to marry with the consent of the parents. Madame Charmoisy still forgave him and remained a loving grandmother to his child. In this respect, the life of Madame Charmoisy was totally filled with the spirit of her friend and spiritual master, Francis de Sales. She tried to overcome the negative forces by focusing on the positive elements in her life.[121]

Her situation reminds one of the condition of many mothers today who find it extremely difficult to bring up and educate children in the modern world in a free and liberal society and to bring back their children from strayed paths.

3.2.1.1.3.8 Leading Her to Detachment and the Final Goal

Spiritual direction is also concerned with the final goal of the Christian life, i.e., preparing one for eternal life. Spiritual direction should, as and when needed, help the directee to prepare to leave this world.[122] This can be done in serious cases of illness when the directee is faced with a sure and imminent death or in the case of very old persons awaiting their final hour. Unfortunately, few directors are able to do it. In his direction of Charmoisy, Francis guided her gradually to detach herself from this world.

After the incident of breaking into and burgling her room, Madame Charmoisy spent most of her time in the castle of Villy or in her house in Annecy. Villy was a remote place and it provided her much-needed interiority. Meanwhile, her daughter was also married. In 1634 through a new contract she gave her son almost all of her jewels, even the ones inherited

[120] Cf. SALES, *Seelenführungsbriefe an Laien*, p. 61. In this last extant letter to her from 28 February 1622, Francis promises to do everything he can for her son. (See also AE, XX: *Lettres – Volume X*, p. 273).
[121] Cf. HÄMEL-STIER, *Frauen um Franz von Sales*, pp. 61-62.
[122] Cf. Walter E. CONN, *The Desiring Self. Rooting Pastoral Counselling and Spiritual Direction in Self-Transcendence*, New York: Paulist Press, 1998, pp. 71-80.

from her husband. She also made him the sole administrator of the properties. In 1643 she wrote her final will.[123]

Now onwards she devoted her time and attention to God and to others. She came more under the direction of Francis de Sales. She spent more time in the Visitation Convent in search of solitude and devotion. Many of the letters Francis wrote to her with the intention of guiding her, which were later compiled as *An Introduction*, must have been written during this period.

In the beginning of May 1645, she went to the tomb of her husband and that of Francis de Sales and Jane de Chantal. Later in the same month, on 16 May, she returned to Villy where she died on 1 June 1645.[124]

The two important women in the life of Francis de Sales, Madame Charmoisy and Madame Chantal, were characterised by similar traits – courage, determination, constancy and enormous practical and worldly sense. The letters of Francis de Sales to Madame Charmoisy were 'depersonalized' for the general public to give shape to *An Introduction*. However, the two women were also unique in their own ways. Madame Chantal knew Francis de Sales only as widow and later as nun. On the other hand, Francis de Sales knew Madam Charmoisy as the wife of his cousin and courtier, as mother and then widow. From the letters of Francis to the latter we get the impression that she wanted to give herself totally to God in the midst of her busy life and sought silence, quietude and intimacy with God, but that was discouraged by Francis as long as she had duties to fulfil in the world.[125] This is clear also from several parts of *An Introduction*, where Francis de Sales firmly states that people in the world, busy with worldly activities, also are called to holiness, and it is possible for them.

Francis had a person-oriented approach to both these women. Since Madame Charmoisy was of delicate health, Francis reminded her to take proper care of her health. Without prejudice to women or women's character, he had appreciated their physical, psychological

[123] Cf. HÄMEL-STIER, *Frauen um Franz von Sales*, pp. 64-66. For those who like to know more about this story: things took a turn for the worse when Henri was 25 years old and when he broke into her room in the Castle of Marclaz in Thonon and ransacked it. He wanted to forcefully take over the administration of the property. This incident caused a lot of mistrust and distance between the two and affected Madame Charmoisy spiritually and psychologically. As her life was characterised by courage and forgiveness, she forgave him again and agreed to be the godmother to his new baby in 1632. On 14 November 1632, she handed over most of the property to Henri and contented herself with a modest share for her pension and upkeep. In his life later on the son realized his mistake and asked her for forgiveness.
[124] Cf. HÄMEL-STIER, *Frauen um Franz von Sales*, p. 66.
[125] Ibid., pp. 67-69.

and moral strength. In a letter to Jane de Chantal he writes, "I love the independent and strong souls who do not have anything feminine in them because this great tenderness confuses the heart, unsettles it and distracts from devoted prayer to God."[126] He appreciated women who could take control of situations, who were resolute and firm when needed. It was true especially in the case of women like Jane de Chantal who had a leading role to play. In this letter Francis is speaking of another Sister who is placed under his care at the request of the Mother, i.e., Jane de Chantal. Francis loves her tenderly, but he believes that her fickleness, 'too much of tenderness' and unsettled nature block her spiritual growth.

3.2.1.2 Madam de Brulart and Francis de Sales

Madam Brulart, also called Madame de la Presidente Marie Bourgeois Brulart, was the wife of Nicolas Brulart. He became the President of the Parliament of Burgundy in 1602. Her friendship with Francis started in early 1604 when she met him in Dijon. Since then she and her sister, Madame Bourgeois du Puisd'Orbe, an abbess, put themselves under the direction of Francis de Sales. Madame Brulart was also a close friend of Madame de Chantal. Madame de Brulart had many children and was active in works of charity.[127]

Madam Brulart experienced total restlessness in her call. Often she was tormented by the desire to leave her family and join the convent. Francis knew well that some situations in her life could not be changed and had to be accepted. She also had to tame down and moderate her 'over-enthusiasm' and discipline her temper. I study some of the famous letters Francis wrote to her in order to guide her. Here below I narrate some of the features that characterised Francis' spiritual guidance of her.

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[126] SALES, DA, 5, *Briefe 1: An Frau von Chantal*, p. 364. This, however, must be understood in the context. 'Does not have anything feminine' has to be understood in the understanding of women in the 16-17 centuries when they were considered physically and mentally weaker. Francis, on the other hand, believed that women, especially those in a leading role, should be strong, resolute and firm. Francis de Sales did not have any prejudice against women. It is clear from his life, writing and teachings. In fact, most of his close friends were women. What he means to communicate here is that he appreciates the strength and resoluteness in Jane de Chantal. „Ich möchte Ihnen noch sagen, meine sehr teure Mutter, daß ich gemäß Ihrem Auftrag unserer Schwester von N. liebevoll geschrieben habe, und ich versichere Ihnen, meine sehr teure Mutter, daß ich dies von ganzem Herzen getan habe, denn ich liebe diese arme Tochter vollkommenen Herzens. Es ist Tatsache, daß es wohl kaum jemand auf der Welt gibt, der herzlicher, zärtlicher, und – um es ganz einfach zu sagen –liebevoller liebt als ich; denn es hat Gott gefallen, mein Herz so zumachen. Dennoch liebe ich die selbständigen, kraftvollen Seelen, die nicht weibisch sind; denn diese große Rührseligkeit verwirrt das Herz, beunruhigt es und lenkt es von der liebenden Gebetsverbundenheit mit Gott ab, hindert die völlige Hingabe und das vollkommene Absterbender Eigenliebe. Was nicht Gott ist, ist nicht für uns. Wie kann das geschehen, daß ich diese Dinge empfinde, der ich doch – wie Sie wissen, meine sehr teure Mutter – der liebendste Mensch auf Erden bin?" (See also AE, Tome XX: *Lettres – Volume X*, p. 215).

[127] See the 'Index of Correspondents' at the end of the book, *Selected Letters*, p. 300. A short biographical sketch of Madam de Brulart and other correspondents of Francis de Sales prepared by the editor is given here.

3.2.1.2.1 Person-Oriented Approach

The letter of Francis de Sales written on 3rd May 1604 seems to be one of his earliest to her.[128] From the beginning itself of that letter one gets the impression that she had asked for (too) many suggestions and pieces of advice from Francis. So he writes to her, "I cannot give you all at once what I promised because I do not have sufficient time to put together all that I have to tell you on the subject you want me to explain. I will, therefore, tell it to you in several letters. Besides the convenience to me, you will have the advantage of having time to ruminate on my advice properly."[129]

At the beginning of their relationship, Francis de Sales exudes a few therapeutic qualities: warmth, openness, congruence and genuineness. These qualities are often so clearly visible in his letters to Madam Brulart. According to person-centred counselling and therapy approach, these are fundamental qualities a therapist should have in a therapeutic relationship.[130]

At the outset, he appreciates her good intention and supports her with a positive stroke. He 'reflects' on what she has already mentioned or what has been implied in her letter to make her further motivated and more conscious of her own inner desires. He makes her aware of her own deep desires and her search for meaning and spirituality: "You have a great desire for Christian perfection. It is the most generous desire you could have: feed it and make it grow every day. The means of gaining perfection are various according to the variety of vocations: religious, widows, and married persons must all seek this perfection, but not all by the same means."[131]

What is also clearly visible in his reply to her is the 'person-oriented' approach. At the beginning Francis orients himself to her particular and personal situation. He reminds her of her married state. Personal vocation and situations have to be taken into account in spiritual direction. He also takes into account her personal feelings, wishes and desires. He is not guiding every person in the same way. In the spiritual direction of Francis, one notices that he adapted himself to the person, his or her situation and the circumstances. Camus says, "He was like the manna which assimilated itself to the palate of whoever

[128] Cf. SALES, *Thy Will be Done*. *Letters of St Francis de Sales*, pp. 45-48. (See also AE, Tome XII: *Lettres – Volume II*, pp. 267-271; DA, 6. p.79).
[129] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 45. (See also AE, XII, pp. 267; DA, 6, p.79).
[130] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change* in *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1957, Washington DC, pp. 95-103. For more details on this topic see 4.2.3.1 of this work.
[131] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 45.

tasted it: he made himself all things to all men that he might gain all for Jesus Christ."[132] Each person has to be guided differently according to their vocation. She is a married woman and is not called in the same way as the nuns to seek perfection.

He gives her some practical tips that suit her life. They include loving God and showing this love in concrete acts of charity to neighbours, constant reception of the sacraments, etc. Francis recommends to her frequent confessions, something which was not common in those days. He even advocated a General Confession at the beginning of a spiritual journey.[133] He believed regular confession was necessary on the way to holiness.[134] At the same time he is not harsh or rigid: "As to confession, I advise you to frequent it even more, especially if you fall into some imperfection by which your conscience is troubled, as often happens at the beginning of the spiritual life. Still, if you have not the opportunity for confession, contrition and repentance will do."[135] He understands it is not easy for a housewife to get out of home and run to a confessor every time she has a troubled conscience. Something which is not quite possible even today!

One must not misunderstand here that Francis de Sales underrates confession. On the contrary, he strongly advocated frequent confession. But here he is speaking of a troubled conscience. He even advocates confession when one has a troubled conscience. But if it is not immediately possible, one has to be satisfied with contrition and repentance.

He also suggests to her daily meditation and reading of spiritual books. Another important tip he gives her is that of being constantly in the presence of God and turning her mind to God from time to time through short spontaneous prayers. "Besides this, often make spontaneous prayers to the Lord, at every moment you can and in all companies, always seeing God in your heart and your heart in God."[136] This simple technique is for Francis de Sales very important: to constantly think of God, to repeat short prayers, to raise our heart and mind to God from time to time. This helps to lead a meditative and contemplative life in the midst of the world and to be constantly in the presence of God. This is the core of

[132] Cf. Jean-Pierre CAMUS, *The Spirit of St Francis de Sales.* Translated by J. S., E-book (Kindle), Section: *How Blessed Francis Adapted Himself to Times, Places and Circumstances*, pp. 93-97. Here p. 94. [This book is the electronic version of the same title translated by J. S., published by Westmonasterii, Westminster, 1910.]
[133] Cf. SALES, *IDL*, Part I, Chapter 19: *How to Make a General Confession*, pp.72-73.
[134] Cf. SALES, *IDL*, Part II, Chapter 19: *Regular Confession*, pp.123-126.
[135] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 46. One must understand this in context. Francis de Sales does not at all mean that contrition can replace confession. In cases where there is no possibility of making confession, in the case of a troubled conscience due to imperfection (not sin) one should at least show real contrition and repentance.
[136] Ibid., p. 47.

Salesian mysticism: to be God-oriented, to bear God always in our hearts in the busy world.[137]

Another important point Francis recommends is the regular evaluation of ourselves to see if we are sticking to our decisions and resolutions. It is not enough to have the desire and to make decisions; it is still more important to stick to them. There is a need to constantly evaluate ourselves to see our progress, failures and shortcomings. This also helps us to make necessary changes and modifications, if and when needed. To the famous philosopher Socrates is attributed the maxim, 'An unexamined life is not worth living.' Francis was not aware of SMART goal-setting,[138] but he had enough psychological knowledge and practical wisdom to know the working of the human mind and how to make use of it in goal-setting.

He strongly encourages her to meditate, but at the same time she should take care of her physical self. It should not do her any harm. In her effort to be devout, she should not damage her health. He tells her "… be very careful not to make it either after dinner or after supper, for that would hurt your health."[139]

Francis is also aware that this 'journey of faith,' even if the person is full of desire, enthusiasm and fervour, requires an enormous amount of perseverance, discipline and endurance. Therefore, he encourages her to be perseverant in her attempts: "And although it may seem at first against our will, we must not give up on that account; our repugnance will at last be conquered by habit and good inclination, which will be produced by repetition of the acts."[140] Is Francis de Sales a behaviourist? Here he seems to be speaking like a behaviour therapist. Do not our repeated actions help us to develop habits and make them part of our life? Or is he speaking like a positive psychologist on character formation?[141]

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[137] Cf. Mary GREENAN, *Salesian Mysticism: Towards the Ecstasy of Action* in *Journal of Salesian Studies*, Spring 2004, Vol XII. 2, Berkeley, CA: Institute of Salesian Spirituality, pp. 258-270.

[138] SMART is a method of goal-setting in personality development and project management. It is a mnemonic acronym which stands for: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Bound. (See for details George T. DORAN, *There is a S.M.A.R.T Way to Write Management Goals and Objectives*, in *Management Review* 70.11, Nov.1981, (AMA Forum), pp. 35-36. Some attribute the SMART concept to Paul J. Meyer.

[139] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 46.

[140] Ibid., p. 47.

[141] Cf. Alexander T. POCETTO, *Positive Psychology, Francis de Sales and Character Formation: An Introduction* in *Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses*, published online by Sage Publishers, September 23, 2014, pp. 1-7. Print version: Dec 2014, Vol. 43. 4, (The Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion-CCSR), pp. 575-591.

He tells her never to fail in her duty to her family by staying long in the church or retiring to herself often and too long. In her attempt to reach holiness, she should never neglect her family or her responsibilities. He warns her also against any snobbish behaviour or tendency to look down on others who are not religious or devout in her opinion. "… take particular care that your husband, your servants, and your parents do not suffer by your too long stays in church, by your too great retirement, or by your failing to care for your household. And do not become, as often happens, manager of others' affairs, or too contemptuous of conversations in which the rules of devotion are not quite exactly observed."[142]

She should never make her devotion a nuisance to others. On the contrary, she should make it lovable to others. He tells her, "You must not only be devout, and love devotion, but you must make it lovable to everyone. Well, you will render it lovable if you render it useful and agreeable."[143] He ends the letter with his personal assurance and with a request for her prayers.

3.2.1.2.2 Genuineness, Empathy and Acceptance

His letter of 13 October 1604[144] gives us an insight into how empathically Francis accepted his directees. Francis begins this letter by expressing his real joy at receiving her letter. He also hopes his letters give her similar joy. What is visible here are his genuine empathy, the sincerity in his approach and the simplicity and openness with which he communicates with people. He expresses freely his feelings to her - what can be expressed to his directee - and makes her feel free and at home with him.

In this letter he also refers to the anxieties in her mind of which she has mentioned. It is obvious from this letter that she has sought his help to acquire not only devotion but also peace of mind. He writes, "You ask how you should set about acquiring devotion and peace of mind."[145] He emphatically tells her that to have peace of mind, one should be faithful to one's state of life. He says that fulfilling God's will for us is the most important thing for human beings here on earth. They have no other greater purpose here in this world.[146] It is indeed a difficult task. He says, "Our miserable nature always wants to have

[142] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 48.
[143] Ibid., p. 48.
[144] SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 57-61. (See also AE, XII, pp. 345-352; DA, 6, pp. 82-87).
[145] Ibid., p. 57.
[146] Cf. Ibid.

things its own way and not God's way. As we come to have less self-will we shall find it easier to obey God's will." [147]

Another important thing he does is to disabuse her or to remove their naïve and simplistic ideas that some lives are more pleasant and free of troubles: "You must consider that every state of life is in some way irksome, bitter and unpleasant; and what is more, except for those who are wholly resigned to God's will, people are all inclined to want to change places with others."[148] What an insight! Instead of finding meaning and happiness in one's life, many try to constantly change their vocation. The grass always seems to be greener on the other side! Sometimes a housewife longs to be a nun, a nun longs to be outside the cloister, a priest wants to be a social worker, etc. This yearning for another form of life had been a common problem in those days. Francis de Sales means that one should be careful enough in discerning and choosing one's way of life and when one has chosen it, it is not good to long for another way of life, except for grave reasons. One should accept what one has chosen, or better said, to that which God has called us and be faithful to it. It is not an uncommon trend even today.

He explains it with his own example: "If I were not a bishop, maybe knowing what I do know, I should not want to be one. But seeing that I am already a bishop, I am not only obliged to do what this hard calling requires of me; over and above that I must do it joyfully, finding pleasure and happiness in it."[149] This is indeed a piece of insight and advice that is truly Salesian in nature and could be of use to any person in any vacation.

Francis de Sales believes that any way of life can be successful only if one has the proper inner dispositions. Whatever one's way of life, one should be joyful and what one does should be done joyfully and cheerfully. What is done without joy, enthusiasm or cheerfulness is only drudgery. Francis tells her that she should take her life with its crosses - her own crosses, not the crosses of someone else. "We each got to carry our own cross, not anybody else's."[150]

He has already established initial rapport with her. Francis knew that it was important in this relationship. If she is to accept his suggestions and guidance, he has to be genuine and empathic towards her. And now he becomes personal and person-oriented in his approach

[147] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 59.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid., p. 60. «Il ne faut pas porter la croix des autres, mais la sienne.» AE, XII, p. 349.

to her. He writes to her, "And now, my dear daughter, allow me to speak to you from my heart, for this is how I feel towards you, you would like me to give you a few practical points for your guidance."[151] And he gives her some practical guidelines which include daily meditation, cheerfully carrying out her daily duties, doing God's will at all times, frequent short prayers, offering herself up in prayer, etc.[152]

Moreover, he persuades her to love her vocation as housewife which God has enjoined on her. God loves it and she should also love her vocation. Constantly doubting one's vocation or wanting to change what one cannot or should not is an unhealthy sign: "We must love all that God loves, and He loves our vocation; so let us love it too and not waste our energy hankering after a different sort of life, but get on with our own job."[153]

This piece of advice has to be seen in the context of people's thinking in those times that they could not lead a holy life as ordinary Christians – being a housewife, farmer, lay person, etc. This false notion is something Francis strongly objected to, and he tried in all his writings and preaching to clear this misconception. One of the main purposes of writing *An Introduction* was to show ordinary people that all are called to holiness, whatever their state of life is, and at what stage of holiness they may have been.[154] And no one need to or should try to change their vocation to become holy. *Lumen Gentium* (LG) says, "They must, therefore, hold on to and perfect in their lives that sanctification which they have received from God. It is, therefore, quite clear that all Christians in any state or walk of life and called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of love and by this holiness a more human manner of life is fostered also in earthly society."[155]

Francis also gives her some good and practical instructions on confession and Holy Communion. He recommends daily examination of her conscience and life. This is something he suggests to all his directees. One who is on the path to growth should make constant examination to assess one's progress, failures, and to make necessary changes. One's life has to be examined often if one has to make progress in spiritual life. Modern companies make daily evaluations to assess their gain and loss. Frequent evaluation is a desideratum on the way to progress - be it in the spiritual realm or the material.

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[151] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 60.
[152] Cf. Ibid., pp. 60-61.
[153] Ibid., p. 61.
[154] Cf. Peter DYCKHOFF, *Wege der Freundschaft mit Gott. Geistlich leben nach Franz von Sales*, (2nd ed.) Freiburg: Herder, 2014, pp. 8-9.
[155] *Lumen Gentium* (LG), Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Ch. V, No. 39.

He reminds her once again towards the end of the letter that her devotion should not be a cause of disturbance or annoyance for others in the family. "Remember what I have so often told you: do honour to our devotion by making it very lovable to everyone who knows you, especially your own family; live in such a way that everybody speaks well of your piety."[156] He encourages her to see the positive side of the persons in the family, especially her husband. "How fortunate you are to have such a reasonable and tolerant husband! You ought to be grateful to God and thank Him."[157] He closes the letter by assuring her that she is close to him and is always in his heart.

The strongly personal and person-oriented approach of Francis de Sales is clearly visible in this letter.

3.2.1.2.2 'Be Your Real Self'

In his letter of 10 June 1605[158] Francis de Sales encourages Madam de Brulart to be true to her real self. This is a short letter asking her to persevere in her efforts, to be joyful and to remain where God has placed her. He begins the letter plainly and openly, "Madam, my dearest sister, you see me in readiness to write to you, and I know not what to say except to tell you to walk always joyfully in this heavenly way in which God has placed you… courageously lead your heart to the execution of the things you know He wants from you, in spite of all kinds of contradictions that might oppose themselves to this."[159]

Francis reminds Madam de Brulart that she should purify her heart daily. He also tells her to be moderate. When starting a spiritual journey, many are over-eager to achieve too much and to do too many things at the same time. Madam de Brulart was also affected by this over-enthusiasm. Francis tells her to be moderate: "Love nothing too much, not even virtues, which are lost sometimes by passing the bounds of moderation."[160] In the following world-famous quotation, Francis encourages her to be what she is and to be that in the best way: "Let us be what we are, and let us be it well, to do honour to the Master whose work we are."[161]

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[156] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 62.
[157] Ibid., p. 62.
[158] SALES, *Thy will be Done*, pp. 21-22. (See also AE, XIII, pp. 53-54; DA, 6, pp. 94-95).
[159] Ibid., p. 21.
[160] SALES, *Thy will be Done*, p. 22. «N' aymés rien trop, je vous supplie, non pas mesme les vertus, que l'on perd quelque fois en les outrepassant.» AE, XIII, p. 53. „Lieben Sie bitte nichts allzusehr, nicht einmal die Tugenden, die man manchmal einbüßt, wenn man sie übertreibt." DA, 6, p. 95.
[161] Ibid. This quotation has been translated variously. Here Mackey translated it in this way. As noted earlier, the publishers of *Thy Will be Done* have basically taken the translation of Benedict Henry Mackey. The

For Francis de Sales, one enjoys freedom, joy and happiness when one tries to be what God has called one to be. In spiritual life it is not only just a matter of being somehow, but one should try to be the best one can be. By being the best that one can be, one gives glory to God. When we long for something else that we are not, it causes self-contradiction, disharmony, lack of joy and incongruence in our lives.

What Francis de Sales here speaks about being the self that one is, sounds close to what Carl Rogers explains in his Person-Centred Therapy. He also calls one to maintain the real self that one is. Trying to be something else causes incongruence and consequently it leads to imbalance and mental illness. According to Carl Rogers, the way to avoid personal imbalance and to promote growth is to avoid incongruence by being the person that one is.[162] There are clear similarities between the Salesian and Rogerian approaches.

At the end of the letter, Francis tells her that he shall be pleased to know the subjects of her meditation and the prayers she makes. This is with a purpose: to assess her progress and to guide her more personally. He concludes the letter with a wish to keep her heart always at peace.

3.2.1.2.3 Encouraging and Supporting with Positive Strokes

The letter he writes to her in March 1605[163] from La Roche is a classic one. As usual, at the beginning he expresses his great joy at receiving her letter. He congratulates her on the progress she makes in her spiritual growth. He affirms, reflects and shares in her feelings of happiness, contentment and success: "I was extremely happy about your letter of 20 January because it seems to me that in spite of the afflictions you describe to me, you have advanced in the spiritual life and profited by your trials."[164]

Francis also tells her in his frankness that he is busy at the moment and unable to make a long reply as he might wish to. She is upset about the fact that she finds it difficult to reveal herself as much as she wants to. Francis consoles her saying that he knows already a lot about her, her inclinations and the motives of her heart. He has a special gift of

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original French is : « Soyons ce que nous sommes, et soyons le bien, pour faire honneur au Maistre ouvrier duquel nous sommes la besoigne. » AE, XIII, pp. 53-54. In German, it has been translated as „Seien wir doch, was wir sind, und seien wir es gut, um dem Meister Ehre zu machen, dessen Werk wir sind." DA, 6, p. 95.

[162] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person. A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*, (1995 Edition), Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company; refer to chapter six: *What it means to be a person*, pp. 107-124.

[163] SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 87-90. (See also AE, XIII, pp. 18-22; DA, 6, pp. 89-93).

[164] Ibid., p. 87.

knowing the hearts of people. This has been stated by many others too.[165] Francis tries to use his knowledge of her to help her: "This is of great advantage to you because you want to use me for your salvation."[166]

Francis lets her know that he understands her situation and the progress she makes and he is happy about it. He is trying to highlight the positive points in her and helps her to build up on her strengths and to derive confidence from the simple successes she has been able to achieve. In spiritual direction and pastoral counselling such small successes are to be seen and highly priced that the directee remains on the right path with courage and confidence. Barry and Connolly recommend: "Understanding is usually helpful. One could merely listen sympathetically and offer what little encouragement one can to another human being in pain. Sympathetic listening is very helpful to someone who is troubled."[167]

3.2.1.2.4. 'Be Realistic'

One important piece of advice that Francis gives Madam Brulart is that she should be realistic. She should admit that she is human and that self-will or ego is not easy to overcome. In Christian life, in the fight against self one should not have unrealistic expectations which could often disappoint us. She is much upset that her self-will frequently comes to the forefront. He tells her that it is not easy in this life to get rid of our self-will. All that we can do is to reduce it or to master control over it slowly and steadily: "It is impossible for us to escape from self entirely...We have to go on bearing ourselves till God bears us to heaven."[168]

He also tells her that only God can heal us instantly, but that is a rare case. In most cases God gives us the strength and grace to fight our weaknesses. An instant healing or instant mastery over self is not, normally speaking, possible for human beings. That can only be done by God. But all human beings are called to take up this struggle upon themselves to change and modify themselves little by little, step by step, patiently and confidently. He gently persuades her, "So we must be patient and not imagine that we can cure ourselves in a day of all the bad habits we have contracted by being careless about our spiritual health.

[165] See Jean-Pierre CAMUS, *The Spirit of St Francis de Sales*. See the parts on 'Upon Different Methods of Direction' and 'Advice on Having a Director'. (E-book, Kindle Edition, p. 315.)
[166] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 87.
[167] BARRY / CONNOLLY, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 5.
[168] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p.87. «Je vous respons qu'il n'est pas possible de nous abandonner du tout nous mesmes. Pendant que nous sommes icy bas, il faut que nous nous portions tous-jours nous mesmes jusques a ce que Dieu nous porte au Ciel.» AE, XIII, p. 19.

God did, of course, cure some people suddenly, without leaving them any mark of their former diseases…"[169]

We must be patient with ourselves. We must try to conquer ourselves little by little and inch by inch. In his own words, "We must acquire this mastery little by little and inch by inch, for the saints themselves spent many decades conquering themselves. I entreat you to be patient with everyone, but first of all with yourself."[170] This is a request which Francis makes to many people. He wants his directees to take one step at a time and make steady progress instead of hurrying and reaching nowhere. One sees this idea being repeated in his letters to different persons.

He tells her that at the moment it is enough if she can place herself in the presence of God. That is to be seen as a success at this initial stage. One should be happy to achieve small successes and be proud of them. Francis also makes a point regarding the uniqueness of individuals and their vocations. There are different kinds of trees. They bear different kinds of fruit. The taste, smell, colour and shape of the fruits are not the same. Nor do they all bear fruits in the same season. It is the same with human beings. They are all different from one another, bear different fruits and at different seasons. What ultimately matters is one's faithfulness and readiness to do the will of God.[171]

In this letter Francis tries repeatedly to encourage her, to help her see the positive side of things and to be realistic. She seems to be struck by her short setbacks, and Francis thinks it necessary that she remain adamant in her decision without being affected by the setbacks. "But don't lose heart, I entreat you; gradually train your will to follow God's will wherever it leads; see that your will is strongly roused as soon as your conscience tells you ... and little by little these feelings of repugnance which run so deep in you will grow less intense and soon disappear altogether."[172]

Repelling others through one's devotion is something not Francis de Sales would advocate. He requests her not to be a nuisance to others whom she wants to lead to holiness and to a life of devotion. Instead, she should try to lead them and attract them by good example and by her goodness and gentleness:

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[169] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 87.
[170] Ibid., p. 88. «Il faut que, petit a petit et pied a pied, nous nous acquérions cette domination pour la conqueste de laquelle les Saintz et les Saintes ont employé plusieurs dizaines d'annees. Il faut, s'il vous plaist, avoir patience avec tout le monde, mais premièrement avec vous mesme.» AE, XIII, p.19.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Ibid., p. 89.

> I beg you to be very careful not to run such risks but to pursue your aims in this matter gently and kindly, that is to say, without being a nuisance to those whom you would like to influence toward perfection, and without even letting them guess your intention; for believe me, that would do more harm than good. So you must work by your example and by what you say, quite gently sowing the good seed which might later come up; and without making it obvious that you want to instruct them or win them over, you must gradually fill their hearts with holy ideas and considerations. And so you will do much more real good than in any other way, especially if you pray about it.[173]

Francis tells her that she should not, in her over-enthusiasm and eagerness, in any way try to influence others. She should respect their freedom and individuality even in spiritual matters but at the same time try to attract them with gentleness, patience and good examples. She should also have faith in their capacity to grow. An aggressive or obtrusive approach is not helpful. It sounds similar to the 'non-directive' method used in the person-centred therapy.

3.2.1.2.5 'Use Your Emotions Constructively'

In the modern sense of the word, Francis was not a psychologist; nor was psychology known as a scientific subject in those times. Francis, however, seems to have had many psychological insights. In his letter to Madam Brulart written in February-March 1606,[174] he guides her to make positive use of her desires and feelings. Even the languor and lack of zest that she often experiences should animate her to action. But at the same time one should be moderate in showing one's feelings. One should not be overcome by one's feelings. Feelings should not control one; on the other hand, one should control one's feelings and use them as catalysts for action.

This counsel of Francis reveals to the reader that she is still disturbed by her imperfections. She seems to be clinging to too high ideals and wishes. Francis tells her that as long as we are human beings, there will always be some imperfections in us. He further tells her that she should make positive use of her desires and feelings: "I see that you are still languishing with the desire for greater perfection. I praise this kind of languor for it does not make you languorous, as I know very well; on the contrary, it animates you and spurs you on to conquest."[175]

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[173] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 90.
[174] Cf. Ibid., pp.107-109. (See also AE, XII, pp.148-151; DA, 6, pp. 96-99).
[175] Ibid., p. 107.

After giving her a positive stroke, he advises her to be realistic in dealing with herself and her desires. It is also important to note the personal touch Francis employs in writing to her:

> You live, so you tell me, subject to thousands of imperfections. Very true, my good sister; but don't you try to make them die in you hour by hour? ... Have I never told you that we must be patient with everyone and primarily ourselves? For we are more troublesome to ourselves than anyone else, because we can distinguish between the old and the new Adam in us, the interior and exterior man.[176]

Then he gives her some useful tips for her daily life. She can spend even one hour in meditation if she wants to. However, he adds that she should not force her imagination. He also gives her some practical and wise instructions regarding receiving Holy Communion. She should not be scrupulous about receiving Communion. She is free to work after receiving Communion. Why do you want to waste your day because you have received Holy Communion, he asks her. He cautions her that what she should do is to avoid sin at any cost, and, as far as possible, the pleasures of the senses. Even in this regard, Francis is rather mild. If it is unavoidable that she should have it, then it is tolerated; but in which case modesty is called for.[177] What a practical, wise and human approach from Francis!

One can see from the letter that both of them have already reached a higher level of director-directee relationship. She is able to relate more freely with Francis and share even her day-to-day spiritual concerns with him. We also see how she gains confidence and asks for more counsel regarding various other matters like Communion, going out, attitude towards the world, being in the world, etc. Francis wants her to be in the world but not affected by it. In order to fulfil her vocation as a mother, she has to remain in the world. In order to be perfect, she does not have to run away from the world: "Perfection, my dear lady, does not consist in not seeing the world, but in not relishing and savouring it."[178]

Francis tells her that their relationship has been characterised by straightforwardness and simplicity and it should remain so. Francis says he is genuine and he esteems this virtue in his relationships. He wants total frankness, openness and genuineness between them: "My dear sister, I should not wish there to be any make-believe in us, not real make-believe.

[176] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 107.
[177] Cf. Ibid., p. 108. (By 'pleasures of the senses' Francis means taking undue pleasure in eating and drinking, going to dances, games, etc. In *IDL* he warns people against seeking pleasures and attractions of the world without modesty and moderation. See *IDL*, Part 1, Chs. 23 & 24).
[178] Ibid.

Straightforwardness and simplicity are the virtues proper to us."[179] Francis tells her that she should not be too much affected by what the world thinks about her and her life. One should keep one's personal identity: "In a word, despise the world's opinion of you and do not let it upset you in any way."[180]

At the end of the letter he deals with a personal matter. He responds to her complaint that he loved some other persons more than her. Francis tells her that he does not prefer others to her. But when others need him, he is obliged to help them. Sometimes others need more help from him than she. He assures her of his love and care. Francis' response hints at the feelings of envy and jealousy which she might have had because she thought he loved others more than her. The final part of the letter seems to have been lost because it does not have the characteristic leave-taking.

3.2.1.2.6 Patient Acceptance of Others

Accepting human beings as they are - with their weak nature and frailties - is central to the humanism of Francis de Sales. It, however, does not mean that one accepts all the negative elements or the evil present in the other. One should be able to see a human person independent of his fragilities and be able to accept him. Gentleness, empathy and openness are more powerful tools to win over others than violence, strictness and force.

The letter of Francis dated October 1606[181] gives the clear impression that she had complained about her husband and her father, that they stood in the way of her devotion. The letter gives an indication that her devotion and pious practices got her into trouble with her husband and her father. Therefore, Francis attempts to make her appreciate their viewpoints and to see the situation at home from a positive angle.

Francis tells her that in his opinion she has a good father and an equally good husband. They are jealous and protective of her, which is indeed a good sign and should not be seen as interference. They feel violated when she does things on her own without consulting them even if it is in the name of devotion. "What a good father and what a very good husband you have got! Alas! They are a little jealous of their authority and dominion over you, and when you do something without their permission and sanction, it seems to them that their rights have been in some sense violated. *Well, you must allow them this little*

[179] SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 108-109.
[180] Ibid., p. 109.
[181] Cf. SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 126-128. (See also AE, XIII, pp. 225-230; DA, 6, pp. 105-109).

touch of human nature."[182] He tries to bring home to her that she should not see their objections in a negative way; on the other hand, they are signs of their love and concern for her. Moreover, they are human beings and they are also likely to feel violated and insulted when she does things without their permission.

To accept human weaknesses and frailties is central to the guidance technique of Francis de Sales. The directee himself should admit his frail human nature and that of others. One has to accept human beings as they are, not as angels. Human beings are likely to err. This aspect also has to be taken into account in all our dealings with people. That is what he means by saying, 'You must allow them little touches of human nature'.

What he tells her in one part of this letter can be controversial and even shocking if we do not understand it properly. He says, "We must sometimes leave Our Lord in order to please others for love of him."[183] Many women in those times thought, in their new-found earnestness for devotion and holy life, it was important and necessary to spend long hours in the church even to the neglect of their household duties, their obligations to their spouses and parents. For many it was also an escape from their families and personal responsibilities. Francis de Sales makes it crystal clear that it is not sincere devotion or true holiness. But he presents his teaching only mildly and suggestively. He invites her to think over the matter to see if there has been any provocation from her side:

> No, I cannot stop myself from telling you what I think, my dear daughter; I know that you will not take offence at anything said to you in a spirit of sincerity. Perhaps you have given your father and your husband occasion to take exception to your devotion in some way? I don't know; maybe you were too eager and fussy about it, wanting to press and force them into it in some way? If that is the case, this is surely why they are now making a stand. *We must, if possible, avoid making our devotion a nuisance*.[184]

The letter clearly shows the empathy, sincerity and trust that existed between them. He frankly tells her, "And it will be a very great consolation to me to know that my advice

[182] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 126. Emphasis mine. [Henry Benedict Mackey translates it as "we must allow them this little bit of human nature." See, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 61]. «Mon Dieu, le bon pere que nous avons et le très bon mari que vous aves! Helas, ilz ont un peu de jalousie de leur empire et domination, qui leur semble estr'aucunement violé quand on fait quelque chose sans leur authorité et commandement. Que voules-vous, il leur faut permettre cette petite humanité.» AE, XIII, p. 226. „Mein Gott, welch guten Vater haben wir doch und welch vorzüglichen Gatten haben Sie! Ach, sie wachen beide ein wenig eifersüchtig über ihren Machtbereich und ihre Herrschaft, die ihnen irgendwie verletzt dünkt, wenn man etwas ohne ihr Machtwort und ihren Befehl tut. Was wollen Sie, man muß diese kleine Menschlichkeit verstehen." DA, 6, p.106. What Francis means here is that one should be able to bear with the weaknesses and failures of others which are due to human nature.

[183] Ibid.

[184] Ibid., pp. 126-127. Emphasis mine.

does not make your heart in any way uneasy."[185] What openness and freedom existed between them!

There is a clear indication that her frequent going out and her frequent Communion has put her in confrontation against her husband and father-in-law. It was a common problem in those days. It may not anymore be the case in Europe today, but similar problems exist in India even in our day. Often one comes across cases of neglect of household duties by men and women in the name of piety and devotion. Sometimes the problem is not lack of devotion but an excess of it.

A spiritual guide in India comes across in his day-to-day ministry many similar cases. There are people who want to dedicate themselves totally to the Lord; at the same time they do not want to take care of their families. There are others who make the life of people around them miserable because of their piety. They are annoying and cause in others a kind of disregard for the person as well as piety in general. That does a great disservice to piety. Being pious or spiritual need not necessarily disturb others or go against once vocation in the world. Which, says Francis de Sales, is contrary to true devotion.[186] In the same letter Francis puts it succinctly: "Sometimes you have to advance by seeming to retreat."[187]

At the end of the letter, Francis appreciates her readiness to make sacrifices and encourages her: "From what I can see, you really are practising resignation and indifference now because you cannot serve God according to your own will."[188] He appreciates the progress she has made until now and he emboldens her to continue on the good path.

3.2.1.2.7 Constant Accompaniment and Support

Francis de Sales used to keep in touch with his directees in spite of his busy schedule. With this purpose, he wrote short notes to them when he was on a journey or when he was on his visitation. They were short and basically letters of assurance to those who needed them or letters just to remind that he was thinking of the directee and praying for him. Some psychotherapists have also stressed the value of 'holding the client' in thoughts and prayers. Brian Thorne says, "Regular 'holding' of clients – in many ways much akin to

[185] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 127.
[186] Cf. SALES, *IDL*, Part 1, Chapter 3, pp. 40-41.
[187] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 127.
[188] Ibid., p. 128.

silent or intercessory prayer – because it is part of a spiritual discipline is likely to have far-reaching effects in other areas of therapists' lives and to illumine all their relationships."[189] Francis also made use of these short notes to remind them of their decision and to encourage them to keep going. They have the function of a reminder and 'positive stroke'.

The letter he writes to Madam Brulart on 20 July 1607[190] from Viuz-en-Sallez seems to be one such. He has written it to her on the way. He spares some time amidst his busy programme to help her. He repeats the exhortation not to be overeager for holiness. Her lack of self-acceptance, over-eagerness and impatience seem to hinder her growth in devotion. He writes to her, "I cannot refrain from writing to you at every opportunity that comes my way. Please believe me – do not be overeager; be very careful to serve God with great gentleness, for this is the right way of setting about His service. Do not want to do everything, but only something, and no doubt you will do much."[191] He concludes the letter exhorting her to be cheerful: "Be of good cheer, let nothing dismay you..."[192]

People tend to forget. Forgetfulness is a common human weakness. A counsellor or spiritual director has to remind them from time to time and encourage them through positive strokes to strive towards their goal. This action of the counsellor or spiritual director assures the directee and gives him a feeling that the counsellor or director cares for him and is concerned about his growth.[193] This kind of positive strokes are always visible in the letters of Francis de Sales. From time to time he writes to his directees, sometimes brief notes to encourage them and to remind them of their decisions.

With the same purpose, a similar letter was written to her in April 1611 from Annecy.[194] It also is a short letter. It is clear that it was not meant to be an independent letter to her. Actually the main letter was sent to her husband with some serious purpose. Along with that letter he writes a short letter to her too. He writes here, "I am enclosing a little message for you simply to greet you with all my heart."[195]

Although it is only a short note, it reveals a lot about Francis de Sales. He always kept good contact with his directees in spite of his busy schedule. He made use of every

[189] Brian THORNE, *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment*, p. 215. See also pp. 240, 244.
[190] Cf. SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 135-136. (See also AE, XIII, pp. 298-299; DA, 6, pp.112-113).
[191] Ibid., p. 135.
[192] Ibid., p. 136.
[193] Cf. BARRY / CONNOLLY, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 92. See also pp. 5, 59, 72 & 102.
[194] Cf. SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 191. (See also AE, XV: *LETTRES - VOLUME V*, pp. 53-54; DA, 6, 127-128).
[195] Ibid.

opportunity to meet them, to write to them and to encourage them. This little note must have surely encouraged her and reassured her of Francis' love and concern for her. He reminds her that holy indifference is not lack of energy. It is not apathy or being unconcerned. It is selfless love of God's will and total surrender to it.[196]

3.2.1.3 Francis de Sales and Madame de Chantal

The friendship between Jane de Chantal and Francis de Sales has a special place in the history of the Church. It is one of the most remarkable and inspiring friendships between two saints. Together they grew in friendship and holiness; together they founded a major religious order and brought about a new way of living the gospel – the Salesian way of life. In the opinion of Henri Nouwen, the friendship that existed between them was characterised by 'Jesus-centredness' and remains an inspiring challenge to the spiritual friendships of all time.[197] The relationship that existed between them was also marked by openness, directness and spontaneity which offered them both mutual healing and strength. Henri Nouwen says, "In a time, in which there is so much concern about the right professional distance within a helping relationship and in which there is preoccupation with transference and counter-transference, Jane de Chantal and Francis de Sales offer us a fresh perspective on a healing relationship."[198]

3.2.1.3.1 The Person of Jane Françoise de Chantal

Jeanne-Francoise de Chantal was born on 3 June 1572, in a noble family in Dijon. When she was 18 months old, her mother died after giving birth to Andre Freymyot, her brother, who later became the Archbishop of Bourges. She was practically raised by her father, and possessed a certain amount of masculine strength and stern behaviour, while in Francis one finds extreme kindness and maternal gentleness. She was married to Christophe de Rabutin Baron de Chantal, an official of the Court. Francoise de Chantal is described as possessing great beauty and attractive qualities – taller than average, black-haired, round-faced, having fair complexion and lively eyes. She loved her husband passionately. There was an intense friendship between them. In the warm months, Baron de Chantal was often away on war and campaigns and spent winter months with his family. Since he was often away for long periods, he entrusted the management of his estate to his wife. She possessed amazing administrative abilities. She looked after the house, supervised the work on the

[196] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 224.
[197] Cf. Henri J.M. NOUWEN, in 'Preface' to *Letters of Spiritual Direction*, pp. 3-5.
[198] Ibid., p. 5.

farms and fields and even educated the servants in religion. She was also generous in giving alms – a quality for which she was well-known.[199]

All the good times came to a sudden end when her husband was mistakenly shot and killed during a hunt. Jane was expecting her fourth child. She could not accept this tragic event in her life. The death of her husband affected her deeply and tragically. She felt like leaving the world and running away to a desert and spending her life alone with God. What withheld her from going away from home was the thought of her children.[200] She vowed not to marry again and to live only for God.[201]

She also began getting visions and having strange spiritual experiences. Her spiritual guide was of little help to her. She was desperately looking for spiritual assistance.[202] She was on the search for a holy spiritual director for more than two years. Her father, Monsieur Freymont, invited her to a spiritual director in his hometown in Dijon who was well-known among the women of the place. Out of obedience she met him but was convinced that it was not he whom she was looking for. He placed her under strange practices and disciplines which strained her spiritually and physically. Instead of finding spiritual solace and comfort, she experienced further moral uneasiness and psychological anguish under his direction. He extracted a vow of obedience from her. Jane felt herself entrapped. In spite of her 'torture' she remained faithful to him.[203]

For the sake of her children, she had to move to Montheleon to her father-in-law. He was an unkind man. He forced her to stay with him in his castle; if not, he threatened to disinherit her and her children. Although Jane did not like going to his castle, she had to yield. The old man was living a rather immoral life with one of his mistresses and her five children. Madame de Chantal had to lead a subservient life because the servant took the upper hand in the castle due to her relationship with the old man. Life in the castle of her father-in-law was for Jane indeed a purgatory. During the winter of 1603-'04 her father, President Freymont, invited her to Dijon to listen to the Lenten preaching of Francis de Sales, the Bishop of Geneva.

[199] Cf. Maurice HENRY-COUANNIER, *St Francis de Sales and his Friends*, tr. Veronica MORROW, Chicago: Sceptre, 1964, pp.159-163.
[200] Cf. Ibid., pp. 166-167.
[201] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 238.
[202] Cf. HENRY-COUANNIER, *St Francis de Sales and his Friends*, p. 168.
[203] Cf. Ibid., pp.168-169.

3.2.1.3.2 The First Encounter

Francis was already on the way to becoming a well-known preacher. Jane had been a widow now for two years, still grieving at the death of her husband and trying to come to terms with her life. Bishop Francis was also impressed at how attentive she was at his sermons. He enquired about her. Archbishop Andre Freymont replied that she was his sister. With his preaching Francis moved many listeners and conquered the hearts of people in Dijon. The young Archbishop invited him to a dinner which was also attended by his sister Jane.

Jane had been a widow for two years now and did not want to marry again. She wanted to dedicate her total life to God. In spite of her desire not to re-marry and to dedicate her life to God, Jane had adorned herself with jewels.[204] For Francis it was a contradiction. He did not comprehend her behaviour. So Bishop Francis asked her: "Is it true, madam, that you do not want to re-marry and want to serve God? … If so, why do you wear those jewels, as if you wish?"[205] Widows of those times who intended to marry a second time wore jewels and frills. In Lajeunie's narration of the events, Francis tells her directly and humorously, "Well… you should take the signboard down."[206] Madam de Chantal got the message. She did not wear her jewels any more.[207]

3.2.1.3.3 Germination of a Life-long Friendship

After the first encounter, she immediately recognized a friend and guide in Francis de Sales and wanted to open her heart to him. Her spiritual guide had been tyrannical and had forbidden her to make confession to anyone else other than to him. In her present situation of grief, pain, loss and looking for a new direction, he was not helpful. She had been searching for a new spiritual guide. She admired Bishop Francis and knew at once that it was he whom she had been searching for all the time.[208] She sought to place herself immediately under his direction. Bishop Francis liked her very much from the first meeting. However, he did not want to answer in a hurry. Moreover, she was at that time under the direction of another priest. He wanted to discern God's will. It took him some

[204] Cf. LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. II, pp. 276-278.
[205] As quoted by MOOKENTHOTTAM, St *Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 242.
[206] As quoted by LAJEUNIE, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Vol. II, p. 277. Lajeunie describes it in a more dramatic manner: "Well!, he replied, you should take the signboard down."
[207] Cf. Ibid.
[208] Cf. Ibid., pp. 277-278.

time to know God's will in this matter. After Easter, she made her confession to him, and Francis accepted her and agreed to guide her.[209]

Confession, especially a general confession, was the starting point of a spiritual relationship and guidance in those times. It helped the confessor or the director to get to know the directee in some depth, especially with a great deal of information regarding the past life, tendencies, inclinations, desires, weaknesses, etc. It could be compared to the psychoanalytic/ counselling sessions in modern times, where the client fully opens up his heart to the psychoanalyst/ counsellor. Francis advocated general confession in *An Introduction* at the beginning of a spiritual guidance. He says, "Since I am advising you about a general renewal of heart and a complete conversion to God by committing yourself to the devout life, I think I have every reason to advise you to make this general confession."[210]

Francis gradually helped Jane to build up confidence. Francis' therapeutic qualities like frankness, authenticity and simplicity helped Jane to open herself to him and to get helped by him. There developed gradually a deep friendship between Madam Jane de Chantal and Bishop Francis de Sales.

3.2.1.3.4. The Process of Discernment

Discernment is central to spiritual guidance. In fact, most people seek spiritual direction to find help to discover God's will for them.[211] Discerning and paying attention to what the Holy Spirit wants of the directee is essential to Catholic spiritual direction.[212] It is the same in the Salesian way. First of all, a spiritual director must be able to discern for himself whether he is able to guide the person in question. An impulsive 'yes' or 'no' is not the right response. He should also assess his capacity, his time and other requirements for taking up such a task. For Francis, spiritual direction is an important task, and one should be careful in choosing the director who should also be cautious and prudent in accepting the offer.[213] In the matter of taking important decisions, Francis was never in a hurry. From his younger days, Francis took time to arrive at decisions. The good examples include

[209] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 242.
[210] SALES, *IDL*, Part 1, Ch. 6, p. 47.
[211] Cf. Andre LOUF, *Die Gnade kann mehr… Geistliche Begleitung*, tr.Christine HOFINGER, Münsterschwarzach: Vier-Türme-Verlag, 1995, pp. 19-31. (originally published in French as „ *La grace peut Davantag*")
[212] Cf. BARRET, *Spiritual Direction in the Roman Catholic Tradition*, p. 290.
[213] Cf. SALES, *IDL*, Part I, Chapter 4. The chapter deals in detail with the topic of spiritual direction and the necessity of having a guide.

revealing to his father his desire to become a priest, assuming the bishopric and taking up the direction of many people, including Jane de Chantal.

Jane, on the other hand, was rather impulsive to take Francis as her spiritual guide. Spiritual direction in many cases involves a long-standing relationship. It was a commitment for an unspecified period. As a result, it also involved concomitant risks. It involved the risk of opening up oneself to another, placing total trust in another person and a certain degree of obedience. For Francis, it was a matter of discerning God's will and also finding enough time to guide her. Time and the results show us that the relationship between Francis and Jane was not based on a passing enthusiasm or whims and fancies. It involved several months of prayer and discernment.[214]

In accepting to be her spiritual director, Francis freed her from the tyranny of her former director. The first thing Francis did was to help her to accept her state of life as a widow, which she had freely chosen and to begin to appreciate and love it. To make progress in one's life, one must accept, appreciate and love the state of life which one has freely chosen. Theories of psychotherapy, especially the person-centred therapy[215] and cognitive therapy[216] are based on self-acceptance and developing a positive outlook on life. They also emphasise creating self-worth and self-esteem in order to create positive outlook.

One could say that Francis was already in his time psychological and therapeutic in his approach. He knew well that unless one accepted one's state of life and appreciated it, one finds it difficult to be happy. A directee, however, should not forget that when he understands that he needs to change his state of life due to circumstances or to respond to the call of God, he must be open to it. Through the acceptance and appreciation of Jane's state of life, Francis led her slowly to inner freedom. Another major area where Francis had to help her related to scruples. Jane was scrupulous by nature. It took her long years to overcome her scrupulosity.

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[214] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 244.

[215] Cf. Sofia von HUMBOLDT / Isabel LEAL, *Person-centred Therapy and Older Adults' Self-Esteem: A Pilot Study with Follow-up* in *Studies in Sociology of Science* by Canadian Research and Development Centre of Sciences and Cultures, Vol. 3, No. 4, 2012, (published by Sage Publishers), pp. 1-10.

[216] Cf. Jordan A. CUMMINGS, Adele M.HAYES, et al. *The Dynamics of Self-Esteem in Cognitive Therapy for Avoidant and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders: An Adaptive Role of Self-Esteem Variability?* In *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, Vol. 36. 4, August, 2012, (electronic edition, published by Springer), pp. 272-281.

3.2.1.3.5 Helping Jane to Grow in Individuality and Inner Freedom

Francis de Sales, being a Christian humanist and champion of the cause of human liberty, was fully convinced of the need for respecting the directees and allowing them personal freedom. The friendship and the director-directee relationship between Francis and Jane was founded on the principle of freedom and individuality. Their personalities, in many respects, were not alike. Francis and Jane differed from each other in their personal traits and qualities.[217] Accepting the differences from the beginning, Francis based the relationship on freedom and individuality. Francis' letter to her on 14 October 1604[218] gives one an insight into the freedom and friendship that existed between them and reveals what Francis means by the liberty of spirit (*'liberté d'esprit'*) which had a great appeal at that time.[219]

Francis helps Jane to grow in freedom respecting her individuality and uniqueness, helping her to make love the basis of all her actions. In order to act in freedom, he had to help her to get over her scrupulosity. She also had to be helped to be free from all attachments to the world in order to enjoy inner freedom.

3.2.1.3.5.1 Love as the Basis of All Actions

Francis advised Jane that love should be the basis of their relationship and not fear - not even obedience. It is important that she follow his guidance and accept his instruction and guidelines. Francis does not, however, want them done in a subservient manner. She should enjoy enough freedom and liberty of spirit. He does not want her to feel compelled or forced into doing something that she does not like. Their relationship and friendship should be based on freedom, independence and maturity. So he tells her, "And if you happen to omit or forget anything that I told you to do, have no scruples about it, for here is the general rule of our obedience written in capital letters: LOVE, AND NOT FORCE, SHOULD INSPIRE ALL YOU DO; LOVE OBEDIENCE MORE THAN YOU FEAR DISOBEDIENCE."[220]

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[217] Cf. Mary Christine MARTENS, *Salesian Spirituality: The Gift of Two Saints*, Talk given to Visitation nuns, St Louis, Missouri, as part of Salesian Studies Programme, 1996-1998 (unpublished material).

[218] Cf. SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 62-76. (See also AE, XII, *LETTRES –VOLUME II*, pp. 352-370; DA, Band 5, *Briefe 1: An Frau von Chantal*, pp. 52- 67).

[219] Cf. Alexander T. POCETTO, *Freedom to Love: A Close Reading of Francis de Sales' Letter of 14 October 1604 to Jane de Chantal* in *Human Encounter in the Salesian Tradition*, ed. Joseph F CHORPENNING, Rome: International Commission for Salesian Studies (ICSS), 2007. pp. 125-144.

[220] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 67, « … et s'il vous advient delaisser quelque chose de ce que je vous ordonne, ne vous mettes point en scrupule, car voyci la règle generale de nostre obeissance escritte en grosses lettres: IL FAUT TOUT FAIRE PAR AMOUR ET RIEN PAR FORCE; IL FAUT PLUS AYMER

Francis tells her that freedom of the spirit is "the complete detachment of a Christian heart following God's known will."[221] Genuine freedom avoids extremes: inconsistency and lack of discipline on the one side, and constraint and slavishness, on the other. Real freedom is freedom from laxity and from slavishness.[222]

Another important aspect emphasized by Francis in his spiritual direction was valuing the uniqueness of the person. Francis was convinced that each person is unique in the eyes of God. Each one is gifted with different talents and graces. Francis knew well that Jane was very different from him in many aspects. But he did not want her to conform herself to his ideals of personhood. He wanted each one to be what one is called to be. Be what one is and be that at its best, is his dictum. This is clearly explained in his *Treatise on the Love of God* where he says, "Assuredly, we never see two persons perfectly alike in natural gifts…To humans grace was not given according to their natural status. However, God's loving kindness, rejoicing and, so to say, delighting in the production of graces, made them different in infinite ways. Hence this variety makes a beautiful mosaic of His redemption and mercy."[223] He warns that it is not the duty of humans to probe why it is so. It is the realm of God and divine wisdom: "However, we should not probe into why supreme Wisdom has given one grace to one rather than to another. No, Theotimus, never indulge in such curiosity. After all, God has given enough, thus abundantly given the graces necessary for salvation."[224]

3.2.1.3.5.2 Dealing with Scrupulosity and Temptations

Jane needed much encouragement and support to come to terms with her difficult life. Francis led her through her temptations, trials and difficult times standing by her and helping her to be herself and to face the challenges of life.

How did Francis 'diagnose' her problems? Her problems were scrupulosity, over-eagerness, anxiety and temperamental nature. To begin with, the Bishop advises her to be patient; first of all, to be patient with herself. He tells her to practise the virtue that counters

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L'OBEISSANCE QUE CRAINDERE LA DESOBEISSANCE.» AE, XII, p. 359. „Dies soll die Grundregel unseres Gehorsams sein: Ich schreibe sie in großen Buchstaben: ALLES AUS LIEBE TUN UND NICHTS AUS ZWANG! MEHR DEN GEHORSAM LIEBEN, ALS DEN UNGEHORSAM FÜRCHTEN!" DA, 5, p. 58.

[221] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 70.

[222] Cf. Ibid., pp. 71-72.

[223] Francis de SALES, *Treatise on the Love of God* (TLG), complete and unabridged edition, tr. & ed. by Antony MOOKENTHOTTAM, Armind NAZARETH & Henry Jose KODIKUTHIYIL, Bangalore: SFS, 2012, Book II, Chapter 7, p. 97. (See also AE, Tome IV*: Traitte De L'amour De Dieu – Vol. 1*, (108-111). Here, pp.109-110. Abbreviated as *TLG*. When page number are quoted, they are from this edition of *TLG*.

[224] SALES, *TLG*, Book II, Chapter 7, p. 97. (See also AE, IV, p. 110).

the vice. If one suffers from over-eagerness, then one should focus on patience. If one is anxious, one should try to have trust in God. In all these, one must be gentle and patient with oneself. Self-possession is a great source of power which comes only with patience. Anxiety can overtake us and make us non-functional. He writes in *An Introduction*:

> Anxiety is the greatest evil that can befall us except sin. Sedition and internal troubles ruin a nation utterly and prevent it from being able to resist a foreign invasion. Similarly, when we are troubled and restless, we lose our power to maintain the virtue which we have acquired. We also lose the means of resisting the temptation of the enemy who then makes every effort to fish, as they say, in troubled waters.[225]

The Holy Scripture also exhorts Christians to be patient and gentle in dealing with others. "And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, forbearing, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth."[226]

Mary Christine Martens, a Visitation nun and an expert in Salesian spirituality, especially from a feminine point of view, describes Jane's situation when she and Francis met:

> When Francis met Jane, she was inconsolable in her grief for her deceased husband, rigid in her obedience to the prescriptions of her first director, and excessive in her practices of fervour. Francis encouraged Jane to relax, to moderate her eagerness, and to let go of her anxieties. … Jane 'began to enter into true peace, that spacious interior freedom only the children of God know: she found herself attracted to a more heartfelt, intimate kind of prayer.' Jane gradually let go of her perfectionism; even her temptations against faith became stepping stones in the stripping of her self-will.[227]

Jane also had frequent temptations against faith. To dally with the devil is a dangerous thing, Francis de Sales reminds her. Francis tells her not to play around with the temptations. She should not lose her calm and composure in her fight with the enemy which gives the enemy an advantage over her. In his letter of 28 August 1605,[228] he tells her:

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[225] SALES, *IDL*, Part IV, Ch. 11, pp. 282-283. «L'inquietude est le plus grand mal qui arrive en l'ame, excepté le péché; car, comme les séditions et troubles intérieurs d'une republique la ruinent entièrement et l'empeschent qu'elle ne puisse resister a l'estranger, ainsy nostre cœur estant troublé et inquiété en soy mesme perd la force de maintenir les vertus qu'il avoit acquises, et quant et quant le moyen de resister aux tentations de l'ennemi, lequel fait alhors toutes sortes d'effortz pour pescher, comme l'on dit, en eau trouble.» (See also AE, Tome III –*Introduction A La Vie Dévote*, p. 311. See also DA 1, *Philothea: Anleitung zum frommen Leben*, pp. 225-226).

[226] 2 Tim 2: 24-25.

[227] MARTENS, *Salesian Spirituality: The Gift of Two Saints* (unpublished material).

[228] Cf. SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 96-98. (See also AE, XIII, pp.87-89; DA, pp. 94-96).

> Your temptations have returned, and although you do not enter into argument with them, they besiege you. You do not answer them, and that is right; but you think about them too much, you fear them too much, you are too apprehensive: else they would not do you any harm. You are too vulnerable to the assault of temptations. You love faith and you do not want to have a single thought contrary to the faith; as soon as one crops up, you are upset and scared. You cling too jealously to the purity of your faith, and you feel that any little thing can spoil it. No, no, dear daughter, let the wind blow freely, and don't mistake the rustling of leaves for the clash of armour.[229]

After these words of encouragement, Francis shares a wonderful experience from his own life to corroborate his argument. "Not long ago I was near some beehives and a few bees came and settled on my face. I wanted to raise my hand and brush them off. No, said a peasant to me, don't be afraid, whatever you do, don't touch them, they will attack you. I trusted his word and not a single one stung me. Believe me, don't be afraid of temptations, and whatever you do, don't touch them, they will not do you any damage; go on, right past them, and don't linger over them."[230] Francis had a wonderful art of using images and anecdotes. He often used penetrating observations and images from nature to illustrate his points.[231]

3.2.1.3.5.3 Helping Jane Grow in Detachment

In order to help Jane de Chantal to grow spiritually, Francis had to help her free herself from all attachments and to grow in freedom. Her scruples and idiosyncrasies curtailed her freedom. She was fussy and fastidious in matters like prayer, fasting, choice of gifts, etc. She also had a strong desire that she should die before Francis. Quite contrary to her previous director who exacted strict obedience and many stringent religious practices from her, Francis gives her more freedom, takes into account her physical and mental situation and is person-oriented and even person-centred. Francis writes back to her on 8 June 1606[232] from Annecy:

> From all these I gather *that you should abstain from long periods of prayer*… from the use of your imagination in a forced, particularized and long-drawn-out manner; your use of it should be simple and brief, only serving as a mere bridge from distraction to recollection. And all the same, apply your understanding to your prayer, for it serves to move the affections, the affections move us to resolutions, resolutions to practice, and practice leads us to accomplish the will of God into which our soul should melt and

[229] SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 96-97.
[230] Ibid., p. 97.
[231] Cf. Louis SEMPE, *St Francis de Sales*, translated into English by the nuns of the Visitation, Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1933. Refer to Chapter Five: *The Friend of Nature*, pp. 36-38.
[232] Cf. SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp.111-117. (AE, XIII, pp.181-192; DA, 5, pp.112-120).

> be dissolved… I approve of your abstinences on Fridays, but without a vow or too much constraint… *for the most important thing is that a holy liberty and freedom should reign in us and that we should have no other law or constraint except that of love***;** and if love tells us to do some work for our own people, we may not punish it as though it had done something bad and force it to make amends as you suggest.[233]

3.2.1.3.6 Assistance in Coping with Dryness in Spiritual Life

Lack of spiritual consolation or the absence of the pleasant feelings one is used to in the spiritual exercises is one of the common problems one faces when one tries to enter deeper into spiritual life. It has been differently described by spiritual authors. Francis de Sales was well aware of this problem and refers to it as spiritual dryness or spiritual barrenness.[234] In his own words, "When you have consolations, dearest Philothea, act as I have just directed you. But this fine weather, so pleasant, will not always last. Sometimes it will happen that the feelings of devotion will be completely removed and taken away from you. Then you will feel like an *arid desert*, fruitless and barren, where there is no path or road to God, *nor any water* (Ps 63:1) of grace to water it, because the drought there turns it into a wasteland. Alas, anyone in such a state deserves compassion, especially when this evil is acute."[235]

It has also been described as darkness, dark night, spiritual emptiness, etc. by different saints and spiritual fathers. It is a kind of total lack of interest and discomfort in spiritual life, experienced by people who normally lead an intense spiritual life. It is spiritually being down or dull. It can be total lack of feeling, lack of interest and characterised by inertia on the side of the devotee. It can mean a feeling of absence of God or a feeling that God is far away from the person. In this difficult time Francis de Sales wants that she open up her heart to him. It is difficult to contain all the stress within oneself without sharing with someone. It is the duty of the spiritual director (counsellor) to elicit it from the directee and to induce a 'catharsis' in the directee.[236] For Francis de Sales, an open sharing without any reservation is important in spiritual direction. He tells her that it does not cause him any discomfort and he is able to bear it. The directee requires an open, free sharing to

[233] Ibid., pp. 113-114. Emphasis mine. « …car il faut par tout que la sainte liberté et franchise regne, et que nous n'ayons point d'autre loy ni contrainte que celle de l'amour.» AE, XIII, p.184. „Überall soll doch die heilige Freiheit und Geradheit herrschen. Wir wollen kein anderes Gesetz, kein anderes „Muß" kennen als das der Liebe." DA, 5, p. 114.
[234] Cf. SALES, *IDL*, Part IV, Ch. 14, p. 294.
[235] Ibid., Part IV, Ch. 14, p. 294.
[236] American Psychological Association (APA) defines c*atharsis* as the process of expressing strongly felt but usually repressed emotions. http://www.apa.org/research/action/glossary.aspx?tab=3 (14.1.16).

let off the tension and stress within. Francis writes to her on 14 September 1605[237] a moving letter from Annecy:

> Just keep on writing to me quite frankly about your difficulties and also about the good things that come your way; and do not be in the least distressed, for my heart is equal to all that. Courage, my daughter. Let us keep on and on making our way through these dark valleys; let us live with the cross in our arms, humble and patient… so go on your way, my dear daughter, and forge ahead while the weather is bad and the night is dark. But, above all, write to me very sincerely; this is the great commandment - you must be absolutely frank with me, for everything else depends on that. And shut your eyes to every consideration you might have for my peace of mind, which, believe me, I shall never lose on your account while I see your heart firmly set on serving our God; and never, never, please God, shall I see you in any other frame of mind than this. Therefore, do not be in any sort of distress. Be brave, my dear daughter; *we shall win through with God's help*; and, believe me, this is a better sort of weather for a journey than if the sun were glaring down on us. …Be of good cheer! We have no control over any spiritual light or consolation except what depends on our will, and that is protected and sheltered by our holy resolutions. While the great seal of God's chancery is upon your heart there is nothing to fear.[238]

Francis reveals here his deep insights about human nature and spiritual problems. He acts like a therapist to help her in her 'dark night of the soul'. Francis identifies himself with her situation by using the plural form 'we'. Francis, acting not only as a spiritual director but also as a good friend, tells her that he will remain with her in all her difficulties and temptations.[239] His positive assurance to her, his encouragement and the 'unconditional positive regard' - to use the language of psychotherapy - that Francis offered, helped her immensely to cope with her life. He tells her the most important thing in such difficult times is to keep on going and not to give up!

An important aspect of Francis' guidance is the use of imagery from nature and daily life. He also draws abundantly from the Bible. He often refers to the Bible, takes examples from there, quotes the Bible and establishes his arguments with the help of Bible quotations and the events of salvation history.[240] Francis progressively leads her to self-acceptance. On 6 August 1606[241] through a long letter from Cluses he encourages her to learn to accept herself and her life with all its ups and downs, problems and joys:

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[237] Cf. SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 98-100. (See also AE, XIII, pp. 98-100; DA, 5, pp. 97-98).
[238] Ibid., pp. 99-100. Emphasis mine.
[239] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 254.
[240] Cf. Anthony R. CERESKO, *St Francis de Sales and the Bible*, Bangalore: SFS, 2005, pp. 77-109.
[241] Cf. SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 119-126. (See also AE, XIII, pp. 201-212; DA, 5, pp. 123-132).

> Love your abjection. But what does that mean, you ask, to love your abjection? For my understanding is darkened and powerless for any good. Well, my daughter, it is no more than just that. If you stay humble, still, gentle and confident in this state of darkness and helplessness, if you don't get impatient, if you take things calmly, if you don't let yourself be upset by all this, but embrace this cross and stay in this darkness willingly (I will not say happily, but I do say whole-heartedly and firmly), then you will be loving your abjection. For what else is it than being obscure and helpless? Love yourself in this state for love of him who wants you to be like this, and you will be loving your abjection.[242]

What does it mean to love one's abjection? Does it mean to wallow in despair and misery? It means to face oneself, to see oneself without any mask. To accept oneself means to accept also one's weaknesses, failures and the fact that one is vulnerable. It means being what one truly is. This self-acceptance and self-awareness is crucial to having a realistic appreciation of oneself. One needs to love oneself with and in spite of all one's imperfections, limitations and weaknesses. Accepting oneself is part of being authentic and integrated. Such people can engage themselves fully in the process of becoming – in the language of psychology, in the process of self-actualisation.[243] Later in the same letter Francis tells her:

> Did I not tell you the first time I spoke to you about your soul that you pay too much attention to what tempts or afflicts you; that you should only consider it *grosso modo*;[244] that women, and sometimes men too, reflect too much about their troubles and that this entangles thoughts and fears and desires, which then so constrict the soul that it cannot free itself. I entreat you, my daughter, don't be afraid of God for surely He doesn't want to hurt or harm you; love Him very much for He wants to do you a great deal of good. Carry on quite simply in the shelter of our resolutions and reject your reflections about your trouble as a cruel temptation. What can I say to stop the flux of these thoughts in your heart? Do not strive to heal yourself of them, for such anxious striving makes your heart more sick. Do not struggle to overcome your temptations, for this effort would strengthen them; simply despise them and do not dwell on them. Fix your mind on Jesus crucified….keep firm in your resolutions; stay in the little boat in which I have launched you; come storm, come tempest, may Jesus reign in you, and indeed you will not perish. He will be asleep, but in his own good time and place he will awake so as to restore your calm.[245]

[242] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 121.
[243] Lucy DAVIDSON, *Integrity* in *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*, Christopher PETERSON & Martin E.P. SELIGMAN (Eds.) New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 249-271, here p. 254. This book is a useful handbook on character and strengths and virtues from a positive psychological perspective.
[244] *Grosso modo* (Latin) means approximately, roughly, circa, etc. Here Francis means that she should not take it too earnestly.
[245] SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 124-125.

Through his constant encouragement, support and reassurance, Francis was able to lead her slowly out of her dryness. He encouraged her to persevere and to focus herself on God in the most difficult times. These difficult experiences in life made Jane a strong person.

3.2.1.3.7 Friendship and Mutual Guidance

One of the most remarkable features of Francis' guidance of Jane was the deep and intimate spiritual friendship that existed between them. In the Salesian tradition, friendship is connected with spiritual guidance. The directee is seen also as a friend. Antony Mookenthottam, a senior Salesian scholar, translator of Salesian literature, and well-known spiritual director in India, says: "Francis de Sales made friendship an essential dimension of his way of spiritual guidance. Once he accepted a person as his spiritual directee, he took the initiative to form a deep spiritual friendship. This is evident from his letters to his directees. Friendship takes away all fear, builds up confidence and makes it easy for the directee to share. He describes the qualities of this friendship: In short, this friendship should be strong and gentle, entirely holy, entirely sacred, entirely divine and entirely spiritual."[246] Without doubt, there existed between Francis and Jane a rare friendship. Soon Jane herself was able to guide many of her own nuns. Helped and taught by her deep friendship with Francis de Sales, she established herself as an able spiritual guide for her own nuns and several others.[247]

A perfect and holy friendship existed between Francis and Jane. Francis took sufficient time to discern that it was really the will of God. There was a sharing of daily life including deep mystical experiences between them. In his letters to her, he expresses his appreciation, love and friendship with her.[248] Francis de Sales cherished friendship and understood the vital role it plays in our life. He wrote to Monsieur Celse-Benigne de Chantal[249] on 8 December 1610, on the importance of having good friends: "It is extremely important for you to make some like-mined friends so that you can be strengthened and

[246] MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 274.
[247] Cf. Patricia RANFT, *A Woman's Way. The Forgotten History of Women Spiritual Directors*, Houndmills, UK: Palgrave, 2001. Special references are made to Jane in the following pages: 111-113, 119, 141, and 146.
[248] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 275.
[249] Cf. SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 186-190. (See also AE, TOME XIV*: Lettres – Volume IV*, pp. 376-381; DA, 6, pp.196-200). Monsieur Celse-Benigne de Chantal was the only son of Jane de Chantal. Who the original addressee of the letter was is disputed. Elisabeth Stopp believes this letter was written to him. (See pp. 186, 301-302). But the editors of the German Edition (DA) do not believe so. (See DA, 6. p. 400, explanation to footnote 17). Editors of the Annecy Edition, *Oeuvres* (AE) also admit that the addressee is contested. (See AE, XIV, p. 376). But one thing is clear: it was written to a young man who was soon going to enter the court and be exposed to the dangers of court life.

fortified in one another, for it is eminently true that the society of disciplined people is of inestimable value in helping us to keep our own souls disciplined."[250]

In the letters between Francis and Jane, one finds deep expressions of mutual love and friendship. There was a give-and-take in their relationship. It was a mutual relationship based on freedom and respect. Both the director and the directee profited from such a relationship.[251] They consoled each other and took joy in each other's letters. In August 1606[252] he writes to her, "How your letters console me, my good daughter, and how vividly you show me your heart whole and entire, and your confidence in me, a trust so pure that I cannot help believing it to be the work of God's own hand."[253]

This friendship turned out to be so close that he even shared his personal trials and successes with her. He expressed the joy and happiness he felt when he received her letters. He also appreciated her frankness and openness with him. He even shared with her the spiritual joy that he experienced.[254]

Mookenthottam opines, "We must always keep in mind a very important fact when we reflect on the friendship of these two saints: Theirs was a holistic friendship which was deeply human, tender, spiritual and mystical. Sharing extended from the most trivial, unimportant thing that happened in daily life to the most sublime experience of God at the summit of mystical life."[255] It was a totally God-centred friendship based on their common passion for God and aimed at purity and perfection. Moreover, in the later stages of this friendship one sees Francis leading her to disinterestedness and total detachment.

Seeing the ministry of spiritual direction of Francis from the point of view of practical theology, one can only wonder at the numerous therapeutic and interpersonal qualities that he possessed and utilized for his ministry.[256] It is also the need of the time. Priests/pastors live in similar situations today. The faithful expect from a priest certain qualities like

[250] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 188.
[251] Cf. Patricia RANFT, *A Woman's Way*, p. 112. Here Ranft claims there existed a mutual director-directee relationship between Francis and Jane. In her opinion, Jane and Francis influenced and 'directed' mutually.
[252] Cf. SALES, *Selected Letters*, pp. 117-118. (See also AE, XIII, pp.199-201; DA, 6, pp. 121-122).
[253] Ibid. « Mon Dieu, ma bonne Fille, que vos lettres me consolentet qu'elles me représentent vivement vostre cœur et confiance en mon endroit, mais avec une si pure pureté, que je suis forcé de croire que cela vient de la mesme main de Dieu.» AE, XIII, p.199. „Mein Gott, meine gute Tochter, wie sehr freuen mich doch Ihre Briefe und wie lebendig stellen Sie doch Ihr Herz und Ihr Vertrauen auf mich mit einer so klaren Reinheit dar, daß ich gezwungen bin zu glauben, daß dies aus der Hand Gottes selbst kommt." DA, 6, p.121.
[254] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, pp. 276-277.
[255] Ibid., p. 277.
[256] Cf. Lewis S. FIORELLI, "*Winning Hearts: Ministering in Salesian Manner*" in *Human Encounter in the Salesian Tradition*, pp. 389-408.

gentleness, empathy and genuineness. These qualities are essential for the ministry and are recommended by the Church.[257]

Every priest must possess certain therapeutic qualities for effective ministry. Pastoral ministry becomes more effective and Christ-like when he has qualities like empathy, positive regard, acceptance and respect. What is required is not complete professionalism but these ordinary qualities which almost everyone can learn with training and constant practice. Temptation, scruples, attachments and spiritual dryness are realities in the life of a Christian. A pastor inevitably comes across these problems and people who seek help to deal with them. In countries like India, the pastor is also confronted with many problems of the faithful – tensions in the family, separation, divorce, etc. They turn to the priest/ pastor for help. How far is he able to help? Francis de Sales stands out as a wonderful model for all pastors in this regard. We see how wonderfully he guides the people under his care.

3.2.2 Some Other Examples

One is surprised by the number of women who came under the guidance of Francis de Sales. It is true that there were more women among those who placed themselves under his direction and guidance. Was he more attracted to women than men? Or was he selective in choosing his directees, preferring women? Not at all; such thinking is totally out of place. It is to be understood in the context of his time. Women were more religious and spiritual-oriented in those times. They had more time than men who were busy with the affairs of the world – profession, business, wars, etc. It is a fact even today in the Church. If one takes into account church attendance and the reception of the sacraments, one immediately comes to the conclusion that even today it is women who try to lead a more religious life than men.[258]

As the eldest son, Francis was intimately connected to his family, too. This close relationship continued even after he was elected bishop although it was often difficult for him to find time. He helped them in matters of administration, arranging alliances through marriage and also in some legal matters. Above all, Francis was a spiritual guide to his

[257] Cf. Vatican II Decree on the Training of Priests *Optatam Totius* (OT) recommends that priestly candidates be given a sound pastoral training and acquire qualities of Jesus the Pastor during their formation. For details refer to OT nos. 4-8, 11, 12.

[258] Cf. Paula DEVINE, *Men, Women, Religiosity in Northern Ireland: Testing the Theories* in *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 2013, 28. 3, pp. 473-488. See also Jessica L. COLLET & Omar LIZARDO, *A Power- Control Theory of Gender and Religiosity* in *Journal for Scientific Study of Religion*, 58.2, 2009, pp. 213-231.

own family.[259] He wrote many letters to his mother and siblings in order to help them grow in holiness. Although most of the spiritual children or directees of Francis were women, a great number of men also sought help from him to lead a genuine Christian life. They came from all social strata and professions. Some of them are dealt with in the following pages.

3.2.2.1 Bishop Jean-Pierre Camus

His list of directees included prominent personalities like Bishop Jean-Pierre Camus, a Parisian, eloquent preacher and writer, ordained priest at twenty-four and in the same year appointed Bishop of Belley by King Henry IV, with dispensation form Pope Paul IV. Francis consecrated him Bishop on 30 August 1609. He relinquished his office in 1629 and retired to a monastery in Normandy. His retirement did not last long. He soon returned to Paris and to active ministry.[260]

Although there are differing views on the relationship between Francis de Sales and Camus, many believe that there existed an intimate friendship between them.[261] It is true that as a bishop, Camus was constantly in conflict with many religious orders, even the Visitation. The question raised by many is: how could such a propagator of the spirit of Francis de Sales and his spirituality of gentleness and meekness ever do that? Even Jane de Chantal was cautious in dealing with him and did not appreciate his ways.[262] Many scholars, however, believe that he was indeed deeply influenced by his friend and mentor Francis de Sales. He was a spiritual son of Francis and totally influenced by him. As a prolific writer, he tried to expose to the secular world the spirituality and ideas of Francis de Sales through his novels and secular writings. Although he did not explicitly use the term 'friend' often in order to refer to Francis de Sales, Pocetto argues that they were indeed friends[263] - in keeping with the spirit of Francis who often combined friendship with spiritual direction. Camus' impressions and personal experiences of Francis de Sales are

[259] Cf. MOOKENTHOTTAM, *St Francis de Sales: A Formative Biography*, p. 213.
[260] See 'The Index' in *Selected Letters*, pp. 300-301. There is a short biographical sketch of Jean-Pierre Camus here.
[261] Cf. Alexander T. POCETTO, *Jean-Pierre Camus (1584-1652) as Disseminator of the Salesian Spirit*. Article published online as part of *Studies in Salesian Spirituality*, September 2001, pp.1-18. Available online. http://web1.desales.edu/assets/salesian/PDF/ATP-Camus.pdf (14.1.2016).
[262] Cf. Ibid., p. 2.
[263] Cf. Ibid., pp. 2-3, 11-12.

put together in his book *The Spirit of Francis de Sales* (*L'Esprit de St. François de Sales*). Scholars consider this work to be authentic and reflecting the spirit of the Saint.[264]

3.2.2.2 Antoine Favre

Besides Jean-Pierre Camus, Francis de Sales had other spiritual sons who were also his friends. They included statesmen like Antoine Favre, noblemen and others. Antoine Favre was a special friend and spiritual son of Francis de Sales. Like Francis, he too was a noted writer. He was well-known for *Codex Fabrianus*, a Latin commentary on Savoyard law. He was the first president of the Senate of Savoy. Some of the letters of Francis to Favre are extant today although they have not been officially published.[265]

It was together with Favre that Francis de Sales founded the Academie Florimontane (Florimont Academy) which, unfortunately, did not last long. The meetings were held at the house of Favre.[266] He accompanied Francis on many of his trips. They were known to be close friends and 'brothers.' On November 6, 1618 the Cardinal-Prince of Paris, son of the Duke of Savoy, took both Francis and Favre with him to Paris. People immediately recognised the two friends of the Cardinal sitting with him in his carriage. They said, "There is the illustrious Bishop of Geneva, the greatest theologian of our time! There is President Favre, who has published so many books. He and Francis de Sales are like brothers because of the incomparable bond of affection that unites them."[267]

The letters between them reveal how close they were to each other. In his correspondence with Antoine Favre, Francis frequently assures him that he thinks constantly of him. He writes to him on 17 December 1610: "You are always present to my soul, and principally at the altar . . . It seems to me that our friendship is boundless and, being so firmly planted in my heart, it is as old as my heart itself."[268] Another letter[269]divulges the strong bond of communion between them: "The souls that God has made completely one are inseparable,

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[264] Cf. POCETTO, *Jean-Pierre Camus (1584-1652) as Disseminator of the Salesian Spirit*, pp. 11-12. (This book is freely available as e-book in different formats: iBook, Kindle, etc.)
[265] A few extant unpublished letters are available on the Salesian Resource site.
[266] Francis de SALES, *Letters (*unpublished*) to Antoine Favre*, published as part of *Texts in Salesian Spirituality* by Marie-Patricia BURNS (ed.) Alexander T. POCETTO (tr). Available online: http://web1.desales.edu/assets/salesian/PDF/Letters-Favre.pdf (14.1.2016).
[267] RAVIER, *St Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint*, p. 222.
[268] Francis de SALES, AE, Tome XIV: *Lettres - Volume IV*, p. 388. As translated by POCETTO in *Spiritual Friendship in Salesian Spirituality*. Published online: http://web1.desales.edu/assets/salesian/PDF/PocettoFriendship.pdf (14.1.2016).
[269] Letter of Francis de SALES dated 31.12.1610. (See also AE, XIV, pp. 395-396: DA, 8, pp. 209-210).

for who can separate 'that which God has joined?' No, not death or anything will ever separate us from the unity which lives forever in our hearts."[270]

The letter of Francis to Favre on 17 August 1610 from Annecy[271] gives us an insight into the deep friendship that existed between them and how they cherished each other. Both were busy people: Francis burdened with the administration of his diocese, and Favre with the political affairs of Savoy. In this letter Francis also shows his slight displeasure at not having been personally told about Favre's son's selection into the Senate. "But why didn't I know that your oldest son was received in the Senate except through hearsay, although you wrote to me after he had been accepted?"[272] The letter also reveals the great affection Francis has for Favre and his wife. He addressed his children 'nephews'. Francis also refers to the other members of Favre's family which is a clear sign that he was familiar with the family and aware of the happenings there. Francis also refers to Favre's daughter in this letter who later became one of the founding-members of the Visitation Order.

3.3 Salesian Method of Spiritual Direction: Basic Concepts

Before I go into the salient features of spiritual direction in the spirit of St Francis de Sales, I need to clarify certain terms and comment on the sources on which Salesian spiritual direction is based. Therefore, I try to clarify the term 'Salesian' and examine some sources and basic concepts associated with it. It is also required to make oneself familiar with the humanism of Francis de Sales in order to understand what philosophical thinking influenced and inspired him to deal with human persons the way he did.

3.3.1 Clarifying the Term 'Salesian'

The term 'Salesian' has become rather unclear and confusing in recent decades. Over the years, especially due to the spread of the Congregation of the Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB), sometimes 'Salesian' has acquired a different meaning than what it originally meant. In its original sense, 'Salesian' meant what is connected with St Francis de Sales and his spirituality. Thus, we speak of Salesian Literature, Salesian Spirituality, Salesian Family (meaning all those who follow the spirituality of St Francis de Sales), and so on. In

[270] SALES, AE, XIV, p. 396. As translated by POCETTO in *Spiritual Friendship in Salesian Spirituality*.
[271] Cf. SALES, *Letters (*unpublished*) to Antoine Favre*, pp. 1-12.
[272] Ibid., p. 3.

my approach I ascribe this original meaning to the term. In this paper 'Salesian' means whatever is connected with St Francis de Sales, his spirituality and his method of spiritual direction. If any reference is made to SDB, it will be specified as Salesians of Don Bosco, and not just as Salesian.

3.3.2 Defining Salesian Method of Spiritual Direction

As dealt with in the earlier part of this chapter,[273] in the Church there are various methods and traditions of spiritual direction. Many schools of spirituality have their own tradition of spiritual direction based on the methods of their patrons and their spirituality. Thus, one can speak of the Ignatian method of spiritual direction, the Dominican, Carmelite and Franciscan methods of spiritual direction. [274]

Although Francis de Sales guided numerous persons spiritually during his lifetime, he has not laid down any specific method to be followed.[275] It was partly because he dealt with each person individually – taking into account one's uniqueness of character, personality, life situation and stage of growth in spiritual life. In the words of John P. Connolly:

> Love of God can be expressed in thousands of ways depending upon the heart and personality of each person; consequently, the heart and the personality must be considered in spiritual direction. For this reason, Saint Francis de Sales does not subject every person to the same regime or to the same prefabricated set of religious practices. He changes his advice and counsels from one person to the next; but invariably, the desired and obtained result is love.[276]

Connolly says further, "His main interest, then, was that his direction be worthwhile for the individual; and what may be worthwhile for one, may not be so for another."[277]

It is true that Francis de Sales has not given any specific definition or method for spiritual direction, neither in his books nor in his talks. Author A. J. Strus, however, tries to give a definition in the spirit of the Bishop of Geneva: "It is an act in which God arouses desire in

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[273] See 3.1 (It means refer to section 3.1 of this work for details).
[274] A detailed description of different schools of spiritual direction by different authors in numerous articles is given in the handout of the German Catholic Bishops Conference on Spiritual Direction, *'Da kam Jesus hinzu.....' (Lk 24:15): Handreichung für geistliche Begleitung auf dem Glaubensweg*, Bonn: Secretariate der Deutschen Bischofskonference, 2001, pp. 107-132. For another detailed description of different schools of spiritual direction by different authors, refer to the book, *Vater, sag mir ein Wort*.
[275] Cf. A. J. STRUS, *Seelenführung* in *Themen Salesianischer Theologie. Ein Kompendium*, Eichstätt: Franz von Sales Verlag, 1989, p. 261.
[276] John P. CONNOLLY, *Basic Principles of Salesian Direction* in *Salesian Studies*, Vol. 2.2, (80-92), January 1964, Delaware: Institute of Salesian Studies, p. 81.
[277] Ibid., p. 83.

the heart of a human being to tread the path of perfection; and when the person has responded positively to such an inspiration of God, God enables him and gives him the means (= a spiritual director and the relationship) to reach that perfection."[278] He states that spiritual direction in the spirit of Francis de Sales involves a reciprocal relationship to the director because it is his duty to help to carry out the work of God.[279]

3.3.3 Sources of Salesian Spiritual Direction

The numerous works of St Francis de Sales and thousands of his letters - most of them were written for the purpose of spiritual direction – give a glimpse into his 'method.'[280] Among his books *An Introduction to the Devout Life* (*Philothea*), *Treatise on the Love of God* (*Theotimus*), and *Spiritual Conferences* - compiled by the Visitation Sisters from his Conferences - were written with the main purpose of spiritual direction. Along with these books, the letters of Francis de Sales constitute the main source of the Salesian way of spiritual direction.[281]

An Introduction to the Devout Life, shortly known as *An Introduction* (*Philothea*) is actually a compilation of letters of spiritual direction to Madame de Charmoisy. These letters were later on compiled and edited by Francis de Sales himself into a book with short additions of articles and essays on different aspects of spiritual life. The book *An Introduction* contains a systematic plan and structure to guide a person living in the midst of the world to spiritual maturity. It is a compendium on spiritual direction, so to say.[282]

His letters of spiritual direction reveal his deep insight into the nature of human persons and their problems. They reveal his intense desire to guide them to perfection, even at a high cost to his life, in terms of time, energy and health.[283] In his encyclical on St Francis de Sales, *Rerum Omnium Perturabationem*, Pope Pius XI said, "We are now happily called upon to celebrate the Third Centenary of the entrance into heaven of another great saint,

[278] STRUS, *Seelenführung*, pp. 266-267. (Translation mine).
[279] Cf. Ibid., p. 276.
[280] Cf. Devasia MANALEL, *Spiritual Direction: A Methodology*, Bangalore: SFS, 2005, pp. 72-73.
[281] Cf. Franz WEHRL, *Die Schriften den hl. Franz von Sales. Eine literarhistorische und quellenkundliche Studie*, Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 2005, pp. 4-8.
[282] Cf. Armind NAZARETH, *The Origin of the Introduction to the Devout Life* in *IDL*, pp. 17-21.
[283] Cf. SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 55. (In many of his letters Francis de Sales acknowledges at the beginning that he is really pressed for time although he would gladly write more and oftener. He begins this letter with apologies for being late to write to her).

one who was remarkable not only for the sublime holiness of life which he achieved but also for the wisdom with which he directed souls in the ways of sanctity…"[284]

In this study my focal point was to concentrate on his letters written to the laity and also on *An Introduction*, because the latter also belongs to the same genre in terms of method and content.

3.3.4 Humanism of St Francis de Sales

Francis de Sales is known as a Christian humanist because of the stress and emphasis he places on the worth and dignity of the human person at a time when it was radically affected by Protestantism, Renaissance humanism, and other similar movements. The Renaissance humanism of the fifteenth century did have an impact on Francis de Sales. However, we need to make a distinction between the humanism of Renaissance and Christian humanism. Franz Wehrl, who has done extensive research into Salesian spirituality, makes it clear: "If we speak of Francis de Sales as a humanist in the sense of Renaissance humanism, then he is not a humanist at all."[285] He was a humanist because he believed strongly in human freedom, freedom of the will, capacity of the human soul to raise itself to God, and in the glory and responsibility of human beings as the crown of creation.[286] Francis de Sales at all times emphasized the grandeur as well as the littleness of man. All that a human being has, he has received from God. In front of God he is nothing. At the same time, God has abundantly blessed him. His grandeur, with God on his side, and his nothingness without God, was emphasized by Francis. God's grace - when received, responded to, and nurtured in oneself - makes weak and fragile human beings unique and able to turn to their Creator.

Pope Benedict XVI also acknowledges that Francis de Sales is a Christian humanist who perfectly combines humanism with Christian spirituality. "St Francis de Sales is an exemplary witness of Christian humanism; with his familiar style, with words which at times have a poetic touch, he reminds us that human beings have planted in their innermost

[284] Pope Pius XI, *Rerum Omnium Perturabationem*, No.5.
[285] Franz WEHRL, *Der Humanisme Chretien des hl. Franz von Sales*, in *Jahrbuch für Salesianische Studien*, Band 37, Eichstätt, Franz Sales Verlag: 2006, p. 8. (See also the following pages for further reading).
[286] Cf. SALES, *TLG*, Bk 1, Chs. 1-5, pp. 21-34. In these five chapters Francis de Sales deals with many philosophical, psychological and anthropological matters like the human will, the powers of the will, sense appetites, emotions, the role of love, etc.

depths the longing for God and that in Him alone can they find true joy and the most complete fulfilment."[287]

3.3.4.1 Christian Humanism

Francis de Sales is one of the prominent Christian humanists. True Christian humanism does not try to replace God but tries to have knowledge of God and through this knowledge tries to have friendship and a loving relationship with God in freedom. God takes human form to invite us to share His divine life. This idea of humanism moved Francis de Sales:

> At both times God takes on our mind in order to establish a very close covenant with all of humanity. Despite the high esteem in which Greek thought held the intelligence and will of man, it is Christian humanism that gives us 'the fullness of the affirmation of man as the centre of the universal drama, man in the spirit, made to the image and likeness of God according to the Spirit.' If Christian anthropology places man at the centre of this drama, this is not for the purpose of displacing or replacing God. Quite the contrary, this fundamental orientation tells us from the start that the search can enlighten and lead us to the knowledge, love and friendship of God. St. Francis de Sales was fascinated by this idea in his very first sermon. When God decided to create man in His own image and likeness, He revealed His own Trinitarian character, that is to say, His intimate life.[288]

In the words of Antony Kolencherry, "Francis de Sales was indeed a devout humanist of the 17th century. He said of himself, 'I am nothing but human.' He was convinced that God is the God of the human heart; and the human being who has been created in the image and likeness of God emerges as a full-fledged being only in his loving union with God. The description 'the most human of all saints' characterizes him most aptly."[289]

Francis de Sales was also a man of moderation in his life; in his philosophical and theological views, too. He placed the human being between the over-optimistic view of secular humanists and the utter pessimistic view of the Protestants and accorded pre-eminence to love which embellishes virtues with a divine glow. Love alone gives attraction and perfection to virtues. Human beings, per se, are attracted by love to God. This holds true in interpersonal relationships, too. '*All by love and nothing by force'* was his dictum. The uniqueness of the anthropology of Francis de Sales is that he has been able to blend the secular and genuine human values with the real spirit of the gospels.[290]

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[287] Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience on 2 March 2011, in the Vatican.
[288] Alexander T. POCETTO, *An Introduction to Salesian Anthropology* in *Salesian Studies*, 1969, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 36-62. Here, p. 36.
[289] Antony KOLENCHERRY (Ed.), *Human Person in St Francis de Sales*, Bangalore: SFS, 1992, p. 3.
[290] Cf. Ibid.

3.3.4.2 Know Thyself: Attaining Knowledge of Oneself

The humanists of his time were over-awed by the dictum, '*Know Thyself'*. They thought it to be the basis of knowledge. Francis de Sales and other Christian mystics, on the other hand, emphasize that we come to the knowledge of ourselves when we totally leave ourselves to God and abandon ourselves to Him. Undue emphasis on self-knowledge sometimes leads to disillusionment, disappointment and frustration. Alexander T. Pocetto tries to explain how Francis understood the motto 'Know Thyself':

> The first element of knowledge of God, Francis informs us, 'is in the knowledge of self.' The oracle of Delphi is for him not only a remedy against pride but also more particularly the very basis of true humility. "It is not wrong to consider ourselves in order to glorify God for the gifts He has given us, providing that we do not become vain and complacent with ourselves. It is a saying of the philosophers, but which has been approved as a good one by the doctors: 'know thyself,' that is to say know the excellence of your soul that you will not debase nor despise it."[291]

Francis took the motto of the secular humanists 'Know thyself' as an invitation to know oneself and to realize that we are not gods. "Among the ancients all of human wisdom was contained in the motto 'Know thyself'. It is in the knowledge of oneself that man recognizes his own limitations, that he is not a god. They envisaged this self-study as a remedy against pride, against the tendency of man to make himself a god. By contrast, according to Christian humanists, this oracle leads to a knowledge that we are not God but that we are made in the image of God. It is in this way that we come to true knowledge of God."[292]

All the spiritual guidance given by Francis de Sales was based on this idea of the wholeness of a human person, who is called to holiness and endowed with divine gifts, but at the same time weak and fragile, due to sin. He is, in his existential situation, enabled by Christ, called to enter into a loving relationship with God and his neighbour, and fulfil his responsibilities to the community. In this process, every Christian must be ultimately united to Christ. Midathada Mariadas terms this intimate relationship to Christ as 'affective Christo-centrism' because it involves all the affective faculties of the human being.[293] In the opinion of Francis de Sales, knowing oneself happens in living in

[291] Cf. POCETTO, *An Introduction to Salesian Anthropology*, p. 40.
[292] POCETTO, Ibid.
[293] Cf. Mariadas MIDATHADA, in Foreword to *Human Person in St Francis de Sales*, p. 11.

communion with others. It is an excellent opportunity for us to know ourselves. The Church is the oracle of the Lord.[294]

'Know thyself' has two major dimensions. One is to acknowledge our worth, our greatness, and to value ourselves. The other is to acknowledge that as human beings we are imperfect and weak. Francis says, "The famous saying of the ancient philosophers *Know thyself* means be aware of your worth and greatness, so that you do not abase and degrade yourself by doing things which are unworthy of your noble calling. It means also 'Know thyself,' that is, your unworthiness, imperfections and your wretchedness."[295]

Thus, it is amply clear that the anthropology of Francis de Sales was thoroughly humanistic, deeply Christian and Christo-centric to the core.[296] These attitudes of realism, optimism, Christian humanism and Christo-centrism are clearly reflected in all his writings, especially in his letters of spiritual direction.

3.3.4.3 Human Being: Image of God and Crown of Creation

It is important to know what picture of human being Francis de Sales had before we delve into the details of the method of his spiritual direction. The idea we maintain of human beings is central to our thinking and it guides the way we think, act and relate to others.

Francis de Sales had an anthropology that was perfectly in conformity with the image of human being in the Bible and in line with the teachings of the Church. It was also at times totally in contrast to the Protestant ideas propelled by the Reformation that neglected the dignity and holiness of man.[297]

Francis de Sales always upheld the glorious position of human beings in the order of creation. Human being is created in the image and likeness of God. This biblical teaching is central to the anthropology of Francis de Sales. Human beings, therefore, claims Francis de Sales, have an innate inclination to love God above all things. In spite of our fall, our frailties and human weaknesses, this inclination to God is deep-rooted in us. Divine inspiration and interventions help us to go beyond ourselves and, therefore, we have a

[294] Cf. POCETTO, *An Introduction to Salesian Anthropology*, pp. 43-44.
[295] Francis de SALES, *Spiritual Conferences* Vol.1, tr. by Ivo CARNEIRO, Bangalore: SFS, 1995, p. 2. Emphasis in the original. (See also AE, VI: *Les Vrays Entretiens Spirituels*, p.19).
[296] Cf. Thomas KALARIPARAMBIL, *Dignity of the Human Person in St Francis de Sales* in *Human Person in St Francis de Sales*, pp. 82-83.
[297] Cf. Thomas PERUMALIL, *Perfection. A Salesian Perspective*, Bangalore: SFS, 1998, pp. 30-34.

natural inclination to search and love God.[298] Human being has an irreplaceable role as the crown of creation. The world is considered as an 'ecstasy' of God.[299] Meditating on the goodness of God leads us to God. The picture that Francis de Sales cherished of a human being is positive, optimistic and at the same time realistic.[300]

3.3.4.4 Levels of a Human Being

Devasia Manalel describes the Salesian understanding of human person on three levels - sense level, rational level and faith level. Human being is a sensible being (animal/sense level), is a rational being (intellectual level), and also a spiritual being (faith level).[301] Human beings at the sense level are primarily propelled by bodily desires, passions, feelings, instincts, and habits. Rational level is the level of reason, will, and human wisdom. These faculties motivate us to seek the good and shun evil. Rational level is superior to sensible level. But these two levels can go awry because what they are based on - our passions, instincts, human reason and human wisdom - can go astray. They can also be led by self-love.[302]

Human being is also a spiritual being. Every human being, therefore, in the opinion of Francis de Sales, has to raise himself to the spiritual level which is the core-level of a person. It is the seat of faith, hope and charity. At this level a human person is sensitive to God's will, open to God and alive to the Spirit.[303]

Spiritual level or faith level is the centre of spiritual life. The aim of spiritual growth or spiritual direction is to let the spiritual level predominate over the other levels of a person. A holistic approach to spiritual life has to take proper care of all the three levels; but at the same time all efforts must be focused on the topmost goal. Therefore, one has to take good care of one's body, update oneself intellectually, and lead a normal life of moderation without ever forgetting the spiritual level. This call for integration is a recurring motif in the letters of spiritual direction of Francis de Sales.[304]

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[298] Cf. SALES, *TLG*, Book 1, Ch. 16, pp. 67-69. (See also AE, TOME IV: *Traitte de L'Amour de Dieu*, Livre1, Chapitre 16: *Que Nous Avon Une Inclination Naturelle d'aymer Dieu Sur Toutes Choses*, pp.77-79. See also DA, Band 3: *Gottesliebe 1*, Buch 1, Kapitel 16: *Wir neigen natürlicherweise dazu, Gott über alles zu lieben*, pp. 90-92).
[299] Cf. MANALEL, *Spiritual Direction: A Methodology*, p. 36.
[300] Cf. PERUMALIL, *Perfection. A Salesian Perspective*, pp. 30-34.
[301] Cf. MANALEL, *Spiritual Direction: A Methodology*, pp. 24-25.
[302] Cf. Ibid., pp. 24-25.
[303] Cf. Ibid., p. 29.
[304] Cf. Ibid., p. 30.

Francis stresses the need for tempering the body but at the same time of taking due care of it; he emphasizes the necessity of using the faculties of intellect and will but simultaneously making total surrender in faith to God's will.[305]

3.4 Salient Features of Salesian Spiritual Direction

Every school of spirituality and every method of spiritual direction have their own characteristic features. Having dealt with Salesian anthropology and some concrete examples of his spiritual direction, I now attempt to draw out some of the salient features of spiritual direction in the Salesian tradition. Salesian spirituality as well as the Salesian way of spiritual guidance is as much suited to the present time as in the time of Francis de Sales. It is relevant to all times because it does not separate spirituality from life, nor does it in any way enjoin on the directees what is not compatible with their state of life. Salesian spirituality teaches us to be holy in every situation of life. It is also contextual. In any context of our life the guidance of Francis de Sales is valid because he says: 'Bloom where you are planted' and 'Be what you are and be that at its best.'[306] This is the guidance Francis offers to Christians of any given time.[307]

Based on the foregoing parts dealing with Francis de Sales and his method of spiritual direction, I list the following features as characteristic of the Salesian way of spiritual direction.

3.4.1 Necessity of a Spiritual Guide

Francis de Sales believed and taught that it was necessary to have a spiritual guide/director/friend for making progress in devout life. He understood well the need for a friend who will accompany us on this journey of faith and guide us from going astray. In *An Introduction*, he says, "I say to you, dear Philothea: if you want to set out earnestly on the path of devotion, find some person to guide and direct you. This is the most important advice...It is necessary to have, more than anything else, this faithful friend to guide our

[305] Cf. SALES, *TLG*, Bk 1.Ch.1, pp.21-23. (See also AE, IV, pp. 23-25; DA, 3, pp. 50-52).
[306] This quotation has already been dealt with in the previous part.
[307] Cf. Noel REBELLO, *Salesian Spiritual Direction: Spiritual Direction of Laypersons*, in *Indian Journal of Spirituality* (IJS), Vol. XVI, No. 2, 2003, pp. 271-272.

actions by his advice and counsels and thus keep us safe from the snares and deceits of the evil one."[308]

This is one of the first things that one has to do as one starts the spiritual journey: "But I tell you once again, ask God to give you such a person and when you find one, give thanks to God. Be faithful and do not look for others. Rather, move on with simplicity, humility and confidence, for your journey will be full of happiness."[309] Francis de Sales, however, insists that one must be prudent and selective in choosing a spiritual director: "Choose one from a thousand, writes John of Avila. And I insist, choose one from ten thousand, for those who are fit for such a task are very few indeed."[310] He was also aware that it was not always possible for lay people to find such a spiritual director, and it was also the reason why he published books like *An Introduction* and *The Love of God* in order to help the laity with their spiritual growth.[311]

Francis de Sales himself understood the value of a spiritual director from his own experience. Francis who became a famous spiritual director had placed himself under the guidance of spiritual directors.[312] When he was at the College of Clermont, a well-known Jesuit college at that time, one of the Jesuits, whose name was never made known, was his spiritual director who helped him compose a Programme of Life.[313] At the University of Padua, Francis chose Fr Pessovino as his spiritual director. He was an experienced teacher and an able spiritual guide. Fr Pessovino was a learned and knowledgeable man who helped his directees to have a broad and catholic outlook. Under his guidance, Francis composed '*The Rules for Spiritual Life*', which he followed during his life at Padua.[314]

Even as a bishop he was guided by a spiritual director. Fr Jean Fournier, a director and professor of theology and Rector of Pont-a-Mousson University, was his spiritual director. He helped Francis to compose his '*Resolutions for Episcopal Life*'.[315] They shared not only a deep spiritual relationship but also an intense friendship. It was Fr Fournier who

[308] SALES, *IDL*, p. 43. (Part 1. Ch. 4: *The Necessity of a Guide to Begin and to Make Progress in Devotion*. See also AE, III, pp. 22-25 : Livre 1.IV: *De La Nécessité d'un Conducteur Pour Entrer et Faire Progres en la Devotion*; DA 1- *Philothea*, 1. 4: *Für den Beginn des frommen Lebens und dessen Fortschritt ist ein Seelenführer notwending*, pp. 38-40). It is important to note that Francis de Sales sees the spiritual guide as a friend. As seen already, in the Salesian tradition, spiritual direction is seen also as friendship.
[309] SALES, *IDL*, p. 44.
[310] Ibid.
[311] Cf. Sebastian LEITNER, *Introducing the Introduction*, in *IJS*, Vol. XVIII, No.2, 2005, pp. 166-183.
[312] Cf. Francis MOGET, *The Spiritual Directors of St Francis de Sales* in *IJS*, Vol. XVI, No.2, 2004, p. 186.
[313] Cf. Ibid., p. 188.
[314] Cf. Ibid.
[315] Cf. Ibid., p. 192.

convinced Bishop Francis to compile his 'spiritual notes' to Madame de Charmoisy into one of the best spiritual classics of all time – *An Introduction to the Devout Life*, a long spiritual direction in book form![316] Later in his life, when Francis took up the direction of Jane de Chantal, he let her influence his life spiritually. He was strongly influenced by her personality. Authors speak of a mutual spiritual direction from which both of them benefitted.[317]

Thus, Francis de Sales had experienced the importance and value of a spiritual director in his own life and benefitted immensely from it. Knowing this background helps one to understand the emphasis Francis places on having a spiritual director.

3.4.2 Discernment and Primacy of God's Will

Discerning God's will has been one of the most important aspects of spiritual direction from the earliest times. During the time of the Desert Fathers many sought their guidance to discern God's will. Discernment is also a core element of spiritual direction in the Salesian tradition.[318] It is one of the main goals of spiritual direction. What is discernment? In simple terms, "Discernment is the spiritual practice that accesses and seeks to understand what God is trying to say."[319] Seekers of all times have sought the guidance of spiritual masters to ascertain God's will for them. Every Christian is called to do God's will. But to do it, one has to find out what God wants. How does one discern God's will? It is not always an easy task.

One of the most important aspects of the Salesian method of spiritual direction is the joyful acceptance of God's will with love. God's will has supremacy over our will, even when it goes against our will. Therefore, he encourages, suggests and coaxes his directees into doing God's will. Sometimes the circumstances of one's life show what God's will is even if it goes against one's own wishes and desires. To a woman who wanted to become a nun but who was prevented from doing so, he writes, "But if after all your efforts you cannot succeed, you could not please our Lord more than by sacrificing to Him your will and remaining in tranquillity, humility and devotion, entirely conformed and submissive to His

[316] Cf. MOGET, *The Spiritual Directors of St Francis de Sales*, p. 193.
[317] Cf. RANFT, *A Woman's Way. The Forgotten History of Women Spiritual Directors*, p. 112,
[318] Cf. Richard J. SWEENEY, *Discernment in the Spiritual Direction of St Francis de Sales*, in *Review for Religious*, 39.1, 1980, St Louis University, pp.127-141.
[319] Henri J. M. NOUWEN with Michael J. CHRISTENSEN and Rebecca J. LAIRD, *Discernment: Reading the Signs of Daily Life*, New York: Harper Collins, 2013, p. ix.

divine will and good pleasure. You will recognize this clearly enough when, having done your best, you cannot fulfil your desires."[320]

It is not enough to do God's will but one must do it in humility and love, without losing one's calm and serenity. Doing the will of God joyfully is what Francis demands of every Christian. To another woman he writes a long letter to convince her that to acquire devotion and to get true joy and peace of mind, we must do God's will, as God wants it and we must do it joyfully:

> The first thing is that God wills it so; and it is indeed reasonable that we should do His will, for we are in this world only for that .... The fact is that, in a word, we want to serve God, but *after our will*, and not His ... We are not to choose at our own will. We must wish what God wishes, and if God wishes me to serve Him in one thing, I ought not to wish to serve Him in another ... But this is not all: we must not only do the will of God, but in order to be devout, we must do it joyfully.[321]

Francis de Sales always took sufficient time to discern if it was God's will to undertake the direction of a person. He wanted to make sure that he was acting in line with the will of God in taking up the spiritual guidance of a person. Spiritual direction of someone could be successful only if it went in accordance with Divine Providence. Hence, he felt it necessary to discern the will of God regarding this matter.[322]

Francis de Sales always laid stress on the fact that the gifts and charisms that he received from God had to be put to use in accordance with the will of God. He had to strike a balance between his other pastoral responsibilities as bishop and the guidance of souls. It was also due to many other reasons like his busy schedule; taking care of his vast diocese demanded great energy from him and he was also a sought-after preacher for which he had to prepare himself. It cost him his precious time, his sleep and even affected his health.[323]

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[320] SALES, *Thy Will be Done.* p. 5. « Mais si, après tous vos effortz, vous ne pouves pas reüscir, vous ne sçauries plaire davantage a Nostre Seigneur que de luy sacrifier vostre volonté, et demeurer entranquillité, humilité et dévotion, entièrement remise et sousmise a son divin vouloir et bon playsir, lequel vous reconnoistres asses quand, ayant fait vostre possible, vous ne pourres pas jouir de vos souhaitz. » AE, XIV, p. 75.„Wenn Sie aber nach all Ihren Bemühungen keinen Erfolg haben, könnten Sie Unserem Herrn nicht mehr gefallen, als wenn Sie ihm Ihren Willen aufopfern und in Ruhe, Demut und Frömmigkeit verbleiben, ganz seinem göttlichen Willen und Wohlgefallen hingegeben und untergeordnet. Sie werden diesen genügend erkennen, wenn Sie Ihr Möglichstes getan haben und doch das Ziel Ihrer Wünsche nicht erreichen können." DA, 6, p. 54.

[321] Ibid., pp. 10-12. (See also AE, XII, pp. 345-352; DA, 6, pp. 82-87).

[322] Cf. Devasia MANALEL, *Spiritual Direction According to An Introduction to the Devout Life* in *IJS*, Vol. XVI, No. 2, 2003, pp. 223-224.

[323] Cf. Prinz GOTTFRIED, *Vorwor*t in *Jahrbuch für Salesianische Studien*, Band 29, Eichstätt, 1996, p. 5.

3.4.3 Grounded on the Supremacy of Love and Personal Freedom

There can be numerous motives for human actions. It could be pleasure, it could be pure satisfaction, it could be the fulfilment of a need, etc. For Francis de Sales love is the pre-eminent principle of all our actions.[324] He believed and taught that love should be the ultimate motive of all human actions. He insisted that his directees follow his guidance out of love and not out of force, nor obedience. To Jane de Chantal who wanted to place herself under his guidance, he gave a couple of suggestions and pieces of advice. He tells her, "And if you happen to omit or forget anything that I told you to do, have no scruples about it, for here is the general rule of our obedience written in capital letters: LOVE, AND NOT FORCE, SHOULD INSPIRE ALL YOU DO; LOVE OBEDIENCE MORE THAN YOU FEAR DISOBEDIENCE."[325] He told her that he allowed her the individual freedom of the Spirit. At the beginning stage of their spiritual direction, Francis wanted her to maintain her liberty and personal freedom, though at the later stages of their friendship, they were totally united in their wills.

Regarding the practice of the little virtues - which he strongly recommended to all his directees - he suggests to Jane de Chantal, "Do the whole without [undue] eagerness, but with true liberty."[326] Francis de Sales believed that love can be a much greater force to bring about change in human beings than coercing somebody or commanding or demanding. Most human beings are amenable to love, gentleness and appreciation. In counselling, psychotherapy and guidance, these virtues are more effective than coercion or trickery.

3.4.4 Person-Oriented Approach

Francis de Sales' way of guiding people was characterised by his person-oriented approach. I consider this to be one of the greatest contributions of the Salesian approach to spiritual direction. He was able to speak or write to his directees in a personal way, orienting himself to them and their individual needs. Anyone reading his letters could feel that he was speaking to them personally and could feel his personal warmth and proximity. I call this approach of Francis de Sales the person-oriented approach. In order to be person-

[324] Cf. SALES, *TLG*, Bk. 1, Ch. IV, pp. 29-31. (See also AE, IV, pp. 33-34; DA, 3. pp. 57-59).
[325] SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 67. (See also AE, XII, p. 359; DA, 5, p. 58). This topic has already been dealt with in the early part of this chapter. For details see 3.2.1.3.5.1.
[326] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 40. (See also AE, XIII, pp. 91-92; DA, 5, p. 96).

oriented, Francis had to have a deep understanding of human nature, be familiar with each directee and his/her life-situation and a high regard for human uniqueness. Francis' person-oriented approach is characterised by the following elements:

3.4.4.1 Deep Understanding of Human Nature

The way Francis de Sales dealt with different persons was not the same. He did not follow a set pattern of dealing with everyone in the same manner. He had a personal approach to each individual which was tailored to his/her life. Each person is unique – unique in talents, gifts, psychological and spiritual endowments. This uniqueness of every individual person has to be taken into account. Moreover, every single individual lives in a different familial and social environment. Francis acknowledged that the uniqueness and diversity of each individual was the result of the wisdom and handwork of God.[327]

Francis de Sales always had a great understanding of and for human nature. As a Christian humanist, he also understood well human imperfections and frailties and showed a great deal of understanding for it. To Madame Brulart whose relatives interfered with her devotions and failed to understand her behaviour, he wrote, "We must allow them this little bit of human nature."[328] He tried to convince her that it was part of human nature to be frail and sometimes misunderstanding and that she should show understanding for the little weaknesses of others.

While Francis de Sales himself showed great understanding of human nature, he could also ask others to do so. He treated penitents with utmost love and concern, welcomed people of all walks of life, respected and upheld the dignity of every person however low in social status one may have been. As Pope Benedict XVI puts it, he could access any person with freedom and help him access God with freedom and confidence.[329] The person-oriented approach of Francis also emphasised that a person should be able to lead a life of devotion in his or her surroundings, whatever might be the situations.

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[327] Cf. PERUMALIL, *Perfection. A Salesian Perspective*, p. 34.

[328] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 61. See also *Selected Letters*, p.126. Stopp translates it as "Well, you must allow them this little touch of human nature." «Que voules-vous, il leur faut permettre cette petite humanité.» AE, XIII, p. 226. „Was wollen Sie, man muß diese kleine Menschlichkeit verstehen." DA, 6, p.106.

[329] Cf. Joseph RATZINGER (Pope Benedict XVI), *To Bring Fruits: Each according to One's Nature*. Homily of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger in the Mother House of the Congregation of the Poor Sisters of Notre Dame, Munich, on the Feast of Francis de Sales in 1982.

3.4.4.2 Taking into Account the Life-Situation of the Directee

What made the guidance of Francis de Sales so effective? It was mainly because of his ability to take into account the life-situation of each directee under his direction, which many of his contemporaries could not do. He was able to understand the life of his directees. In giving guidance, Francis de Sales always took into account the individual qualities, uniqueness, needs and the life-situation of the person concerned. To a pregnant woman who had scrupulosity because she could not kneel down for a long time as she used to do earlier, he was full of understanding and had a practical piece of advice: "Make no effort to oblige yourself to any kind of exercise, except quite gently. If you get tired kneeling, sit down; if you cannot command attention to pray half an hour, pray only fifteen minutes or even half of that." He advises her further to pour out her feelings to the Lord, to complain to him but all this must be done with love: "For if it is done lovingly, there is no danger in complaining, nor in begging cure ... but do this with love and with resignation into the arms of the good will of God."[330]

Francis de Sales advocated that devotion should be an integral part of one's life; it should also be suited to each individual's state of life. Devotion that is separated from one's life cannot be true devotion. Whatever state or situation of life one is in, one must make devotion compatible with that situation.[331] Thus, a married person should seek devotion in the family, in his household - being in the midst of it and radiating his/her life as well as that of others with God´s grace. That means making sacrifices, accepting the failures of others, living in harmony with them, etc. For a nun, it is in life in the community, leading a life of prayer, interiority and humility. She has to practise devotion in living in obedience to the superiors and in harmony with other members of the community. To be true to her vocation, a nun has to spend hours in prayer and silence, which is not the case for a married woman. For a man in the court of the king it is totally different. He has to live in high society but has to practise his Christian vocation accordingly by giving good examples, leading a life of virtues and, above all, by taking Jesus as his patron.[332]

To Madame Brulart, who has problems practising devotion and virtues due to the hostile environment at home, he advises to make a self-evaluation to see if she has contributed to the hostile environment and warns her against being 'too devout and restive'. He urges her to make her devotion attractive to others, too: "I know that you will take my advice in a

[330] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, pp. 91-92. (See also AE, XIV, pp. 53-54; DA, 6, pp.140-141).
[331] Cf. SALES, *IDL*, Part I, Chs. 1-3, especially Ch. 3.
[332] Cf. SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 77. (See also AE, XIV, pp. 376-381 & DA, 6, pp. 196-200).

good way, because I speak with sincerity. Perhaps you have given occasion to your good father and good husband to mix themselves up with your devotion, and to be restive about it; I cannot tell you how. Perhaps you are a little too eager and bustling, and you have wanted to bother and restrict them. If so, that is without doubt the cause that makes them now withdraw. We must, if possible, avoid making our devotion troublesome."[333] He encourages her to show understanding towards human frailties and weaknesses: "We must allow this little bit of human nature..."[334] This is a piece of advice typical of Francis de Sales. He calls upon everyone to be understanding towards others and to put up with the little human frailties, failures and imperfections of others because all human beings are weak and frail.

He wrote to Madame Brulart who is in the initial stages of devotion and is over-eager to make her devotion pleasant and lovable: "You must not only be devout, and love devotion, but you must make it lovable to everyone. Well, you will render it lovable if you render it useful and agreeable. The sick will love your devotion if they are charitably consoled by it; your family will love it if they find you more careful of their welfare, more gentle in little accidents that happen, more kind in correcting ..."[335] Francis de Sales tells her to combine her spiritual life well with her life in the family and to show her devotion concretely in her daily life.

Francis advised his directees to accept their life situation and to accept with love what cannot be changed. To Madame Guillet de Monthoux, a woman who was close to him, who had difficulties with her in-laws in the family, he wrote, "Well now, here you are in your establishment, and you cannot alter it; you must be what you are, mother of a family, since you have husband and children. And you must be so with good heart and with love of God, *yea*, for the love of God…"[336] He tells her she must be prepared to sacrifice her will for the sake of the household, and encourages her to do it with love and out of love: "It is better that the running of the household be not exactly as you wish, it will please those to whom you owe so much... Peace is better than fortune. You must do what can be done with

[333] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 62. See also AE, XIII, pp. 225-230 «Il faut, s'il se peut, nous empescher de rendre nostre dévotion ennuyeuse.» p. 227. See also DA, 6, pp. 105-109. „Wenn möglich, sollen wir vermeiden, daß unsere Frömmigkeit unangenehm wird." p. 107.
[334] Ibid. What Francis means by his statement here is that she should be able to put up with the human frailties and imperfections of the members of her own household. (See also 3.2.1.2.6 for more details).
[335] Ibid., p. 48. (See also AE, XII, pp. 267-271; DA, 6, pp. 79-81).
[336] Ibid, p. 55. Emphasis as in the original. (See also AE, Tome XVIII: *Lettres – Volume VIII*, pp. 305-307; DA, 6, pp. 245-246).

love."[337] And finally, he urges her to yield to God's will, after all that has been done, and what she could do: "Do well what you can, and the rest leave to God, who will do it sooner or later, according to the disposition of His divine providence."[338] Such was the faith, wisdom and understanding that Francis de Sales showed in all his spiritual direction!

Francis was firmly convinced that devotion that does not suit the life-situation of the person, that causes strife and troubles in the family, and that takes away the freedom and joy of the person, is not real.

Even in today's world one comes across many who try to live a devout life but without taking into account the vocation to which God has called them. We see many mothers who want to spend long hours in the church, neglecting their children, or religious who do not find time for prayer or community life under the pretext of charitable and social activities. Francis de Sales admonishes the Christians that one should combine one's devotion with one's vocation and life-situation if it has to be genuine. It is the same Lord who gifts one with a personal vocation and at the same time invites one to a life of devotion and, therefore, they are two sides of the same coin.

3.4.4.3 Respecting the Uniqueness of Every Person

Francis de Sales writes in *The Treatise on the Love of God*, "Assuredly, we never see two persons perfectly alike in natural gifts. We do not find perfect equals in supernatural gifts."[339] Francis believes that this difference shall remain even in the life after death: "Just as one star is different from the other in brightness (1 Cor. 15:41), humans are different from one another in glory. It is a clear sign that they have been also different in grace. So this variety in grace or this grace in its variety creates a sacred beauty. It makes a sweet harmony which causes joy to the whole holy city of the heavenly Jerusalem."[340]

Francis de Sales adamantly believes that this uniqueness of the individual has to be respected. Therefore, guiding persons from different walks of life and different environments, Francis oriented himself to each person. He tells everyone to be the unique person that he/she is and be that in the best way. In writing to Madam de Brulart, he says,

[337] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 56.
[338] Ibid.
[339] SALES, *TLG*, Bk. 2. Ch. 7, p. 97.
[340] Ibid. (1 Cor 15:41 reads, "The sun has its own splendour, the moon another splendour, and the stars yet another splendour; and the stars differ among themselves in splendour.").

'Be what you are, and be that at its best'.[341] Every human being is called to be the best he or she can be, instead of trying to blindly imitate someone else. Francis de Sales encourages people to bring the best in them to fruition in spite of the negative and unholy elements that they might find within themselves. It reminds one of what Carl Rogers said, 'Be the self that you really are.'[342]

3.4.4.4 Individual Direction

Did Francis de Sales engage in group direction? Or did he take up only personal and individual direction? Although Francis de Sales gave regular spiritual conferences to the Sisters of the Visitation whom he co-founded with Jane de Chantal, he is most known for his direction of individual persons. He spent an enormous amount of his time meeting people individually, writing personal letters to each of his directees and establishing personal bond with each of them. Being in a relationship with individual persons helped him to get to know them better and, as a result, he could guide them more effectively and personally. He had a wonderful talent for guiding individual persons and cherishing these relationships. In the words of Alice von Hildebrand:

> Endowed with natural grace, illuminated by supernatural grace, St Francis knew how to adapt himself to each individual case. With an intuitive sense that clearly came from above, he knew when to encourage, when to rebuke, when to moderate and slacken the pace of those anxious to run, when to quicken the pace of those who were sluggish. He combined patience and love with firmness in his principles, never deviating from the teaching of holy Church. He made no distinction of persons; to all his spiritual children, whether rich or poor, cultivated or uncouth, male or female, he gave the same loving care, the same unconditional devotion.[343]

Franz Wehrl is of the opinion that this individual care of persons and the importance he places on relationships has its foundation in the ministry and examples of Jesus himself. It was also a method of the counter-Reform movement of the Church of France at that time.[344] This intimacy and friendship that he shared with his directees can easily be noticed

[341] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 22. « Soyons ce que nous sommes, et soyons le bien, pour faire honneur au Maistre ouvrier duquel nous sommes la besoigne. » AE, XIII, pp. 53-54. For details refer to 3.2.1.2.2.
[342] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995, pp. 163-182. (Part IV, Chapter 8: *'To Be That Self Which One Truly Is': A Therapist's View of Personal Goals*).
[343] Alice von HILDEBRAND, In Foreword, *Thy Will be Done*, p. xii.
[344] Cf. WEHRL, *Schwerepunkte Salesianisher Seelenführung* p. 21.

in the way he addressed his directees in his letters. He addressed them 'my dearest,' 'my beloved,' 'my dear child,' 'my dearest daughter' and so on.[345]

Moreover, Francis helped his directees, especially Jane de Chantal, to prepare a 'spiritual directory' of daily actions.[346] To help one to do so called for deep personal knowledge of the person that he could guide individually and according to the individual's personal characteristics and traits. Francis de Sales was himself in the practice of keeping a directory of his action from his youth. This helped him in his spiritual and personal growth and exercised a control over all his actions. This also helped him to review his life from time to time.[347] Helping his directees to make their own spiritual directory was indeed a great step in individual direction. It is the result of his long years of experience as spiritual director and guide. Ceresko says:

> Although written specifically for the first Visitandines, this Spiritual Directory represents a distillation into a brief and compact form the fruits of Francis' many years of experience and wisdom in living the Christian life and in guiding and directing others in that same endeavour. This 'Spiritual Directory' thus holds a unique place among Francis' writings. It provides a privileged access to the style and method of this great spiritual master.[348]

3.4.5 Importance of Relationship and Friendship in Spiritual Direction

Salesian anthropology is basically relational. It is in relationship with others that one comes to know more of oneself. 'Know thyself' in Salesian tradition is a call to get out of oneself and get into relationships with others. Human beings are called to work out their salvation here on earth in relationships with other human beings. This is an essential dimension of Christian living. It is also the ministry of the Church to be this community where the believers can be in relationships with others and achieve their salvation as a community.[349] Speaking of Salesian anthropology, John Crossin says being in relationships with others gives one knowledge of oneself. "As many theologians do today, St. Francis de

[345] Reference to this are too many to be given here. Practically every letter of Francis de Sales begins with a very personal note.

[346] Cf. Anthony R. CERESKO, *St Francis de Sales' "Spiritual Directory" for a New Century: Re-interpreting the Direction of Intention* in *IJS*, Vol. 14. 4, 2001, pp. 377-391. The Spiritual Directory which he prepared for the Visitation Sisters is based on his own spiritual directory. See also AE, Tome XXV: *Opuscules – Volume IV* «Directoire des choses spirituelles» pp. 137-175. DA Band 12: *Geistliche Schriften*, Part VII, *‚Das Geistliche Direktorium*', pp. 402-417.

[347] Cf. CERESKO, *St Francis de Sales' "Spiritual Directory" for a New Century*, pp. 377-378. See also Lewis FIORELLI, *The Spiritual Directory Today*, (unpublished article). Available online: http://web1.desales.edu/assets/salesian/Brisson/Fiorelli-Directory.pdf (14.1.2016)

[348] CERESKO, *St Francis de Sales' "Spiritual Directory" for a New Century*, p. 378.

[349] Cf. LG, No. 1.

Sales begins his considerations, for example in his *Treatise on the Love of God*, with the human person. De Sales begins with the Greek axiom: "Know Thyself." This knowledge of self is attained primarily in going out of oneself and reflecting on this experience and not predominantly in introspection. Thus, in acting we come to know ourselves. And action brings us into contact with others."[350]

3.4.5.1 To Be Is to Be Related

Human existence is basically relational after the image of God who is Himself relational. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are in constant relation, communion and communication with one another. To quote Crossin: "Mutual relationships are most important for our spiritual growth. There is in us both a need to go out to others and a receptivity to others. Of course, our giving and receiving is a faint image of the Trinity."[351] Therefore, human beings are called to relate to one another. As philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti says, "To be is to be related."[352]

The spiritual relationship that exists between two persons helps them to be more fully human. Pocetto argues, "It is through spiritual friendship that a person becomes what he/she is. In order to enter into a spiritual friendship, people have to accept themselves as they are. We have to first be a friend to ourselves before we can become a friend to another. True friendship modeled after that of the Trinity requires that friends have a very profound respect for each other."[353]

The fact that human beings are called to be related - and this dimension makes them more human - necessitates that they should develop relational qualities in themselves. Therefore, Francis de Sales insisted so much on those virtues that play a crucial role in interpersonal relationships. They include gentleness, patience, humility and simplicity. These virtues cement the mutual relationship among human beings. 'To be related' also calls for frequent communication. That explains why Francis tried to be constantly in touch with his spiritual children in spite of his busy life as a bishop. Through his letters – thousands of them – he not only guided them but also kept up his contact with his spiritual

[350] John CROSSIN, *Reflections on Salesian Anthropology* in *Mind and Heart Renewed: Essays in Honour of Rev. John Harvey osfs*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001. Available online: http://web1.desales.edu/assets/salesian/PDF/Crossin-Anthropology.pdf (15.1.16).
[351] Ibid.
[352] Jiddu KRISHNAMURTI, *The Mirror of Relationship*, Third Public Talk given on 09.06.1940 in Ojai, California. Available online at: http://www.jiddu-krishnamurti.net/en/1936-1944-the-mirror-of-relationship/krishnamurti-the-mirror-of-relationship-42 (14.1.2016).
[353] POCETTO, *Spiritual Friendship in Salesian Spirituality*.

children separated by distance and time. As noted earlier, some of his letters are only a few lines just giving assurance and promising prayers. But they serve the great purpose of 'being related.' In the opinion of Pocetto, "Friends who are so joined together by God cannot be separated by distance or time (OEA, XVIII, 416). This kind of union is not achieved unless there is a good deal of openness, exchange of feelings, and frequent communication. It takes also a great sensitivity to the needs of the friend and a rather affectionate and warm nature that readily responds to others…"[354]

3.4.5.2 Relationship that Helps and Heals

It is clear in the writings of Francis de Sales that he believed that human relationships could have a tremendous power to heal. Therefore, in many cases he combined spiritual direction with friendship. In Salesian tradition spiritual direction and friendship go hand-in-hand.[355] Friendships are one of the best forms of relationships that can bring out the best in each other. Friendship based on true and pure relationship is a great incentive for the person to become what he truly is. Such a pure and genuine relationship leads to self-realization, happiness and contentment in life: "The profound union that exists in spiritual friendship does not destroy the personality or the individuality of friends. In fact, it helps them reach a deeper level of understanding and enables them to become what they are."[356]

Francis' friendship with others was totally based on freedom and devoid of any sort of obtrusion. He never wanted to force his ideas on others although he was a bishop and a learned man. He showed extreme respect for others and their opinion. Pocetto opines:

> Because Francis has such a deep respect for his friends and wants them to be what they are, he does not force his opinions on them and can differ with them in serious matters without destroying the friendship. A good example of this was his friendship with Claude-Nicolas de Quoex and his brother Phillip. These two very dear friends of his had different views on how to reform the monastery of Talloires. De Sales tells them that he does not want to force his opinions on them: ". . . I do not think that either my feelings, nor my opinions, nor my interests should serve as a rule to anyone in the world,

[354] POCETTO, *Spiritual Friendship in Salesian Spirituality*. [OEA = AE] (Pocetto here refers to the letter of Francis to Madame de Villesavin written in July-August, 1619 from Paris). AE, Tome XVIII: *Lettres – Volume VIII*, pp. 415-416 « Ne croyes jamais, ma très chere Fille, que la distance des lieux puisse separer les ames que Dieu a unies par les liens de sa dilection.» DA, 6, p. 313. „Glauben Sie niemals, meine liebe Tochter, daß die örtliche Entfernung die Seelen trennen kann, die Gott durch die Bande seiner Liebe vereint hat."

[355] Cf. POCETTO, Ibid.

[356] Ibid.

> and particularly to my friends. ... Let each one follow his own judgment as long as Christ is glorified" (OEA, XVI, 114).[357]

The freedom and liberty Francis gave to his directees and his human approach to them had their advantages. This approach helped his directees to open themselves fully to him. They placed their confidence and trust in him. At a time when psychotherapy was unheard of, Francis could help people through his personal relationship as in counselling and psychotherapy, wonderfully aided by his warmth and personal qualities. No spiritual direction or psychotherapy can be helpful when the client is not able to trust the director or therapist and open himself up fully to him.

Interestingly enough, efforts have been made in recent times to bring out the therapeutic value of the Salesian method of spiritual direction because of the stress it lays - like logo therapy - on personal freedom, spiritual friendship, importance of mutual relationship and the search for meaning.[358] Efforts have also been made to compare Salesian spirituality with the depth psychology of Carl Gustav Jung.[359]

3.4.6 The Importance of Little Virtues

Virtues are an integral part of Christian life. The Catholic Church teaches, "A virtue is an [sic] habitual and firm disposition to do good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions."[360] The purpose of acquiring virtues is to be fully human and to become like God.[361]

One of the important points that Francis de Sales stresses in his spiritual direction, especially in his letters, is the importance of the little virtues. They are gentleness, patience, humility and simplicity. In *Introduction* he strongly recommends the practice of these virtues.[362] In his opinion, one should not always look for virtues that appear to be

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[357] POCETTO, *Spiritual Friendship in Salesian Spirituality*. (AE Tome XVI: *Lettres-Volume VI*, Letter to Philippe de Quoex, pp.113-117. « Non certes, je ne pense pas que ni mon sentiment, ni mes opinions, ni mes interestz doivent servir de réglé a pas un homme du monde, et particulièrement a mes amis … » p.114.

[358] Cf. Raymund FOBES, *Sinnzetriert und salesianisch. Geistliche Begleitung im Geist des hl. Franz von Sales in der Begegnung mit Viktor E. Frankls Logotherapie*, in *Human Encounter in the Salesian Tradition*, pp. 367-387. [The whole edition deals with encounter, relationship and similar themes in Salesian tradition].

[359] Cf. Irene BECK, *Franz von Sales und C. G. Jung*, in *Jahrbuch für Salesianische Studien*, Band. 7, 1969, pp. 7-17.

[360] CCC, Part III, Section 1, Chapter 1, Article 7.

[361] Cf. Ibid.

[362] Cf. SALES, *IDL*, Part III, Chs. 1-10. (These chapters deal mainly with the little virtues).

nobler and more excellent, but for the practice of which our life-situation offers hardly any chance. Such are virtues like martyrdom, persecution for the sake of faith, etc. Chances to practise them are indeed rare. But the simple virtues add flavour to our lives, make our lives more pleasant, and our living together peaceful and joyful. Moreover, there are innumerable chances to practise them in our day-to-day living.[363] An authentic spiritual life supports the practice of virtues: "The practice of virtues and progress in them is a natural outcome of growth in prayer and charity in the Salesian understanding."[364] Manalel states three reasons why Francis de Sales advocates the practice of virtues:

> No one is (pre)determined to do what is best. Due to our free will, we can choose to act against what is good or seek the good through wrong means. The human will is pulled in a variety of directions. Virtues primarily recognize the need to develop habits that incline one to whatever is best. Secondly, human nature is wounded by sin and needs to be rehabilitated through virtue. A person's behaviour flows from his nature. The wounded nature does not take away the capacity for virtue; rather, it does condition it. Therefore, virtues work to restore a nature wounded by sin ... a third reason why virtues are needed is to overcome vices. The best way to understand vices is to realize that they are the opposite of virtues in every way, but like the virtues, they are habits. Vices are dehumanizing habits; unless acted against and weakened, they will overcome virtues..."[365]

Francis de Sales believed that these little virtues enabled one to let go of judgemental attitude and become more compassionate and understanding towards people. He believed that there was nothing small in the service of God.[366] The letters of Francis de Sales are full of examples whereby he tells his directees to practise the little virtues to make their life devout, pleasant and harmonious. The little virtues of humility, patience, gentleness and simplicity are central to the spirituality of Francis de Sales and they contribute to growth in inter-personal relationships.

To a young woman who has difficulty in praying, but who is over-eager, Francis de Sales recommends patience: "It pretends to excite us to good, but only to make us tepid; it makes us run in order to make us stumble. This is why we must always beware of it, especially in prayer."[367] He tells her further that if she does not find words to speak, just being in the presence of the Lord in patience will do: "We shall not be overeager to speak to him since it is no less useful for us just to be in his presence; jea, it is more useful although not much

[363] Cf. SALES, *IDL*, pp. 137-141.
[364] MANALEL, *Spiritual Direction: A Methodology*, p. 300.
[365] Ibid., pp. 303-304.
[366] Cf. John SANKARATHIL, *God of the Ordinary*, Bangalore: ATC, 1999, p. 129.
[367] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 28. By 'it' Francis here means over-eagerness.

to our taste. When you come to him, speak to him if you can. If you cannot, stay there; be seen; and care for nothing else."[368]

To another directee, Madame de la Flechere, a woman beset by the tasks of daily life, and apparently suffering from lack of gentleness and patience, Francis says, "Do not lose any occasion, however small it may be, for exercising gentleness of heart toward everyone."[369] Further he suggests to be patient, "Have patience with everyone, but chiefly with yourself."[370]

In the opinion of Francis de Sales, we should choose virtues that correspond to our life-situation and duties rather than with our tastes. He believes that every life situation requires the practice of some particular virtue. Different are the virtues to be practised by a bishop, by a prince, by a soldier, by a married woman, by a widow. Although all should strive to have all the virtues possible, nevertheless, all are not bound to practise them equally. But each one must devote oneself to those virtues much needed for the state of life, to which one is called by God. Writing to Jane de Chantal regarding the importance of the little virtues, he suggests to her to take up virtues that are suitable to her state of life as a widow: "Each one must love the virtues that are suitable to him, each according to his vocation. The virtues of a widow are humility, contempt for the world and of oneself and simplicity."[371]

3.4.7 High on Optimism

The spiritual guidance of Francis de Sales was characterised by optimism and positive outlook on life. As spiritual director, Francis infuses great optimism in his directees. Anyone who reads Francis de Sales cannot but be moved by the optimism radiated in his writings. His letters of spiritual direction are full of optimism, hope, joy and positive emotions. It springs from the highly positive idea Francis de Sales had of a human being. Every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. And God, who created human beings, and whose children they are, never leaves them alone. They are always under the protection of the loving Father and He will always take care of them. The basis

[368] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 29.
[369] Ibid., p. 49. (See also AE, XIV, pp. 21-23; DA, 6, pp. 137-138).
[370] Ibid., p. 51. «Ayés patience avec tous, mais principalement avec vous mesme.» AE, XIV, p. 22. „Haben Sie Geduld mit allen, in erster Linie aber mit sich selbst." DA, 6, p. 138.
[371] Ibid., p. 31. (See also AE, XIV, pp.109-111). «Chacun doit aymer les vertus qui luy sont convenables, chacun selon sa vocation. Les vertus d'une vefve sont l'humilité, le mespris du monde et de soy mesme, la simplicité.» p.109.

of this optimism is total faith and trust in a personal God who always accompanies His children. It comes also from the acceptance of all the good things that God has given us in our lives. Human happiness comes from doing God's will and totally trusting in His Providence.[372] Jesus, through his redemptive mission, has given all human beings the capacity to turn to the Father and to reach the final goal of being with Him in heaven. There is hardly any letter that does not encourage the addressee or infuse in him/her the courage to go forward joyfully.

He encourages a priest who sought his advice because he had problems in his priestly life, to persevere in his ministry in spite of the difficulties in the following words: "Believe me, remain there where you are; do faithfully everything in good conscience that morally you can do, and you will see that 'if you believe you will see the glory of God' (Jn 11:40)."[373]

He has an inspiring thought for Jane de Chantal at a time when she was beset with troubles and abjections. He wrote to her[374]on 6 August 1606: "Let us always be moving; however slowly we advance, we shall make plenty of way."[375] Francis de Sales reminds Christians that it is important to keep moving even when they face difficulties, because the difficulties will not last long. God does not allow human beings to be tested beyond their capacity.[376]

One who wants to grow in spiritual life has to constantly fight against desperation. Desperation is a great barrier to spiritual growth. It is important to be optimistic and positive and to carry on with one's decisions in spite of the failures one encounters. To Madame Flechere, who struggles hard to be devout but often falls short of her expectations, he writes,[377] "But do these exercises with a tranquil and joyous spirit; and if distractions arise, humble yourself and start again."[378]

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[372] Cf. WRIGHT / POWER in the 'Introduction' to *Letters of Spiritual Direction*, p. 42. (For details see *Theme II*, pp. 40-43).

[373] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 18. (See also AE, XIV, pp. 65-67). « Croyés-moy, demeurés la; faites fidellement tout a la bonne foy ce que moralement vous pourres faire, et vous verres que *si crecdideris, videbis gloriam Dei* (Joan xi, 40).» p. 66-67.

[374] Cf. AE, XIII, pp. 201-212. See also DA, 5, pp.123-131.

[375] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 144. «Mais gardes de vous empresser, car vous entortilleries vostre filet a nœuds et embarrasseries vostre fuseau. Allons tous-jours; pour lentement que nous avancions, nous ferons beaucoup de chemin. » AE, XIII, p.202. „Hüten Sie sich aber vor Hast, denn sonst verwickelt sich Ihr Faden zu einem Knoten und bringt Ihre Spindel in Unordnung. Machen wir nur immer weiter; wenn wir auch nur langsam vorwärts kommen, so legen wir doch einen weiten Weg zurück." DA, 5, p. 123.

[376] Cf. 1 Cor. 10:13b "You can trust that God will not let you be put to the test beyond your strength." (NJB)

[377] Cf. AE, XIV, pp. 121-123. See also DA, 6, pp. 144-146.

[378] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 154. «Mais faites cela avec un esprit tranquille et joyeux, je veux dire ces exercices; et s'il vous arrive des manquemens, humilies vous et recommencés. » AE, XIV, p. 122. „Aber tun

Francis de Sales encourages her to be optimistic and never to give up her efforts. The most important thing in spiritual growth is never to give up. This idea of Francis de Sales is reflected also in his spiritual conferences to nuns:

> It is a very good thing to feel ashamed of ourselves when we become conscious of our miseries and imperfection. However, we should not stop there, we should not fall into a state of discouragement. Rather, we ought to lift up our heart to God in holy confidence; the foundation of this trust is in God himself and not in our own self. For, even if we change, God never changes, and he remains always gentle and merciful when we are weak and imperfect as when we are strong and perfect. I am always in the habit of saying that our misery is the throne of God's mercy. It follows, then, that the greater our miseries, the greater should be our confidence in God; for, confidence is the life of the spirit. *Take away confidence from your heart and you doom yourself to death*.[379]

For a young woman[380] who is constantly discouraged by her failures, Francis de Sales has words of optimism and common sense: "I do not mean to say that we are not to put ourselves in that direction; but we are not to desire to get there in one day, that is in one day of mortality. For this desire would torment us, and for nothing. To advance well we must apply ourselves to make good way in the road nearest to us and to do the first day's journey..."[381] He encourages her to move on optimistically, at the same time patiently and step and step.

One could gather any amount of supporting materials to show that Francis had such a fine way of encouraging his directees and infusing optimism in them. He shows understanding for human weakness and at the same time encourages them to go on because God does not fail anyone who attempts to make progress. Francis pushes them gently ahead with 'love's gentle persuasion'[382] to go on their way without getting stuck. Those who persevere till the

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Sie das, das heißt diese Übungen, ruhigen und freudvollen Geistes; und wenn Ihnen dabei Fehler unterlaufen, demütigen Sie sich und beginnen Sie wieder von neuem." DA, 6, p. 145.

[379] SALES, *Spiritual Conferences*, Vo.1. p. 3. Emphasis mine. AE, Tome VI: *Les Vrays Entretiens Spirituels*, « J'ay accoustumé de dire que le throsne de la misericorde de Dieu c'est nostre misere : il faut donc, d'autant que nostre misere sera plus grande avoir aussi une plus grande confiance. (*car la confiance est la vie de l'ame: ostezluy la confiance, vous luy donnez la mort*). p. 22. The part in the bracket appears in the footnote of the original Annecy Edition. DA, Band 2: *Geistliche Gespräche* „Ich pflege zusagen: unsere Armseligkeit ist der Thron der göttlichen Barmherzigkeit. Je größer also unsere Armseligkeit, desto größer unser Vertrauen. Das Vertrauen ist das Leben der Seele, nimmst du ihr das Vertrauen, so jagst du sie in den Tod." p. 42.

[380] Madame Soulfour. Letter dated 22.7.1603. (See also AE, XII, pp. 202-206; DA, 6, pp. 38-42).

[381] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, pp. 173-174.

[382] Cf. Ivo CARNEIRO, in the 'Translator's Introduction' to *Spiritual Conferences*, Vol.1, p .xi.

end will surely survive.[383] With faith and hope one should continue one's journey, getting up again every time one falls. The greatest danger lies in hopelessness and in giving up.

3.4.8 Mystical Dimension of Christian Living

Every Christian is called to live a mystical life. Francis de Sales always emphasized in his spiritual direction the mystical dimension of daily Christian living. Years later, Karl Rahner would say that a Christian in today's world (tomorrow, too) has to be a mystic or no Christian.[384] The mysticism that Francis de Sales advocates is one that is perfectly in tune with the daily life of a Christian. A Christian's daily life cannot be separated from his devotion and spirituality. Francis de Sales suggests invariably to everyone in his spiritual direction how important it is to remain constantly in the presence of God, to thank Him constantly for all His blessings and to repeatedly ask Him for His forgiveness. Every Christian is called to live, to work and to be 24x7 in the presence of God. He is called to experience God in his daily life, in the midst of the world. The more Christians are aware of God's presence in the world and His love for them, the more intensive and deeper will their devotion be.[385]

To be constantly in the presence of God, in order to be always united with him, Francis de Sales suggests some simple methods which can be extremely helpful to every Christian. He encourages every directee that even if he/she does not have time for long hours of prayer, they can become aware of the presence of God at regular intervals, or rather very often, which is itself a prayer.[386] He also strongly recommends repetition of short invocations or ejaculatory prayers. They help us to be constantly in the presence of God and to develop our trust and confidence in the Lord.[387]

Another important practice that adds a mystical dimension to Christian living is meditation. Francis de Sales makes it a point to recommend daily meditation to his directees, each according to their situation. Meditation is a method to purify thoughts and

[383] Cf. Lk 21:19, "Your perseverance will win you your lives." (NJB)
[384] Cf. Karl RAHNER, *Frömmigkeit heute und morgen*, in: *Geist und Leben*, No. 39, 1966, pp. 326-342. See esp. p. 335; see also *Frömmigkeit früher und heute*, in *Schriften zur Theologie*, Bd. 7, Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1966, pp.11-31.
[385] Cf. Raphael MERCIER, *Prophetic Insight and Pastoral Guidance Methods of Prayer according to St Francis de Sales*, in *IJS*, Vol. XVIII, No.3, 2005, pp. 333-361. Here p. 334.
[386] Cf. SALES, *IDL*, pp. 104-106.
[387] Cf. Ibid., pp. 107-108.

as a consequence human actions, too. Daily meditation done in the morning or evening fills one's heart and mind with good thoughts and reflections.[388]

It is important to raise one's heart and mind to God at regular intervals. Writing to Madame Brulart[389]on obtaining true devotion and peace of soul, he suggests to her to ask God often during the day for this grace: "I would wish you *often, during the day*, to ask God to give you love of your vocation and to say like St Paul when he was converted, 'Lord, what will you have me to do?' "[390] Just being in the presence of God with awareness and thinking of God, raising one's heart and mind to Him even without words are all forms of genuine prayer. Writing to Jane de Chantal on prayer – she is apparently disturbed in prayer and does not know what to do during prayers – he stresses that just being in the presence of God wherever we are and whenever, and making certain acts towards God are indeed wonderful forms of prayer. He tells her that sometimes it is not required to speak much or make acts of adoration or any other form of prayer. It would suffice to be simply there 'like a statue in its niche' before God or with God.[391]

In the midst of the world and in the 'busy-ness' of the world, we are called to live constantly in the presence of God and to be aware of it. To a married woman[392] who is beset with her household duties and, therefore, finds it difficult to have fixed times for prayers, Francis de Sales has a soothing suggestion: "Often make spontaneous prayers to the Lord, at every moment you can, and in all companies, always seeing God in your heart and your heart in God."[393]

To be a mystic in the world today demands of one to experience the Lord more than to understand him or to know about him. It is the experience that precedes the knowledge. From experiencing the Lord we come to know of his goodness and love.

The Salesian understanding of mysticism is totally practical. Francis de Sales advocated a mysticism that is to be practised not only in monasteries or cloistered convents. Nor is it to be lived out only in deserts or on mountain tops, but in the world - in the midst of one's daily activities and in loving relationship with others. Mysticism in the opinion of Francis

[388] Cf. SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, pp. 12-13. (See also *IDL*, Part 1 Chapters 9 to 18).
[389] Letter to Madam Brulart on 13.10.1604. (See also AE, XII, pp. 345-352;DA, 6, pp. 82-87).
[390] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 13. (Emphasis mine)
[391] Cf. SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 36. Letter to Madame de Chantal, (1611 ?). See AE, XV, pp. 320-323. « comme une statue dans sa niche » p. 321.
[392] To Madame Brulart, Letter dated 3.5.1604. (See AE, XII, pp. 267-271; DA, 6, pp. 79-81).
[393] SALES, *Thy Will be Done*, p. 47.

de Sales is one that is nurtured by a deep intimacy with God, living constantly in the awareness of the presence of God and reminding oneself of it every now and then through short acts and ejaculatory prayers, or even raising one's thoughts to God. It is a mysticism in the midst of the world but undisturbed by it, allowing God's love to radiate one and through one's relationship with one's neighbours, especially through the practice of the little virtues of gentleness, patience, simplicity and humility that makes life here on earth a heavenly experience.

Concluding Remarks

The world today is going through a phase of unprecedented scientific and technological developments. As a result, the world is in constant flux. In this process of rapid change and transformation, many of the old values and practices are tumbling down. The so-called liberalism of today and the supremacy of the ego and personal freedom are leading the society, the family and the individuals often to nowhere.

Francis de Sales also lived and worked in a similar situation. It was the time immediately after the Reformation and the humanism of the Renaissance had taken deep roots in the society. However, many people from all walks of life who were looking for spiritual guidance and a direction in their lives came to Francis de Sales. He was able to help them through his person-oriented approach, fine personal qualities, personal touch and his deep psychological insights. He could convince them that every Christian was called to holiness and that holiness was not inaccessible to ordinary people living in day-to-day life-situations. Through his letters, the main medium of communication those days, he could touch and move the hearts of people. It was difficult for people to reject his genuine suggestions given with great love and understanding. He guided many persons and won thousands back to the Catholic fold. His success also depended on the fact that he could counter negative developments with positive elements. Thus, to counter the evil effects of a negative and exaggerated form of humanism he relied on Christian humanism which gave God the central place He deserved, at the same time upholding the dignity of the human being as the pinnacle of creation. He could do so because he had the educational background and training, sound formation in faith and, above all, total dependence on God.

The pastors of today have a similar obligation: to bring a personal touch to their ministry in the world which is becoming more and more impersonal, more digital and more distanced from humanity; to orient themselves to the life-situation of every believer without

compromising on Christian faith and values; to love and guide people in the true spirit of Christ. Christian life does not reach its perfection all of a sudden. It is like a small sapling planted in a garden. It has to be nurtured in all seasons. One should not forget that there are different plants in a garden and they produce different flowers. In the same way, all Christians are called to bear fruit according to their nature and abilities. This message of Francis de Sales is more valid today than ever, as people are more and more conscious of their uniqueness than ever before. A great danger that one faces today is that this uniqueness is almost equated with egoism which almost consumes families, the society and humanity at large.

Spiritual growth is like a house that one builds where each brick contributes its share to the completion of the whole structure. Such are the daily acts of virtues one performs. They build one up, form one's character and make one's life here on earth pleasant, joyful and more Christ-like. However high one's goals may be, one must never forget that human beings are frail, weak and likely to fall. Therefore, Francis de Sales recommends that one make progress slowly but steadily, little by little, in self-acceptance, gentleness and patience. The most important thing is never to give up. This spirit has to be communicated to every Christian in the world.

The present time offers the Church challenges as well as possibilities because there are more and more people on the search – for God, for spirituality and devotion, for meaning in life, for identity. The spirit of guidance that Francis de Sales offers is indeed of supreme value at this juncture.

CHAPTER 4

CARL ROGERS AND THE PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH

Introduction

IN this longish chapter, my intention is to trace, in some detail, the life and the background of Carl Rogers, the founder of the person-centred approach (PCA).[1] It is important to understand the person – and to understand him critically – to have a better understanding of Rogers' philosophy and his contributions to psychology. That is done in the first part. This part also tries to see the major influences in the life of Rogers, what shaped him to be the person he was, the different stages of his life and what influence each stage had on him personally, and how it contributed to the development of PCA.

In the second part, effort is made to see systematically the basic concepts of PCA and how the person-centred therapy (PCT) operates. To achieve this goal, first a theoretical study of PCA is undertaken, and secondly an effort is made to show how it has been applied in action.

PART 1

4.1 Carl Rogers: Biography, Influences and Development of his Person-Centred Approach

Person-centred therapy is one of the widely used forms of psychotherapy and counselling today. After almost seven decades of existence, Person-centred therapy (PCT) remains relevant even today. Unlike other therapy forms, PCT has a much wider reach - it is used in private practice, in educational institutions and even in religious and pastoral settings. Person-Centred Therapy (PCT) and person-centred counselling and all other person-centred approaches trace their origin to the foundation laid by Carl Ransom Rogers. Carl Rogers pioneered a new approach to psychotherapy and counselling known as non-

[1] I have used throughout this work the abbreviations PCA and PCT denoting Person-Centred Approach and Person-Centred Therapy respectively. I have also left North American spellings unchanged when they refer to the name of a person, book or institution (i.e., when used as proper nouns) and in quotations. I have generally used the masculine gender to refer to persons in order to avoid the clumsy reading of the text. It does not reflect any gender prejudice whatsoever.

directive, client-centred or person-centred approach.[2] Rogers developed his therapy as a response to the psychoanalytic approach and the behavioural method. PCA is an integral part of the humanistic approach and of the 'third force' psychology.[3]

Rogers is perhaps the first psychologist who stressed that the *quality of human relationship* is central to counselling and psychotherapy. For him, to be a counsellor is to be a facilitator and to provide a healthy and salutary climate for the client to use his own capacity and potential for self change.[4]

True to the spirit of Carl Rogers, PCT includes various schools, directions and 'tribes'. It includes many approaches like the classical client-centred, focusing-oriented, existential, experiential, integrative, and several more.[5] Compared to the other psychologists of his time, Rogers was the first to take a purely scientific approach to psychotherapy at that time. He was also responsible for the spread of professional counselling in various fields like education, family, and inter-personal relationships. Rogers spearheaded the humanistic psychology movement in the 1960s through the 1980s.[6]

Rogers is also known world-wide as an author. Being a prolific writer, he persuasively brought out his ideas and concepts through his 16 books and more than 200 articles.[7] He was also a pioneer in using non-print media for the propagation of his ideas. He made tapes and videos of his therapy sessions and circulated them. He was also known worldwide as an educator and speaker, and always attracted large audiences all over the world.[8]

Carl Rogers occupied many distinguished positions like the New York State Chairman and national executive committee member of the American Association of Social Workers, vice-president of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, first president of the American Academy of Psychotherapists, president of the American Psychology

[2] Cf. Howard KIRSCHENBAUM / Valerie Land HENDERSON, *The Carl Rogers Reader*, NY: Houghton Mifflin, 1989, p. xi.
[3] Humanistic or the third force in psychology evolved in the second half of the twentieth century. It was a reaction against Freud's psychoanalysis and its various allied schools and the behaviourist schools initiated by B. F. Skinner. Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow were the pioneers of the humanistic movement.
[4] Cf. Brian THORNE, *Carl Rogers*, London: Sage Publications, 1992, p.vii.
[5] Cf. Pete SANDERS, *The Many Tribes of the Person-Centred Nation*, Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books, 2004. One only needs to turn the pages of this book to get familiar with some of the major approaches in the person-centred therapy.
[6] Cf. Howard KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books, 2007, p. xi.
[7] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM / HENDERSON, *The Carl Rogers Reader*, p. xi.
[8] Cf. Ibid., p. xii.

Association, and many more. He was instrumental in establishing the Association for Humanistic Psychology in 1963.[9]

The numerous awards and recognitions he received include the Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award instituted by the American Psychology Association, and the Distinguished Professional Contribution Award by the same association.[10] His life was characterised by outstanding contributions over the long period he was active in the profession - 59 years! He was active and contributed vigorously to the field till his death in 1987.[11]

In sketching the life of Carl Rogers and of the development of his psychology, I have drawn heavily from Kirschenbaum's detailed biography of Carl Rogers. It not only describes Rogers' life in detail, but also deals at length with such topics as the development of his ideas, the background influences, the growth and spread of the client/person-centred approach, and their relevance. Carl Rogers was even nominated for the Nobel peace prize. He left many private papers behind to be made public after his death. Authors believe that he wanted others to know of his private and hidden life. Kirschenbaum prepared the biography of Rogers after serious consideration of various sources available.[12]

4.1.1 Family, Childhood and Youth

Carl Rogers was a typical product of Midwestern America. He had purely American ancestors, unlike many psychotherapists and psychologists who were either of Jewish-European descent or directly European. His predecessors - the Rogers - were from England who migrated to America as early as the 17th century. So was the case with his mother's family. They had lived in the new country for more than 300 years, too.[13] The family had settled in the Glen Falls area and later moved to Wisconsin. Walter Alexander Rogers, his father, attended the University of Wisconsin and was closely associated with YMCA. He was a successful engineer and had several projects under his supervision. Later the family moved to Chicago and Walter started his own company with a friend.[14]

[9] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM / HENDERSON, *The Carl Rogers Reader*, pp. xii-xiii.
[10] Cf. Ibid., p. xiii.
[11] Cf. Ibid.
[12] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. ii.
[13] Cf. THORNE, *Carl Rogers*, p. 1.
[14] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp.1-2.

Carl Ransom Rogers was born on 8 January 1902 as the fourth of six children. As a child, Carl was rather sickly and weak. His father's business improved, and when Carl was five, they moved to a better suburb on the north side of Oak Park. It was an upper middle class community with restrictions.[15]

4.1.1.1 Avid Reader

Carl joined a school when he was nearly seven years old, rather later than other children. Carl was an avid reader, a quality which remained with him till the end of his life. He read anything he could get hold of: stories, novels, comics.[16] Carl created a fancy world of his own through his readings. As a young boy, he also tried to get information about such taboo subjects like love, sex, etc. Carl had a fascination for adventure stories. He was a vulnerable child, tender, easily hurt but at the same time took things in a feisty and sarcastic manner.[17]

4.1.1.2 Strict Upbringing in a 'Fundamentalist' Religious Family

Since his parents, Walter and Julia, were committed Christians, religion played a major role in the life of the family. The family considered itself to be different and treated themselves as the 'elect' of God.[18] The family atmosphere at home was not one of freedom, but more of discipline, rigorous religious practices and Protestant work ethics. In his own opinion, it was not only strict and conservative, but his family was almost a fundamentalist Protestant family.[19]

As Carl grew up, his family prospered due to the hard work of his father. However, it was often admitted by Carl Rogers that he did not feel emotional closeness to his father. His parents were strict disciplinarians. They exercised total control over the children. Rogers recalled later in his life: "My parents cared a great deal for us, and had our welfare almost constantly in mind. They were also, in many subtle ways, very controlling of our behaviour. It was assumed by them and accepted by me that we were different from other

[15] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 2-3.
[16] Cf. Ibid.
[17] Cf. Ibid., pp. 4-5.
[18] Cf. THORNE, *Carl Rogers*, p. 1.
[19] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy, Personality and Interpersonal Relationships, as Developed in the Client-Centered Framework*, in Sigmund KOCH (ed.) *Psychology: A Study of Science. Vol.3, Formulations of the Person and the Social Context*, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1959, (184-256), p.186. Hereafter referred to as *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959.

people – no alcoholic beverages, no dancing, cards or theatre, very little social life and *much* work."[20]

His father, although an engineer, had a passion for farming. He bought a farm near Glen Ellyn, Illinois, west of Chicago, and in 1915 he built a new house there.[21] The children at Rogers' family also had to do some hard work at home and on the farm. Through these activities and work on the farm Rogers developed a life-long love for the outdoors and nature. He also learnt to observe things intensely and developed a love for nature. Perhaps influenced by his own experience on the family farm, he developed an interest in scientific agriculture. As he says, he had a 'deep abiding respect' for the scientific method.[22]

Carl Rogers' childhood and youth were spent socially and emotionally isolated. The only source of entertainment for Carl was reading. He developed intellectually and in inner life. Carl had from early years on an intense urge to communicate his reflections and to reach out to the public through his writings.[23]

4.1.1.3 Desire for Farming

In September 1919, Carl went to Madison College, University of Wisconsin. For major, he chose agriculture, wanting to specialize in scientific agriculture. He stayed at the YMCA campus where his brother Ross was president of the YMCA Chapter then. In complete contrast to his childhood life, Carl engaged himself in a lot of extracurricular activities. Away from home and from its restrictive atmosphere, he had a burning desire to meet people and make friends. He was part of many groups like the 'Ag-Triangle' which helped him with socialization. At College, he also made his first friends in life. [24]

4.1.1.4 Desire to be a Missionary

In 1919, the *Des Moines Convention* was organised in Iowa by YMCA. It was indeed a turning point in the life of the eight-year old Carl. After the convention, he decided to become a missionary. From 1919 to 1921, his life moved in the direction of ministry. He changed agriculture as his major and opted history which would help him become a

[20] Carl R. ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*, NY: Houghton Mifflin, 1961, p. 5. [Emphasis in the original].
[21] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 8-10.
[22] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p.186.
[23] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 14-23.
[24] Cf. Ibid., pp. 18-19.

minister in the Church.[25] He was already engaged in ministry, youth work and evangelism.[26]

Another major turning point in his life was being selected to go to Peking for the World Student Christian Federation Conference in 1922. The trip meant that he would lose a semester. He was 'strongly and religiously motivated to undertake this trip'.[27] On 15 February 1922, Carl left Illinois to begin the trip which he later called the greatest experience of his life. In August 1922, he was back in the US from the China trip. This six-month trip had a profound impact on him. It brought about a major change in his life, in his outlook and his approach to religion. It caused a liberalising of his religious views: "In major ways I for the first time emancipated myself from the religious thinking of my parents, and realized that I could not go along with them. This independence of thought caused great pain and stress in our relationship, but looking back on it I believe that here, more than at any other time, I became an independent person."[28]

Brian Thorne, another biographer and friend of Carl Rogers, believes his China journey already laid the foundations for his own idea of counselling and therapy:

> As he experienced the depth of group life, so it became possible for him to understand and to value individual differences. What is more, the acceptance he found in the group, the increasing security of the relationship with Helen and the changing perception of the nature of God enabled him to maintain an authenticity which was crucial to his escape from the shackles of the narrow parental view of reality. The interweaving of the later core conditions of empathy, acceptance and genuineness is not difficult to trace.[29]

Rogers did not yet leave religion, but he was looking for a more personal approach to it. By the time he reached home after the trip, there was a great gap between him and the family. He encountered occasional fights in the family with his mother due to his altered life-style.[30] It was not only a religious gap, but it was, as his biographer Howard Kirschenbaum notes, also an emotional and intellectual gap. His religious, social, political and economic views changed considerably. Carl Rogers also exuded considerable self-confidence now.[31] Since he had lost a semester, he had to wait to re-enter the University.

[25] Cf. ROGERS, *On Becoming A Person*, p. 7.
[26] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 19-22.
[27] Cf. Ibid., p. 23.
[28] ROGERS, *On Becoming A Person*, p. 7.
[29] THORNE, *Carl Rogers*, p. 5.
[30] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 31-32.
[31] Cf. Ibid., p. 25.

During this period he took a correspondence course in Psychology from Wisconsin University for which the texts were prepared by William James.[32]

When he was back at the University, he took history as major and plunged into academics. Rogers' philosophy of life was gradually emerging. One must trust one's own experience. He believed his own clear conscience was above anything else - the Church, the Pope, the Bible or any force on earth.[33] He also believed in the right of private judgement in religious matters.[34] Rogers also considered religion to be useless if it were only negative. He wrote in his diary on 15 February 1922 on his trip to China: "Our religion is worse than useless if it is only a negative thing, for by its very nature it ought to be the most positive and compelling force in our lives."[35]

4.1.1.5 Carl and Helen Eliott

During his studies at Wisconsin, Rogers got close to Helen Eliott. Helen was an art student at the University at the time. Carl was gradually moving away from his parents.[36] The empirical bend of Carl was growing and he had a strong desire to find out the truth. After his studies at Wisconsin, Carl wanted to study further and he moved to Union Theological Seminary (UTS) in NY. This move was not well appreciated by his family. They wanted him to marry and settle down in life. Rogers could not think of marrying anyone other than Helen. She had already begun working as a commercial artist. Against their parents' advice they got married on 28 August 1924. The marriage would last 55 years till the death of Helen on 29 March 1979.[37]

4.1.1.6 Studies in New York: 1924-1928

It was the personal choice of Carl to study at UTS. The Union Theological Seminary was considered liberal. Although Carl's attitude to religion had undergone a serious change, he still wanted to prepare himself for religious work. At UTS, Carl enjoyed the air of freedom and liberty. He loved Arthur Cushman McGiffert, then head of the Seminary, who promoted free and liberal thinking.[38]

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[32] Cf. THORNE, *Carl Rogers*, p. 5.
[33] Cf. ROGERS, *On Becoming A Person*, pp. 23-24.
[34] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 33.
[35] Carl. R. ROGERS / David E.RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: The Quiet Revolutionary. An Oral History*, Rosewill: Penmarin Books, 2002, p. 63.
[36] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 35-36.
[37] Cf. Ibid., p. 41.
[38] Cf. ROGERS, *On Becoming A Person*, p. 7.

Rogers' papers at the university reflected his increasingly liberal thinking. Some of them were critical and liberal to the extent of stating that there is nothing like the religion of Christianity. Although Carl was registered for the religious education programme, during his first year at UTS he was also re-introduced to the world of psychology. He had already been introduced to Psychology through correspondence course from Wisconsin. He found the subject exciting. In the summer of 1925, Carl worked as a part-time or 'temporary pastor' in East Dorset in Vermont where he also had the opportunity to preach sermons.[39]

4.1.1.7 Moving over from Theology to Psychology

In his second year at UTS, 1925-1926, Carl also attended many classes at Columbia University where he came into contact with clinical psychology and with William Heard Kilpatrick and his philosophy of education. Carl was deeply impressed and influenced by Kilpatrick, John Dewey, and the idea of progressive education. He found himself attracted to child guidance and gradually he moved from theology to psychology.[40]

During studies at UTS, he also worked as Director of religious education at the First Congregational Church in Mt Vermont, NY. He introduced many progressive approaches in religious education there. In the fall of 1926, he moved to Teachers' College, Broadway, to major in clinical and educational psychology. It was at this time that Rogers said goodbye to religion. He left the Church, never again to return to any formalized religion.[41] In 1926, their first child David was born. Rogers had now new responsibilities besides his studies and work.

Teachers' College, Columbia University, was a leading centre for the training of psychologists. Important psychologists like E.L. Thorndike were teaching at Columbia at that time. Rogers, however, was not impressed with Thorndike's intelligence testing, measurement and assessment methods. Rogers found them to be dull.[42]

Carl Rogers was faced with a serious problem. He had no job now and no income. He took up a job as assistant to Goodwin Watson. Watson appreciated the person of Rogers and his work very well. Carl received his MA in Psychology from Columbia University.

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[39] Cf. THORNE, *Carl Rogers*, p 7.
[40] Cf. ROGERS, *On Becoming A Person*, p. 9.
[41] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 47-48. (See also Carl R. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p.186).
[42] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 52.

4.1.2. Rogers Moves into Academic and Scientific World

Rogers' intense involvement in the academic and scientific world of psychology and psychotherapy begins with the short period of employment at the Institute for Child Guidance in NY. Thenceforth his life was an endless journey of academic achievement.

Later in 1926, with a fellowship in hand, Rogers moved to the newly formed Institute for Child Guidance in New York. Here Rogers was exposed to Freudian thinking. The psychology at the Institute in the opinion of Rogers was more eclectic. Rogers had some initial interest in Freudian psychology, but it waned over the years. Rogers found it more or less esoteric. Alfred Adler was one of the lecturers at the Institute.[43] For his dissertation, Rogers developed a test system for children and an adjustment inventory. He had collected all his data by 1928 but got all this worked up and finally as a dissertation only in 1931. He got his Ph. D while working in Rochester in 1931.[44]

4.1.2.1 Rochester: Laying the Foundation for His Own Therapy

In mid-April 1928, Rogers appeared for an interview for a job at the Rochester Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. He was selected for the job which involved working with delinquent and problem children and included diagnosing their difficulties, doing 'treatment interviews' and planning for their treatment.[45]

The early 1900s witnessed an enormous growth in psychology, psychotherapy and social work. Psychology had two major directions – on the one side, testing and measurement and, on the other, experiment work in the labs. The Rochester Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children had on average 600-700 children per year, most of them from the middle class. Rogers' work was a confluence of three professions – psychology, psychiatry and social work. The Centre had children with behavioural and personality problems and many different other problems like stealing, lying, sex perversion and sadism.[46]

4.1.2.1.1 Disenchantment with Existing Methods

As for Rogers, his time at Rochester was a decade of experimentation and soon he became dissatisfied with diagnostic models. He tried to develop his own method by incorporating different approaches. He was pragmatic in an eclectic manner. He was also unhappy with

[43] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 54-57.
[44] Cf. Ibid., p. 59.
[45] Cf. ROGERS, *On Becoming A Person*, p.10.
[46] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 61-62.

traditional methods and felt the need for a new way: "More and more he began to realize that he could regard himself as a pioneer in his own right and that he could take the risk of formulating his own ideas based on the day-to-day experience of the encounters he had with those seeking his help."[47]

Rogers was not someone who would blindly accept the views and teachings of others. He learnt from his own experiences. Openness to new and creative ideas was part of Rogers. He speaks about one of his experiences: "Somehow this incident impressed me with the possibility that there were mistakes in authoritative teachings, and that there was still new knowledge to discover."[48] From many such experiences he was convinced of the need for a new approach.

4.1.2.1.2 Fundamental Motive: Desire to Help

One of the motives that moved Rogers throughout his professional life was his desire to help. It is clearly seen from his earliest years of practice. The question that he asked himself in every case was: 'How can we be of help to this child?'[49] One of the common forms of therapy was environmental therapy - placing the child in an entirely new atmosphere. In most cases, it was a foster home. It was not the ideal solution for the problems of children.

Rogers noted time and again: "Extreme behaviour, psychological and emotional problems would often disappear or be reduced to a minimum in a healthy environment. The child has within him the drive, the need to grow and mature. To create an environment that supports growth is to allow the child to be healthy."[50] What constitutes this healthy supportive environment? Rogers noted that four attitudes were necessary: i) an attitude of intelligent understanding, ii) consistency of viewpoint and discipline, iii) an attitude of interested affection, and finally iv) satisfaction in the child's developing abilities.[51]

4.1.2.1.3 From Child Therapy to Adult Therapy

During the period of his work in Rochester, Rogers made an important transition from child counselling to adult therapy. His first 'adult-interview' was an eye-opener for Rogers. It caused a major change in his professional life. It also confirmed his beliefs which he had

[47] ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: The Quiet Revolutionary*, p. 9.
[48] ROGERS, *On Becoming A Person*, p. 10.
[49] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 67.
[50] Ibid., p. 71.
[51] Cf. Ibid.

already gained from his work with the children: "This incident was one of a number, which helped me to experience the fact – only fully realized later – that it is the *client* who knows what hurts, what directions to go, what problems are crucial, what experiences have been deeply buried. It began to occur to me that unless I had a need to demonstrate my own cleverness and learning, I would do better to rely upon the client for the direction of movement in the process."[52]

4.1.2.1.4 Developing the Concept of Actualizing Tendency

Actualizing tendency was one of the earliest concepts in his therapy to be developed. This idea came from his work with the children. He noticed this tendency in children that, given suitable conditions, they were capable of making adjustments of their own. He noticed a tendency in them that moves in the direction of growth and adjustment. Already at that time Rogers believed, "… that most children, if given a reasonably normal environment which meets their own emotional, intellectual and social needs, have within themselves sufficient drive toward health to respond and make comfortable adjustment to life."[53]

This hypothesis would become a life-long conviction of Rogers and the central premise of the person-centred therapy. Later he would revise this as the actualising tendency of the individual. Kirschenbaum notes, "Although at this stage of his career Rogers was more interested in the child's 'adjustment' than his self-actualization, the basic premise was firmly in place that the person has within him or herself the resources to grow in healthy directions when suitable conditions are present."[54]

As we have already seen, during his Rochester years Rogers tried out many forms of available therapies. He was not happy with most of them. Due to his disenchantment with the existing theories and with his intense desire to help, and propelled by a scientific and creative mind, Rogers was already laying the foundation for his later psychotherapy. In the later years at Rochester, Rogers moved more in the direction of intensive psychotherapy. It was an experimental period for Rogers. For him it was also a fruitful time. Soon he would develop his own psychotherapy.[55]

[52] ROGERS, *On Becoming A Person*, p. 12. Italics as in the original.
[53] As quoted by KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 73.
[54] KIRSCHENBAUM, Ibid.
[55] Cf. Brian THORNE, *Carl Rogers*, pp. 8-9.

4.1.2.1.5 Influence of Rankian Relationship Therapy

During the period 1935-36, Rogers became familiar with Otto Rank and Relationship Therapy.[56] It had an influence on Rogers later. Otto Rank was a former follower of Freud. Upon Rogers' invitation, Rank came once to Rochester in 1936 to conduct a seminar. Rogers was much taken up by Rank's 'will theory', although he later rejected all the theories of Rank. Some claim that Rank and the Rankian school have strongly influenced Rogers. However, Kirschenbaum believes, it is more his school than Rank himself that influenced Rogers and contributed to his thinking. One of the ideas that influenced Rogers most was that the therapist is not himself the director of therapy but only a supporter or helper. Rogers also liked the emphasis the Rankian school placed on the dignity and capacity of the individual.[57]

4.1.2.1.6 Academic and Personal Life

His biographers note that he had a special ability to write quickly and persuasively in the busy intervals. Before Rogers left Rochester after 12 years of work there, he wrote his first book in 1939, titled *The Critical Treatment of the Problem Child*.[58] Rogers was also immersed in a lot of professional and social activities during his Rochester years. He served as the president of the Rochester Psychological Society. During these years his fame spread beyond New York. He published dozens of scholarly articles about his research in child guidance. He was a popular figure in conferences, public discussions and his articles appeared often in journals. His first book also contributed to his fame. As a person, Rogers was totally accepting, warm, understanding but also tenacious and determined, too.[59]

4.1.2.2 In Ohio

In 1940, Rogers received a full professorship at Ohio State University. His book *Clinical Treatment of the Problem Child* had its influence in getting him this job. It was his first full-time teaching job and he was quite excited about it.[60] He led a busy and active life at Ohio. His duties involved taking classes at the University, supervision of counsellors-in-training, conducting workshops, writing articles and, of course, conducting counselling

[56] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995 Edition, p. 37.
[57] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 85-90.
[58] Cf. THORNE, *Carl Rogers*, p. 11.
[59] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 93- 95.
[60] Cf. ROGERS, *On Becoming A Person*, p.12.

sessions. There were many students under his supervision. Rogers received his greatest satisfaction from his students in the graduate seminars and under his supervision.[61]

4.1.2.2.1 Birth of a New Therapy

In 1940, Rogers started a practicum for students in advanced clinical treatment. It was perhaps the first in a university setting in the US. His classes were popular and attended by hundreds of students who were eager to listen to him.[62] As noted earlier, since his Rochester years, Rogers was disenchanted with the existing forms of therapy and had been working on a new form of therapy based on his own experience. On 11 December 1940, he presented his therapy at the University of Minnesota where he was invited to give a speech. Rogers presented the fundamental elements of his new approach. Rogers stated the goals of the new psychotherapy:

> This newer approach differs from the older one in that it has a genuinely different goal. It aims directly toward the greater independence and integration of the individual rather than hoping that such results will accrue if the counselor assists in solving the problem. The individual and not the problem is the focus. The aim is not to solve one particular problem, but to assist the individual to *grow*, so that he can cope with the present problem and with later problems in a better integrated fashion… In the first place, it relies much more heavily on the individual drive toward growth, health, and adjustment…In the second place, this newer therapy places greater stress on the emotional elements, the feeling aspects of the situation, than upon the intellectual aspects … In the third place, this newer therapy places greater stress upon the immediate situation than upon the individual's past… For the first time this approach lays stress upon the therapeutic relationship itself as a growth experience.[63]

On this date – 11 December 1940 – Carl Rogers said the Client-Centred Therapy was born. Rogers got both positive and negative feedback. It was not well accepted in therapy circles by the therapists who laid heavy stress on their own professional expertise and experience.[64]

In spite of the negative reactions from professional and academic circles, Rogers was determined to further develop his own therapy. In order to propagate his new therapy, Rogers began writing the book, *Counseling and Psychotherapy: Newer Concepts in Practice*. In autumn 1941, the book was ready, but the publisher Houghton Mifflin was

[61] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 105-106.
[62] Cf. Ibid., pp. 107-109.
[63] Carl R. ROGERS, *Counseling and Psychotherapy: Newer Concepts in Practice*, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin, 1942, pp. 28-30. [This talk has been incorporated into his book *Counseling and Psychotherapy*].
[64] Cf. THORNE, *Carl Rogers*, p. 13.

unwilling because they feared there would be no takers for the book. To the surprise of everyone, the book sold over 100,000 copies and remained in print for most of the 20th century.[65] This book was referred to as 'The Bible' by his students in Ohio.[66] Some important ideas from the book would help us to understand Rogers and his therapy better. Rogers used many innovations in his book. Some of the core ideas of the person-centred approach today, such as treating the person seeking help as client and not as patient, non-directiveness, reflection on feelings, therapeutic relationship, etc. were dealt with in this book.

Although his book *Counseling and Psychotherapy* helped Rogers to establish himself and rise to fame and to establish a trademark name 'Rogerian', the psychological establishment of the country and the academic circles largely ignored the book which received no major reviews or critique in the journals or periodicals. In spite of this 'neglect' from academic circles, Rogers' approach caught on. Although his new ideas were not well accepted by other psychologists and psychotherapists, he became more and more popular with graduate students and the ordinary public.[67] The students saw in him a caring father figure, an elder brother and a friend. His student-centred approaches were also appreciated by his students. He was accepted by all sections of students. Many of his then students went on to become famous later. They include Arthur Comb, Virginia Axline, Thomas Gordon and Nicolas Hobbs. Rogers had friends and admirers from even 'inimical' fields. Fr Charles Curran, a Catholic priest, had great respect for him and once along with friends entered into a lively discussion with Carl Rogers on sensitive issues. Although they disagreed with him on several issues, they greatly appreciated the person of Carl Rogers.[68]

4.1.2.2.2 Academic Fame

As Rogers' fame spread considerably due to his seminars, lectures and books, he came to be widely accepted as a psychologist of renown. Carl Rogers became a member of many professional associations like the American Psychological Association and American Association for Applied Psychology. In addition, he was associate editor of Journal of Consulting Psychology and of Psychology Monographs. All these assignments took plenty of his time. In the period between 1940 and 1945, he had 20 studies and articles published

[65] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 110.
[66] Cf. ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: The Quiet Revolutionary*, p. 12.
[67] Cf. Ibid.
[68] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 134-138.

in various journals. His non-directive approach was making steady progress and so was his influence on the field of psychology and psychotherapy.[69]

Since Rogers' family did not practise any religion, the children – David and Natalie - were free to have their own world views and lead their own lives. There were no religious books or stories read to them at night.[70]

4.1.2.2.3 With the Armed Forces

During the years of World War II he was also engaged in counselling Air Force personnel. He accepted a one-year offer as Director of Counseling Services for the United Services Organization (USO) in New York.[71] His duties included training professional staff in counselling, helping the Force in personal adjustment and workshops with intense training. The new job meant that he had to move to New York.[72]

4.1.2.3 Chicago Years

After his work with the USO, Rogers was invited by Ralph Tyler of Chicago University to be a visiting professor. Tyler was much impressed with Rogers and his work and invited him to join the University to help set up a counselling centre there. The 12 years that Carl Rogers spent in Chicago beginning in 1945 was the most prolific and productive period of his life. He wrote three books, numerous articles, published many studies and was also President of the American Psychology Association. The first half of the 12-year period was spent on the creation of the counselling centre, his own personal development and refining his approach. The second half was dedicated to more research and for laying theoretical foundation for this therapy.[73]

It was initially difficult to find a proper place and finance for a counselling centre at the University. As Rogers refused to lead the Institute, his assignments included from being a counsellor to doing research to taking classes. He also had numerous direct personal experiences in counselling.[74]

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[69] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*,pp. 143-144.
[70] Cf. Ibid., p. 140.
[71] Cf. David COHEN, *Carl Rogers: A Critical Biography*, London: Constable, 1997, pp. 107-109.
[72] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 147.
[73] Cf. Ibid., p. 151.
[74] Cf. ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: The Quiet Revolutionary*, pp.13-15.

4.1.2.3.1 From Non-Directive to Client-Centred

Rogers was growing in his knowledge and experience. It also meant accommodating new information and experience and changing when needed. Rogers noticed how others had struggled to learn his non-directive method which had an 'illusion of simplicity.'[75] In his later writings the emphasis was not on method, but on the attitudes of the counsellor. Rogers noticed that if the method was not in line with the attitudes of the counsellor, he was doomed to fail. The attitudes held by the counsellor toward the worth and significance of the individual is primary.[76]

In 1951, Rogers brought out his third major book titled *Client-Centered Therapy*. Here he speaks openly about the changes and modifications that took place in his thinking and practice. It enjoyed a good readership and reflects his work at the Counseling Center in Chicago.[77] Although it was neglected by the academic world, his style of communication became very personal. It was an unusual approach in those times in academic circles.[78] At the Counseling Center at the University, he was basically a counsellor, therapist and scientist. In his classes he tried to apply increasingly client-centred methods. He allowed the students to do self-evaluation and they could choose their grades. Rogers was basically a facilitator. He himself was always a learner.[79]

Two outstanding qualities were visible in Rogers during his years at the Center. Firstly, it was his great capacity to understand and accept another person as a separate individual capable of self-direction and worthy of trust. Secondly, he showed an enormous capacity to listen empathically and his ability to encourage independent, creative work among his staff and students.[80] Rogers could at the same time be very 'hard driving', forceful, ambitious; and he had a sense of importance but at the same time unassuming. He also fought for his rights. Another characteristic that many noticed was that his was a warm personality, but he was frequently aloof. He had a natural reticence, a kind of withdrawnness. Carl Rogers was influenced by his own personal life.[81]

[75] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers,* p. 154.
[76] Cf. Ibid., p. 156.
[77] Cf. ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: The Quiet Revolutionary,* p.13.
[78] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers,* p. 165.
[79] Cf. Ibid., p. 169.
[80] Cf. Ibid., p. 172.
[81] Cf. Ibid., pp. 174-183.

4.1.2.3.2 Personal Crisis - 1949

When he was in Chicago, Carl Rogers experienced a period of intense personal distress. It was due to a messed-up therapy with a severely distressed woman. Rogers admitted he was lost in this relationship. It turned out to be a destructive relationship. She demanded up to five appointments per week. He himself had to take to psychotherapy to overcome his distress. To get over the matter, he spent months away with his wife Helen wandering and travelling around.[82] Some authors like Thorne and Russell believe that Rogers developed his client-centred therapy because he himself needed the healing it provided.[83] Rogers had trained enough counsellors that he could turn to in times of trouble like this. This proved helpful to him in this time of crisis.[84]

When he returned, Rogers was not sure about his future. He was apprehensive about working again as a therapist and about his future in the field of psychology and psychotherapy. He doubted his own worth as a person. He had to seek the help of therapists whom he had trained to overcome this crisis. It took him a year to be again in the profession of therapy.[85]

This crisis was an eye-opener for Rogers. He obtained new insights from this crisis. Through this experience, he was able to accept himself. This crisis helped him to be more free and spontaneous with his clients in the future. Rogers said that through this experience he learned to love and value himself. Once that was done, he returned again fully into the profession.[86]

Recalling this crisis and reflecting on it before his death, he said to David E. Russell, "I did go to him for therapy, and that was very, very profitable, very helpful. I realize that probably my deepest problem was not being able to like or love myself. That changed at that point and changed a lot of things in my life - more inner changes than outer."[87] 'Psychoanalytically' seen, the problem of not being loved lay deep in his person. It could have been a hangover from his childhood. This bondage of his childhood could have been triggered by his troubled therapeutic relationship with this distressed woman.[88]

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[82] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 184.
[83] Cf. ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: the Quiet Revolutionary*, p. 13.
[84] Cf. THORNE, *Carl Rogers*, p. 14.
[85] Cf. ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: the Quiet Revolutionary*, p. 13.
[86] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 186.
[87] ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: the Quiet Revolutionary*, pp. 164-165.
[88] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 187.

David Coven, author of the critical biography of Rogers, looks at it critically and thinks it is likely that Rogers even may have had an affair with her and rejected her. However, he admits that there is no evidence of any sexual involvement with the client. He confirms that Rogers suffered a total nervous breakdown.[89]

4.1.2.3.3 Further Development of Person-Centred Therapy

During the years in Chicago, his method of therapy was undergoing changes and taking concrete shape. As Kirschenbaum notes, "In the twelve years at Chicago he moved from the *method* to the *attitudes* to the *relationship* as the key ingredient in the therapeutic process."[90] As early as 1941, he had developed his concept of actualizing tendency which would be the central point of his therapy. In order to develop a comprehensive theory, Rogers still had to work on many other aspects. His work in Ohio and Chicago laid the foundation for the same. This came in the background of his long experience and rigorous research unknown to the field of psychotherapy at that time.[91]

We see clearly the gradual development in the thinking of Rogers. Rogers argues now that it is not enough to have the attitudes. These attitudes must be both lived and expressed by the therapist in a genuine interpersonal relationship. They should be expressed in the core conditions of the therapy. Each of these conditions is dealt with in detail in the second part of this chapter. We only take an overview of their development in the following part.

4.1.2.3.3.1 Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR)

Another concept that evolved during this period was unconditional positive regard (UPR). In the early stages of his therapy, Rogers referred to it as acceptance. Later he revised it as UPR. The development of this concept was greatly influenced in the mid-fifties by the doctoral dissertation of Stanley Standl, one of his doctoral students. It was not accepted blindly from him, but Rogers thought over it for a while before he finally came out with his own version of UPR. Rogers postulated it as one of the six necessary and sufficient conditions of therapy.[92]

Although Rogers was open to other therapeutic approaches, he considered his therapy to be the best. His tolerance of differences and openness is a great quality in him.[93] Rogers was

[89] Cf. COHEN, *Carl Rogers: A Critical Biography*, pp.136-140.
[90] KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 195.
[91] Cf. ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: The Quiet Revolutionary*, p. 14.
[92] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 193-195.
[93] Cf. Ibid., p. 196.

never a fanatic. In the beginning stages the 'conditions' remained a hypothesis for Rogers. He was open to empirical data and willing to adapt his thinking to it. In the early 1940s, Rogers popularised recording, transcribing, and publishing therapeutic interviews. He did it on a regular basis. It was something totally new, innovative, bold and revolutionary in the field of psychotherapy. Rogers had conducted thousands of interviews for the sake of study and research.[94] Rogers and Rosalind Dymond published part of these research data in 1954 as a book titled *Psychotherapy and Personality Change*.[95]

4.1.2.3.3.2 Congruence

Carl Rogers was always a learner and listener. During his years in Chicago he developed another important element of client-centred therapy – congruence. Congruence was not basically Rogers' idea. It was already in discussion in psychological circles at that time. Rogers, however, developed this concept further to fit into his therapeutic method. He claimed that congruence should be communicated. If not, it would express itself in other ways and interfere with the process of therapy. If it remains uncommunicated, it may even confuse the client. Congruence, however, remained the most obscure, ambiguous, and even misunderstood concept of client-centred therapy due to the lack of concrete examples.[96]

4.1.2.3.3.3 Developing the Six Conditions

Carl Rogers spoke for the first time of these conditions in a systematic manner in 1956.[97] From then on, Rogers was working on the improvement of this important theoretical dimension of his therapy.[98] This he slightly modified and improved upon it in 1959 and incorporated into his famous work *A Theory of Therapy, Personality and Interpersonal Relationships, as Developed in the Client-Centered Framework,* published in the third volume of Sigmund Koch's series on psychology.[99] This is considered by many as the best exposition of client-centred therapy by Carl Rogers. The six necessary and sufficient conditions of therapy as proposed by Carl Rogers in 1959:

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[94] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 199.
[95] Cf. Ibid., p. 208.
[96] Cf. Ibid., pp. 188-191.
[97] The 1956 version can be read in the *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1957, *The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change*, pp. 95-103. [See especially p. 96 for the six conditions].
[98] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 192-196.
[99] See Carl R. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy Personality and Interpersonal Relationships, as Developed in the Client-Centered Framework*, in Sigmund KOCH (ed.), *Psychology: A Study of Science. Vol. 3, Formulations of the Person and the Social Context*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, NY: 1959, pp. 184-256 (Hereafter referred to as *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959.)

> Conditions of the Therapeutic Process: For therapy to occur it is necessary that these conditions exist: 1.That two persons are in *contact*. 2. That the first person, whom we shall term the client, is in a state of *incongruence*, being *vulnerable*, or *anxious*. 3. That the second person, whom we shall term the therapist, is *congruent* in the *relationship*. 4. That the therapist is *experiencing unconditional positive regard* toward the client. 5. That the therapist is *experiencing* an *empathic* understanding of the client's *internal frame of reference*. 6. That the client *perceives*, at least to a minimal degree, conditions 4 and 5, the *unconditional positive regard* of the therapist for him, and the *empathic* understanding of the therapist.[100]

Rogers said that in order for the therapy to be successful, these attitudes must be lived and experienced by both the therapist and the client in a genuine interpersonal relationship. During his Chicago years, his method of therapy was undergoing changes and taking concrete shape. As Kirschenbaum notes, "In the twelve years at Chicago he moved from the *method* to the *attitudes* to the *relationship* as the key ingredient in the therapeutic process."[101]

4.1.2.3.4 Academic Honours

His innovative approach to research brought wide appreciation from all circles. He was acknowledged as a pioneer in psychotherapy research. Many awards followed. In 1956, Rogers was selected with two others to receive the first Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award from the American Psychological Association. The same year he was elected first president of the American Association of Applied Psychology.[102]

During these years, he also got acquainted with the philosophy of Kierkegaard, Martin Buber, Sartre, Whitehead and others. They began to influence his thinking and writing.[103] All these years his prolific writing appeared in a wide variety of periodicals and professional journals. His approach began to impact various fields like education, social work, nursing and management. It had its influence in Christian circles, too, especially in the field of pastoral counselling. Many Christian thinkers and ministers like Rev. Ralph Higgins believed that it was the person-centred approach which was truly compatible with the Christian ministry and was easy to learn without rigid psychological training.[104] As noted earlier in this work, pioneers in pastoral counselling like Anton T. Boisen and Seward Hiltner were also influenced by Carl Rogers.

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[100] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 213. Emphasis as in the original.
[101] KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 195. Italics in the original.
[102] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 212-213.
[103] Cf. Ibid., pp. 223-224.
[104] Cf. Ibid., p. 215.

Rogers became a well-known and much sought-after teacher. Students came from various distant places to listen to him. His speeches and workshops were filled to their capacity. He was offered visiting professorship at five universities including Harvard. In 1957, *Time* magazine acknowledge his contributions.[105]

4.1.2.3.5 Personal Life – A Troubled Phase

Regarding his personal life in the forties, he had his own problems, too. Rogers experienced no sexual desires. It was a difficult time in their relationship, but his wife Helen stood by him. Later Rogers said, "Her quiet continuing love meant a great deal to me and probably was the best therapy I could have had."[106] Helen's standing by him in the difficulties of his life was better than the best therapy for him.

It is important to note that Rogers himself acknowledges that his wife stood by him in this difficult period of his life. Her love and her standing by her partner in the difficult times of his life was a concrete expression of her love and fidelity. Is Rogers going to stand by her in her crisis and requite this love and fidelity to her in her difficult times?

4.1.2.3.6 Carl Rogers – A Man of Integration and Synthesis

Rogers was a man of synthesis. He was able to take useful ideas from different sources and modify and make them his own. His ideas of self, concept of self-actualisation, unconditional positive regard, etc. are the best examples of this special gift of Rogers. He did not invent any of these concepts. One of the reasons for this success could be that Rogers was a practical and empirical man and was less interested in theory.[107]

Rogers is indebted to Rollo May for his ontology. Rollo May and Carl Rogers were friends. They had many dialogues. Both were leaders of the growing 'humanistic psychology' movement. Rollo made known to Rogers that he found no ontology in his psychology and that it was important for him to have an ontology to build up his psychology.[108] This must have also helped Rogers to build his psychology on the concept of self and self-actualisation.

The 1940s and 1950s were psychologically fertile years in the US. Attempts were made to give counterpoints for psychoanalysis and behaviourism. In the 1950s, Abraham Maslow

[105] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 216.
[106] Carl R. ROGERS, *Becoming Partners: Marriage and its alternatives*, NY: Delacorte, 1972, p. 25. (See also *Carl Rogers Reader*, p. 33. *Speaking Personally*, Part 2. *My Own Marriage*).
[107] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 234-235.
[108] Cf. Ibid., p. 236.

spoke of a 'third force' in psychology. It was known by different names, such as holistic, existential, humanistic, and, of late, as positive psychology. Rogers was widely acknowledged as the leading spokesperson of humanistic psychology.[109]

At the time when Rogers studied at the universities it was Freud's psychoanalysis that was holding sway in the US. Rogers was familiar with Freud. Although Freud shaped his academic and professional environment, Rogers was not overly impressed by Freud, especially his unmeasurable concepts like Id, Ego and Super Ego, Oedipus complex, to name a few. For Rogers, tangibility, testability and scientific nature were important.[110] His biographer Kirschenbaum notes, "Rogers said it took years for him to get over both his religious and his Freudian training with their view of human beings as being fundamentally evil."[111]

Authors like Kirschenbaum and Thorne, who treat Rogers positively, say that as a child and youth, Rogers had a negative view of religions and human beings. He must have inherited it from his family, which was fundamentalist at that time. However, I must assert that Christianity does not see human beings as fundamentally evil. Christian theology treats human beings as created in the image and likeness of God. Humans have such a lofty place in creation. But at the same time it acknowledges that human beings are fallen through sin and disobedience and redeemed through Jesus Christ as planned by God. Human beings continue to have the image and likeness of God, and at the same time are weak and sinful, constantly in need of help from God. Rogers' totally negative idea of human beings must have come from his evangelical parents and the false theology they followed. It also shows in religious education how a wrong idea of God can do a lot of damage, which can sometimes have a life-long influence on the person.

4.1.2.3.7 Dialogues

Carl Rogers also engaged himself in many debates and dialogues with prominent personalities and psychologists of the time.[112] He had two debates with B.F. Skinner, in 1956 and in 1962. His other dialogues were held with Martin Buber in 1957, Paul Tillich in

[109] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 241.
[110] Cf. Ibid., p. 243.
[111] Ibid.
[112] See Howard KIRSCHENBAUM / Valerie LAND HENDERSON (Eds.), *Carl Rogers: Dialogues*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989. This book contains Carl Rogers' Dialogues with Martin Buber, Paul Tillich, B.F. Skinner, Michael Polanyi and Gregory Bateson.

1965, Michael Polanyi in 1966, and Gregory Bateson in 1975.[113] He also held a podium discussion with Reinhold Niebuhr and correspondence with Rollo May on important psychological issues of the time.[114] After his 1956 debates with Skinner, Carl Rogers became popular as an advocate against the misuse of behavioural science to manipulate and control human behaviour.[115]

4.1.2.4 Wisconsin Years: 1957-63

At the height of his career in Chicago, Rogers decided to move to the University of Wisconsin. In the spring of 1957, Rogers had been to the University of Wisconsin as a visiting professor. He was there for five months and held seminars on psychology, counselling and education. His stay there was highly successful. Prof Virgil Herrick was instrumental in getting Rogers to Wisconsin. The reasons from Rogers' point of view were better research opportunity, better living situation and other academic and personal reasons.[116]

In Wisconsin, Rogers was able to establish a support group as he had done in Chicago. His main assignment in Wisconsin was to serve as chairman of the Executive Committee which was led by Virgil Herrick who had in the first place invited him to Wisconsin.[117]

4.1.2.4.1 Disappointment in Wisconsin

Rogers had taken some of his students to Wisconsin. They included Eugene T. Gendlin, Philippa Mathieu and Joe Hart. Rogers' stay and work at the University of Wisconsin was not as successful as he had wanted it to be. His proposals met with resistance from the departments of psychiatry, clinical psychology and social work, which he was expected to unify. There was much institutional politics. Although students wanted to work with Rogers, they were dissuaded by the strict system of the university and examinations.[118] His academic work at the University was disappointing due to the detrimental atmosphere that prevailed in the Department. There were also frequent conflicts and a 'rule of veiled terror' was experienced by the students of the Department.[119] Rogers was totally disillusioned

[113] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM / HENDERSON (Eds.), *Carl Rogers: Dialogues*, pp. 41-176.
[114] See Ibid., Part III.
[115] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 268.
[116] Cf. Ibid., pp. 238-239.
[117] Cf. Ibid., p. 282.
[118] Cf. ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: The Quiet Revolutionary*, pp. 178-179.
[119] Cf. THORNE, *Carl Rogers*, p. 17.

with the institutional system at Wisconsin: "I learned there what I had learned before: institutions are exceedingly difficult to change and that institutional life is not for me."[120]

4.1.2.4.2 Rogerian Listening

Rogers, however, was like anywhere else, able to strike a good rapport with the students. Most of his students and colleagues always noticed therapeutic qualities in Rogers. He was gifted with a wonderful capacity for listening and understanding. He could focus and concentrate on a person and what he was saying with full attention. Rogerian listening or active listening became popular and was used to describe empathic listening in which the listener shares with the speaker his understanding of the speaker, his feelings and emotions, not just his words. It also respects the uniqueness and individuality of the client.[121]

4.1.2.4.3 Overseas Trips

Although he was disappointed with the situation at the university, Rogers made use of his time. During this period he made several professional trips. He received many invitations from different universities to lecture as visiting professor. In the summer of 1961, he undertook a six-week trip to Hong Kong and Japan. Logan, a former student of his, who was now a professor in Ibarki Christian College, was behind this trip. Logan was instrumental in spreading client-centred therapy in Japan and believed the visit of Carl Rogers would give an impetus to client-centred therapy in Japan where Rogers held many workshops and training programmes. Out of his interest in Zen Buddhism, he also met Zen masters and held discussions with them although it did not produce any concrete and useful result for him.[122]

From August 1962 to June 1963, Rogers was a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in Behavioural Sciences in Stanford, California. There he came in contact with Michael Polanyi and Erik Erikson. Polanyi and Rogers influenced each other mutually. Rogers also showed appreciation for Erikson. Rogers even believed that Erikson had an aura of a good therapist.[123]

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[120] ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: The Quiet Revolutionary*, p. 179.
[121] See Philipp NAWROTH, *Aktives Zuhören nach Carl R Rogers*, (e-book) Grin Verlag: 2013. The whole of this short e-book deals with Rogerian listening.
[122] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 303-307.
[123] Cf. Ibid., pp. 307-308.

4.1.2.4.4 'On Becoming a Person'

In 1961, Rogers brought out his seventh book, *On Becoming a Person*.[124] It was a collection of 21essays. This book reflected Rogers' career until then as a psychologist and psychotherapist and it included many of his publications from 1931 to 1961. The book begins with a personal section, *This is Me*. In the first two sections of this book he elaborates his ideas of therapy. The idea of 'The Fully Functioning Person' is also elaborated in this book. The book also narrates the role of research in psychotherapy. Carl Rogers also widens his insights into various other fields like education, teaching, learning, day-to-day relationships, interpersonal relationships, family life, etc.[125] In the section on 'Growing Power of Behavioural Sciences' he cautions against the inherent danger of being able to predict human behaviour, the pressure to conform, killing of creativity, and the dangers of knowledge acquired through control of behaviour.[126]

One can apparently feel here the threat felt by a humanistic psychologist from the spread of the Behaviourist school. One must keep in mind that both person-centred approach and behaviourist approach were taking shape and spreading around the same time. Carl Rogers and B.F. Skinner were not only contemporaries but also competitors.

4.1.2.4.5 Widening of Person-Centred Approach (PCA)

During this time, Rogers was working to apply his client-centred approach to various other fields. He was also trying to apply his theories and methods to interpersonal and intergroup conflict resolution. Rogers advocated more listening and honest, open communication between the parties.[127]

Rogers' book *On Becoming A Person* sold well and it contributed much for the spread of humanistic psychology. He was a member of various other associations. In 1956, he was elected first president of the American Academy of Psychotherapists.[128]

4.1.2.5 In California

Carl Rogers could not make an impact in Wisconsin as he had wanted, but his books made him famous and influential. During his Wisconsin years Rogers was extremely active outside giving speeches and seminars, conducting workshops and other professional

[124] See Carl R. ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person*, NY: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.
[125] Cf. See ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person*, especially Part IV, chapters 14-18.
[126] Cf. Ibid., pp. 363, 383.
[127] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 319.
[128] Cf. Ibid., p. 323.

activities. Through these activities he exercised considerable influence in the field of psychology and psychotherapy. In December 1965, Rogers moved to California, into a new house in La Jolla. He and his wife Helen liked the beautiful location.[129]

4.1.2.5.1 Western Behavioural Science Institute (WBSI)

The Institute was only a 10-minute drive away from his house. Rogers was invited by Thomas Gordon and Richard Farson – both of them his former doctoral students - to work with WBSI. Rogers was offered a higher salary than in Wisconsin. He was impressed by the organization and its goal and even contributed financially to WBSI.[130]

In California, Rogers had a televised dialogue with Michael Polanyi. At WBSI, from 1964 to 1969, Rogers was fully engaged with 'encounter groups'. Soon he was able to establish himself as a leading figure at WBSI.

4.1.2.5.2 Centre for Studies of Person (CSP)

The good times at WBSI did not last long. The departure of Dick Farson from WBSI created problems for Rogers. There were organizational problems in WBSI, coupled with internal problems, power-conflicts and personal problems. Finally things reached such a state that Carl Rogers and 25 other staff members resigned from WBSI and started a new centre called 'Center for Studies of the Person' (CSP). The departure from WBSI was sudden.[131] Carl Rogers was not the prime mover, but without his support it would not have been possible. The new institute had to come into existence without any grant. An atmosphere of freedom and closeness prevailed at CSP unlike at WBSI. Eventually, CSP received independent legal status.[132]

4.1.2.5.3 Personal and Family Troubles

The move to California distanced Carl and Helen geographically farther from their children. However, David and Natalie kept up good contact with their parents. Both of them had difficult times in their lives with personal problems like conflict, separation and divorce.[133] Rogers tried his best to help Natalie and her husband Larry in their marriage. But in spite of his best efforts they divorced. He wrote to them: "I think that what I am trying to say is that I love and care for each of you, not as perfect creatures, but as very

[129] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 325-329.
[130] Cf. Ibid., pp. 332-333.
[131] Cf. ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: The Quiet Revolutionary*, pp.196-198.
[132] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 362-367.
[133] Cf. Ibid., p. 370.

fallible, imperfect persons. And as a very fallible, imperfect person, I expect to go on valuing each of you, caring for each of you."[134]

One sees here a very human side of Rogers. Although he advocated in his works and books the nearly 'godly' nature of human beings, there were occasions in his own life where Rogers had to acknowledge that as a human person he was frail and imperfect. Perhaps one could say that there was something of a Christian understanding of man in him till the end of his life, which admits human frailty and imperfection.

In spite of all their problems in life, both the children had a great appreciation for Rogers and cherished him tenderly till the end of his life. It was also the period when Rogers and Helen would begin to have marital troubles in their own lives; some of them would last till the end of Helen's life. Both of them also began to experience health problems like blood pressure, heart palpitations, etc.[135] In the winter of 1965, Rogers and Helen went on a two-month trip to Hawaii, South Seas, Australia and New Zealand where he gave a series of lectures. He was impressed by Australia and found there was huge scope for therapy there.[136] It was followed by a two-month trip to Europe. Most of his time was not only pleasure-oriented, but also academic in nature. During his long trips to the Caribbean and Mexico, a lot of writing was done.[137]

4.1.2.5.4 Critical Remarks

From 1967 to 1970, Helen's health kept deteriorating and they could not travel together. There were problems in the family, too. Helen was getting increasingly unhappy with Rogers and his behaviour.[138] However, Rogers was not interested in staying back to take care of her or to spend time with her. Rogers was now also being considered the hero of the counter-culture and was driven by the liberal ideas of the 1960s and 1970s. He travelled alone. He spent many days and nights away from his sickly wife. His wife Helen felt excluded.[139] He travelled around meeting encounter groups, which was not without criticism. Larry, his son-in- law, criticised him and believed, "one reason for their appeal (…) was that they gave people the chance to form 'deep relationships' with no

[134] ROGERS as quoted by KIRSCHENBAUM in *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 370.
[135] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, ibid., p. 371.
[136] Cf. COHEN, *Carl Rogers: A Critical Biography*, pp.181-182.
[137] Cf. ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: The Quiet Revolutionary*, p.190.
[138] Cf. Ibid., pp. 212-214.
[139] Cf. COHEN, *Carl Rogers: A Critical Biography*, pp.186-192. One can read here the details of their problems at home. One must remember that Cohen looks at the issues critically and avoids any sort of eulogy which many other biographers of Rogers engage in.

responsibility. You could fall madly in love in a group and go home three days later to the comfort of your wife. It was escapism."[140] His travels and programmes brought him in contact with thousands of people across the country.[141] Did Rogers contribute to the permissive counter-culture of the 1960s and '70s? Cohen thinks so:

> For someone so imbued with the work ethic, it is extraordinary that Rogers approved of hippies, the sexual revolution, the student sit-ins, flower power and even the use of drugs. They all inspired rather than disturbed Rogers… Rogers did not see – but few did – that the counter-culture was also deeply narcissistic and that it would often turn out to be selfish. For many people, being 'open to experience' would mean utterly absorbed in themselves, the favourite hobby of the 'Me' generation.[142]

Was Rogers a promoter of the permissive culture of the 1960s and '70s? It is difficult to say. But it is clear from the different biographies that he held totally liberal and lenient views regarding the changes in the society, and Rogers himself seemed to have lived accordingly. Another important issue is that of his treatment of his wife when she was sick and unable to travel around. Can his neglect of his wife in any way be justified?

4.1.2.5.5 Two 'Failed Projects' and Conflict with the Catholic Church

In 1968, something happened that brought Rogers indirectly into conflict with the Catholic Church. He held a workshop for the delegates to a chapter of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart, a religious order which ran schools. His workshop encouraged the Sisters to be more independent and to make personal choices as they preferred. Some Sisters began asserting themselves even if it meant being in conflict with tradition and authority. This created division and controversy in the community. It went to that extreme that finally the Vatican stepped in and demanded of the Sisters to conform to traditional norms and rules. Consequently, over forty Sisters left their religious life and the Order within a year. The Immaculate Heart College, which the Sisters run, was finally closed in 1980.[143]

How did it happen? Was he trying out something similar to the encounter groups with the Sisters? Carl Rogers himself admitted that their naivety and lack of experience could have contributed to these unpleasant events that happened at Immaculate Heart.[144] Admitting this fact, he wrote to one of the leaders at Immaculate Heart: "Like you, I recognize how naïve we all were when we started the project - and by and large I'm glad for it. We

[140] COHEN, *Carl Rogers: A Critical Biography*, p.187.
[141] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 407.
[142] COHEN, *Carl Rogers: A Critical Biography*, p.196.
[143] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 398- 401.
[144] Cf. Ibid., pp. 401-402.

weren't even adequately aware of all the intricacies of organizational development or the problems of changing institutional systems…"[145]

Rogers was also criticized by his colleagues. Kirschenbaum notes, "His colleague William Coulson came to regret his role in the Immaculate Heart and other projects and dedicated much of his life telling the world about the errors of his and Rogers' ways in failing to respect the legitimate role of authority in education, parenting, the Church and society."[146]

A few years later another project, called 'Project Transition' at the public school system of Louisville, was taken up by Newman Walker and Car Foster, also based on the ideas of Carl Rogers. Unlike at Immaculate Heart, Rogers was not directly involved in the project, but he played a consultatory role. Although the project began successfully, it ended prematurely due to various problems.[147]

These two failures gave enough fodder for the critics of Carl Rogers to doubt his hypotheses regarding education. Rogers invited criticism from all circles, including the Church. Even today the question remains as to the validity of his views regarding education and institutional change.[148]

One of the insights that these events provide is that the blind acceptance of psychology leads to problems. It is true in the case of spiritual and religious matters. In the first case, the over-eagerness of the Sisters brought about problems in their community and slowly led to a split in the community and the gradual closing down of the school. Accepting and adopting psychology into the spiritual world has always been a sensitive issue. These events warm that even today, one must be extremely careful in doing so; otherwise, the results could be catastrophic.

For Rogers, it must have been an eye-opener. He must have come to the realization that working with religious communities and institutions is not the same as working with individual persons.

[145] Letter of Carl ROGERS to Bonnie McWinnie in 1974. As quoted by KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 401-402.
[146] KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 402.
[147] Cf. Ibid., pp. 402-405.
[148] Cf. Ibid., p. 405.

4.1.2.5.6 Academic Dynamism

In April 1952, Carl Rogers gave a demonstration at Harvard Business School on 'student-centered learning'. By the mid-60s, the human potential movement had become part of American life. Two strong advocates of this movement were Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. Carl Rogers' *On Becoming a Person* and Abraham Maslow's *Towards a Psychology of Being* were the most popular books on humanistic psychology at that time. Along with the growth of humanistic psychology, Rogers' ideas on humanistic education were also becoming popular and widely talked about.[149]

In his book *Freedom to Learn: A View of What Education Might Become*, published in 1969, Carl Rogers enumerated the elements involved in experiential learning. It has a quality of personal involvement, is self-initiated, pervasive, it is evaluated by the learner, and its essence is meaning.[150] To his dismay, most reviews of this book were negative. Critics found nothing new in it, but only repetition of old opinions. Like some of his former books, this book too was largely neglected by academic circles, but his idea became part of the thinking of thousands of ordinary people. Rogers' influence was felt at different levels from child guidance to education.[151] The other books he brought out during this period were *Man and the Science of Man, Freedom to Learn, On Encounter Groups* and *Person to Person: The Problem of Being Human*.

Due to his contacts and his fame, he had to respond to hundreds of mail per week, added to that many telephonic calls. His work and ideas received further recognition and appreciation in the awards that followed. In 1964, he was named the *Humanist of the Year* by the American Humanist Association. In 1967, he received the *Distinguished Contribution Award* of the American Pastoral Counsellors Association. In addition to that, he received three more honorary Doctorates. He was also on the editorial board of many psychology and psychotherapy journals. In 1972, Rogers received another remarkable recognition for 'making lasting impression' on the profession of psychology. He received the first Distinguished Professional Contribution Award from the American Psychological Association.[152]

[149] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 388-389.
[150] Cf. Ibid., p. 390.
[151] Cf. Ibid., p. 395.
[152] Cf. Ibid., pp. 408-409.

For Rogers, age was slowly catching up. In 1969, 67 years old, he was still full of energy, eagerness and enthusiasm to widen his area of influence and his psychology.

4.1.2.5.7 The Person of Rogers: Attracted to the Young

In California many of his colleagues were impressed with his ability to listen, and the respect, care and understanding he radiated. The Centre of Studies of the Person (CSP) was founded in 1968 as part of WBSI. Most of its members were young. Young people were especially attracted to Rogers. He was a sort of old person with whom the young people could associate, share their feelings and feel at home.[153]

They were impressed by his ideas of 'the person of tomorrow' and the 'emerging person'. Rogers was also showing increasing openness to feminism. In 1981, he presented a workshop with his daughter Natalie and granddaughter Frances Fuchs on the topic 'New World/New Person: A Theme Generational View'. In 1972, Rogers published his thirteenth book, *Becoming Partners: Marriage and Its Alternatives*. The book included his personal experiences, caste studies, inputs from letters and recorded interviews. Readers could once again have a taste of his personal and intimate style of writing in this book. The book sold well as it dealt with current and relevant topics of the 1970s like premarital sex, cohabitation and communes.[154]

Reading the later works of Rogers one asks oneself whether he really promoted freaky ideas. Were sometimes his ideas on education, marriage, growth and experiencing the moment, etc. promoting the zeitgeist? Did he try to become popular through his liberal and libertine ideas? Rogers was against following anyone mindlessly. Kirschenabum recalls: "His favourite Zen quotation that he often repeated was: 'When you meet the Buddha, kill the Buddha.'"[155] Rogers used to say, "When you find the guy who has all the answers, the person you ought to follow, the person that shows you the way to go, well… I'd try to get rid of him psychologically."[156]

4.1.2.5.8 Duty, Love, Selfishness, Intimacy and Sex

In the 1970s, his wife Helen's health became poor and Rogers had to take care of her. He began to feel burdened, distraught and depressed. He was troubled and stressed by the situation and even felt that he was feeling the inability within himself to care for others. In

[153] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 415.
[154] Cf. Ibid., pp. 416- 425.
[155] KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 428.
[156] Carl ROGERS as quoted by KIRSCHENBAUM in *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 428.

1974, he arranged for someone to care for Helen and left her for ten days to be alone. He spent the days in a cottage in Stinson Beach in California. In 1976, Helen was on the verge of death. Rogers had to take over all household responsibilities. Biographers state that Rogers felt frustrated that his life was being hemmed in by her sickness. He felt awfully restricted and unable to live his normal life due to his wife's illness. It was for him the most trying part of their 50 years of marriage.[157]

During this period - during the 1970s - Carl Rogers' need for intimacy and sex was intense and he felt deprived by the illness of his wife who did not want to have sex with him. His biographer, one of his own friends and associates, who regards him greatly, notes:

> He became increasingly desperate to experience an intimate, exciting sexual relationship before it was too late. So there was a man who relished and extolled new experience, personal growth and change. All around him people were experimenting with new forms of relationships. They were open about their sexuality. The counter- culture even provided philosophical and psychological justification for such relationships. Opportunities readily presented themselves. Yet he felt trapped at home, taking care of Helen, with whom he had no sexual relationship and with whom he experienced diminished intimacy. He wanted to break free and experience an important part of life he felt was missing out on. Moreover, he felt he did not have much time left.[158]

During this time Rogers fell in love with a young married woman in her 30s, participant of a person-centred workshop, and he had an unconsummated love affair for four years. Howard Kirschenbaum, who studied his personal letters, says: "It is painful to read his letters to her, filled as they are with pleading, demeaning, and embarrassing requests for more than she is willing to give."[159] David Cohen also notices that Rogers had a special attraction to younger women: "He did not think he wanted a marriage 'certainly not for a good long time'. Age differences didn't matter to him but he just happened to be drawn to younger women."[160]

That was not the end. Rogers had some other illicit relationships which he did not hide from Helen and which caused strain in their relationship:

> Rogers did have a few, more or less single, satisfying sexual experiences in the few years before Helen's death. Probably this contributed to his describing the decade as the 'most satisfying in my life'. But it was not

[157] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 429-430.
[158] Ibid., pp. 459-460.
[159] KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 460.
[160] COHEN, *Carl Rogers: A Critical Biography*, p. 225.

> without its turmoil and conflict for him and, of course, for Helen. … He did it to meet his own needs, but naturally it hurt her… Naturally all this contributed significantly to their stormy relationship in their later years.[161]

Reading about the 'most satisfying decade' of Rogers raises many questions in the minds of readers. Was Rogers, by any imagination of mind, right in doing so? Did he not have a duty and obligation to look after his wife in her sickness, who gave up her career and looked after him so far? Does not personal growth also mean self-discipline and self-control? Even in that ripe age, did he not have any control over his desires and drives? Does not one get the impression that he neglected his sick spouse and went after his own pleasures and thus added to her sufferings? Where is the limit to one's own pleasure in the face of one's obligations? Is that the humanism and self-realization Rogers advocated? Was Rogers a product and advocate of the sexual revolution of the '60s, '70s and '80s?

Although some of his friends and colleagues like Maureen O'Hara tend to condone Rogers for his aggressive self-realization, Rogers had been badly criticized for his illicit relationships and his bad handling of his wife during her illness.[162]

One could also interpret his behaviour as being selfish and inhuman. It seems when his wife was sick and helpless, Rogers felt that he was being restricted and controlled by the need to care for her: "I have baffled and hurt her by the fact of my own independent life. While she was so ill, I felt heavily burdened by our close togetherness, heightened by her need for care. So I determined, for my survival, to live a life of my own. She is often deeply hurt by this, and the changing of my values."[163] Was he not able to accept the normal pain and sufferings of life? He who taught thousands to be human found it difficult to accept suffering also as part of human life.

4.1.2.5.9 Helen's Death

Later in the year 1976, Helen's situation improved - physically and psychologically. She began taking up her normal activities again. In the opinion of Rogers, she 'fought her way back by sheer force of will'.[164] She was able to travel once again and accompanied Rogers on some of his trips. However, new problems cropped up again. Rogers found Helen very demanding. After more than 50 years of marriage with Helen, Rogers began showing interest in another woman. This brought further discord into the marriage. Helen was

[161] KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 461.
[162] Cf. Ibid., p. 463.
[163] ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, p. 86.
[164] Cf. Ibid., p. 85.

angry at it and could not accept it for a fact. They faced some troubled times again in their relationship.[165]

Sometimes an ordinary reader finds it shocking to read about the personal life of one of the most famous psychologists. Some critical authors suggest that Helen was shattered by Rogers' relationship with another woman when she was sick and helpless, and he let her experience lots of frustration and pain in her last year of sickness and suffering.[166] In the summer of 1977, Helen's health began to decline again. Helen died on 29 March 1979. She had paranormal experiences and visions of white light before death.[167]

Helen's death came as a great relief for Rogers. He now felt he was on his own after a long period, 55 years. He enjoyed this new-found freedom in every sense: "At age seventy-five, he developed intimate, loving, sexual relationships with three women and maintained all three relationships simultaneously for the next half dozen years."[168] Of his three women, two were divorced; one was married but whose husband had approved of her relationship with Rogers. In addition to these three steady relationships, Rogers also had a few other brief liaisons.[169]

Rogers was a great friend to all his contacts. He kept up contacts and developed new ones. Meanwhile, Rogers had another personal problem to deal with: his alcoholism and consequent emotional volatility. From his Chicago days he had grown dependent on alcohol. Helen and Rogers used to take 8-10 drinks per day. Few people were aware of this part of his personality. Although his children tried to warn and control Rogers, his alcoholism remained with him till the very end.[170]

There were different sides to Rogers' personality that the world knew little of - his appetite for sex, his weakness for alcohol and his intense loneliness. The other side of Carl Rogers was revealed to the world only after his death. Kirschenbaum, his biographer, writes:

> And so, in a sense, there *were* two Carl Rogers. One was the Rogers most of the world knew through his various professional roles and his typical "way of being" - a man remarkably consistent with his professional values, philosophy and person-centred approach to relationships. Hence the vast

[165] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 431-432.
[166] Cf. COHEN, *Carl Rogers: A Critical Biography*, pp. 209-223. Cohen looks very critically at the behaviour of Rogers towards his wife in her last years.
[167] Cf. ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, p. 91.
[168] KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 466.
[169] Cf. Ibid., pp. 466-467.
[170] Cf. Ibid., pp. 469-477.

> body of testimony describing Carl Rogers as an embodiment of the fully functioning person and professional he wrote about – a man, I would say, who modeled his teaching at least as congruently as any prominent psychologist in history. The other Carl Rogers was the one very few people (not even me during his lifetime) were privy to - a man who was not at peace with himself, who suffered from a drinking problem, who was surrounded by love but deeply lonely.[171]

It raises many questions. Was Carl Rogers a psychological wreck? Did he not enjoy real happiness in life, although he claimed to have? Was having an intimate and sexual relationship without any binding characteristic of him? Did he propagate this promiscuous spirit in his group sessions? Was it the result of his loneliness or poor self-respect? Did he have two personalities – one totally hidden from the world? Was Rogers a man who helped thousands of people but could not solve his own problems? Kirschenbaum seems to attribute his emotional problems to his childhood experiences.[172] But that does not sound convincing. Is that not the psychoanalytical way of diagnosing which Rogers had rejected all his life? Kirschenbaum also traces his alcoholism and other problems to his scars of childhood such as not being fully loved, totally accepted, etc. Is not tracing the source of one's problems to the unresolved past psychoanalytic and un-Rogerian and against the humanistic approach?

In the 1970s because of Helen's illness, Rogers spent plenty of time working at home and corresponding with people from all over the world. His friends and students were bringing out new publications and material on client-centred therapy, and the approach was spreading world-wide. With his daughter Natalie and other colleagues Rogers began offering person-centred workshops in 1974. It usually lasted three weeks. In 1977, he was in Brazil and conducted workshops with even up to 800 people.[173]

In 1977, Carl Rogers published his fourteenth book, *Carl Rogers on Personal Power: Inner Strength and Its Revolutionary Impact*. It dealt with topics like leadership, management, autonomy, self-actualisation, self-responsibility and maturity. In this book Rogers develops further his concept of actualizing tendency. He postulated that this tendency in human beings toward maintenance, fulfilment, actualization, and enhancement of the organism was a trustworthy base.[174] This book sold moderately well. But Rogers

[171] KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 476-477.
[172] Cf. Ibid., p. 476.
[173] Cf. Ibid., p. 442.
[174] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *Carl Rogers on Personal Power: Inner Strength and Its Revolutionary Impact*, London: Constable, 1978, p. 238.

also faced criticism for being too 'evangelistic' about his ideas and for 'new narcissism.' He was criticized for promoting selfishness and selfish turning inside, promoting extreme self-indulgence, political naivety and over-simplifying.[175] These are also most common criticisms levelled against the person-centred approach even today.

During this time he became closely associated with a new political figure, John Vasconcellos, California legislator, who played an important role in the life of Rogers. He became a political coach for Rogers, and Rogers a life coach for Vasconcello.[176]

4.1.2.5.10 'Spiritual' Journey?

Rogers had left religion in his youth and was not interested in any religious activities thereafter. However, in his later years Rogers began to be more open to spiritual and psychic phenomena. He began to speak about the transcendental and spiritual dimension of person-centred relationship. Some authors like Kramer believe that it was the period of spiritual emergence for Carl Rogers.[177]

Did he really become spiritual? Some others believe that Rogers was only dabbling with paranormal and psychic phenomena. Kirschenbaum believes that Carl Rogers never became 'deeply spiritual' in the strict sense of the word, but experienced a period of intellectual, emotional and spiritual evolution.[178] During this period Rogers developed more trust in his own person and deep empathy for the other and was able to fully concentrate on the other. Rogers believed that at the higher levels of therapy, the therapist experiences a slightly altered state of consciousness, which is beyond the ordinary level of it. This higher level of consciousness can bring about a lot of healing. At such level of consciousness, the very presence of the other is curative. In his own words:

> When I am at my best, as a group facilitator or as a therapist, I discover another characteristic. I find that when I am closest to my inner, intuitive self, when I am somehow in touch with the unknown in me, when perhaps I am in a slightly altered state of consciousness, then whatever I do seems to be full of healing. Then, simply my *presence* is releasing and helpful to the other. There is nothing I can do to force this experience, but when I can relax and be close to the transcendental core of me, then I may behave in strange and impulsive ways in the relationship, ways which I cannot justify rationally, which have nothing to do with my thought processes. But these strange behaviours turn out to be *right*, in some odd way: it seems that my

[175] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 454-455.
[176] Cf. Ibid., p. 453.
[177] Cf. Robert KRAMER, *The Birth of Client-Centered Therapy: Carl Rogers, Otto Rank, and "the Beyond"* in *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, Vol. 35, No. 4, Fall 1995, pp. 54-110.
[178] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 477.

> inner spirit has reached out and touched the inner spirit of the other. Our relationship transcends itself and becomes a part of something larger. Profound growth and healing and energy are present.[179]

In the late 1970s, Carl Rogers showed interest in new sciences, spirituality and psychic phenomena. He also came in contact with telepathy, precognition, reincarnation, communication with the dead, etc. On some occasions, he also met with some gurus of oriental religions.[180] In the last years of Helen, Rogers and she even visited a medium where she experienced contact with her deceased sister, which Carl Rogers also found to be credible.[181] As Kirschenbaum notes, Rogers 'was fascinated, but not convinced.'[182] Helen, on the other hand, was interested in psychic phenomena. His daughter Natalie was also serious about spirituality and helped her mother to be more open to spiritual experiences in her last trying years. Rogers, however, would not call her a religious person. Helen's death, nevertheless, changed some of his views. He began to believe in the continuation of the human spirit after death.[183] Rogers writes in *A Way of Being*:

> All these experiences (the last days of Helen, her death, etc.) so briefly suggested rather than described, have made me more open to the possibility of the continuation of the individual human spirit, something I had never before believed possible. These experiences have left me very much interested in all types of paranormal phenomena. They have quite changed my understanding of the process of dying, I now consider it possible that each of us is a continuing spiritual essence lasting over time, and occasionally incarnated in human body. That all of these thoughts contrast sharply with some of the closing portions of the chapter, written only two years earlier, is obvious.[184]

Was it a radical change of mind? Did he really believe in the spiritual dimension of human beings? It sounds so. Kirschenbaum believes he was on a spiritual journey from around 1977 to his death.[185] It was also the period oriental philosophy and spirituality was taking root in the western world. They offered an alternative to the existing religions in Europe and attracted huge following in the West with their novelty. Rogers also had a special audience with a famous Hindu spiritual leader, Swami Muktananda, who believed that Rogers had a very highly evolved consciousness.[186] Rogers also had experience of transcendental meditation and breathing exercises with Andre Auw, an ex-Catholic priest

[179] ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, p. 129. Italics as in the original.
[180] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 479-486.
[181] ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, p. 90.
[182] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 480.
[183] Cf. Ibid., pp. 482-483.
[184] ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, pp. 91-92.
[185] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 483.
[186] Cf. Ibid., pp. 484-485.

and his former doctoral student, who occasionally acted as his therapist.[187] Some others who knew him closely in his later years also attest to his spiritual bent towards the last phase of his life. Quoting some persons who were closely associated with Rogers, like Maria Bowen, who served as Rogers' therapist in the 1980s and Brian Thorne, his friend and associate and Maureen O'Hara, Kirschenbaum claims that, Rogers was a spiritual person all throughout his life although Rogers was never religious in the strict sense.[188]

Speaking about the person of tomorrow in his book, *A Way of Being*, Carl Rogers says that being spiritual is a quality of the person of tomorrow: "A yearning for the spiritual... These persons of tomorrow are seekers. They wish to find a meaning and purpose in life that is greater than the individual. … They wish to live a life of inner peace. Their heroes are spiritual persons – Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Teilhard de Chardin…"[189] Although he was totally unconventional, Rogers had his own definition of spirituality. In an interview shortly before his death, he said, "Another time, a group of young priests were trying to pin me to the wall, saying that I must be religious. I finally said to them and it is something I still stand by – I am too religious to be religious – and that has quite a lot of meaning for me. I have my own definition of spirituality…"[190]

4.1.2.5.11 Spread of Person-Centred Approach

In the 1970s and '80s, Rogers was actively engaged in the spread of the person-centred approach across the continents. Rogers' work was introduced in Europe as early as 1949 at the Catholic University of Louven by Prof J. R. Nuttin. But the movement began to spread actively only in the '70s. It took roots across Europe, in countries like France, Italy and Austria. Workshops were conducted across Europe. His six-week trip to Europe in autumn 1983 contributed in large measure to the spread of the movement. Even in his advanced age Carl Rogers exuded a lot of energy and enthusiasm and could work with attention and concentration. He worked on his book, *On Personal Power*, which was published in 1977. In 1977 he was in Brazil, in 1979 in Poland, in 1984 in Hungary and in 1982 in South

[187] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 483.
[188] Cf. Ibid., pp. 487- 489. (For details of Thorne's view on the matter, refer to two of his books, *The Mystical Power of Person-Centred Therapy: Hope beyond Despair*, London, Whurr Publishers 2002 and *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment. Bridging Faith and Person-Centred Therapy*, 2012).
[189] ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, p. 352.
[190] As quoted by KIRSCHENBAUM in *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 490.

Africa.[191] Carl Rogers' last cross-cultural experience was in the Soviet Union in 1986. He was accompanied by his colleague Ruth Sanford.[192]

4.1.2.5.12 Further Development of PCA outside USA

The person-centred approach began to fade in the US in the 1980s. The American society was getting more enamoured with cognitive and behavioural therapies, and the counter-culture of the '60s and '70s was giving way to more conservative decades.[193] Beyond America, the person-centred approach began to flourish. Spearheading the movement in Europe were Reinhard Tausch and Jobst Finke in Germany, Germain Lietaer in Belgium, and Peter Schmid in Austria. Tausch had developed an eclectic approach in Germany, combining both person-centred approach and behavioural methods – something which would normally be seen as totally contradictory. When Rogers visited Tausch in his clinic, Rogers even encouraged him to continue with his eclectic approach.[194] Peter F. Schmid founded the Institute for Person-Centred Studies in Vienna in 1969. Carl Rogers visited Austria in 1981 and again in 1984 upon his invitation.[195]

4.1.2.5.13 Working Towards Peace

Carl Rogers was actively and genuinely concerned about peace in the world. He was greatly concerned about the future of planet Earth and tried to apply the principles of the person-centred approach to bring nations together to engage in talks. CSP had a programme called 'The Peace Project' intended for this purpose. His interest in reducing international tensions was clearly visible in his article 'Dealing with Psychological Tensions' which appeared in the *Journal of Applied Behavioural Science* in 1965.[196] His talks and writings, presentations on reducing tension among nations and fostering more understanding and peace in the world were well recognized. In 1983, he held his first workshop toward this end. He was even considered for the Nobel peace prize.[197]

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[191] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 493-500.
[192] Cf. Ibid., p. 516.
[193] Cf. Ibid., *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 524.
[194] Cf. Ibid., pp. 524-525. [This also reveals an important characteristic of Carl Rogers. He was basically open to new ideas and was not against it when people still used the term person-centred but modified the approach in keeping with the context, situation and need. He was against such a strict interpretation of the person-centred approach].
[195] Cf. Ibid., p. 526.
[196] Cf. ROGERS / RUSSELL, *Carl Rogers: The Quiet Revolutionary*, p. 215. [Details of his work towards reducing international tensions can be read in pp. 215-236].
[197] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 540-556.

4.1.2.5.14 Final Years

In his advancing age, in 1980, he published his fifteenth book, *A Way of Being*. In 1983, he brought out a revised edition of his *Freedom to Learn* as *Freedom to Learn for the '80s*. Rogers continued to write articles in the 1980s. In the '80s his health began deteriorating and he suffered from heart problems. In 1981 he suffered macular degeneration in both eyes. In August 1985, he had a fall and broke his neck and it took several months to heal. In January 1987 after his eighty-fifth birthday, he had a woman in his house to help him in case of emergency.[198]

Besides his romantic relationships, friendship with women was important for Rogers. He was surprised at his own popularity and success which he himself had never expected. As of 1982, he was one of the leading psychotherapists and one of the best-cited authors. In December 1985, Rogers attended a conference in Arizona on 'Evolution of Psychotherapy'. In 1986 February, at the age of eighty-four, Carl Rogers and Ruth Sanford undertook their second trip to South Africa. He was nearing eighty-five and he sounded happy and contented in life. His eighty-fifth birthday was celebrated on 22 December 1986 along with a fund-raiser for the Carl Rogers Peace Project. The President of the United States, Jimmy Carter, sent a personal note to him greeting him on his 85th birthday.[199]

In the last week of January 1987 Rogers suffered a mini stroke, but he recovered soon. When he was able to travel, he went with a companion to Las Vegas to spend a few days there. In January 1987, he had a fall and a broken hip and underwent an operation. He knew that he wanted to go. Soon afterwards he suffered a cardiac arrest and fell into a coma. He had already stated in his will that he did not want to be kept alive with the help of machines. David Rogers knew that his father was brain-dead, and in keeping with the wishes of his father, had the life-support system removed. Rogers lay in coma for three days. During these days members of his family, friends and colleagues said farewell to him. On 3 February 1987, they received a letter from Congressman Bates' office nominating Carl Rogers for the Nobel peace prize. It was read out to him as he lay in coma. He died on 4 February 1987.[200]

[198] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 560-562.
[199] Cf. Ibid., pp. 563-568.
[200] Cf. Ibid., pp. 569-571.

Concluding Reflection

As we close the description of the life and works of Carl Rogers and the growth and spread of his person-centred approach, one can only wonder at his person and his achievements. Carl Rogers remains, even today, on top of the list of the ten most influential psychotherapists of all time. He continues to influence the field of psychology and psychotherapy.[201]

His desire and determination to look beyond for an alternative approach to the existing unconscious-dominated, sex- and drive-driven psychoanalytic method and the deterministic behaviouristic approach, with a tendency to manipulate human beings and thereby interfere in personal freedom and choice, led him to the unknown limits of humanistic psychology. The credit goes to Rogers for exploring and establishing the power of human attitudes like empathy, acceptance, and sympathy; and the vital role played by therapeutic relationship. His work and influence had such a revolutionary impact. That is why he has been called a 'quiet revolutionary'.[202]

Throughout his life, Carl Rogers remained a modest person who shunned popularity, glamour, and publicity. He kept a low profile. He has been considered by many as one of the greatest personalities of the 20th century. One of the striking features that most of his friends, acquaintances, colleagues and students admired – that in his personal life too, - is that Rogers was a wonderful person who exuded the qualities of a therapist in his day-to-day life. He was a keen listener, empathic in his relationships, and person-centred in his dealings.

One should, however, be careful in 'canonizing' Carl Rogers. As a weak human being, Rogers had also had his shady sides. He was weighed down by his own problems in his personal and married life, and an excessive desire for companionship and for pleasure. His manner of treating his wife in the years of her illness is highly despicable and shocking. He also seems to have been an advocate of the liberal spirit of the '70s. His craving for women and sex seemed to have been one of the major motives of his later years. His alcohol addiction seemed to have disturbed him deeply although it was not known to the world at that time. The fact that Rogers left behind papers and documents regarding his secret and personal life and allowed them to be made public shows that he did not want to

[201] Cf. KIRCHENBAUM / HENDERSON, *The Carl Rogers Reader*, p. xiii.
[202] Cf. Ibid., p. xiv.

hide his personal life and dark sides after his death. It also means he wanted people to know him as he really was, in keeping with his spirit of congruence.

The purpose of this part of the paper was to explore the person of Rogers critically and also to see how the PCA had developed and spread.

Part II

4.2 Person-Centred Therapy in Action

Introduction

We have already seen in detail in the first part of this chapter - along with the biography of Rogers - the birth, influence, growth and spread of person-centred therapy (PCT). This part deals with the basic philosophical and psychological foundations of PCT and its concrete application in counselling and psychotherapy.

Person-centred approach is an "experiential way of being."[203] Person-centred approach is different from other approaches because it starts from different premises than the other psychotherapies. Two basic features that differentiate the person-centred approach are: firstly, it relies on the constructive actualizing tendency of the person. Secondly, it rejects the pathological model in terms of diagnosis, dealing with, and cure of psychological problems. It tries to release growth and development rather than looking for pathological cure.[204]

Person-centred theory is not an arbitrary theory which tries to fit the client into the theoretical frame of a particular system. On the other hand, it takes into account the experience of each particular individual. Rogers claims: "Our theory develops on our

[203] Carl R. ROGERS, *The Basic Conditions of the Facilitative Therapeutic Relationship*, in *The Handbook of Person-Centred Psychotherapy and Counselling*, NY: Palgrave Mac Macmillan, 2007, pp. 1-5, here p. 1. This is the summarised form of a talk given by Carl Rogers in Vienna on 2 April 1981 to the psychotherapists at the Medical Faculty of the University of Vienna. The talk gives in a nutshell all the core aspects of the person-centred approach and one of his latest descriptions of the same.
[204] Cf. ROGERS, *The Basic Conditions* in *The Handbook of PCPC*, p. 1.

experience with the clients, it is not an arbitrary theory which was developed and then we fit the clients to it."[205]

4.2.1 Basic Concepts in PCA

Unlike other psychotherapies, PCT does not have a long and complicated theoretical structure on which it is based. PCT, however, is based on some basic concepts which are central to the person-centred approach in general. In the following pages, we are going to see some of them.

4.2.1.1 Client, not Patient

Person-centred approach (PCA) sees the person seeking help as a 'client' and not a 'patient'. PCA treats him as a self-respecting person seeking help, who is autonomous and self-responsible. It has to do with the philosophical understanding of person in PCA. The words of its own founder make the difference clear and explain why he chose the term 'client' rather than 'patient':

> A patient means someone who is sick, who puts himself in the hands of the doctor, who feels that the doctor is probably the authority who will tell him what to do. A client, on the other hand, is a self-respecting person who comes to someone else for service: I go to a lawyer for help, what I want is expertise. But I am still the one in charge, I am the one to decide whether to take his advice or not, I am the one who is self-responsible. The use of the term client is to stress the fact that we regard the person coming for help as a self-responsible, autonomous individual who is seeking help, and we are trying to provide a climate from which he can find that help for himself. The use of the word client means greater respect for the autonomy of this person.[206]

4.2.1.2 Non-Directiveness

In the non-directive approach of Carl Rogers, independence and personal freedom of the client are respected. The therapist does not use his skills and power to control or manipulate the client but he uses it to create an atmosphere and in which the client can work and develop. It helps the client to discover resources within himself and to make crucial choices to move ahead.[207]

Carl Rogers' idea of non-directivity came at a time when the process of therapy was reduced to diagnosis, interpretation and psych-education by an expert. The client was at the

[205] ROGERS, *The Basic Conditions* in *The Handbook of PCPC*, p. 2.
[206] Ibid.
[207] Cf. ROGERS, *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, pp. 418-419.

receiving end of the whole process. Although some of his ideas changed, were modified and further developed, non-directivity remained more or less the same till the end. He said in an interview to Richard Isadore Evans a few years before his death, "I still feel that the person who should guide the client's life is the client. My whole philosophy and whole approach is to strengthen him in that way of being, that he's in charge of his own life and nothing I say is intended to take that capacity or opportunity away from him."[208]

4.2.1.2.1 Power to the Client

Most therapeutic schools use directive approaches, and accordingly the therapists use their personal power to control, guide and sometimes even to 'manipulate' the client. They use their skills and techniques to exercise this power which is vested in the therapist. But person-centred approach, on the other hand, gives power to the client to decide, to choose and to direct his own life. As early as 1942, when Rogers was still developing his psychotherapy he wrote:

> At the back of these differences between the directive and non-directive approaches lie deeper differences in the philosophy of counselling and the values which are assumed to be important… The first basic difference in purpose centers around the question of who is to choose the client's goals. The directive group assumes that the counselor selects the desirable and the socially approved goal which the client is to attain, and then directs his efforts toward helping the subject to attain it. An unstated implication is that the counselor is superior to the client, since the latter is assumed to be incapable of accepting full responsibility for choosing his own goal. Non-directive counseling is based on the assumption that the client has the right to select his own life goals, even though these may be at variance with the goals that the counselor might choose for him. There is also the belief that if the individual has a modicum of insight into himself and his problems, he will be likely to make this choice wisely…The non-directive viewpoint places high value on the right of every individual to be psychologically independent and to maintain his psychological integrity. The directive viewpoint places a high value upon social conformity and the right of the more able to direct the less able.[209]

In therapy, the therapist has a lot of power – he has the power to direct, guide, misguide or manipulate the client. Sometimes the clients are so weak and distressed that they are just puppets in the hands of the therapist. Therefore, the therapist has a responsibility not to misuse this power. Person-centred therapists are also aware of this reality, but they exercise it in a very constructive and health-promoting manner. He does not relinquish his

[208] As quoted by Peter SANDERS in *Introduction to the Theory of Person-Centred Therapy*, in *The Handbook PCPC*, (pp.9-18), p.15.
[209] ROGERS, *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, pp. 126-127.

power; on the other hand, he shares this power with the client in the therapeutic relationship.[210]

Power has many dimensions. Personal power can be used to help others and at the same time it can be used in an authoritarian manner to control and manipulate others. PCA transmits this power to the client and desists from using it for the therapist's own purposes. The politics of therapy should lead to the independence of the client and not his dependence on the therapist.[211] Arthur C. Bohart, who supports a more integrative approach, believes one of the most distinguishing marks of person-centred approach is that it trusts the client, unlike other therapeutic approaches. Many features of PCA are now used in other forms of therapy, but they do not trust the client as PCA does.[212]

"It is possible and desirable to experience personal power without exercising authoritarian power (power over). It is this refusal to disempower the other, to take responsibility for the course of direction of the therapeutic encounter that allows the emergence of 'power from within' …"[213]

4.2.1.2.2 Is Non-Directive Approach Possible?

Person-centred approach is also known as non-directive therapy. Non-directivity is the bedrock of person-centred therapy. Some critics see non-directivity as a practical impossibility. They argue that total non-directivity is impossible, because the client is vulnerable and in a state of incongruence and distress, and, therefore, he cannot be an equal partner to the therapist. Moreover, he has more expertise than the client and there is an imbalance of power between the two because of the training, experience, skills, etc. of the therapist. He is ethically obliged to apply his expertise and skills to help the client. That is his job. So critics argue that the person-centred approach only pretends to be non-directive. There cannot be a complete non-directivity or equality of power.[214]

Person-centred therapists argue that it is a misapprehension of the person-centred approach and of non-directivity. Non-directivity, as understood by the person-centred approach, primarily relates to the client's right to choose his own goals, even if it is in conflict with

[210] Cf. Paul WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, London: Routledge, 2010, p. 147.
[211] Cf. Alberto ZUCCONI, *The Politics of the Helping Relationships: Carl Rogers' Contributions*, in *Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapies* (PCEP), Journal of the World Association for Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counseling, Vol.10, No.1, March 2011, pp. 2-10.
[212] Cf. Arthur C. BOHART, *Can You Be Integrative and Person-Centred Therapist at the Same Time?*, in PCEP, Vol.11, No.1, 2012, (1-13), pp. 8-9.
[213] WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, p. 148.
[214] Cf. Ibid., p. 145.

the views of the therapist. It is because, "the belief is that clients have insights into themselves and their problems and are best placed to make the right choices at the right time. This is about trusting the actualising tendency."[215]

Non-directivity in person-centred approach is not just 'reflecting' the responses; it has more to do with the therapist's acceptance and recognition of the clients as unique autonomous persons who are experts on their own lives. Non-directivity remains at the heart of the practice of those who still follow the classical way. The therapists are there to accompany the clients on their journey: "In this are related forms of practice, clients formulate their own goals and therapists are companions on the journey, not leaders. Person-centred therapists cannot have goals for their clients, cannot presume to know what outcomes are desirable for them."[216]

4.2.1.3 Stance against Absolutism

To hold a psychological theory as absolute is to negate its growth. It means to close itself to further discussion or newer ideas. Change is the law of nature. Rogers was against any form of absolutism. He believed that no theory was absolute, even his own. Every such theory is based on a context and conditioned by the existing culture and society:

> Another deep-seated opinion has to do with theory. I believe that there is only one statement which can accurately apply to all theories from the phlogiston theory to the theory of relativity, from the theory I will present to the one which I hope will replace it in a decade and that is that at the time of its formulation every theory contains an unknown (and perhaps at that point an unknowable) amount of error and mistaken inference. The degree of error may be very great, as in the phlogiston theory, or small, as I imagine it may be in the theory of relativity, but unless we regard the discovery of truth as a closed and finished book, then there will be new discoveries which will contradict the best theories which we can now construct.[217]

Rogers knew that the best of theories would be modified or contradicted later. Rogers was deeply conscious of this fact when he developed his own theory and did not want to see his theory as a dogma: "To me this attitude is very important, for I am distressed at the manner in which small-caliber minds immediately accept a theory, almost any theory, as a dogma of truth. If theory could be seen for what it is, a fallible, changing attempt to construct a

[215] WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, p.146.
[216] Ibid.
[217] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p.190.

network of gossamer threads which will contain the solid facts, then a theory would serve as it should, as a stimulus to further creative thinking."[218]

He criticizes the psychoanalytic school for making the theories dogmatic, which is against the spirit of Freud. Freud himself kept changing and improving his theories. But his followers have made dogmas out of them:

> I am sure that the stress I place on this grows in part out of my regret at the history of Freudian theory. For Freud, it seems quite clear that his highly creative theories were never more than that. He kept changing, altering, revising, giving new meaning to old terms always with more respect for the facts he observed than for the theories he had built. But at the hands of insecure disciples (so it seems to me), the gossamer threads became iron chains of dogma from which dynamic psychology is only recently beginning to free itself. I feel that every formulation of a theory contains this same risk and that, at the time a theory is constructed, some precautions should be taken to prevent it from becoming dogma.[219]

Rogers admits that his theory of personality is not an absolute theory. His purpose is to provide an understanding of human organism and its dynamics. Rogers believes that if his theory of personality is valid, then it can be applicable in other fields of human relationship, too – for example, inter-personal relationship, education, family and group leadership. Rogers acknowledges that he has drawn from the scientific works of Victor Raimy, Richard Hogan, Stanley Standal, John Butler, Thomas Gordon, etc. He has also been influenced by Oliver Brown, Gendlin, Abraham Maslow, Julius Seeman, and many others.[220]

Carl Rogers was himself aware that his theory was not going to be absolute. It was and is in keeping with his spirit that his own theory and ideas change and develop. Therefore, to make them absolute would be against the spirit of Rogers. This underlying principle gives great scope for further modification, development in different directions and integration of his theory into various fields like pastoral counselling, spiritual direction, etc.

4.2.1.4 Importance of Subjective Experience

PCA is based on subjective truths and subjective experiences. It deals more with the phenomenological world than the transcendental one. What counts here is the personal experience of the individual and his subjective world.

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[218] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 191.
[219] Ibid.
[220] Cf. Ibid., pp.193-194.

Like many other humanistic and existentialist psychologists, Rogers values subjective truth over objective truth. He was not sure whether there was objective truth and whether we could ever know it. There may be objective truth, but we cannot know it. What we can know is the subjective truth. Rogers' focus on subjectivism and the 'agnostic approach' towards objective truth is a matter of contention with Christian theology.[221] Rogers wrote in 1959: "To put it more briefly, it appears to me that though there may be such a thing as objective truth, I can never know it; all I can know is that some statements appear to me subjectively to have the qualifications of objective truth. Thus, there is no such thing as Scientific Knowledge; there are only individual perceptions of what appears to each person to be such knowledge."[222]

Such radical statements denying objective truth and scientific knowledge have brought Rogers much criticism. Rogers solely depends on the personal experience of the individual. For him the experience of the person is the highest authority:

> *Experience is for me the highest authority. The touchstone of validity is my own experience*. No other person's ideas, and none my own ideas, are as authoritative as my experience. It is to experience that I must return again and again, to discover a closer approximation to truth as it is in the process of becoming in me. Neither the Bible nor the prophets – neither Freud nor research – neither the revelations of God nor man – can take precedence over my own direct experience.[223]

Can such an extreme form of subjectivism and phenomenological approach lead to objectivity and truth? In the view of Rogers, to look for the objective truth is not the task of a psychotherapist. He is there to help the client and the client's experience is the truth for him in the therapeutic relationship.

4.2.1.5 Actualizing Tendency

It is one of the core concepts in Carl Rogers. The whole theoretical basis as well as the classical person-centred practice of therapy is based on the concept of actualizing tendency. In the person-centred approach, the person is not driven by hunger, libido, sex, pain, avoidance, etc. Rogers believed that the organism always strives to maintain and enhance itself in all his actions. He called this tendency 'the actualizing tendency'. He

[221] Cf. Stanton L. JONES & Richard E. BUTMAN, *Modern Psychotherapies. A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal* (2nd Edition), Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press (IVP), 2011, pp. 270-273.
[222] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p.192.
[223] ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person*, pp. 23-24. Emphasis as in the original.

believes it is the mainspring of life and it can be released when proper conditions are provided:

> Gradually my experience has forced me to conclude that the individual has within himself the capacity and the tendency, latent if not evident, to move forward toward maturity. In a suitable psychological climate this tendency is released, and becomes actual rather than potential. … It shows itself in the tendency to reorganize his personality and his relationship to life in ways which are regarded as more mature. Whether one calls it a growth tendency, a drive toward self-actualization, or a forward-moving directional tendency, it is the mainspring of life, and is, in the last analysis, the tendency upon which all psychotherapy depends. It is the urge which is evident in all organic and human life - to expand, extend, become autonomous, develop, mature - the tendency to express and activate all the capacities of the organism, to the extent that such activation enhances the organism or the self…it is my belief that it exists in every individual, and awaits only the proper conditions to be released and expressed.[224]

4.2.1.5.1 What is the Actualizing Tendency?

What, then, actually is the actualizing tendency? Rogers says it is an inherent tendency which is present in every person to enhance its organism. His idea of actualizing tendency goes much deeper than that of Maslow:

> This is the inherent tendency of the organism to develop all its capacities in ways which serve to maintain or enhance the organism. It involves not only the tendency to meet what Maslow terms "deficiency needs" for air, food, water, and the like, but also more generalized activities. It involves development toward the differentiation of organs and of functions, expansion in terms of growth, expansion of effectiveness through the use of tools, expansion, and enhancement through reproduction.[225]

The actualizing tendency can also be seen as the source of energy for the individual that propels him to action. Rogers says, "I see the actualizing tendency in the human organism as being basic to motivation."[226] PCA does not postulate any other motive for the individual's move towards growth and adjustment in its theoretical system. This tendency comes from the individual as a whole, not from any particular dimension - for example, biological, psychological or spiritual:

> It should be noted that this basic actualizing tendency is the only motive which is postulated in this theoretical system. It should also be noted that it is the organism as a whole, and only the organism as a whole, which exhibits this tendency. There are no homunculi, no other sources of energy or action in the system. The self, for example, is an important construct in our theory,

[224] ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person*, p. 35.
[225] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p.196.
[226] ROGERS, *On Personal Power*, p. 237.

> but the self does not "do" anything. It is only one expression of the general tendency of the organism to behave in those ways which maintain and enhance itself.[227]

Rogers argues that he was not the only psychologist who thought about the actualizing tendency and he admits that he has been influenced by Goldtein, Maslow, Angyal, Szent-Gyoergyi, and others.[228] In his later years, Rogers postulated that there was a tendency in the universe and in every human being.[229] This is a tendency which is contrary to entropy. It is a tendency to move towards greater integrity, complexity and differentiation. It is a modification of his 1959 postulation of actualizing tendency where he postulated that the organism tries to maintain and enhance itself.[230]

4.2.1.5.2 Movement towards Autonomy and Independence

The actualizing tendency includes an enhancement of effectiveness and a movement away from control to autonomy and independence. It is also a move towards wholeness and integration. Rogers symbolically describes it as "…the tenacity of life, the forward thrust of life, the ability to push into incredibly hostile environment and not only to hold its own but to adapt, develop, become itself."[231] Bohart claims it is an organizational tendency to survive. "The actualizing tendency, however, is not merely a motive to survive. Rather, it is an organizational tendency to survive, cope and grow. By 'organizational tendency' I mean that it is a proactive tendency to organize the organism for optimal functioning in the given circumstances."[232]

4.2.1.5.3 Actualizing Tendency is Generative

The actualizing tendency is generative in the sense that it leads to growth and development. What about the tendency for self-destruction? Rogers believed, "Only under unusual or perverse circumstances do these potentialities become actualized. It is clear that the actualizing tendency is selective and directional – a constructive tendency, if you will."[233] This tendency can be found in all organisms.[234] An important point that Rogers stressed was that the actualizing tendency is fundamentally biological, and not moral. Nor

[227] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p.196.
[228] Cf. ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, p. 119.
[229] Cf. Ibid., pp. 113-136.
[230] Cf. Arthur C. BOHART, *The Actualizing Person* in *The Handbook of PCPC*, (47-63), p. 49.
[231] ROGERS, *On Personal Power*, p. 238.
[232] BOHART, *The Actualizing Person*, p. 49.
[233] ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, p. 121.
[234] Cf. Ibid., p. 118.

does it go always in the positive direction. Rogers believes that this tendency is present in every person, even in the most abnormal person:

> Under the most adverse circumstances, they were striving to become. Life would not give up, even if it could not flourish. In dealing with clients whose lives have been terribly warped, in working with men and women on the back wards of state hospitals … so unfavourable have been the conditions in which these people have developed that their lives often seem abnormal, twisted, scarcely human. Yet, the directional tendency in them can be trusted. The clue to understanding their behaviour is that they are striving, in the only ways that they perceive as available to them, to move towards growth, toward becoming. To healthy persons, the results may seem bizarre and futile, but they are life's desperate attempt to become itself. This potent constructive tendency is an underlying basis of the person-centred approach.[235]

Rogers says that the actualizing tendency may express itself in the satisfaction of a wide variety of needs like hunger, security or sex. Satisfaction of these needs enhances the individual and contributes to his self-esteem. The actualizing tendency is the substratum of all organismic tendencies. These and other behaviours are expressions of the actualizing tendency.[236]

4.2.1.5.4 Universal Formative Tendency

Rogers is of the opinion that there has been too much emphasis on 'entropy', the tendency towards deterioration or disorder, and very little has been spoken of the universal formative tendency. Rogers argues, "My main thesis is this: there appears to be a formative tendency at work in the universe, which can be observed at every level. This tendency has received much less attention than it deserves. Physical scientists up to now have focused primarily on "entropy", the tendency toward deterioration or disorder. … But there is far less recognition of, or emphasis on, the even more important formative tendency which can be equally well observed at every level of the universe."[237]

4.2.1.5.5 Actualizing Tendency is Biological, not Moral

The actualizing tendency does not mean that a person will grow to be moral. Bohart says, "It is important to note that for Rogers, the existence of this tendency is biological. It is not fundamentally moral. Nor does it necessarily go in the morally positive direction. At the

[235] ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, pp. 118-119.
[236] Cf. Ibid., p. 123.
[237] Ibid., pp. 124-125.

human level one could learn and become better and better at being a sadistic monster. All it postulates is a tendency to proactively grow and adapt."[238]

Rogers did not believe that the direction of self-actualization will always be positive or pro-social. It can even go in a narcissistic or self-centred direction: "Self-actualization is not postulated to inevitably move in a positive, pro-social direction. What is implied is that the organism will work to maintain and enhance what is defined as the self. This could lead to the enhancement of a negative and destructive development of the self."[239] Maslow's concept of self-actualization, on the other hand, takes a positive direction. For Maslow, 'actualized people' are positive, creative, pro-social, loving, and so on. Although Rogers was influenced by Maslow, there are clearly marked differences in their concept of self-actualization.[240]

4.2.1.5.6 Criticism of Actualizing Tendency

The actualizing tendency as proposed by Rogers is not without controversies. It has been criticized from all circles. But for Rogers it is the core of the organism. It is the quality of life itself. It is active and present in the organism all the time. The actualizing tendency, Pete Sanders says, can, however, be suppressed or diminished by certain situations:

> The actualizing tendency is directional in that the organism inexorably moves towards development, enhancement, differentiation and increasing complexity…It can never be satisfied. This leads to an organism in continuous motion, a motion evident and integrated from its continuous flow of experience through to its complex social behaviour and creativity. The fundamental position of person-centred psychology is that when the actualizing tendency is not fettered by restrictions, the organism flourishes and may realize its full potential.[241]

If the organism has a tendency towards growth, integration and health, how does he experience maladjustment, vulnerability, anxiety, and sickness? It is because the material and psychological environment in which the organism finds itself is less ideal, the conditions in which one lives are not very conducive. Only in an environment free from fear and judgement, an environment where there is understanding and unconditional love, does the individual experience self-actualization.

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[238] BOHART, *The Actualizing Person*, p. 49.
[239] Ibid., p. 51.
[240] Cf. Ibid.
[241] Pete SANDERS, *Introduction to the Theory of Person-Centred Therapy*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, (pp. 9-18), p. 13.

4.2.1.6 Self-Actualization

The concept of self-actualization goes back to Kurt Goldstein, who believed in a holistic view of the person. He believed that the person cannot be divided into different parts like mind, body and soul. Goldstein was engaged in research in the field of brain damage and repair. He noticed that a holistic being tended to cope with the threats to his integrity by developing adaptational skills. This idea was close to Carl Rogers' idea of self-actualization and the idea of 'self-heal' in the person-centred therapy.[242]

Carl Rogers would have been further influenced by the idea of Abraham Maslow's idea of actualization, although there are clear-cut differences. For Maslow self-actualization is the highest of the needs, which will only be fulfilled if all the underlying needs are fulfilled. One cannot try to actualize oneself when the needs in the lower hierarchy are not fulfilled. For Maslow self-actualization is the highest in the pyramid and it is a state. Although these may have been precursors to Carl Rogers' idea of self-actualization, his idea is different. For Carl Rogers, self-actualization is a subset of actualizing tendency and which in turn is a subset of the formative tendency.[243]

As an individual grows, the idea of 'me' and 'I' becomes more and more distinct and separate from the rest of the world. Self-actualization need not always take place in a positive direction. Thus, there can be a split between the actualizing tendency and the self-actualization of the individual. If the psychological conditions of growth are not favourable, it is likely that self-actualization can take place contrary to the actualising tendency of the organism. Rogers often speaks of the favourable conditions which can promote self-actualisation in the right direction. That is the role of therapy – to provide favourable conditions through congruence, UPR and empathy. Rogers believed 'conditions of worth' promote to unfavourable environment.[244]

Actualization or self-actualization is not a goal of therapy. It is perhaps surprising to note for someone who is not very familiar with person-centred therapy that it is the actualizing tendency that makes growth possible in the client, but is not in itself the goal of therapy. Bohart makes it clear: "Actualization is not the goal of psychotherapy. Rather, it is the 'engine' which makes psychotherapy work. As clients are able to think and experience in

[242] Cf. BOHART, *The Actualizing Person*, p. 48.
[243] Cf. Ibid.
[244] Cf. SANDERS, *Introduction to the Theory of Person-Centred Therapy*, p.14.

open, supportive relationships, they are able to use their growth capacities to move forward in finding solutions to their problems."[245]

The concept of self-actualization is one of the most misunderstood concepts in Rogers. He has been accused of promoting narcissism, egocentrism, individualism and aggressive self-promotion at the cost of others. It has been said in criticism of Rogers' theory that the individual focuses only on his personal goals and his own self-actualization and neglects the good of others and that of the society. Rogers' concept has also been criticized for being too western and culture-specific because many non-western cultures have their own concepts of self and self-actualization and common good.[246] But the followers of the person-centred approach defend self-actualization as proposed by Rogers saying that his concept is not culture-specific and is compatible with all cultures. Bohart defends him saying, "Self-actualization means enhancing or actualizing the self as the self is defined for that person and culture. In a socio-centric culture, self-actualization would be different than in an individualistic culture, and might be family- or group-oriented."[247]

Self-actualization also involves a respectful stance towards others: "A key part of full functioning is the capacity to listen to and respect others' realities, as well as to dialogue productively with them. Another part is to prize and care for other people."[248]

4.2.1.6.1 'To Be the Self that One Is'

Rogers has been influenced by the dictum of Lao-tzu who said, "The way to do is to be."[249] The quest for the true self emerges when we ask ourselves the fundamental questions of life. Answers to these questions bring every person closer to his true self. The fundamental questions every person asks himself in life are:

> 'What is my goal in life?' 'What am I striving for?' 'What is my purpose?' These are questions which every individual asks himself at one time or another, sometimes calmly and meditatively, sometimes in agonizing uncertainty or despair. They are old, old questions which have been asked and answered in every century of history. Yet, they are also questions which every individual must ask and answer for himself, in his own way.[250]

[245] BOHART, *The Actualizing Person*, p. 59.
[246] Cf. BOHART, *The Actualizing Person*, p. 50.
[247] Ibid.
[248] Ibid., p. 55.
[249] As quoted by ROGERS, in *On Becoming a Person*, p. 164.
[250] ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person*, p. 164.

To be the true self does not mean to bring out the self which lies underneath. In Rogers, it means to be congruent and to continually integrate all aspects of the self. To be authentic an organism has to be in a process of constant growth and learning. Bohart opines, "To be the self that one is, then, is to be in a process, to be in touch with all aspects of oneself, and to have a trusting relationship towards oneself. These are all aspects of the fully functioning person."[251]

4.2.1.6.2 Fully Functioning Person

The fully functioning person in Carl Rogers is different from that of Maslow. For Maslow it is basically a state that one can attain, but for Rogers it is a process. There really is not a fully actualized person. It is a process, not an outcome. A fully functioning person strives towards self-actualization by being genuine, being open to new information and new learning and optimizing his growth. Contrary to Maslow's concept, a fully functioning person could be poor, handicapped or 'unsuccessful' in the eyes of the world. But he is someone who acts congruently and one who does not hinder his growth and learning process.[252]

In his 1959 exposition of PCT, Rogers gives the detailed theory of the fully functioning person. Some of the characteristics of the fully functioning person that Rogers enumerates are the following:

> The fully functioning person will have at least these characteristics: 1. He will be open to his experience… The corollary statement is that he will exhibit no defensiveness. 2. Hence all experiences will be available to awareness. 3. All symbolizations will be as accurate as the experiential data will permit. 4. His self-structure will be congruent with his experience. 5. His self-structure will be a fluid gestalt, changing flexibly in the process of assimilation of new experiences. 6. He will experience himself as the locus of evaluation…The valuing process will be a continuing organismic one. 7. He will have no conditions of worth as the corollary statement is that he will experience unconditional self-regard. 8. He will meet each situation with behavior which is a unique and creative adaptation to the newness of that moment. 9. He will find his organismic valuing a trustworthy guide to the most satisfying behaviors, because a. All available experiential data will be available to awareness and used. b. No datum of experience will be distorted in, or denied to, awareness. c. The outcomes of behavior in experience will be available to awareness. d. Hence any failure to achieve the maximum possible satisfaction, because of lack of data, will be corrected by this

[251] BOHART, *The Actualizing Person*, p. 51.
[252] Cf. Ibid., p. 52.

> effective reality testing.10. He will live with others in the maximum possible harmony, because of the rewarding character of reciprocal positive regard.[253]

In the person-centred approach, personality is a process. People continually grow and change. It is part of the process. Characteristics of personality include both continuity and change. Some elements remain the same while others keep changing. 'A personality is a structure in process.'[254] Human behaviour is a synthesis of the past and of the present. A fully functioning person has the potential for learning from experience.

Being open and congruent is an essential characteristic of self-actualisation and learning:

> Implied in the idea of learning is openness to information. This involves both openness to internal information and to information from the external world. This suggests the importance of congruent self-self relationship as well as open, respectful dialogue with others. … To be congruent does not mean that one will always experience inner harmony. Sometimes one will be in a state of harmony; other times there will be inner conflict. Rather, congruence, defined as an open receptivity to all inner voices, means the creative synthesising process of the individual can move forward.[255]

4.2.1.7 Experience

Rogers' definition of experience is basically psychological and phenomenological. It is in a way totally subjective, too. In his opinion, experience does not include the deep currents in the unconscious which do not have relevance to the individual at the moment. It has more to do with the moment-to-moment felt experience of the organism. Rogers focuses more on the concrete experiences that are available to the person's awareness:

> This term is used to include all that is going on within the envelope of the organism at any given moment which is potentially available to awareness. It includes events of which the individual is unaware, as well as all the phenomena which are in consciousness. Thus it includes the psychological aspects of hunger, even though the individual may be so fascinated by his work or play that he is completely unaware of the hunger; it includes the impact of sights and sounds and smells on the organism, even though these are not in the focus of attention. It includes the influence of memory and past experience, as these are active in the moment, in restricting or broadening the meaning given to various stimuli. It also includes all that is present in immediate awareness or consciousness. It does not include such events as neuron discharges or changes in blood sugar, because these are not directly available to awareness. It is thus a psychological, not a physiological, definition.[256]

[253] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, pp. 234-235.
[254] Cf. BOHART, *The Actualizing Person*, p. 52.
[255] Ibid., p. 53.
[256] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 197.

Experiencing is the source of creativity. Being in touch with our organism enriches our functioning, gives us information and generates creativity in us to deal with our problems. To be fully functioning also means trusting one's feelings and experiences. One should trust one's feelings to explore oneself and to clarify them.

4.2.1.8 Organismic Valuing Process

When an infant grows up, he experiences himself[257]as the centre of the world. He is the centre of the reality and the world as far as the infant is concerned. Even as an infant, he has a tendency to actualize. It responds to the world in its own way. It values positively what is good for him and what enhances his being. It is because of the actualizing tendency present in the infant. The valuing process present in the person is called organismic valuing process. "The infant also has an inherent tendency to value experiences which maintain and enhance her organism positively. Experiences which work against actualization of the organism are valued negatively. 'Valuing' can mean something as simple as 'liking' or 'enjoying'. This is the organismic valuing process. As she develops, the infant is attracted towards, and accepts, positively valued experiences whilst avoiding and rejecting negatively valued experiences."[258]

4.2.1.9 Nature of the Individual

Rogers' idea of human beings is based basically on his experience of therapy. He does not characterise human beings as fundamentally hostile, evil, anti-social, etc., like Freud believed. Nor does he believe it to be a *tabula rasa* on which everything can be imprinted or a malleable putty, which can be formed and shaped according to one's liking. Nor does he see the human being to be a perfect being as he is 'warped and corrupted' by the society.[259]

4.2.1.9.1 Positive Outlook

From his theory of personality and experience in therapy, Carl Rogers comes to the following conclusion regarding the nature of the person:

> We present these conclusions about the characteristics of the human organism: 1. The individual possesses the capacity to experience in awareness the factors in his psychological maladjustment, namely, the incongruence between his self-concept and the totality of his experience. 2.

[257] I use the personal pronoun for child in keeping with the spirit of the person-centred approach. The child is also a person, hence the use of personal pronoun.
[258] SANDERS, *Introduction to the Theory of Person-Centred Therapy*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, p. 10.
[259] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *The Nature of Man*, in *Pastoral Psychology*, 11. 4, 1960, (23-26), p. 23.

> The individual possesses the capacity and has the tendency to reorganize his self-concept in such a way as to make it more congruent with the totality of his experience, thus moving himself away from a state of psychological maladjustment, and toward a state of psychological adjustment. 3. These capacities and this tendency, when latent rather than evident, will be released in any interpersonal relationship in which the other person is congruent in the relationship, experiences unconditional positive regard toward, and empathic understanding of, the individual, and achieves some communication of these attitudes to the individual.[260]

Rogers claims in his experience of human beings in therapy he has come to the conclusion that they are basically positive and forward-moving: "In my experience I have discovered man to have characteristics which seem inherent in his species, and the terms which have at different times seemed to me descriptive of these characteristics are such terms as positive, forward-moving, constructive, realistic, and trustworthy."[261] It is not only human beings who are basically positive. In the opinion of Rogers, all organisms are basically positive and constructive.

4.2.1.9.2 Man is a Man, not a Beast

Rogers says, even animals, for example lions, are basically constructive and trustworthy and behave towards their own enhancement and that of their species. We don't call them basically evil when they behave according to their nature – a dog bites, a mouse eats our cheese, a lion kills its prey, a sheep eats our garden grass, and the like. In the same way, man also sometimes experiences anti-social and evil desires, even murderous feelings. But that does not make him a fundamentally evil person. He is still a human being, not a beast. He is not innately evil or innately destructive like some Freudians believe.[262]

Rogers believes it could lie in the approach of some therapists that they see human beings as beasts and fundamentally evil. A lot depends on how one approaches a human being and what kind of relationship one has with the client. He wonders how a therapist can care for the client when he does not have a positive approach to the client and sees him as destructive. "Perhaps these deep differences do not matter if the therapist really cares for his patient or client. But how can the analyst feel a positive caring for his patient if his own innate tendency is to destroy? And even if his own destructive tendencies were properly

[260] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 221.
[261] ROGERS, *The Nature of Man*, in *Pastoral Psychology*, p. 23.
[262] Cf. Ibid., pp. 24-25.

inhibited and controlled by *his* analyst, who controlled the destructiveness of *that* analyst? And so on, *ad infinitum*."[263]

4.2.1.9.3 Focus on the Positive

Rogers is strongly convinced from his experience that the view the therapist holds of human nature is a decisive factor and can have consequences in therapy:

> … the view the therapist holds of human nature does have consequences in his therapy. Hence I believe it is important for each therapist to abstract for himself from his own experience those trends or tendencies which seem most deeply characteristic of the human being. I have indicated that for myself man appears to be an awesomely complex creature who can go very terribly awry, but whose deepest tendencies make for his own enhancement and that of other members of his species. I find that he can be trusted to move in this constructive direction when he lives, even briefly, in a non-threatening climate where he is free to choose any direction.[264]

Carl Rogers vehemently criticises Freud for focusing on the evil which lies beneath the man and neglecting all the good and positive aspects present in him.[265]

> … both his critics and Freud himself focussed on the "evil" feelings in man which lay beneath the surface. This continued to be the focus even though Freud's own experience with his patients must have shown him that once these "evil" feelings were known, accepted, and understood by the individual, he could be trusted to be a normally self-controlled, socialized person. In the furore of the controversy over psychoanalysis this latter point was overlooked, and Freud settled for what is, in my estimation, a too-superficial view of human nature. It was, of course, a much more deeply informed view than that held by his contemporaries, but it was not so profound a concept as his own experience would have justified.[266]

Carl Rogers criticizes Freud that the latter did not provide the *warm relationship* that the client needed to accept his hidden feelings. The way Freud carried on his therapy was not suited to it. Rogers explains his conviction: "It has been my experience that though clients can, to some degree, independently discover some of their denied or repressed feelings, they cannot on their own achieve full emotional acceptance of these feelings. It is only in a caring relationship that these "awful" feelings are first fully accepted by the therapist and can then be accepted by the client. Freud in his self-analysis was deprived of this warmly acceptant relationship."[267]

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[263] ROGERS, *The Nature of Man*, in *Pastoral Psychology*, p. 25. Italics as in the original.
[264] Ibid., p. 26.
[265] Cf. Ibid., pp. 25-26.
[266] Ibid., p. 26.
[267] Ibid.

Is man basically good? Carl Rogers never claimed it. His theory never postulated it. He does not assume that humans grow necessarily in a pro-social and positive direction. Human beings are both good and bad, but the Rogerian theory assumes that there is a potential to change. Carl Rogers is of the opinion that both tendencies – good and evil – are present in man. He is free to choose his direction. Rogers' writings basically imply a positive view of human nature. Because it is important in therapy what view of a human being the therapist has because it influences his handling of the client and the person of the client, too. He believed that at the deepest level human beings have the potency to be positive, forward-moving, constructive, realistic and trustworthy. He was also aware that human beings at times can be cruel, destructive, anti-social and regressive.[268]

4.2.1.9.4 The Art of Dealing with Humans Matters

Given the right conditions, most individuals will spontaneously move towards solving their own problems and will adapt and re-organize themselves. The right conditions in the person-centred approach include empathic listening, showing unconditional positive regard and congruence. Research has supported that it is clients who make therapy successful. Therefore, in the person-centred approach, therapy is seen as more self-healing, self-righting and actualization rather than as repair.[269] PCA lays stress on the way persons are treated:

> For Rogers, the key is how people are treated. If they are responded to in a fundamentally positive, respectful and empathic way (as in psychotherapy), he observed that individuals grow in a positive, pro-social direction. The implication is that the actualization tendency can go in a positive direction, given the right circumstances. What is different about this view compared to others is the implication that people can naturally and spontaneously grow in positive and pro-social directions if given proper supportive climate. They do not have to be 'taught' or 'programmed' to do so.[270]

Evidence has shown that individuals do have the capacity to grow from trauma rather than be devastated by it. Most human beings are resilient, they overcome their own problems without the help of others (including therapists) and have a capacity for self-healing and self-righting and that the client himself is the best therapist. This, however, does not mean that all individuals are able to do so.[271]

[268] Cf. BOHART, *The Actualizing Person*, p. 57.
[269] Cf. Ibid., p. 59.
[270] Ibid., p. 57.
[271] Cf. Ibid., pp. 58-59.

4.2.1.10 It is the Relationship that Heals

This is one of the underlying marks of distinction which differentiates PCT from other forms of therapy. In PCT, it is a relationship that brings about healing in the person. The client finds new confidence and trust in himself through the therapeutic relationship. This relationship is characterised by empathy, acceptance and positive regard. It is a relationship with the full involvement of the therapist: "At a time when great emphasis was laid upon a thorough intellectual understanding of a patient's dynamics, Rogers pioneered a clinical stance that seems to include equal dose of mind, heart and soul."[272]

This relationship provides the client a safe atmosphere for self-exploration and to make use of his own inner capabilities – to help his tendency to actualize to take over. The relationship provides the facilitative atmosphere essential for healing:

> The counselling relationship is one in which warmth of acceptance and absence of any coercion or personal pressure on the part of the counsellor permits the maximum expression of feelings, attitudes, and problems by the counselee. The relationship is a well-structured one, with limits of time, of dependence, and of aggressive action which apply particularly to the client, and limits of responsibility and of affection which the counsellor imposes on himself. In this unique experience of complete emotional freedom within a well-defined framework, the client is free to recognize and understand his impulses and pattern, positive and negative, as in no other relationship. This therapeutic relationship is distinct from, and incompatible with, most of the authoritative relationships of everyday life.[273]

When the person-centred therapist does not treat, what does he actually do? He offers the client a climate characterised by a healing relationship which comprises six conditions. In this relationship the quality of the relationship is more important than expertise or techniques. As Wilkins says, it is more 'being' than 'doing' to the client.[274]

Maureen O'Hara summarises the central place of therapeutic relationship in PCA and its relevance beautifully: "It isn't the technique, it isn't the therapist, it isn't the lack of training. It isn't the new wonder drug, it isn't the diagnosis. It is our clients' own inborn capacities for self-healing, and it is the meeting – the relationship in which two or more sovereign or sacred 'I's meet as 'we' to engage with significant questions of existence."[275] PCT and related approaches are at best therapies of relationship. They help the person to

[272] Barry A. FARBER / Debora C. BRINK / Patricia M. RASKIN (Eds.), *The Psychotherapy of Carl Rogers. Cases and Commentary*, NY: The Guilford Press, 1996, p. 4.
[273] ROGERS, *Counselling and Psychotherapy*, pp. 113-114.
[274] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, pp. 171-172.
[275] Maureen O'HARA, *Why is This Man Laughing*, in *Perspective* (Association for Humanistic Psychology) May/June 1995, (30-31), p. 30.

shift away from the over-individualistic and 'island' images of our nature and to bring about personal and social change.[276]

Recent studies suggest that an appropriate and facilitative relationship can promote actualization in the different partners in a relationship. They call this tendency co-actualisation. Thus, actualisation takes place not only in one person in relationship but it affects mutually others also who are in the relationship.[277]

4.2.2 Rogers' Theory of Personality

The theory of personality is the backbone of a particular form of therapy. All the major forms of psychotherapy have their own theories of personality on which the practice of therapy is founded. The theory of personality shows how a particular approach sees the growth of a person, the influence environment and other factors have on the development of a person, how psychological problems arise and how they can be solved.

In the Rogerian approach, every felt experience is a reality. The child's experience is reality for him. It is his reality and has relevance and meaning for him. Even as a child an organism has potency for awareness. He has in himself a tendency to actualize his organism. He interacts with reality in terms of his actualizing tendency and tends to behave as an organized whole – gestalt. He has the capacity to engage in an organic valuing process. Whatever experiences are perceived as maximising or enhancing the organism are valued positively, and threatening experiences valued negatively. The organism moves towards positive experiences and avoids negative experiences.[278]

The infant has a tendency towards differentiation as part of its actualizing tendency. His experiences become more and more differentiated and symbolized and he develops awareness of his functioning. This is called self-experience. Through the interactions with the environment, through others, especially the significant others, the concept of self is further developed. As his awareness of self increases, there is also a need for positive regard. Rogers claims it is a universal need and present in every human being. Rogers believes that the satisfaction of the need for positive regard is reciprocal. In satisfying the

[276] Cf. Godfrey T. BARRETT-LENNARD, *Enquiring into Human Relationship in Therapy and Life Systems, 1956-2010: Searching Journey and New Understanding*, in PCEP, Vol.10, No.1, March 2011, pp. 43-56.
[277] Cf. Renate MOTSCHNIG-PITRIK / Godfrey BARRETT-LENNARD, *Co-Actualization: A New Construct in Understanding Well-Functioning Relationships*, in *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 50.3, 2010, pp. 374-398.
[278] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 222.

needs of the other for positive regard, one satisfies one's own need for it.[279] Sometimes it can happen that the positive regard of significant others can be more compelling than that of the organismic valuing process of the individual, then the individual becomes adient[280] to the positive regard of the significant other.[281]

4.2.2.1 Self-Concept

As the child grows, he develops a picture of himself based on his experiences. The child experiences himself as someone different and special. The child develops a picture of himself as distinct from others. This picture is called self-concept. Sanders tries to define it: "This differentiated portion of experiences comes into awareness as the self. The infant then builds up a picture of herself as she experiences the world, particularly as a result of being with others and being evaluated by others. This picture is the self-concept."[282]

4.2.2.1.1 Introjected Values

As the infant/child grows, it looks for positive regard from others. Rogers says it is a universal need in the individual and it is 'pervasive and persistent'.[283] The positive regard from the other is so important and potent because it enhances self-actualization and it is crucial in determining his behaviour. At this stage of growth he often takes evaluation from the other for granted. Those evaluations from others taken into self-concept as they are, are called 'introjected values.'[284] Introjected values are, thus, values and evaluations that are originated outside of his organismic valuing process, but incorporated into his self-concept: "When the infant accepts or avoids a self-experience as a result of positive regard from another, the infant has developed a 'condition of worth'."[285]

Rogers says if the child experiences unconditional positive regard from significant others, then he would not develop conditions of worth.[286] As we have seen, the child has in himself the tendency to actualize, to maintain himself, and to enhance himself. But because of the introjected values the child may actualize in a different direction than that of the organism. That creates disharmony between the self and the organism.[287]

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[279] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 223.
[280] Adience in Psychology means the urge to accept or to approach.
[281] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 224.
[282] SANDERS, *Introduction to the Theory of Person-Centred Therapy*, p. 11.
[283] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 223.
[284] Cf. SANDERS, *Introduction to the Theory of Person-Centred Therapy*, p.11.
[285] Ibid.
[286] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 224.
[287] Cf. SANDERS, *Introduction to the Theory of Person-Centred Therapy*, p.11.

This disharmony causes incongruence and consequent psychological tension in the individual. When the experience of the individual fits in with his self-concept, he experiences harmony. When the self-concept contains introjected material the individual is likely to have experience which does not fit in his self-structure and that leads to psychological tension. The more the disharmony the individual experiences, the greater the incongruence, psychological maladjustment and vulnerability.[288]

The behaviour of the individual could be basically of two sorts – the behaviour could be consistent with the self-concept. In this case the person is aware of this behaviour and owns it up. On the other hand, the behaviour of the individual could be consistent with the rest of the organism, in which case the behaviour is not consistent with the self-concept and the individual may not own up his behaviour, and this can lead to incongruence in the person. Sometimes the experiences can also be distorted to 'fit in' the self-concept without threat.[289]

4.2.2.1.2 Rigid Self-Concept Causes Distress

What is the self-concept of a fully-functioning person like? In a fully-functioning person, the self-concept is changing, flexible, and open to new ideas. Such a person is open and collects more ideas about 'me' and 'I'. When the person possesses a rigid self-concept and is not open to new ideas, he is unable to incorporate new experiences in life, and as a result perceives experiences as threatening. He is more dependent on his past experiences and denies more current experiences. He is constantly in a process of defence, and as a result psychological tension builds up. Sooner or later, the person experiences anxiety, depression, confusion or pain. Such a person seeks help. In the process of therapy the individual learns to integrate his experiences into his self-concept. Thereby he learns to eliminate threats to his self-concept. Newer experiences are welcomed and a process of integration takes place.[290]

4.2.2.2 Need for Self-Regard

An infant needs love because love is satisfying. The infant learns from his mother, from her communication and gestures whether he is getting love or not. He tends to see himself in terms of the behaviour of his mother. Maternal love is the guiding force at this stage. He tends to see some behaviour as positive even if it is not organismically satisfying, and

[288] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 226.
[289] Cf. SANDERS, *Introduction to the Theory of Person-Centred Therapy*, p. 11.
[290] Cf. Ibid., p.12.

some as negative even if they are organismically experienced as positive. At this stage he is said to have acquired conditions of worth because he cannot see himself as positive or having worth unless he sees himself in terms of these conditions. His behaviour is now guided by introjected conditions or introjected values.[291]

This course of growth need not be the necessary course. The child can also be accepted for what he feels and for his behaviour. In which case, the conditions of worth will not develop. If the child retains his own organismic evaluation of experiences, his life becomes a balancing of his own satisfaction and that of his mother.[292]

As seen above, when the self-experiences of the individual are discriminated by significant others as less worthy of positive regard, he experiences conditions of worth. It is because his experience is not valued for being what it is. When the self-regard he experiences is conditional, it is called conditional positive regard. To be fully functioning he has to experience again unconditional positive regard, get rid of conditions of worth, and the need for self-regard and positive regard should be in tune with the organismic evaluation. This can help the individual to be psychologically adjusted and fully functioning.[293]

4.2.2.3 Discrepancy in Behaviour

How does incongruence develop in the child? As we have seen, he has a need for self-regard. Because of the conditions of worth, he perceives experiences selectively. Experiences in line with conditions of worth are symbolized[294] in awareness, and experiences contrary to conditions of worth are distorted or denied. As a result, some experiences in the organism are not recognized as self-experience and not accurately symbolized and not organized into self-structure in an accurately symbolized form. Thus the selective perception in terms of conditions of worth and the incongruence between self and experience cause psychological maladjustment.[295] Some behaviour maintains and actualizes those aspects which are not assimilated into the self-structure. They are either unrecognized or distorted so as to be congruent with the self.[296]

[291] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 225.
[292] Cf. Ibid.
[293] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 224.
[294] 'Symbolization' in Rogers means to become aware of something, to own it up, to express it, etc.
[295] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 226.
[296] Cf. Ibid., p. 227.

4.2.2.4 Threat and Defence

When the organism continues to have experiences contrary to the self-structure, it is perceived as a threat and creates anxiety in the organism. The organism develops defences to counter this threat and anxiety. Defence consists in selective perception or distortion of experience and thereby trying to keep experiences in line with the self-structure. Classical defence mechanisms include rationalisation, compensation, fantasy, projection, compulsion, phobias, etc. The consequences of this process of defence are preservation of inconsistencies, rigidity of perception and inaccurate perception of reality. When it persists for a while in the individual it gives way to neurotic behaviour and experience of distress in the individual.[297]

4.2.2.5 Breakdown and Disorganisation

When the degree of incongruence reaches a high level and the defence system is unable to cope, and if this experience is accurately symbolised in awareness of the organism, then the organism becomes aware of the incongruence. He seeks help. As a result, a state of disorganisation follows.[298] To quote Rogers: "In the freedom of therapy, as the individual expresses more and more of himself, he finds himself on the verge of voicing a feeling which is obviously and undeniably true, but which is flatly contradictory to the conception of himself which he has held."[299]

This process of disorganization has to be handled by the therapist in such a gentle manner that the client is in a position to deal with it. Overstraining the client can have negative repercussions: "But if, through overzealous and effective interpretation by the therapist, or through some other means, the individual is brought face to face with more of his denied experiences than he can handle, disorganization ensues and a psychotic break occurs… We have known this to happen when an individual has sought "therapy" from several different sources simultaneously."[300]

4.2.2.6 Process of Reintegration

When the individual has experienced incongruence and breakdown, it does not mean that everything is lost. It is possible for the individual to have a process of reintegration. This is a process which moves in the direction of increased congruence between self and

[297] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, pp. 227-228.
[298] Cf. Ibid., p. 229.
[299] Ibid.
[300] Ibid.

experience. Rogers postulates conditions which are necessary for this process: decrease in the conditions of worth, increase in unconditional self-regard and unconditional positive regard communicated by significant others. The communication of unconditional positive regard by a significant other takes place in the context of empathic understanding. The experience of unconditional positive regard dissolves or weakens the conditions of worth and causes an increase in the unconditional positive self-regard. When this happens the threat is removed, the process of defence is reversed and there is accurate symbolization and integration of experiences into self-concept.[301] Carl Rogers summarises it as follows:

> The consequences (…) are that the individual is less likely to encounter threatening experiences; the process of defense is less frequent and its consequences reduced; self and experience are more congruent; self-regard is increased; positive regard for others is increased; psychological adjustment is increased; the organismic valuing process becomes increasingly the basis of regulating behavior; the individual becomes nearly fully functioning.[302]

Rogers admits that there isn't much difference between his theory of personality and his theory of therapy. He also believes that provided the conditions (as postulated by him) exist, constructive personality changes can take place in any relationship characterised by empathy and understanding:

> It is intended to emphasize the fact that the reintegration or restoration of personality occurs always and only (at least so we are hypothesizing) in the presence of certain definable conditions. These are essentially the same whether we are speaking of formal psychotherapy continued over a considerable period, in which rather drastic personality changes may occur, or whether we are speaking of the minor constructive changes which may be brought about by contact with an understanding friend or family member… Empathic understanding is always necessary if unconditional positive regard is to be fully communicated.[303]

4.2.3 Person-Centred Therapeutic Relationship

In the following pages we make an attempt to make ourselves familiar with the therapeutic relationship in PCA. The therapeutic relationship is central to change of personality in the PCA. PCA believes that the relationship between the therapist and the client plays a

[301] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, pp. 230-231.
[302] Ibid., p. 231.
[303] Ibid. It is important to note here that at this stage of development of PCT, Rogers speaks very little about the third condition, i.e. congruence.

crucial role in bringing about a change in the client. In this part we are going to focus on what conditions are necessary for such a relationship to take place, what factors facilitate this relationship, and what are the consequences of such a relationship, etc.

4.2.3.1 Conditions of Therapeutic Relationship

The basic hypothesis in person-centred approach (PCA) is that if the therapist can provide the climate, then the self-actualizing tendency will take over and begin to develop. What sort of climate is required for that? In which climate can the client search within himself and find insights to bring about a constructive change in his life? The distressed individual needs a condition-free (unconditional), empathic relationship with an authentic person for the development of his personality and his actualization.

It is sometimes intriguing to note that in the later years of his work Rogers mainly wrote and spoke about three basic conditions. For example, in 1981, Rogers spoke of three basic conditions which facilitate this process of self-actualization in the client. These conditions are essential. They are empathy, unconditional positive regard (UPR) and congruence.[304]

In 1957, Carl Rogers proposed six conditions that were necessary and sufficient for therapeutic change to occur.[305] He claimed no other conditions as necessary. In 1959, he reiterated but slightly modified them. These conditions are generally accepted in the person-centred approach as the necessary and sufficient conditions of therapeutic relationship. They are:

For therapy to occur it is necessary that these conditions exist.

1. That two persons are in *contact.*
2. That the first person, whom we shall term the client, is in a state of *incongruence*, being *vulnerable* or *anxious*.
3. That the second person, whom we shall term the therapist, is *congruent in the relationship*.
4. That the therapist is *experiencing unconditional positive regard* toward the client.
5. That the therapist is *experiencing* an *empathic* understanding of the client's *internal frame of reference.*
6. That the client perceives, at least to a minimal degree, conditions 4 and 5, the *unconditional positive regard* of the therapist for him, and the *empathic* understanding of the therapist.[306]

[304] Cf. ROGERS, *The Basic Conditions* in *The Handbook of PCPC*, pp. 2-4.
[305] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change* in *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, Vol. 21. 2, 1957, (95-103), p. 96.
[306] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 213. Emphasis as in the original.

Therapeutic relationship is experienced differently by the clients. Rogers argues that it is neither necessary nor helpful to manipulate this relationship in specific ways for different clients. Such manipulations go against the genuineness of the relationship.[307]

Rogers claims the 'growing edge' of his theory lies in congruence or genuineness. Congruence means that he is authentic in his relationship with the client: "This means that the therapist's symbolization of his own experience in the relationship must be accurate, if therapy is to be most effective. Thus if he is experiencing threat and discomfort in the relationship, and is aware only of an acceptance and understanding, then he is not congruent in the relationship, and therapy will suffer. It seems important that he should accurately 'be himself' in the relationship, whatever the self of that moment may be."[308]

Should the therapist communicate everything he feels to the client? The therapist sometimes experiences fear, feelings of threat, insecurity, attraction to the client, etc. Does being genuine mean that the therapist should also communicate the negative feelings to the client? Rogers admits that it is difficult to express some feelings to the client. But the therapist must at least be aware of what is going on in himself and how he feels.[309] At the same time, to be overcome by feelings that make one unable to express UPR and empathy to the client is also detrimental to therapy.

For the therapy to be effective, wholeness of the therapist in relationship is necessary. "For therapy to occur the wholeness of the therapist in the relationship is primary, but a part of the congruence of the therapist must be the experience of unconditional positive regard and the experience of empathic understanding."[310] Humanly speaking, it is not possible to be congruent all the time. But the therapist must at least be congruent in the relationship with the client. Rogers understands this situation, "But it is enough if in this particular moment of this immediate relationship with this specific person he is completely and fully himself, with his experience of the moment being accurately symbolized and integrated into the picture he holds of himself. Thus it is that imperfect human beings can be of therapeutic assistance to other imperfect human beings."[311] Have these conditions which Rogers proposes as necessary been sufficiently proved? Rogers claims that studies

[307] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy,* 1959, p. 214.
[308] Ibid.
[309] Cf. Ibid., p. 214.
[310] Ibid., p. 215.
[311] Ibid.

done by Fiedler, Quinn, Seeman, Lipkin and others have reaffirmed the effectiveness of his conditions.[312]

4.2.3.1.1. Psychological Contact

A therapist, in order to help the client, has to be in contact with him. It is one of the six necessary and sufficient conditions of which Rogers speaks. It is the first condition. In 1957,[313] Rogers spoke of psychological contact, and in 1959 he modified it as contact.[314] Both these terms – psychological contact and contact – are interchangeably used in person-centred approach. What is meant by contact in person-centred approach? Rogers says in his 1959 article why he opted to use the term contact and not relationship:

> Two persons are in psychological contact, or have the minimum essentials of a relationship, when each makes a perceived or subceived difference in the experiential field of the other. This construct was first given the label of "relationship" but it was found that this led to much misunderstanding, for it was often understood to represent the depth and quality of a good relationship, or a therapeutic relationship. The present term has been chosen to signify more clearly that this is the least or minimum experience which could be called a relationship. If more than this simple contact between two persons is intended, the additional characteristics of that contact are specified in the theory.[315]

4.2.3.1.1.1 Minimum Essential Relationship

Contact, as meant by Rogers above, is a 'minimum essential relationship' where each person takes cognizance of the other and makes a difference to him. It involves two people making some difference to each other, even if they are unaware of it. Contact is the basic or primary relationship between the client and the therapist and the starting point of the therapeutic relationship. It does not form part of the three core conditions, but is an implied condition.[316]

Paul Wilkins argues that contact is important because it is the first stage of entering into a relationship. It helps the therapist to perceive himself and to acknowledge the other. How one enters into contact may vary from person to person and from situation to situation. Our posture, appearance, facial expression, tone of voice and the general atmosphere may

[312] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 215.
[313] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change* in *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, Vol. 21. 2, 1951, pp. 95-103.
[314] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 213.
[315] Ibid., p. 207.
[316] Cf. Will GYATT, *Psychological Contact*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, (140-152), p. 141.

contribute to establishing contact. An important element in all these is congruence. The therapist has to be congruent and genuine.[317]

It also means some awareness of the context in which the encounter takes place. Contact also means awareness of each other, of the place and things and the ability to communicate this awareness in an understandable way.[318] In establishing contact, one has to be genuine. "Contact is best assured by being true to one's nature."[319]

The second necessary and sufficient condition states that the client is in a state of distress or incongruence. Otherwise he does not approach a therapist. If so, is he capable of contact? Can contact be established with a person in distress? What should the therapist do? The therapist pays attention to the client, shows him empathy and sometimes communicates to the client the presence of hindering factors.[320]

4.2.3.1.1.2 Contact and Pre-Therapy

In the 1990s, Garry Prouty developed the concept of contact further for giving concrete shape to his 'pre-therapy' especially in his therapy with clients with schizophrenic tendencies who were not capable of normal contact.[321] The purpose of contact or pre-therapy is to help the client to feel welcomed, to have contact with oneself and to be expressive: "In essence, the objective of pre-therapy is to encourage clients towards contact with self, the world and others."[322] Pre-therapy is widely used in PCA today, especially with patients who have difficulties with normal contact, for example, who suffer from autism.[323]

In the pre-therapy school, as understood and seen by Garry Prouty, empathy and empathic contact play a crucial role. In working with clients who are contact-impaired, pre-therapy helps the therapist to 'feel into' the clients who are contact-impaired, retarded, brain-damaged, schizophrenic, and the like.[324] Contact could also be understood as a container

[317] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, p. 203.
[318] Cf. GYATT, *Psychological Contact*, p.142.
[319] WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, p. 204.
[320] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, pp. 206-208.
[321] Cf. Garry F. PROUTY, *The Practice of Pre-Therapy*, in *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, Vol. 31.1, 2001, pp. 31-40.
[322] WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, p. 210.
[323] Cf. Corna CARRICK / Sheila McKENZIE, *A Heuristic Examination of the Application of Pre-Therapy Skills and the Person-Centred Approach in the Field of Autism* in PCEP, Vol. 10.2, June 2011, pp. 73-88.
[324] Cf. Elizabeth S. FREIRE, *Empathy* in *The Handbook of PCPC*, (194-206), p. 203.

for the therapist's empathy and UPR. Seen from a relational point of view, we could say that contact has to be mutual.[325]

4.2.3.1.1.3 Hindrances to Contact

Both the client and the therapist can experience factors that hinder the capacity for contact. Some of them are incongruence, anxiety, anger, fear, alcohol, drugs and exhaustion.[326] Will Gyatt says there can also be other hindrances that turn the client away. They include cross-cultural divide, homophobia, racism, sexism, etc. In order to get over the hindrances, one has to drop all assumptions and expectations for the client. The therapist has to be receptive, sensitive and slowly allow the client to unravel his story. The quality of contact can be electric, intense, vital or transformative. The therapist has an obligation to develop his capacity for contact and to get over hindrances. Empathic understanding and responding are a great help in establishing contact. The present-day world calls for extended contact, taking into account inter-subjectivity and interconnectedness.[327]

Diversity can also be a hindrance to psychological contact. Something strange or foreign causes dislike or aversion in human beings. When a therapist is not able to accept diversity, he is indirectly allowing inequality and perpetuating the structures of power.[328] Len T. Holdstock is of the opinion that in order to survive and to be effective in the world, which is ever more globalized and multi-cultural, we need a paradigm shift in PCA to include diverse concepts of self that transcends cultural boundaries.[329]

4.2.3.1.2 Client Incongruence

A client comes for therapy because he experiences incongruence. It is a source of mental and emotional distress in a person. Rogers sees the incongruence in the client as the second necessary and sufficient condition. The second condition states in the original: "That the first person, whom we shall term the client, is in a state of *incongruence*, being *vulnerable* or *anxious*."[330] When a person is well and fully functioning, he does not require therapy. Classical person-centred approach sees incongruence as the central cause of mental distress. It reduces the person's ability to reach his vital goals. Person-centred approach

[325] Cf. GYATT, *Psychological Contact*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, (140-153), p. 147.
[326] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, pp. 205-206.
[327] Cf. GYATT, *Psychological Contact*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, pp.149-151.
[328] Cf. Gillian PROCTOR, *Diversity: The Depoliticization of Inequalities*, in PCEP, Vol.10. 4, 2011, pp. 231-234. [This whole issue – Vol.10, No. 4 - of PCEP deals with this topic and has many articles on diversity].
[329] Len T. HOLDSTOCK, *Towards a Paradigm Shift in the Person-Centered Approach*, in PCEP, Vol.10, No. 4, 2011, pp. 286-298.
[330] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 213.

uses the term 'distress' to refer to mental imbalance, personality disorder or any form of psychological sickness and generally hesitates to use terms like mental illness, madness, etc. It stands in a broader sense for any psychological maladjustment of the client.

4.2.3.1.2.1 Incongruence Leads to Dysfunctionality

Person-centred approach sees incongruence as the cause of dysfunctionality. This happens in most cases when the person has a rigid self-concept and is frightened and defensive. Such a person fails to revise his self-concepts, depends purely on the old constructs and fails to listen to himself. He fails to open himself to corrective information. Lack of self-acceptance and self-trust also contribute to dysfunctionality. However, the biggest obstacle is defensiveness. It blocks the organism from adopting an open information processing stance where the person can freely consider information and integrate it. The actualizing process is an organismic process to cope with life's stresses and promotes growth and adaptation. A fully functioning person lets the actualizing process to operate most effectively.[331]

4.2.3.1.2.2 Causes of Distress

Incongruence is caused in organisms by denying experiences or when experiences are distorted or inaccurately symbolized to fit into the wrong self-concept. In his book *Client-Centered Therapy*, 1951, Rogers dealt with at some length maladjustment and consequent distress.[332] Rogers explains it in detail in his 1959 theory of personality:

> The Development of Incongruence between Self and Experience: 1. Because of the need for self-regard, the individual perceives his experience selectively, in terms of the conditions of worth which have come to exist in him. a. Experiences which are in accord with his conditions of worth are perceived and symbolized accurately in awareness. b. Experiences which run contrary to the conditions of worth are perceived selectively and distortedly as if in accord with the conditions of worth, or are in part or whole, denied to awareness. 2. Consequently some experiences now occur in the organism which are not recognized as self-experiences, are not accurately symbolized, and are not organized into the self-structure in accurately symbolized form. 3. Thus from the time of the first selective perception in terms of conditions of worth, the states of incongruence between self and experience, of psychological maladjustment and of vulnerability, exist to some degree.[333]

Wilkins claims that the main reason for incongruence in the classic person-centred approach is the self-concept of the individual which is out of touch with the organism.

[331] Cf. BOHART, *The Actualizing Person*, p. 56.
[332] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *Client-Centered Therapy*, London: Constable, 1951, (2003 ed.), pp. 507-512.
[333] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 226.

Incongruence can result from genetic or biological causes or life events - abuse in early life, trauma, life events, etc.[334]

Gert-Walter Speierer has a slightly different opinion of the classical theory. He believes that client-centred therapy is mainly the treatment of incongruence caused by the acquisition of conditions of worth, bio-neuropsychological limitations and life-changing events of intensity. Classical person-centred followers do not believe that bio-neuropsychological limitation is one of the causes of incongruence.[335]

The classical person-centred approach sees basically only one cause for psychological distress, namely, incongruence: "In précis, distress is caused by incongruence in the total personality between the self-structure (largely the self-image or the self as perceived,…) and the lived out experience of the person."[336] Each person is unique and, therefore, it is difficult to predict the causes of distress in individual cases. Therefore, conventional methods of diagnosis and medical methods are not useful. Therefore, to professionals who are purely dependent on diagnosis and sophisticated medical methods the person-centred approach seems simplistic and naïve.[337]

Many person-centred therapists today believe that psychological distress has more environmental and social causes than biological causes. Many of them have to do with power and powerlessness. Most of the causes of distress cannot be treated with medicine or physical means. They can be helped through therapy. Person-centred therapists argue that in working with individuals with mental and emotional distress, the clients have to be taken and understood in their context. They cannot be divorced from their social and political milieu.[338]

The client's style of processing may contribute to emotional and mental distress. M. S. Warner has identified three kinds of difficult processing. She says clients with these types of processing are more likely to experience distress: *Fragile process:* Those who have this style of functioning process core issues at very high or very low levels of intensity. *Dissociated process:* They experience themselves often as having multiple selves that are

[334] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, p. 111.
[335] Cf. Ibid., pp.111-112.
[336] SANDERS, *Introduction to the Theory of Person-Centred Therapy*, p. 10.
[337] Cf. Ibid.
[338] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, pp.115-116.

not integrated with one another. *Psychotic process:* They have impaired contact with themselves, others and the world.[339]

4.2.3.1.3 Empathy

The following conditions of person-centred therapy (PCT) – empathy, unconditional positive regard (UPR) and congruence – are generally referred to as the three basic conditions of PCT. They are also sometimes called the three pillars of PCT.

Many present-day person-centred experts consider that although the three core conditions of Rogers – UPR, empathy and congruence – are separate variables, their interrelationship is so intimate and close and, therefore, they can be functionally said to be one condition.[340]

4.2.3.1.3.1 The Concept of Empathy

Generally speaking, empathy is the ability to understand another person's feeling, experience, etc.[341] In psychotherapy, however, it has a much deeper meaning. Empathy is a core concept in the person-centred approach. Empathy was part of the therapeutic approach of Carl Rogers much before UPR and congruence. In his early years of practice, Rogers discovered that empathy was a very effective tool.[342]

In the early stages of the development of his therapy Rogers found that the therapeutic relationship is more effective when the therapist tries to understand the client as he sees himself. As early as 1942, Rogers emphasized the counselling relationship as one based on empathy and warmth. Here although Rogers does not directly mention empathy, he emphasizes warmth, acceptance and freedom.[343]

We see a gradual development in the thinking of Carl Rogers regarding empathy. In 1951, Rogers said that empathy involved the counsellor's capacity to understand and assume the internal frame of reference of the client. "At the present stage of thinking in client-centred therapy… that it is the counselor's function to assume, insofar as he is able, the internal frame of reference of the client, to perceive the client as seen by himself, to lay aside all

[339] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, p. 113.
[340] Cf. FREIRE, *Empathy* in *The Handbook of PCPC,* (194-206), p.197.
[341] See Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 7th Edition.
[342] Cf. FREIRE, *Empathy*, p. 194.
[343] Cf. ROGERS, *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, pp. 113-114.

perceptions from the external frame of reference while doing so, and to communicate something of this empathic understanding to the client."[344]

Later in 1959, Rogers stated that empathy provided effectiveness to the therapeutic relationship. He emphasized the 'as if' quality of empathy. According to him, it is the empathy in therapeutic relationship that makes this relationship effective and which helps the therapist to understand the client as he sees himself, without losing his own identity. It may sound strange because most schools of psychotherapy use some form of diagnosis, and to see the client as he sees himself is fallacy, because the client is 'sick' and needs help and is not reliable. To see the client as he sees himself, to see and understand him from his internal frame of reference - that is what makes person-centred therapy something special. In 1959 Rogers wrote:

> The state of empathy, or being empathic, is to perceive the internal frame of reference of another with accuracy, and with the emotional components and meanings which pertain thereto, as if one were the other person, but without ever losing the " as if " condition. Thus it means to sense the hurt or the pleasure of another as he senses it, and to perceive the causes thereof as he perceives them, but without ever losing the recognition that it is as if I were hurt or pleased, etc. If this "as if" quality is lost, then the state is one of identification.[345]

Empathy is a particular type of understanding that comes from the internal frame of reference of the client. Empathy shows a deep respect for the individual. It is deeply connected with the concept of actualizing tendency and relies on the capacity of the individual to actualize.[346]

Rogers' concept of empathy led to a lot of research on empathy in the 1960s and '70s. Empathy became part of every therapy form. There were attempts to give skills training to develop empathy. In 1980, in his book *A Way of Being*, Rogers further defined his idea of empathy. This time he adopted a more holistic approach to empathy.[347] His description of empathy and its effects are clearly and plainly presented and one does not need any explanation:

> An empathic way of being with another person has several facets. It means entering the private perceptual world of the other and becoming thoroughly at home in it. It involves being sensitive, moment by moment, to the

[344] ROGERS, *Client-Centered Therapy*, p. 29.
[345] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, pp. 110-111.
[346] Cf. FREIRE, *Empathy*, pp. 194-195.
[347] Cf. Ibid., p. 195.

> changing felt meanings which flow in this other person, to the fear or rage or tenderness or confusion or whatever that he or she is experiencing. It means temporarily living in the other's life, moving about in it delicately without making judgments; it means sensing meanings of which he or she is scarcely aware, but not trying to uncover totally unconscious feelings, since this would be too threatening. It includes communicating your sensings of the person's world as you look with fresh and unfrightended eyes at elements of which he or she is fearful. It means frequently checking with the person as to the accuracy of your sensings, and being guided by the responses you receive. You are a confident companion to the person in his or her inner world. By pointing to the possible meanings in the flow of another person's experiencing, you help the other to focus on this useful type of referent, to experience the meanings more fully, and to move forward in the experiencing. To be with another person means that for the time being you lay aside your own views and values in order to enter another's world without prejudice. In some sense it means that you lay aside yourself; this can only be done by persons who are secure enough in themselves that they know they will not get lost in what may turn out to be the strange or bizarre world of the other, and that they can comfortably return to their own world when they wish. *Perhaps this description makes clear that being empathic is a complex, demanding, and strong – yet also a subtle and gentle way of being.*[348]

Recently scholars like Peter F. Schmid in the field of person-centred approach influenced by philosophers like Buber and Levinas have tried to give philosophical meaning to it which confirms the presence of the 'other'. Empathy also emphasises the mystery dimension of the other person. "Empathy is the art of not-knowing. It is the art of being curious, being open to being surprised, being kept awake by an enigma."[349] It helps to see the client as 'an Other'. Bozarth believes empathy is a manifestation and channel of UPR.[350]

4.2.3.1.3.2 Empathic Listening and Reflection of Feelings

Listening is one of the key elements of counselling and psychotherapy. It is the heart of any form of therapy. Listening as a means of catharsis is used in almost all forms of psychotherapy. Listening is also one of the concrete means used by person-centred therapists to show empathy and acceptance to the client. In fact, PCA has often been criticised for the 'over-emphasis' it lays on listening and reflecting the feelings of the client.

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[348] ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, pp. 142-143. Italics mine.

[349] Peter F. SCHMID, *Comprehension: the art of not knowing. Dialogical and ethical perspectives on empathy as dialogue in personal and person-centred relationships* in *Rogers' Therapeutic Conditions: Evolution, Theory and Practice*. Vol. 2. *Empathy* Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books, (53-71), p. 61.

[350] Cf. FREIRE, *Empathy*, pp.196-197.

We live in a world full of noises. We hear a lot, but how often do we listen - to persons, emotions and feelings? Listening is one of the greatest tools of healing. From our day-to-day living, we know how listening can reduce tension, ease an atmosphere of stress, establish a relationship and bring human beings together. To be listened to is to belong to. Listening is one of the major tools in the person-centred approach. Person-centred listening is a keen, empathic and non-judgemental listening. Rogers himself was a great empathic listener. His students and colleagues marvelled at his capacity for listening. For Rogers, empathy and listening are two sides of the same coin. Carl Rogers says being empathic (an empathic listener) is one of the most delicate and powerful ways of using ourselves.[351]

In person-centred counselling, the therapist listens not only to the content of what the client says, but also to the emotions and feelings. The therapist listens to the client with empathy, moves with him moment-to-moment and is involved actively in the whole process. As response, the therapist 'reflects back' to the client what he has said and reassures the client that the therapist is with him, has understood him fully – not only what he has verbally expressed - but his feelings, emotions and the relevance it has for him. A person-centred therapist tries to see the meaning the client has from what he has said, without interpreting or judging. [352]

Since Rogers defines empathy as a process, not a state, empathic listening means, being in a process. Rogers' listening is much more than just giving attention to what the client says. It means moving with the client – it is an empathic, moment-to-moment movement with the client, entering into his private world and at home with it without judging or moralising. It means being a confident companion to him and temporarily living with him. This requires shedding our personal views, values and prejudices.[353]

Empathic listening has great consequences for the client. Speaking on the effects of empathy and empathic listening, Rogers says:

> We can say that when a person finds himself sensitively and accurately understood, he develops a set of growth-promoting or therapeutic attitudes to himself…The non-evaluative and acceptant quality of the empathic climate enables him, as we have seen, to take a prizing, caring attitude towards himself…Being listened to by an understanding person makes it possible for him to listen more accurately to himself, with greater empathy toward his

[351] Cf. Carl R. ROGERS, *Empathic: An Unappreciated Way of Being*, in *The Counseling Psychologist*, 1975, Vol. 5, pp. 2-10.
[352] Cf. ROGERS, *Empathic: An Unappreciated Way of Being*, p. 2.
[353] Cf. ROGERS, *Empathic: An Unappreciated Way of Being*, p. 3.

> own visceral experiencing, his own vaguely felt meanings. But his greater understanding of, and prizing of, himself opens up to him new facets of experience which become part of a more accurately based self… So we are perhaps not overstating the total picture if we say that an empathic understanding by another has enabled the person to become a more effective growth enhancer, a more effective therapist, for himself.[354]

Rogers means that this kind of listening can be applied in any context of human relationship, be it family, education, church or group facilitation: "Whether we are functioning as therapists, as encounter group facilitators, as teachers or as parents, we have in our hands, if we are able to take an empathic stance, a powerful force for change and growth. Its strength needs to be appreciated."[355]

Billy Lee and Seamus Prior have stated that therapeutic reflexivity has four major sub-themes. They are: learning to hear the self, listening as relationship, revelations of otherness and 'thereness' (in terms of PCA, 'presence'). Listening has a lot to do with 'undoing' than 'doing' – undoing one's expectations, prejudices, learnt ways.[356]

Humanistically-oriented listening, influenced by phenomenology, tries to enquire into things themselves, by removing the biases that normally accompany our perception. The humanistic psychologist tries to understand the client in his own terms, unlike the psychoanalysts who try to delve into his unconscious with a 'third eye'.[357] In the opinion of Rogers, empathic listening is a gift that one can render to the other: "The gentle and sensitive companionship of empathic stance (...) provides illumination and healing. In such situations deep understanding is, I believe, the most precious gift one can give to another."[358]

PCT uses different listening skills that help the client to say more, open up more, to let out pent-up emotions, etc. Empathic skills and methods allow the therapist, when the client works through a problem, to remain unobtrusive, thereby allowing the client to have a dialogue with the self. Classical continuers like *mm*'s, *mh* and *hh*'s and the variation of tone of the therapist can play a great role and can be of immense help to the client. They

[354] ROGERS, *Empathic: An Unappreciated Way of Being*, p. 10.
[355] Ibid.
[356] Cf. Billy LEE / Seamus PRIOR, *Developing Therapeutic Listening*, in *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 2013, Vol. 41, No. 2, pp. 91-104.
[357] Cf. LEE / PRIOR, *Developing Therapeutic Listening*, p. 92.
[358] ROGERS, *Empathic: An Unappreciated Way of Being*, p. 10.

help the client to remain on the topic and to stay focused.[359] Listening, reflecting and summarising as used in PCT is a way of checking for accuracy of the therapist's understanding, correcting - if he has understood it wrongly - and caring for the client. It is an important way of fulfilling the conditions, especially empathy.

Listening is a difficult exercise. One of the most difficult things for the therapist is the tendency to evaluate and judge, which PCA strongly deprecates. Carl Rogers advocated listening with understanding and with empathy. Rogers claims listening with understanding is the most effective agent for change at the personal level and improving relationships and communication with others:

> This tendency to react to any emotionally meaningful statement by forming an evaluation of it from our own point of view is, I repeat, the major barrier to interpersonal communication… Real communication occurs, and this evaluative tendency is avoided, when we listen with understanding. What does this mean? It means to see the expressed idea and attitude from the other person's point of view, to sense how it feels to him, to achieve his frame of reference in regard to the thing he is talking about.[360]

Listening reduces psychological distress. Many professions like nursing and social work train their personnel in the art of listening which can in turn be extremely beneficial to the patients.[361]

4.2.3.1.3.3 Empathy as a Process

Rogers believes empathy is a process rather than a state. It means entering the private perceptual world of the client. It also means being at home with the client, being with him from moment to moment, understanding him and feeling what he feels and as he feels. It is being temporarily in the world of the client and accompanying him from moment to moment. It means becoming a 'confident companion' to the person in his inner world. Empathy presupposes that the therapist enters the client's world free of all prejudices against him. This can be done by a person who feels secure within himself and who will not get lost in the world of the other and who can comfortably return to his own world at any time he wishes. Needless to say, being empathic is not an easy task.[362]

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[359] Cf. Pamela FITZGERALD / Ivan LEUDAR, *On Active Listening in Person-Centred, Solution-Focused Psychotherapy*, in *Journal of Pragmatics*, 2010, Vol. 42, pp. 3188-3198.
[360] ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person*, pp. 331-332.
[361] Cf. Alun Charles JONES, John R. CUTCLIFFE, *Listening as a Method of Addressing Psychological Distress*, in *Journal of Nursing Management*, April 2009, Vol. 17.3, pp. 352-358.
[362] Cf. ROGERS, *The Basic Conditions*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, pp. 2-3.

The person-centred approach lays emphasis on the present. It presupposes a gentle way of being. Empathy involves understanding what the client is saying and experiencing and the relevance it has for him right now:

> This description makes clear that being empathic is a complex, demanding and gentle way of being. Teaching this kind of therapy is by trying to teach people what it means to be empathic in that sense, to be non-judgemental and yet to very subtly understand all that is available in the consciousness of this other person, and perhaps just a little bit below the layer of consciousness. In being empathic, the therapist is not trying to go back into the past, is not trying to leap ahead into the future; it's trying to catch the meaning that is real to the client at that moment. What the client is talking about might have reference to the past or reference to the future, but the meaning he is talking about is an immediate meaning, is that meaning we would like to be sensitive to, enter into and be companion to.[363]

Many later authors and practitioners of the person-centred approach have also tried to see empathy as a process. Empathy is not a single response, nor is it a series of responses. It is being with the client throughout.[364] Mearns and Thorne define empathy thus: "Empathy is a continuing process whereby the counsellor lays aside her own way of experiencing and perceiving reality, preferring to sense and respond to the experiences and perceptions of her client. This sensing may be intense and enduring with the counsellor actually experiencing the client's thoughts and feelings as powerfully as if they had originated in herself."[365]

4.2.3.1.3.4 Effects of Empathy

Rogers considers empathy as a healing agent in therapy and as one of the most potent aspects of his person-centred therapy. Empathy makes the client feel at home with the therapist. It breaks the barriers and builds bridges: "It releases, it confirms, it brings even the most frightened client into the human race. If a person is understood, he or she belongs."[366]

Being understood helps one to have a sense of belonging. One gets a sense of belonging to the human family. Empathy also leads to self-empathy, helping one to be empathic with oneself and to listen to oneself more attentively and accurately. Receiving empathy helps

[363] ROGERS, *The Basic Conditions*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, p. 3.
[364] Cf. Dave MEARNS / Brian THORNE, *Person-Centred Counselling in Action*, London: Sage Publications, (2nd ed.), 2000, p. 41.
[365] MEARNS / THORNE, *Person-Centred Counselling in Action*, p. 41.
[366] Carl R. ROGERS, in *Rogers, Kohut and Erickson* in *Person-Centered Review*, Vol. 1, (125-140), p. 129.

change of self-concept in the client and consequently change of behaviour. It also helps one to empathize with others.[367]

Today, empathy is not the monopoly of the person-centred approach. It is practised by all schools of psychotherapy. Even cognitive therapists, behaviourists and psychoanalysts value it greatly today and use it in therapy. However, the Rogerian idea of empathy goes much deeper and is different. Many schools of therapy use it as a means to gather data for therapeutic interpretation and to prepare the client for the interventions of the therapist, while in Rogers the main purpose of empathy is to communicate UPR. Rogers believed that through empathy the therapist entered into the perceptual world of the client to provide the client an opportunity to express himself deeply and truly and to discern himself more clearly and to choose more significantly.[368]

Through empathy the therapist is perceived by the client as holding up a mirror, which reflects the image of meanings and perceptions as experienced by him and this reflection leads him to more clarifications and insights. The client who experiences being understood in this way is helped to get into a process of attitudinal and behavioural change.[369]

Empathy can also be used to convey the understanding of the therapist and to help the client to explore himself further. There can be different forms of empathic responses, depending on the frame of reference of the client – understanding, evocation, exploration, conjecture and interpretation.[370]

4.2.3.1.4 Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR)

It is the second basic attitude Rogers speaks of as essential for a therapeutic relationship. It is about prizing, caring and appreciating the client. Rogers calls this attitude unconditional positive regard, usually abbreviated as UPR. In our day-to-day life, caring for another person is not easy. Therapeutic caring is even more difficult. This caring is a non-possessive and non-judgemental caring. It is similar to the feeling a parent has for a child. In spite of all his misbehaviour, the parents prize and love the child as someone of worth. In Rogers' opinion, "That type of caring is most effective in therapy. It is something the therapist cannot order within himself. But the relationship is going to be more profitable if that kind of caring exists…It is a positive caring which has no conditions attached…for the

[367] Cf. FREIRE, *Empathy* in *The Handbook of PCPC,* p. 197.
[368] Cf. Ibid., p.198.
[369] Cf. Ibid., pp. 198-199.
[370] Cf. Ibid., p. 202.

emotional growth, for the development of the individual, the relationship is best in our experience when the care is really unconditional."[371]

Dave Mearns and Brian Thorne, two experts in the field of PCT, argue that the distinctiveness of UPR lies in its consistency. The therapist manifests UPR regardless of the behaviour of the client. It is easy to value a client when he is positive or cooperates, but in PCT the therapist is bound to show UPR irrespective of the behaviour of the client. This unconditional valuing and acceptance of the client have positive effects on the client. He is able to accept himself.[372]

Today different schools of psychotherapy and counselling use UPR or similar concepts. It is one of the tools or attitudes in every therapeutic relationship. But the terms used are sometimes different from that of PCT. In PCT, acceptance is a term used often instead of UPR. Other terms include non-possessive warmth, prizing, affirming, liking, etc. However, most of these terms are not as deep and meaningful as UPR.[373]

4.2.3.1.4.1 Development of the Concept of UPR

The concept of UPR was not developed suddenly by Rogers. It had a gradual growth and many influences on its development. In 1951, Rogers spoke of the therapist's attitude of acceptance and respect which is the forerunner of UPR in 1959. In his 1951 book, *Client-Centered Therapy*, he speaks about the attitudes the therapist should have. Although he does not directly speak about UPR, he speaks about understanding the client as he is and offering emotional warmth in a relationship. This is one of the important attitudes the therapist should have:

> In client-centered therapy the client finds the counselor a genuine alter ego in an operational and technical sense… In the emotional warmth of the relationship with the therapist, the client begins to experience a feeling of safety as he finds that whatever attitude he expresses is understood in almost the same way that he perceives it, and is accepted… The therapist perceives the client's self as the client has known it, and accepts it; he perceives the contradictory aspects which have been denied to awareness and accepts those too as being part of the client; and both of these acceptances have in them the same warmth and respect.[374]

[371] ROGERS, *The Basic Conditions*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, p. 3.
[372] Cf. MEARNS / THORNE, *Person-Centred Counselling in Action*, pp. 64-65.
[373] Cf. Ibid., p. 66.
[374] ROGERS, *Client-Centered Therapy*, pp. 40-41.

Here Rogers speaks of accepting the client's self as it is, as the client sees himself and the therapist also accepts all the contradictions within the client. Rogers was influenced by one of his students, Standal, who used the term unconditional positive regard in his dissertation. Rogers adopted this term for his therapy. By 1959, Rogers evolved his concept of respect and acceptance to unconditional positive regard.[375]

In Carl Rogers' theory it is an underlying principle that every individual has a need for positive regard. He adapted the ideas developed by Standal and developed his own concept of UPR.[376] In his 1959 exposition of the person-centred approach, Carl Rogers describes UPR as follows:

> Unconditional positive regard. Here is one of the key constructs of the theory, which may be defined in these terms: if the self-experiences of another are perceived by me in such a way that no self-experience can be discriminated as more or less worthy of positive regard than any other, then I am experiencing unconditional positive regard for this individual. To perceive oneself as receiving unconditional positive regard is to perceive that of one's self-experiences none can be discriminated by the other individual as more or less worthy of positive regard. Putting this in simpler terms, to feel unconditional positive regard toward another is to "prize" him … This means to value the person, irrespective of the differential values which one might place on his specific behaviors. A parent "prizes" his child, though he may not value equally all of his behaviors. … In general, however, acceptance and prizing are synonymous with unconditional positive regard. This construct has been developed out of the experiences of therapy, where it appears that one of the potent elements in the relationship is that the therapist "prizes" the whole person of the client. It is the fact that he feels and shows an unconditional positive regard toward the experiences of which the client is frightened or ashamed, as well as toward the experiences with which the client is pleased or satisfied, that seems effective in bringing about change. Gradually the client can feel more acceptance of all of his own experiences, and this makes him again more of a whole or congruent person, able to function effectively. This clinical explanation will, it is hoped, help to illuminate the meaning contained in the rigorous definition.[377]

All individuals have a need for positive regard. When the individual is in incongruence, there is a higher need for it, and it has to be offered unconditionally. Only UPR can heal the person in therapy.[378] Bozarth states that UPR is the agent of change in therapy: "It is the congruent therapist's experiencing of unconditional positive regard (UPR) toward the

[375] Cf. Jerold BOZARTH, *Unconditional Positive Regard* in *The Handbook of PCPC,* (182-193), p.183.
[376] Cf. ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy,* 1959, p. 208.
[377] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy,* 1959, p. 208.
[378] Cf. Ibid.

client along with empathic understanding of the client's internal frame of reference that precipitates therapeutic personality change."[379]

In simple terms, unconditional positive regard has been defined as a warm and total acceptance of the client and his experience. UPR occurs when the client perceives that he makes a positive difference in the experiential field of the therapist.[380]

4.2.3.1.4.2 Love and UPR

Even before Standal brought out his dissertation, one of the members on the staff of Rogers, Oliver H. Brown, spoke of a similar concept, but used the term 'love', although he knew that it was misunderstood. But Brown felt that 'love' was the most useful term. Rogers, however, preferred the term 'unconditional positive regard' to any other term.[381] In Bozart's opinion, "Unconditional positive regard became an identified and integral part of client-centred therapy in Rogers' (1959) self-proclaimed magnum opus. Rogers considered the term to be more precise than such terms as love and affection that were used by others who proposed such needs as inherent traits…"[382]

UPR is in many ways a Christian concept. In the Christian sense, we could say, it is similar to unconditional love. It means accepting another person without conditions, with all his weaknesses and failures.

4.2.3.1.4.3 Role of UPR in PCT

In order to understand the role played by UPR, we need to look into the theoretical aspect of the client-centred approach. In classical person-centred approach the distress in the client is due to the incongruence experienced by him. He is vulnerable and anxious because of the conditions of worth or due to introjections by significant others. He is not valued for what he is, but conditions are placed on his worth. In such a case what he experiences is conditional regard or rather conditional positive self-regard. It conflicts with the individual's organismic experiences and as a result he becomes incongruent. When the client perceives the unconditional positive regard from a real and genuine therapist, who shows empathic understanding to him, that facilitates the client's unconditional positive

[379] BOZARTH, *Unconditional Positive Regard*, p. 182.
[380] Cf. Ibid., p. 183.
[381] Cf. ROGERS, *Client-Centered Therapy*, pp. 160-161.
[382] BOZARTH, *Unconditional Positive Regard*, p. 183.

self-regard. So it is UPR that frees the client from conditions of worth and consequent congruence, prompted by the actualizing tendency.[383]

Mearns and Thorne also think more or less in similar fashion. They believe UPR liberates the client from the oppressive conditions of worth. It frees him from the self-defeating cycle of the conditions of worth, conditional positive regard, aggressiveness, withdrawal from social contact and defensiveness. UPR has also effects on the therapeutic atmosphere. The therapist's 'different' behaviour breaks all defences in the client and provides him with the freedom to be himself. The therapeutic atmosphere will become one of 'trusting environment'.[384]

4.2.3.1.4.4 UPR – Curative Factor in PCT

UPR has been differently viewed by the person-centred therapists. For some it is the 'curative factor' of the person-centred therapy. Some others consider it the 'distinctive feature of the person-centred therapy. On the other hand, some hold it to be a crucial but impossible task for the therapists. In the classical view, it is indeed seen as 'the curative variable' because in person-centred therapy, UPR is required to remove the conditions of worth.[385]

In the opinion of Bozarth, "Unconditional positive regard communicated through empathic understanding is in and of itself the curative factor that frees the client to integrate with the experiences of the organism. Thus, organismic self-experiences ultimately become integrally aligned with the actualizing tendency."[386] When the therapist's trust in the client's actualizing tendency is greater, he experiences consequently a greater capacity to experience unconditional positive regard towards the client. Bozarth reconceptualised the three therapist conditions as follows: "Congruence as the state of therapist readiness, empathic understanding as the conveyor of unconditional positive regard, unconditional positive regard as the 'curative factor.' "[387]

G. Lietaer opines that UPR helps the client to be more inner-directed and to be a 'therapist for himself.' He also believes that confrontational interventions are more and more

[383] Cf. BOZARTH, *Unconditional Positive Regard* in *The Handbook of PCPC*, p. 184.
[384] Cf. MEARNS / THORNE, *Person-Centred Counselling in Action*, pp. 67-68.
[385] Cf. BOZARTH, *Unconditional Positive Regard*, p. 184.
[386] Ibid.
[387] Ibid., p.185.

becoming part of the client-centred therapy.[388] These views are actually divergent from the classical person-centred views. The person-centred approach has in recent years become more open to divergent and more eclectic views.

How effective is UPR in therapy? It is difficult to empirically test the effectiveness of UPR. From research regarding the effectiveness of UPR, there is considerable result to show that UPR is associated with therapeutic success. Sometimes UPR is wrongly associated with 'therapeutic alliance', 'client affirmation' and therapeutic support. The person-centred therapist affirms that these concepts are not the same as UPR in the person-centred approach and, in fact, UPR works at a much deeper level.[389]

As we have already seen, while the classical view in the person-centred approach is against any directiveness, in some post-classical approaches, there is also a tendency to direct, guide and encourage the client towards a particular experience. In these cases the necessary and sufficient conditions are also looked at differently by them, but at the same time being faithful to the original concept.[390]

Many therapists see UPR as being sufficient as an intrinsic attitude of the therapist. A 'classical' therapist places no constraints on the client. He never attempts to solve the problems or interferes, but provides warm acceptance to the client. In PCT it is not enough to have UPR, but it is also necessary that it is to be communicated to the client. How it is to be communicated varies from therapist to therapist. Each one has his own personal repertoire.[391] Bozarth recommends the following steps to therapists to develop UPR: "Be congruent in the relationship. Maximise your own unconditional positive self-regard… Maximise your attitude of UPR through your empathic experiencing of the client…Trust the client to develop her own direction at her own pace, and in her own way."[392]

4.2.3.1.4.5 Two Dimensions of UPR

Bozarth believes that there are two dimensions to UPR. Firstly, the therapist himself experiences a difference in himself by his experiencing and receiving of the client. He is not passive; he is actively receiving the client. The client's experiential world makes a difference in the therapist. He is affected by the client and has to attend to himself and his

[388] Cf. G. LIETAER, *Unconditional Acceptance and Positive Regard*, in Jerold BOZARTH / Paul WILKINS (Eds.), *UPR: Unconditional Positive Regard*, Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books, 2001, (88-108), pp. 92-93.
[389] Cf. BOZARTH, *Unconditional Positive Regard*, p.186.
[397] Cf. Ibid., p.187.
[391] Cf. MEARNS / THORNE, *Person-Centred Counselling in Action*, p.74.
[392] BOZARTH, *Unconditional Positive Regard*, p. 189.

own experiences in the therapy. Secondly, the therapist makes a difference in the experiential world of the client.[393] In Bozarth's opinion UPR is the crux of Rogers' theory:

> The client's perception of unconditional positive regard communicated through empathic understanding by the congruent therapist is the crux of Rogers' theory… The thrust of the therapy is 'to create the climate where there are no constraints upon the client and, therefore, they are able to reintegrate previously denied experiences into their way of being in the world'…This climate is created by the client's perception of the congruent therapist's experiencing of unconditional positive regard and empathic understanding.[394]

In the post-classical approach, UPR is considered preliminary and it is dependent on the client's level of experiencing. As noted already, there are some post-classical views which do not consider the conditions to be sufficient.

4.2.3.1.5 Congruence

The third basic condition which makes therapy effective is congruence. It means that the therapist is a real person in his relationship with the client. In 1959, when Rogers expanded and systematised his theory, he proposed congruence as one of the core conditions of therapeutic change: "That the second person, whom we shall term the therapist, is *congruent in the relationship*."[395]

The therapist is in a genuine, real relationship with the client and he deals with the client without any façade. He reveals to the client what he thinks and feels, if it is appropriate and when it does not harm the therapeutic process. Rogers said in 1981:

> It means that the client is in relationship not with a person in a white coat, not with a professional, not with a façade but with a real honest-to-God person. That takes away from something that some therapists prize a great deal, namely, the professional façade that they put on when they meet someone else. It is more effective when the therapist is himself or herself as he or she is at the moment. For that kind of genuineness we use the term 'congruence' to indicate a matching between what is being experienced inside and what is in awareness in the intellect and what is expressed verbally.[396]

[393] Cf. BOZARTH, *Unconditional Positive Regard*, pp.189-190.
[394] Ibid., p.190.
[395] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 213. Italics in the original.
[396] ROGERS, *The Basic Conditions of the Facilitative Therapeutic Relationship*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, pp. 3-4.

4.2.3.1.5.1 Revolutionary Idea of Congruence

Through the concept of congruence, Rogers has brought about a revolutionary change in the field of psychotherapy. In all other therapy methods the therapist is an expert or specialist, who diagnoses, analyses, prescribes and directs, always with a professional façade, but hardly a real person. Genuineness adds a special dimension to the therapeutic relationship. This quality adds a depth dimension to the therapeutic relationship.

The concept of congruence is not a monopoly of PCT, nor is it anything entirely new. Moreover, the concept had been in development in the preceding decades. The concept has also been further developed after the time of Rogers.[397] Different terms have been used to describe congruence in PCT and other forms of therapy and counselling. They include genuineness, transparency, authenticity, realness, etc.[398] Some person-centred therapists believe that congruence is the most difficult concept in the person-centred approach to understand and develop because it refers to "the internal, relational and ecological integration of persons."[399]

Congruence includes internal and body awareness, communication, flow, spontaneity and encounter. Rogers used the term interchangeably with realness, being genuine, transparent, etc. He first mentioned it in 1951. Rogers' first understanding of congruence was the consistency between the ideal self and the real self in his personality theory.[400] It is not only the therapist who requires congruence. In the preceding pages of the same work, he speaks of the need for congruence in the client. To be a fully-functioning person, one has to be congruent. There has to be congruence of self and his experience. This sometimes requires revising self-concept and accurately symbolising his experiences:

> He reorganizes the concept he holds of himself to include these characteristics, which would previously have been inconsistent with self. Thus when self-experiences are accurately symbolized, and are included in the self-concept in this accurately symbolized form, then the state is one of congruence of self and experience. If this were completely true of all self-experiences, the individual would be a fully functioning person... If it is true of some specific aspect of experience, such as the individual's experience in a given relationship or in a given moment of time, then we can say that the

[397] Cf. Sheila HAUGH, *A Historical Review of the Development of the Concept of Congruence in Person-Centred Theory*, in Gill WYATT (Ed.), *Congruence*, (*Series on Rogers' Therapeutic Conditions. Evolution, Theory and Practice, Vol. 1*), Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books, 2001, (1-17), p. 1.
[398] Gill WYATT, *Introduction to Volume 1: Congruence*, in *Congruence*, Gill WYATT (Ed.), p. vii.
[399] Jeffery CORNELIUS-WHITE, *Congruence*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, (168-181), p. 168.
[400] Cf. ROGERS, *Client-Centered Therapy*, p. 142.

> individual is to this degree in a state of congruence. Other terms which are in a general way synonymous are these: integrated, whole, genuine.[401]

Later in the light of his therapy, he further developed the concept of congruence. When a therapist is congruent, his symbolisation of the therapeutic relationship should be accurate and genuine. He should be himself in the relationship. He should not be wearing a mask.[402]

Mearns and Thorne state, "The counsellor is 'congruent' when she *is* openly being what she is in response to the client – when the way she is behaving is perfectly reflective of what she is feeling inside – when her response to her client is what she feels and is not a pretence or a defence. On the other hand, when she pretends to be 'clever' or 'competent' or 'caring' she is false in relation to her client – her outward behaviour is not congruent with what is going on inside her."[403]

4.2.3.1.5.2 Congruence, Awareness and Communication

So, in the person-centred approach, a person is congruent when he is aware of his experiences and when he expresses it truthfully. For Carl Rogers, symbolisation is almost the same as awareness. There should not be any dichotomy between self and experience. The symbols we use – our awareness, language, gestures, posture – should match with the real experience. If it is not the case, there is a state of incongruence. If the therapist tries to suppress, reject or hide his real feelings, he is falling into a state of incongruence and that is detrimental to the therapeutic relationship. Congruence is a matching between experience, awareness and the therapist's expression or communication. Incongruence can take place at the level of our awareness, experience and being.[404] In one of his later works, Rogers wrote:

> I have found that the more I can be genuine in the relationship, the more helpful it will be. This means that I need to be aware of my own feelings, insofar as possible, rather than presenting an outward façade of one attitude, while actually holding another attitude at a deeper or unconscious level. Being genuine also involves the willingness to be and to express, in my words and my behaviour, the various feelings and attitudes which exist in me. It is only in this way that the relationship can have a reality, and *reality* seems deeply important as a first condition. It is only by providing the genuine reality which is in me that the other person can successfully seek for the reality in him. I have found this to be true even when the attitudes I feel

[401] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, pp. 205-206.
[402] Cf. CORNELIUS-WHITE, *Congruence*, p.169.
[403] MEARNS / THORNE, *Person-Centred Counselling in Action*, p. 84.
[404] Cf. CORNELIUS-WHITE, *Congruence*, p. 169.

> are not attitudes with which I am pleased, or attitudes which seem conducive to a good relationship. It seems extremely important to be *real*.[405]

How can one be congruent? Are there criteria and yardsticks to measure it? Experts say there is no one fixed way of being congruent. It varies from person to person and from situation to situation: "There is no one right way to be congruent. There is only a fluid process that appreciates one's self, others and the world as it is in that moment-to-moment encounter."[406] Barbara Temaner Brodley argues that it is difficult to get the exact meaning of congruence from the works of Carl Rogers because he presented this concept in apparently different ways in his different works. There is a certain ambiguity regarding this concept. Brodley believes that Rogers intentionally left it open to different interpretations.[407]

Julius Seeman further developed Rogers' idea of congruence in his human systems approach. His approach is called organismic integration. His approach extends congruence to multiple levels and processes like biochemical, physiological, perceptual, precognitive, cognitive, interpersonal and ecological. He says that an important aspect of congruence is to be able to receive and process the reality data of the person's world. He also noted that congruent people respond to the world with more engagement.[408]

4.2.3.1.5.3 Limits of Congruence

Can and should the therapist express all that he feels and thinks to the client in the name of congruence? How far can he go? Mearns and Thorne believe that there are certain restrictions to the extent that the therapist can go. They warn against equating congruence with self-disclosure. Both are not the same. In PCT, congruence deals with the therapist's response to the client's experiencing. It does not deal with the feelings and sensations of the therapist which are external to the therapy. They believe that the therapist cannot express anything on the ground of being congruent. In that case he will become more focused on himself than on the client.[409]

Congruence in PCT deals with giving genuine response to the felt experience of the client in therapy. Another important matter is that the response of the therapist should be relevant

[405] ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person*, p. 33. (Emphasis as in the original).
[406] CORNELIUS-WHITE, *Congruence*, p. 171.
[407] Cf. Barbara Temaner BRODLEY, *Congruence and its Relation to Communication in Client-Centered Therapy* in *The Person-Centered Journal*, Vol. 5. 2, 1998, (83-106) pp. 83-84.
[408] Cf. CORNELIUS-WHITE, *Congruence*, pp. 171-172.
[409] Cf. MEARNS / THORNE, *Person-Centred Counselling in Action*, pp. 90-91.

to the client and not to the therapist. Another factor is that the therapist cannot respond to all the feelings of the client. So he should be able to respond to those feelings in the client which are persistent and striking.[410]

In summary, one could say, "When we talk about being 'congruent' we are referring to the counsellor giving expression to *responses* which she has which are *relevant* to her client and which are relatively *persistent* or *striking*."[411]

4.2.3.1.5.4 Role of Congruence

A congruent relationship exudes warmth and openness. An incongruent therapist, on the other hand, conveys withdrawal and defensiveness. There have been debates in person-centred circles as to whether it is right for the therapist to communicate his feelings to the client. Carl Rogers' primary intention behind introducing this concept was that the therapist should not be deceiving himself and the client. It has more to do with the integration, realness or wholeness of the therapist which strongly influences the relationship with the client. The more actualized the therapist is, the more accurate will he be in his symbolization of awareness and experience. Congruence also helps the client to revise himself through openness to experience. All the three core conditions - empathy, UPR and congruence - are at a non-verbal level and highly interconnected.[412]

Brodley also believes that congruence is connected to the other conditions of therapy. Moreover, it is a state within the therapist. She says, "Congruence is a condition for therapy in the sense that it must be a state or condition within the therapist. This state permits the therapist to succeed in his intentions to experience unconditional positive regard and empathic understanding in relation to a client. It does so by permitting the therapist to experience an unconflicted and undistracted dedication to acceptant empathy."[413] The role played by congruence can be summarised in the following points:

a) Authenticity is Pre-condition for Dialogue

In the opinion of Peter F Schmid, authenticity or congruence is a pre-condition for dialogue. There cannot be any true encounter or dialogue between two persons without being authentic. This is applicable to the therapeutic relationship, too. Therapeutic relationship is also an encounter and also has the nature of dialogue. Therefore, if the

[410] Cf. MEARNS / THORNE, *Person-Centred Counselling in Action*, pp. 91-92.
[411] Ibid., p. 92. Emphasis as in the original.
[412] Cf. CORNELIUS-WHITE, *Congruence*, pp. 170-171.
[413] BRODLEY, *Congruence and its Relation to Communication*, p.85.

therapeutic relationship has to be effective, this pre-condition has to be respected and put into practice.[414] Schmid asserts that authenticity is a pre-condition and even much more than a condition: "Among other things, congruence, genuineness or realness, is generally a *fundamental characteristic* of being and becoming a person, and so is much more than a therapeutic attitude or condition."[415]

b) Independence and Inter-Connectedness

The more congruent and integrated a person becomes, the more independent and free he will be. He moves away from the control of others. Rogers believed in his later years that the person moves in a direction of inter-connectedness. This is a transcendental dimension of the person.[416]

Peter Schmid is of the opinion that congruence essentially refers to the relational dimension of human beings. Congruence has two dimensions: the inner dimension and the outer dimension. The inner dimension can be called openness to oneself, and the outer dimension transparency.[417] Cornelius-White believes that congruence makes it easier to live in a fully engaged process: "This involves internal congruence, communication, a sense of flow, disciplined spontaneity, bodily awareness and an encounter stance to the world."[418]

c) Accurate Symbolization

Internal congruence is based upon self-awareness or accurate symbolization of experience. He is aware of his inner feelings and perceptions and reactions as they occur. In other words, the therapist has empathy, regard and acceptance for his own experiencing. At the deepest level, empathy, UPR and congruence are rarely communicated in words. People pick it up through body language and other forms of non-verbal communication. But sometimes the therapist should deliberately communicate it for the success of the therapy.[419]

d) Experience of Spontaneity and Flow

Being in congruence is an experience of spontaneity and flow. It is also learning to accept one's personal strengths and vulnerabilities, without being overcome by them. A congruent person is at home with himself, he is in a flow of life which includes ups and downs. The

[414] Cf. Peter F. SCHMID, *Authenticity: The Person as His or Her Own Author*. *Dialogical and Ethical Perspectives on Therapy as an Encounter Relationship, And Beyond* in Wyatt GILL (Ed.), *Congruence*, pp. 213-228.
[415] SCHMID, Ibid., p. 218. Italics in the original.
[416] Cf. CORNELIUS-WHITE, *Congruence*, p. 173.
[417] Cf. SCHMID, *Authenticity: The Person as His or Her Own Author*, p. 220.
[418] CORNELIUS-WHITE, *Congruence*, p. 174.
[419] Cf. Ibid.

therapist is also a human being and has his own human frailties and vulnerabilities. Congruence means being aware of them and accepting them. However, being in a flow means that the therapist is able to bracket the irrelevant experiences.[420] Another dimension of congruence is spontaneity. Lietaer describes it as 'disciplined spontaneity.'[421]

e) Congruence contributes to Effectiveness

Speaking about the role of genuineness in being a teacher - facilitator in education - Carl Rogers says:

> When the facilitator is a real person, being what she is, entering into relationship with the learner without presenting a front or façade, she is much more likely to be effective. That means that the feelings that she is experiencing are available to her, available to her awareness, that she is able to live these feelings, be them, and able to communicate them if appropriate. It means that she comes into a direct person-to-person basis. It means she is *being* herself, not denying herself…Thus, she is a person to her students, not a faceless embodiment of a curricular requirement nor a sterile tube through which knowledge is passed from one generation to the next.[422]

Rogers emphasized very often that when a therapist is natural and spontaneous, he is more genuine and congruent: "I believe it is the realness… when the therapist is natural and spontaneous that he seems to be the most effective."[423]

In the opinion of Mearns and Thorne, congruence takes away the aura of secrecy and threat from the therapeutic relationship. Concealing the real response and sending contradictory signals only confuse the client who is already in distress and affects the efficacy of therapy. They argue, "Congruence demystifies the counsellor's work because it shows simply and clearly what she is experiencing in response to the client. It shows that she is not harbouring complicated and threatening interpretations or theories about the client's pathology. It takes away the secrecy of counselling and ensures that the counsellor and the client share the same reality."[424]

4.2.3.1.5.5 Concluding Reflection

Only a person who can be openly himself at the moment of therapy can be an effective therapist. Congruence has another layer in its practice which is bodily felt. The therapist, to be fully congruent and effective, has to pay attention to their clients' bodies and that of

[420] Cf. CORNELIUS-WHITE, *Congruence*, p. 175.
[421] Cf. Ibid.
[422] Carl R. ROGERS, *The Interpersonal Relationship in the Facilitation of Learning*, in *The Carl Rogers Reade*r, p. 306. [Originally published in LEEPER. R (Ed.), *Humanizing Education*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision of Curriculum Development, 1967, pp. 1-18]. Emphasis as in the original.
[423] Carl R. ROGERS, as quoted by CORNELIUS-WHITE, *Congruence*, p. 175.
[424] MEARNS / THORNE, *Person-Centred Counselling in Action*, p.105.

their own. There must also be what is called 'bodily felt congruence' and it calls for mind-body-spirit integration.[425] In today's world of change and pluralism, a congruent therapist should develop a capacity to accept diversity and plurality and tolerate a certain degree of ambiguity and discomfort, too, which are necessarily part of human existence today. As Mahatma Gandhi said, it is being and becoming the change that we want to see in the world today.[426]

4.2.3.1.6 Client Perception

Perception or client perception is the sixth condition proposed by Rogers as necessary and sufficient. Perception as a concept in psychology is one of the most researched topics. It is also an important concept in philosophy, especially in epistemology. The development of the concept owes much to the work of European philosophers like Buber, Kierkegaard, and Merleau-Ponty. The humanistic psychologists have been greatly influenced by these existentialist philosophers. The humanists have taken the idea that a person can only be understood from his point of view, which in turn lays emphasis on the uniqueness of human experience. It lays stress on personal awareness and how people make sense of events for personal meaning.[427]

Although perception is implicit in any form of therapy, Rogers was the first to state it as a necessary and sufficient condition. This emphasizes the view of humanistic psychology, where the subjective or phenomenological experience of the person is central to therapeutic change, that it is the client who makes the decision in the therapy.[428] Wilkins claims this condition puts the client at the centre of the therapeutic process and at the same time lays responsibility on the therapist to make sure that the client is being and feeling understood and accepted.[429]

To have a concrete effect on the client, it is not enough that the therapist has all qualities and conditions but the client also be able to perceive it from the therapist. That is the sixth and last condition. Rogers stated in 1959: "That the client perceives, at least to a minimal degree, conditions 4 and 5, the *unconditional positive regard* of the therapist for him, and

[425] Cf. CORNELIUS-WHITE, *Congruence*, pp.176-177.
[426] Cf. Ibid., pp. 178-179.
[427] Cf. Shaké G. TOUKMANIAN / Lila Z. HAKIM, *Client Perception* in *The Handbook of PCPC*, (207-220), pp.208-209.
[428] Cf. TOUKMANIAN / HAKIM, *Client Perception*, pp. 209-210.
[429] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, p. 69.

the *empathic* understanding of the therapist."[430] It means that the client should perceive at least to some degree the UPR and the empathy that the therapist has for him. It is not enough that the therapist has UPR and empathy for the client. He should also be able to communicate them to the client in a manner that he perceives them to some extent. It is logical to think that as long as he does not perceive them in the therapist, they do not exist for him. In 1957, Rogers wrote the following about the final condition of therapeutic change:

> The final condition as stated is that the client perceives, to a minimal degree, the acceptance and empathy which the therapist experiences for him. Unless some communication of these attitudes has been achieved, then such attitudes do not exist in the relationship as far as the client is concerned, and the therapeutic process could not, by our hypothesis, be initiated. Since attitudes cannot be directly perceived, it might be somewhat more accurate to state that the therapist's behaviors and words are perceived by the client as meaning that to some degree the therapist accepts and understands him. … In the present state of our knowledge the meaning of "to a minimal degree" would have to be arbitrary.[431]

Client perception is important for therapy because only if the client perceives the therapist's congruence, UPR and empathy, can he engage himself in a therapeutic relationship. Rogers has written actually little about client perception. It is a condition which often is not apparent but lies at the core of the person-centred therapeutic practice: "Although often not readily apparent, it is the central and most pervasive concept that runs through the links and humanistic foundations of the theory to many of its basic prepositions, including Rogers' unique conceptualization of the process of therapy and the nature of the therapeutic relationship."[432]

How can the therapist transmit empathy and UPR to the client that he is able to perceive them? Rogers has not given any explanation or method regarding this. He seemed to have assumed that when other conditions are present, this should automatically occur. Therefore, in the field of person-centred therapy, the further understanding and practice of it is based on the understanding, experience and training of the individual therapist. [433]

Some practitioners and authors believe it can be ascertained from the way the client behaves if he has perceived UPR and empathy from the therapist. Another possibility is a

[430] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 213. Italics as in the original.
[431] Carl R. ROGERS, *The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change* in *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, Vol. 21. 2, 1957, p. 99.
[432] TOUKMANIAN / HAKIM, *Client Perception*, p. 207.
[433] Cf. TOUKMANIAN / HAKIM, *Client Perception*, p. 211.

post-therapy evaluation obtained from the client. Yet another means can be to see whether the client has undergone positive therapeutic change.[434] They also believe that further study and research is needed in this field. Since the client is a major contributor to the outcome of the therapy, it is crucial to know the perception of the client of the conditions/qualities shown by the therapist.

4.2.3.2 Status of the Conditions

Do all person-centred therapists consider all the six conditions proposed by Rogers in 1959 as necessary and sufficient? It is difficult to say. There are different views regarding the conditions even among person-centred practitioners. It depends mainly on their approach.

Those who strictly follow the classical version of the person-centred approach hold that these conditions are necessary and sufficient. Other followers of the person-centred approach such as processing therapy and process-experiential schools also regard them as crucial. They believe that these conditions are more important than techniques in therapy. Techniques are relatively unimportant or play only a subsidiary role in the person-centred approach except to help fulfil the three core conditions.[435] Freiere throws more light on the issue:

> Although the focus on the phenomenological world of the client is a common ground for all person-centred orientations, there are differences among them in relation to how the therapist should communicate empathy and the associated conditions of unconditional positive regard and congruence. From the classical perspective, the six conditions are 'necessary and sufficient', but in the view of the other orientations they are 'necessary but not sufficient' and should be supplemented with other procedures.[436]

Jeffrey Von Glahn argues the psychological hurt - one of the main reasons why one approaches a therapist – and therapeutic catharsis – one of the major means of releasing this hurt or tension – should also be treated as a necessary and sufficient condition.[437]

In the major later works of Rogers like *On Becoming a Person* and *A Way of Being*, one sees a detailed treatment of the three 'core conditions' and a neglect of the other three conditions. Did Rogers change his attitude? Or did he think that these three are more important than the other? Or did he take the other three conditions for granted?

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[434] Cf. TOUKMANIAN / HAKIM, *Client Perception*, p. 213.
[435] Cf. FREIRE, *Empathy*, p. 201.
[436] Ibid.
[437] Cf. Jeffrey Von GLAHN, *Proposed Necessary and Sufficient Conditions for Optimal Psychotherapeutic Change*, in PCEP, Vol.10. 2, June 2011, pp. 129-143.

There are some person-centred therapists who treat only the core conditions as necessary and sufficient. They include famous person-practitioners like Bozarth, Bohart, Greenberg and Geller. But authors like Keith Tudor argue that Rogers spoke of six necessary and sufficient conditions and they should remain so. All the six are necessary and they are sufficient, too. He also argues that the idea of 'core conditions' is confusing and could be done away with.[438] Many person-centred therapists, who take deviation from the classical version of the therapy, do not accept the Rogerian version of the 'necessary and sufficient conditions' as sufficient. In the post-classical person-centred approach the therapist uses also other activities and processes that they believe to be facilitative. They also intend to influence the client without manipulating him, and some are even explicit about the process of directivity.[439] Process directive perspective in PCA makes use of selective understanding to focus on the client's growth possibilities. Over the years, some person-centred therapists have focused more on becoming an 'alter-ego' for the client and entering into an 'I-thou' relationship with the client with more free use of self and with more self-disclosure and self-expressiveness.[440]

Brian Thorne and Dave Mearns, two ardent senior person-centred therapists, are of the opinion that very often the core conditions are sufficient:

> The debate about the necessity and sufficiency of Rogers' six conditions will probably never be resolved because it is difficult to see how a convincing research design could ever be devised to test the complete package. Clearly, however, the conditions are not always *necessary* because there is ample evidence that 'therapeutic movement' can take place without them; a chance meeting with a far from empathic stranger in a train has been known to change a life in a positive direction as has the reading of a powerful novel. What does seem likely, however, is that the presence of the core conditions and their recognition at some level by the client is *sufficient* in most cases to provide a powerful context for positive development.[441]

4.2.4 Process of Therapy and Its Outcome

Having seen the historical development and the theoretical background of PCT, it is time to see the process and the effects of therapy. Although most research done in the field

[438] Cf. Keith TUDOR, *Rogers' Therapeutic Conditions: A Relational Conceptualization*, in *PCEP*, Vol.10, No. 3, September 2011, (165-180), pp.166-168.
[439] Cf. BOZARTH, *Unconditional Positive Regard* in *The Handbook of PCPC*, p. 185.
[440] Cf. FREIRE, *Empathy*, p. 202.
[441] Dave MEARNS / Brian THORNE, *Person-Centred Therapy Today: New Frontiers in Theory and Practice*, London: Sage Publications, 2000, pp. 99-100. Emphasis as in the original.

concludes that psychotherapy is beneficial, the efficacy of therapy is still a controversial field because sometimes the effects are not measurable, and in many cases the effects cannot be concretely related to the therapy.[442]

4.2.4.1 How Does Therapeutic Change Take Place in PCT?

How can the presence of these conditions in the therapist bring about change in the client? Rogers believes that if these three conditions (i.e., the above-mentioned core conditions) are present in the therapist, constructive personal change is most likely: "If all those three match in a therapist then I think the client is very fortunate, and constructive personal change is most likely to occur… It is that if in a relationship this kind of empathy or of caring exists, then the relationship will be constructive, but is not as though you can tell yourself to be empathic and immediately be there. What I am saying is if these three conditions exist, then change is much more probable. But you cannot order yourself to do that."[443]

Rogers claims when the client is really listened to with whole heart and with empathy, he begins to look into himself. The condition of the therapist helps the client to have an internal process which helps him to listen to himself and to increase his self-worth. His self-image changes, growth takes place – he becomes more real, genuine and self-trusting.[444] Carl Rogers describes this process in a much later work as follows:

> If the client finds herself really listened to in this intense, sensitive and deep way, she begins to listen to herself more: What is going on in me? In other words, the empathic attitude on the part of the therapist encourages the client to a more sensitive listening to herself. As the therapist exhibits more of a positive and unconditional caring toward the client, the client begins to feel: 'Possibly I am worthwhile, possibly I can care for myself more, and possibly I can regard myself with greater respect'. And there she begins to change the often very negative self-attitudes which are common in clients. So it begins to develop a more positive self-concept in the client. In other words, what happens in the client is a real reciprocal act of what's occurring in the therapist. As the therapist listens to the client, the client comes more to listen to himself or herself; as the therapist cares with a more unconditional caring for the client, the client's self-worth begins to develop. As the client

[442] Cf. Michael J. LAMBERT / Benjamin M. OGLES (Eds.), *The Efficacy and Effectiveness of Psychotherapy* in Michael J. LAMBERT (Ed.), *Bergin and Garfield's Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behaviour Change* (5th Edition), NY: John Wiley & Sons, 2004, pp.139-193. This book is a very useful and one of the most authoritative compendia for those who like to inform themselves more about psychotherapy, its effectiveness, different factors that contribute to its success/failure etc.
[443] ROGERS, *On Becoming a Person*, pp. 31-38.
[444] Cf. ROGERS, *The Basic Conditions*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, p. 4.

> responds in herself in both those ways then the client is becoming more real, more congruent, more expressing of what is actually going on inside.[445]

One of the greatest processes taking place in the client is that he is more able to listen to himself and able to have a positive self-image of himself. It is made possible through the unconditional acceptance, empathic listening and congruence manifested by the therapist. Through his empathic listening, the therapist enables the client to listen to himself. Carl Rogers also claims that his theory of therapeutic condition is based on empirical research. Since 1957, it has been enormously researched and confirmed.[446]

4.2.4.2 Process of Therapy

How does the process of therapy take place? What happens in the sessions of person-centred therapy? Rogers says when the necessary conditions[447] – the six conditions – are present, the process of therapy sets in the client a process. It may be good to refer back to the original idea and the detailed wording of Rogers as early as in 1959 to understand this important process:

> When the preceding conditions exist and continue, a process is set in motion which has these characteristic directions: 1. The client is increasingly free in expressing his *feelings*, through verbal and/or motor channels. 2. His expressed feelings increasingly have reference to the *self*, rather than non-self. 3. He increasingly differentiates and discriminates the objects of his *feelings* and *perceptions*, including his environment, other persons, his *self*, his *experiences*, and the interrelationships of these. He becomes less *intentional* and more *extensional* in his *perceptions*, or to put it in other terms, his experiences are more *accurately symbolized*. 4. His expressed *feelings* increasingly have reference to the *incongruity* between certain of his *experiences* and his *concept of self*. 5. He comes to experience in awareness the threat of such *incongruence*. This experience of threat is possible only because of the continued *unconditional positive regard* of the therapist, which is extended to *incongruence* as much as to *congruence*, to *anxiety* as much as to absence of *anxiety*. 6. He *experiences* fully, in *awareness*, feelings which have in the past been *denied to awareness*, or *distorted in awareness*. 7. His *concept of self* becomes reorganized to assimilate and include these *experiences* which have previously been *distorted in* or *denied to awareness*. 8. As this reorganization of the *self-structure* continues, his *concept of self* becomes increasingly *congruent* with his *experience*; the *self* now includes *experiences* which previously would have been too *threatening* to be in *awareness*. A corollary tendency is toward fewer perceptual *distortions in awareness*, or *denials to awareness*, since there are fewer

[445] ROGERS, *The Basic Conditions*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, p. 4.
[446] Cf. Ibid.
[447] As noted earlier, there is some lack of clarity regarding the conditions. In his early writings Rogers spoke of six conditions, but in his later writings he mentions basically three conditions – empathy, UPR and congruence, known as the core conditions. In his later works Rogers seems to be taking the other three conditions for granted. He seems to be presupposing that without the presence of these three conditions – contact, incongruence of the client and perception – therapy cannot take place.

> *experiences* which can be *threatening*. In other words, *defensiveness* is decreased. 9. He becomes increasingly able to *experience*, without a feeling of *threat*, the therapist's *unconditional positive regard*. 10. He increasingly feels an *unconditional positive self-regard*. 11. He increasingly *experiences* himself as the *locus of evaluation*. 12. He reacts to *experience* less in terms of his *conditions of worth* and more in terms of an *organismic valuing process*.[448]

Rogers says although all these steps may not be visible in all instances of therapy, they are the most visible elements in this process. Rogers says he cannot exactly say why if all these conditions exist the change necessarily takes place. There has been sufficient evidence to prove that it does take place.[449]

4.2.4.3 Changes That Take Place as a Result of Therapy

What are the outcomes experienced by the client as a result of the therapy? What are the visible and invisible, internal and external changes that take place as a result of therapy?

I have dealt with already in the preceding parts some of the major changes that take place as a result of therapy. Rogers in his 1959 work stated that some of the relatively permanent changes taking place in the client are the following. The client experiences increased congruence between self and experience, the lack of which formerly caused distress. The client becomes more congruent. He is more open to experience. He is more realistic and has a better psychological adjustment than before. Tensions in him are reduced. He experiences a higher degree of positive self-concept and self-regard. He experiences better acceptance of himself and of others. He affirms himself as the locus of evaluation and of choice. He believes that his behaviour is within his control. He becomes more socialized, mature, adaptive and creative.[450]

4.2.5 Criticism of PCT

In spite of his wide popularity and acceptance, Rogers' work and contributions has been the object of severe criticism, too. The person-centred approach faced and still faces plenty of criticism:

> From the beginning, client-centered therapy has had its critics — for the apparent vagueness of its principles, its antipathy to diagnosis, its claim that

[448] ROGERS, *A Theory of Therapy*, 1959, p. 216. (Emphasis in the original).
[449] Cf. Ibid., p. 217.
[450] Cf. Ibid., pp. 218-219. [Here I have mentioned only a few of the changes; for a detailed list of changes refer to pp. 218-219].

> therapists need little training, and its emphasis on the client's self-evaluation as the way to judge the outcome of therapy. Rogers admitted that his ideas left a great deal of room for interpretation. Many thought he was a gifted therapist, and it is difficult to know whether those who follow his model or use his methods are practicing as he intended. Client-centered therapy may also work less well with people who find it difficult to talk about themselves or have a mental illness that distorts their perceptions of reality. [451]

Those who defend the PCA argue that most of the criticism is due to misunderstanding and lack of understanding of the person-centred approach. It has often been criticised for being too naïve, simple, simplistic and unscientific. Many believe the person-centred approach requires no training or qualification. It is enough to be 'nice' to people. There is actually no serious work and no expertise is required. This type of therapy is only helpful in trivial matters. Most of this criticism is due to the poor presentation of the person-centred approach by its own followers and due to the lack of unity among them.[452]

Rogers faced most severe criticism from the academic circles and from psychologists who found it difficult to accept the revolutionary new ideas of Rogers. Even at the time of Rogers he was criticised for not having a coherent theory of personality for his psychotherapy and Rogers was aware of it, too.[453]

His theory and method have been criticised for oversimplification, trusting the 'sick' patients and relying on their resources, which is a fallacy. This is not going to help therapy. Others claimed there was nothing new in the findings of Rogers - 'there is nothing new in it,' 'we knew it already.'[454] Rogers' position was directly against the popular thinking in the field of psychotherapy at that time: we must also use our expertise, experience, and knowledge sometimes to direct and to guide, too. It is the therapist who should give direction to the process of therapy.

4.2.5.1 Tendency to Self-Actualise: Does it Exist?

The actualising tendency is one of the core concepts of PCA. It is also one of the main points of controversy in PCA. Critics say it is merely a theoretical construct, and such a tendency does not exist, and it cannot be scientifically proved in any way. Person-centred therapists themselves admit that there is some lack of clarity regarding the actualising

[451] *Client Centred Therapy*, in *Harvard Mental Health Health Letter*, January 1, 2006, (authorless article). http://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletters/harvard_mental_health_letter/2006/january (10.12.15)
[452] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, pp.123-124.
[453] Cf. ROGERS, *Client-Centered Therapy*, p. 15.
[454] Cf. KIRCHENBAUM / HENDERSON, *The Carl Rogers Reader*, pp. xiv-xv.

tendency.[455] Christian thinkers argue that by aggressively promoting self-actualization, Rogers places the self at the centre of all human actions and contributes to egoism and self-centredness. They criticize Rogers' theory for being self-focused and neglects the ethical and social dimensions.[456]

Some criticise the person-centred approach on the goal and endpoint of the therapy. They take for granted that the goal of therapy is self-actualisation. But this view is not true. For a person-centred therapist, self-actualization is not a state or the goal of therapy. "Person-centred theory neither states nor implies that there is an ideal state which is to be the objective of therapy and/or personal growth."[457] Unlike Maslow, Rogers sees self-actualization as a process. It is not the peak or a point of stagnation. The person-centred therapy does not see it as a goal of therapy. Sometimes self-actualization can come in conflict with the actualizing tendency. But it is true that a fully-functioning person experiences directional growth, not a state. It is a process of becoming.[458]

4.2.5.2 Naïve and Seriously Lacking

Critics consider the person-centred approach to be naïve and lacking[459] because it operates without the traditional and established methods in therapy like transference and other unconscious methods. They argue that being empathic and congruent, the person-centred therapist sometimes denies the client the negative transference of their feelings. That prevents real and in-depth therapy. Being nice alone is not enough. Sometimes the therapist has to confront and challenge the person. Person-centred therapists say they do not emphasise it because it can affect relational depth in the therapy, which the person-centred approach holds as more important than healing. Transference takes place and is useful in a relatively superficial relationship, not in a deep relationship as in the case of the person-centred therapy.[460]

The academic circles largely neglected Rogers' works and contributions. Rogers was aware of this fact. The person-centred approach was not taken seriously in the universities

[455] Cf. Joanna L. RINGROSE, *The Concept of Actualising Tendency in Client-Centred Psychotherapy Theory and Practice* (unpublished article). Available online at: http://www.karunatherapy.co.uk/files/Actualising%20tendency.pdf (03.1.2016).
[456] Cf. Terry WATSON / Stanton L. JONES / Richard E. BUTMAN, *Person-Centered Therapy*, in Stanton L. JONES / Richard E. BUTMAN (Eds.), *Modern Psychotherapies. A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal*, Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2011, (pp. 260 -290), pp. 272-275.
[457] WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, p.126.
[458] Cf. Ibid., pp.125-126.
[459] See *Client Centred Therapy*, in *Harvard Mental Health Health Letter*.
[460] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points,* pp.141-142.

because they believed it to be unscientific and naïve and seriously lacking. Some think Rogers has a very trivial view of what is going on within a human person, his inner conflicts, emotions and his deep-seated desires and passions.[461] Rogers was disappointed at the neglect of his psychotherapy in academic circles. A year before his death he wrote: "In universities I feel we are under-represented, badly misunderstood and seen as superficial. We are under-represented partly because we constitute a threat to the academically-minded. We espouse the importance of experiential as well as cognitive learning. Such learning involves the risk of being challenged by the experience, and this can be frightening to one whose world is intellectually structured."[462]

Carl Rogers himself was agitated about being considered naïve. He wrote in a personal communication: "Because my writing is reasonably lucid and my ideas are less complex, does not mean that my ideas are less complex or profound than those whose writing is more difficult to understand."[463] Some critics of PCT say that it is very affective in nature dealing mainly with feelings and emotions and leaves out many important cognitive aspects of human life like sensing, perception, thinking, etc. C. H. Patterson argues that in reality the person-centred practitioner deals with the client as a whole and sees him as a person in his entirety.[464]

4.2.5.3 Is Non-Directive Approach Possible?

Non-directive approach is central to PCT. In fact, it is also called non-directive therapy. Critics say it is impractical and impossible. They argue that an incongruent client can never be an equal partner to the therapist and can never be in a position to direct himself. He needs help and that is the reason he seeks it. The therapist is bound by the ethics of his profession to help him; he actively uses his training, skills and expertise to do so. To be client-centred can only be a pretention.

Person-centred practitioners argue that it is a wrong understanding of PCA. Non-directivity in the first sense means the freedom and the right of the client to choose his own goals and to decide the direction of the therapy. Wilkins says: "The belief is that clients have insight

[461] Cf. WATSON / JONES / BUTMAN, *Person-Centered Therapy*, pp. 274-275.
[462] Carl R. ROGERS, *Carl Rogers on the Development of Person-Centered Approach* in *Person-Centered Review*, 1.3, (257-259), 1986, pp. 257-258.
[463] As quoted by Barry A. FARBER, in *The Psychotherapy of Carl Rogers. Cases and Commentary*, p. 2.
[464] Cf. C. H. PATTERSON, *The Therapeutic Relationship: Foundations for an Eclectic Psychotherapy*, Monterey, CA: Brook/Cole Publications: 1985, p. 214.

into themselves and their problems and are best placed to make the right choices at the right time. This is about trusting the actualising tendency."[465]

It is one of the earliest criticisms against the PCT therapy that the therapist is only a passive participant/listener who just listens to the client and reflects his feelings. It is true that the therapist is a listener - but a sharp and active listener. It is a way of being in which the therapist makes the client feel understood, helps him to deeper self-exploration and being in a relationship with him and accompanying him on his way. [466]

The major controversy regarding Rogers is to what extent can we rely on the individual's ability to guide his own growth and to what extent is outside help required? Take, for example, the situation of a person in a ditch or mire, desperately looking for help to come out. In such a situation is it not normal to throw a piece of rope or a pole at him so that with its help he can get out of it? Or should we just feel with him and 'empathically' watch him go down?

4.2.5.4 Over-simplistic Psychopathology

Critics of the person-centred approach say that it does not have a sound theoretical basis to explain psychopathology. They criticise that this approach does not have a method of diagnosis like psychoanalysis. Rogers traces all psychopathology to incongruence. That sounds too simple. One of the questions an ordinary person, who is not very familiar with psychology, often asks is: Can simple incongruence cause serious mental illness and personality disorders? Can incongruence be the cause of serious mental illnesses as Rogers claims?

It is true that the person-centred approach does not 'diagnose' because it treats the clients as persons and not as patients. Diagnosis labels and fixes the client. Then the therapist would try to focus more on the problem than on the person. That is totally contrary to the spirit of the person-centred approach, which, however, uses exploration to see the causes of incongruence in the person and assessment to ascertain the client.[467]

4.2.5.5 Over-optimism Regarding Human Nature?

Another criticism against the person-centred philosophy is the presumption that human beings are fundamentally good. Is it not too naïve and unduly optimistic to claim human

[465] WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, p.146.
[466] Cf. PATTERSON, *The Therapeutic Relationship*, pp. 213-217.
[467] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, pp.127-128.

nature to be fundamentally good in the face of all the atrocities committed by humans in the past and today?[468] One important point to be taken into account is that Rogers never claimed human beings to be innately good. Nor did he hold the view that humans are inherently evil. What he believed was that human beings have such basic characteristics like being positive, forward- moving, constructive, realistic and trustworthy.

It is true that Rogers did not hold human beings to be fundamentally hostile, destructive and evil, although some grow in that direction. Nor did he believe human being to be *tabula rasa* which has to be filled up. He did not hold human beings to be perfect beings, either. Carl Rogers spoke more about the psychological and biological nature of man than of his moral nature. He held the optimistic view that we are constructive; we tend to grow and move towards the perfection of our potential. Accordingly, the person-centred approach does not hold that we are innately good but that we human beings have intrinsic worth. This approach believes that it is human to have murderous and evil feelings. The therapy helps the person to accept these feelings, acknowledge them and to change them.[469]

Many argue that Rogers has largely neglected the problem of evil in his theory of human nature. Rollo May, himself a humanistic psychologist, was convinced that humanistic psychology failed to deal with the problem of evil: "The issue of evil – or, rather, the issue of not confronting evil – has profound, and to my mind, adverse effects on humanistic psychology. I believe it is the most important error in the humanistic movement."[470]

The critics of Rogers saw in him the stubbornness not to accept the problem of human destructiveness. They criticized him for not accepting the negative facts and realities of human life.[471]

4.2.5.6 Are the Conditions 'Necessary' and 'Sufficient'?

The person-centred approach has also been often challenged for holding on to Rogers' conditions as necessary and sufficient. While many accept that they are helpful and even necessary, they take exception to the view that they are sufficient. Rogers' three core conditions – congruence, UPR and empathy – have been widely accepted and appreciated.

[468] Cf. WATSON / JONES / BUTMAN, *Person-Centered Therapy*, pp. 270-276.
[469] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, pp.131-133.
[470] Rollo MAY, *The Problem of Evil: An Open Letter to Carl Rogers*, in *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, Vol. 22.3, (10-21), 1982, p.19.
[471] Cf. COHEN, *Carl Rogers. A Critical Biography*, p. 229.

At the same time, they argue that these conditions are not sufficient. Even among the person-centred practitioners there are differing views on this point and many do not hold them to be absolute. They are constantly being reconsidered and modified by them.[472]

4.2.5.7 PCA: A 20th Century North American White Male Perspective?

The person-centred approach has been criticised for being typically a 20th century Midwestern white male perspective.[473] This argument does not hold water today as it has spread in all the continents now. It has also undergone changes in line with different cultures. Even at the time of Rogers, the person-centred approach had gone far beyond the USA. He himself was instrumental in the spread of the person-centred approach.[474]

Some statements of Carl Rogers show that he was concerned about paying attention to the cultural setting. In 1951, following suggestions regarding the training of future counsellors and therapists, he said:

> It seems desirable that the student should have broad experiential knowledge of the human being in his cultural setting. … Such knowledge needs to be supplemented by experiences of living with or dealing with individuals who have been the product of cultural influences very different from those which have moulded the student. Such experience and knowledge often seem necessary to make possible the deep understanding of another.[475]

Most counselling and therapy forms originate in and are influenced by a particular culture and setting. But that does not mean that they are limited to that culture. In today's world all therapy forms spread their wings across the globe. Person-centred therapists, and, in fact, all therapists who engage in therapy with people of other cultures, have to take extreme care to take into account the culture of the client, the concept of person and self. He has to make himself familiar with cultural diversities and respect them.[476] Kirschenbaum is also aware of the criticism that PCT is too individualistic and the core conditions and non-directive approach makes it inappropriate for multi-cultural applications, especially in the non-western cultures.[477]

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[472] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, pp.135-136. [More on this topic: Status of the Conditions – 4.2.3.2].
[473] Cf. WATSON / JONES / BUTMAN, *Person-Centered Therapy*, pp. 264, 277.
[474] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, pp.137-138.
[475] ROGERS, *Client-Centered Therapy*, 1951, p. 437.
[476] Cf. Colin LAGO, *Counselling Across Difference and Diversity*, in *The Handbook of PCPC*, pp. 251-265.
[477] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 510.

4.2.5.8 PCT Lacks Depth and Rigour

One of the popular views about the person-centred therapy is that it is too mild and inoffensive and it can help only people who have minor adjustment problems in life, who need a listening ear and sympathy but it cannot really treat/deal with people who have serious and deep-rooted psychological problems. It is basically palliative in nature. It is no real psychotherapy. Its methods solely consist of listening, reflecting and mirroring. It is ineffective.[478]

The person-centred therapy uses 'reflecting' because it is an effort to make sure that the client is understood properly and fully with the meanings he holds for himself. The person-centred approach withholds one-sided interpretation or delving into the unconscious by the therapist. Reflection is about being non-directive. The aim is to understand the whole experience of the client, expressed and unexpressed. However, the person-centred approach uses therapeutic encounter to understand the client and to respond to the 'whole of the client's experience'. What is on the 'edge of awareness' can be perceived through therapeutic empathy, even if the client is not aware of it and fails to reveal it. For this the tool of 'reflection' is a great help.[479]

Client-centred therapy has also been often criticised for being not effective for treating serious psychological problems. Critics say it is useful for only a few problems and works with only some clients. However, person-centred therapy has proved successful and effective with clients with schizophrenia and psychotic problems.[480]

4.2.5.9 Rogers: an Advocate of the Spirit of 1960s and '70s?

After the Second World War, the western world was gripped by a spirit of liberalism, permissiveness, promiscuity and personal freedom which also gave rise to dramatic social changes, rise of hippy culture, sexual revolution, breakdown of traditional values, etc, which reached its climax in the 1960s and '70s. The movement was obviously anti-traditional and anti-authoritarian and it attacked tradition, religious beliefs, Church and anything that tended to limit personal freedom. It was also characterised by a new-found love for eastern religions, mysticism and spirituality.

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[478] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, pp.151-153.
[479] Cf. Ibid., pp.154-155.
[480] Cf. PATTERSON, *The Therapeutic Relationship: Foundations for an Eclectic Psychotherapy*, p. 214.

Rogers was well-accepted and appreciated by the young people. Young people flocked to Rogers and to his lectures and programmes. But the question remains: Did Rogers promote the liberal and libertine spirit of the '60s and '70s? His personal life and philosophy tend to suggest so. His many illegal affairs seem to suggest that Rogers was part of the sexual revolution of this age.[481]

His tendency to negate authority, religious beliefs, Church, and the stress he lays on the individual experience and personal freedom also give support to this argument. The tendency to see everything as relative and subjective - as self is the ultimate judge of everything- poses a great danger to society and the social fabric, church and any form of authority.[482] Was Rogers an anti-authoritarian narcissist in whose opinion the world was limited to the personal phenomenological perception of the individual? How far can we trust the individual person and his senses? Are there no realities beyond the perception of the individual? Rogers' psychotherapy will be further scrutinised in the following chapter.

Concluding Remarks

From this study of Carl Rogers and PCA until now it is clear the contribution of Rogers to the field of psychology and psychotherapy is enormous. No wonder, he is considered by many as one of the greatest psychologists of the 20th century[483] and the pioneer and father of the counselling movement.[484] The psychotherapy that Rogers developed may not today be as wide-spread or practised in its original form as it was in the last century. But it exists even today and has given birth to many branches or to 'tribes', who still trace their origin back to Carl Rogers.

Rogers has introduced and developed a personal manner of expressing and communicating in psychotherapy which was hitherto unknown. Even his critics do acknowledge his contributions to the field of psychotherapy: "Rogers' philosophy – listen to the client, treat him or her with respect, use empathy, try to get the client to find his or her own solutions – has become part of the fabric of therapy."[485]

[481] Cf. COHEN, *Carl Rogers. A Critical Biography*, pp.18-19.
[482] Cf. WATSON / JONES / BUTMAN, *Person-Centered Therapy*, p. 278.
[483] Cf. *Eminent Psychologists of the 20th Century* in *Monitor on Psychology*, Vol. 33.7, 2002, American Psychological Association (APA), p. 29. See also (for the same), *The Review of General Psychology*, Vol. 6.2, 2002, pp. 139-152.
[484] Cf. J. M. FUSTER, *Personal Counselling*, p. 27.
[485] COHEN, *Carl Rogers. A Critical Biography*, p. 235.

Rogers has given rise to a movement which has spread across the world and in different directions. For those who apply psychology in the pastoral field, Rogers remains even today a great model. Person-centred approach is one of the most frequently used methods in the pastoral field even today. Emphasising the healing power of relationship could be seen as Rogers' greatest contribution to humanity and to the field of pastoral counselling. However, further research and development in this direction is needed to make PCA more suitable and relevant to our times and our context.

Perhaps it is appropriate to wind up this section with a quote:

> For our technological age is increasingly impressed by new wonders of telecommunication, new drugs and cures, new hardware and software, new gadgets for work and leisure – the latest advances modern science and capitalism have to offer. Rogers' message points us in a different direction, at first glance much less exciting and more difficult: *The answer to most of our problems lies not in technology, but in relationships*. What really matters is trust in ourselves and others, in communication, in how we handle our feelings and conflicts, in how we find meaning in our lives.[486]

[486] KIRSCHENBAUM / HENDERSON, *The Carl Rogers Reader*, p. xvi. Emphasis mine.

CHAPTER 5

Person-Oriented and Person-Centred: Looking for a Combined Approach

Introduction

After having seen at some length two important approaches in Spiritual Direction and counselling/psychotherapy respectively, it is time to look for similarities and differences to see whether it is possible to develop a combined approach. This chapter looks for such similarities and differences between the two approaches and tries to integrate the common elements from both of these approaches.

As noted already in the first chapter, it is not an easy task to combine psychology/ psychotherapy with Christian theology/spirituality. But the many successful efforts in the recent times give us hope and encouragement. Efforts at an integration of Christian theology with different cultures and sciences have been made from the very beginning of Christianity. What would have been Christian theology without the Greek philosophy? Today one speaks also of Liberation Theology, Asian Theology, Indian Theology etc.

Psychology is relatively very young and efforts to integrate it into pastoral ministry are still going on, especially with reference to the diverse spiritual traditions of the Church. Over the last decades the cry for integration between counselling (psychotherapy) and spirituality has been louder. It has come from psychologists, therapists and from spiritual directors. Many of them argue that in order to give a holistic healing to the needy person a healthy integration is necessary.

In spite of the declining interest in organised religions, especially in the West, there has been a great interest in recent times in spirituality and its integration into psychotherapy and vice versa. Spirituality remains a fundamental aspect of human experience. A significant number of people have psychological problems related to spiritual experiences. Most therapists are not competent to deal with the spiritual issues of the clients and thereby they ignore a key element of clients' experience.[1] Numerous books and authors (some of them are quoted in this work) reveal that the spiritual dimension of persons cannot be neglected and that it has also to be taken into

[1] Cf. William WEST, *Psychotherapy and Spirituality. Crossing the Line between Therapy and Religion*, London: Sage, 2000, pp. 131-133.

account in counselling and therapy.[2] In pastoral circles a purely psychological approach is less appreciated in recent times as it tends to neglect the spiritual dimension of the person. The initial euphoria about a purely psychological approach has died down. It is not any more 'psychology alone.' There is a renewed interest in spiritual and religious issues in therapy. Therapists have come to the understanding that the spiritual and religious issues of a person cannot just be pushed aside in therapy.[3] Sometimes the spiritual and the psychological issues are so intimately intertwined that it is difficult to separate the spiritual from the secular. Moreover, they believe that spiritual issues also belong to the key aspect of human life.[4]

5.1 Is an Integration Possible?

To go into every aspect regarding the integration of spirituality into counselling and psychotherapy would be too broad, unrealistic and impractical. Therefore, the fundamental question that I ask here is: is it possible to integrate Salesian approach with person-centred approach? This is the subject matter of this chapter. This question is answered in the light of what I have dealt with so far in this work.

Since my attempt is intimately related to Salesian approach, to ascertain the thinking of some scholars and experts from this field, an internet survey was conducted.[5] Eighty-two persons responded to the survey. Most of those who took the survey were familiar with Salesian spirituality and engaged in some form of ministry of guidance – counselling, pastoral counselling, spiritual direction, teaching etc. Some psychotherapists/psychologists were also part of the survey. The findings of the survey have also been incorporated into this chapter.

In the survey, most of those who follow Salesian spirituality, i.e, the spirituality of Francis de Sales, felt that it was possible to combine Salesian spirituality and counselling/psychotherapy. But invariably all of them had a word of caution regarding the integration of psychology in pastoral counselling. Salesian spirituality has a great potential for guiding people. Of those who

[2] Cf. P. Scott RICHARDS / Allen E.BERGIN, *A Spiritual Strategy for Counselling and Psychotherapy* (2nd Edition), Washington DC: American Psychological Association (APA), 2005, pp. 5-26. In this book, officially published by the APA, the authors, narrating many concrete examples and therapy cases, make a serious appeal for a theistic spiritual strategy.
[3] Cf. RICHARDS / BERGIN, *A Spiritual Strategy for Counselling and Psychotherapy* pp. 3-12.
[4] Cf. James M. NELSON, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality*, New York: Springer, 2009, pp. 490-491.
[5] The result of the survey is attached at the end of this work for reference.

were familiar with Salesian spirituality, 93.91% said that they used Salesian spirituality in their ministry of guidance/direction. [6]

The Church stands for the use of modern knowledge for helping persons, in so far as they don't go against the Gospel and the teaching of the Church.[7] William West, therapist and author, calls on the therapists to remove their prejudices about religion and spirituality, both positive and negative. He encourages them to familiarize themselves even with spiritual direction and the literature on spiritual guidance and pastoral care. They should not set aside the spiritual issues of the clients when it appears in therapy. There should be more openness in this regard. It is also important for therapists to discern the nature of spiritual experiences. Some of them are sometimes falsely equated with madness by psychologists/therapists. A therapist should be able to differentiate between spiritual direction, pastoral care, counselling and psychotherapy and should be aware of the limits of his competence. He also suggests that the therapist themselves should be involved in a process of spiritual development.[8]

In spite of the moribund state of religion today, West is convinced that spirituality and spiritual experiences play a vital role for the psychological health of many clients. The therapists today should be culturally and spiritually equipped to work with the clients. He firmly believes that there is room for spirituality in today's therapy.[9] Another author, Peter Verhagen also believes that an integration both spirituality and psychotherapy is possible and desirable. Both spirituality and psychotherapy need to work together, as allies. He calls up on World Psychiatric Association to get rid of its narrow- minded, reductionist and materialistic approach and to see religion and spirituality as allies.[10]

5.2 Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers: A Comparison of Persons

Before I take a comparative look at the approaches of Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers, perhaps it is fitting to compare these two personalities. That may help one to understand better the similarities and differences in their approach from the point of view of their own lives. Persons can be better understood when we look at their family, background, early life social context,

[6] Refer to the survey for details.
[7] Cf. G.S 62. See also 1.1.2 (Hereafter reference to previous chapters will be made by referring to the numbering in the respective chapter. This is done to avoid unnecessary repetition. For example, here the footnote leads to Chapter 1 and the section 1.2).
[8] Cf. WEST, *Psychotherapy and Spirituality*, pp. 131- 133.
[9] Cf. Ibid., pp. 134- 135.
[10] Cf. Peter J. VERHAGEN, *Controversy or Consensus? Recommendations for Psychiatrists on Psychiatry, Religion and Spirituality* in *Asian Journal of Psychiatry* 2012, No. 5, pp. 355-357.

upbringing, education and the formative experiences. Knowing the person with his background is also central to any form of therapy and spiritual direction. A short biographical sketch and formative influences of both were dealt with in the previous chapters. Here we take only comparative look at them based on the previous chapters to see the similarities and differences.

5.2.1 Upbringing

In the preceding chapters, e.g., in chapters two and three, I have gone into in details of the life and ministry of Francis de Sales. Therefore, only some of the points relevant for our present consideration are discussed here below.

Francis de Sales was a product of his political and religious environment. His family, especially his mother influenced him deeply and positively. From early on, he was convinced of God's and his mother's love for him.[11] Likewise, Rogers was also greatly influenced by his family and upbringing – but the influences were more or less negative. The family was a fundamentalist protestant family. His parents were loving but very authoritarian. Unfortunately, he did not experience the freedom and appreciation that was needed for sound mental and spiritual growth. Her mother emphasized more the wretchedness of human beings than the love God had for them. They also tried to segregate themselves from the 'filthy', 'unholy' environment around them. This kind of upbringing had an effect on Rogers till the end of his life. This negative idea of God and religion was also partially responsible why Rogers left religion in his adolescent years.[12]

As their biographers note, both them had a passion for reading and a longing for knowledge from the younger days and both them were rather aloof in the school. They found more pleasure in reading than in playing around with other children.

As regards schooling and education, Francis de Sales and Rogers received excellent education. Thanks to the wealth of the family and their status as nobles, Francis received the best of education available at that time. He completed his studies with a double doctorate – in Canon Law and in Civil Law. His education had positive effect on Francis de Sales. He was open to new ideas, able integrate different views and able to form his own opinion on many issues. As narrated in the second chapter, at his younger days he came into contact with French Humanism, French Renaissance and Christian Humanism which was beginning to flourish in Savoy. All these had a profound influence on his preaching, writings and ministry of guidance. At the same

[11] See 2.1.1.3
[12] See 4.1.1.2

time Francis was also deeply aware of the dangers of humanism. His deeper contact with Humanism in Paris and the terrible crisis he experienced taught him that the spirit of secular humanism had to be tempered by faith and virtues.[13] Later in his writing he was able to integrate humanism into Christian theology and spirituality in the light of his own study and personal experience.

Rogers also had good opportunities for education. Rogers was a very good student at different colleges and universities and completed his studies with Doctorate. As a professor Rogers was very much loved and valued by his students. Many students from outside universities would gather to listen to his lectures and talks. He immediately established good rapport with young people and students. There were many students under his supervision. Rogers received his greatest satisfaction from his students in the graduate seminars and under his supervision.[14]

5.2.2 Personal Traits

If one looks Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers - their lives, work and personal qualities - one is struck by the great similarity that one finds between the two. Both of them are very significant personalities in their own fields, have made great contribution to the field of spiritual direction and counselling respectively. Their ideas were to some extent revolutionary, too. Francis de Sales tried, at a time of religious hatred, violence and animosity, to work his way through love, friendliness, gentleness and his optimistic outlook. Rogers emerged at a time when psychotherapy was getting established in the western world. He helped in establishing the 'third force' as response to psychoanalysis and behaviourism.

Both of them had in common a very kind and positive approach to human beings, a spirit of humanism, and above all, a heart for the other, especially for suffering human beings. Their personal lives were characterised by gentleness, patient listening, non-judgemental attitude, peaceable and peace-loving nature. Both cherished love of solitude, love of nature and possessed a capacity to wonder at nature. They were both creative and productive, and wrote voluminously.

Looking at their personal traits, both of them were very loving and loveable personalities. As a person, Rogers was totally accepting, warm, understanding but also tenacious and determined, too.[15] Rogers was also a man of determination with a defiant will to continue in spite of setbacks.

[13] See 2.1.2.1
[14] See 4.1.2.2
[15] See 4.1.2.1.6

When his new therapy and his earlier books were not met with the expected success but were dismissed with scorn from the academic circles, Rogers was not willing to give up his efforts. He kept on working until he found acceptance and success.

In both of them, one notices a certain sense of disenchantment with the existing system and the desire to work towards improvement, even if they had to meet with resistance and rejection. Rogers was unhappy with the existing system of psychotherapy and the methods it used which, he believed, was reductionistic and manipulative. He felt the need of starting a new form of psychotherapy. In the same way, Francis de Sales also wanted to reform the Church in the spirit of the Council of Trent, although he had to face many severe objections to it, even from his own colleagues. His call to personal renewal was met with stiff resistance from the priests and religious. In order to make religious life possible for the poor girls and the widows, he started the Visitation Order. He also wanted to give a new dimension to spiritual direction basing it on love and personal freedom. This was totally at variance with the existing practices.

Interestingly, both men experienced severe personal crisis sometime in their lives that changed their perspective to life and influenced the rest their lives. As student in Paris in 1586 Francis experienced his severest crisis in life.[16] Rogers experienced the most serious crisis of his life in 1949 in Chicago after a botched up therapy with a severely schizophrenic woman.[17] Francis overcame his crisis through total surrender to God in prayer. Rogers, on the other hand, turned to a therapist friend. Both emerged stronger and more willing to accept themselves after the crisis.

Francis de Sales and Rogers, both have left their influence on various fields that is felt even today. Francis' views on theology, spirituality and his insights on spiritual direction and guidance continue to have its influence even today. So, too, Rogers does have an enormous impact on various fields like psychology, psychotherapy, education, social work, peace movements, nursing and management. Rogers' psychology has its influence in Christian circles, too, especially in the field of pastoral counselling. Many Christian thinkers and ministers believe that the person-centred approach is well compatible with Christian ministry and is easy to learn without rigid psychological training.[18]

[16] See 2.1.2.2.6 (All the details of the crisis, the occasion, his response etc. are dealt with here)
[17] See 4.1.2.3.2
[18] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 215.

5.2.3 Prolific Writing

Another important characteristic that both of them possessed, was their capacity to use language effectively – both in speech and in writing. Francis de Sales was a master of French language. He was very creative in his writing. He would write to people especially in his letters of spiritual direction, as though he were talking personally to the person. His letters were very personal and exuded warmth and love. All his works display his powerful but at same time persuasive use of language, exuding charity and openness, his wonderful use of imageries from nature and literature and concrete examples from day-to-day life. His language was characterised by simplicity of style, elegance and grace. Although some of the works of Francis de Sales are lost,[19] most of them are available today in different languages. All his available works form 26 volumes in French known as the Annecy Edition.[20] A German translation of all his works is available, too.[21] His works are even today relevant and Francis de Sales is considered one of the best spiritual authors of the Church.[22]

Like Francis de Sales, Rogers was also a prolific writer. All of his works are available today. He gave numerous talks and training programmes around the world. Being a prolific writer, he persuasively brought out his ideas and concepts through his sixteen books and more than two hundred scientific articles.[23] He was also a pioneer in using non-print media for the use of therapy. He made tapes and videos of his therapy sessions for the sake of scientific research. Carl Rogers was also known as an educator and speaker and he always attracted a large audience.[24]

In the works of Francis de Sales and Rogers one comes to know of their love of nature. Wonderful examples from nature are used profusely in their works, more especially in Francis de Sales.

5.2.4 Masters of Empathic Listening

Francis de Sales and Rogers were excellent listeners. Their listening was characterised by empathy and understanding. Francis de Sales spent hours in the confessional welcoming all

[19] Only some of his over 20,000 letters of spiritual direction are available today.
[20] All the works of Francis de Sales are published in 26 volumes (plus one Index) as *Oeuvres de Saint François de Sales de évêque et prince de Genève, ed complète Annecy 1892 -1932*. Generally known as the Annecy Edition (AE/OAE) in the English speaking world. It is generally known as OEA in the German speaking world.
[21] See *Deutsche Ausgabe der Werke des Hl. Franz von Sales* (DA/DASal).
[22] Cf. Franz WEHRL, *Die Schriften des hl. Franz von Sales. Eine literarhistorische und quellenkundliche Studie*, Würzburg: Echter, 2005, pp. 1-9.
[23] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM / HENDERSON, *The Carl Rogers Reader*, p. xi.
[24] Cf. Ibid., p. xii. (See also 4.1)

people and listening to their problems. He also spent hours guiding his directees (spiritual children) and giving conferences to the Visitations Sisters. Being a very busy person in his capacity as bishop, preacher and author he could not find enough time for personal encounter with every spiritual child. Writing letters of spiritual direction was also one of the ways through which he directed many.[25]

As confessor, Francis exhibited enormous listening skills and power to speak to the hearts of the penitents.[26] He made them feel welcome, treated them with extreme gentleness and warmth. His empathy with the penitents, his capacity to go down to their level, his gentleness towards the sinners, his listening skills and his almost supernatural skills to understand the human nature helped him to be an excellent and most sought-after confessor that time. To encourage his penitents and to help them to open up, he used to say to them: "Don't make any difference between your heart and mine; I'm yours, our souls are one and equal."[27]

In the language of psychotherapy today one could day that he was very therapeutic in his treating of people and was blessed with (or he acquired through his effort and diligence) the capacity to heal people. He knew how to listen, what to talk, how to talk and how to instruct them without bossing over or moralising them.

Rogers is most known for his listening capacities. He gave therapeutic listening a new dimension called 'Rogerian Listening'. Two outstanding qualities were visible in Rogers during the early years of his work as therapist. First, he exhibited an unimaginable capacity to listen empathically; second, his ability to encourage independent, creative work among his staff and students through his empathy. Rogers showed tremendous understanding and appreciation of the other person and trusted the other as a separate individual capable of self-direction and worthy of trust.[28]

Rogers could concentrate on a person and listen to him with full attention. Rogerian listening or active listening has been popularised because of this quality of his. In active listening the listener shares to the speaker his understanding of the speaker, his feelings and emotions, not just his words. It also respects the uniqueness and individuality of the client and tries to see his experiences from his frame of reference.[29] Wherever Rogers went, he attracted young people

[25] See 3.2.
[26] See 2.2.1.2 ff. See also 3.2 ff. ('ff' here means the following sections. It does not refer to page numbers).
[27] As quoted by Jane de Chantal, *Testimony*, p. 127.
[28] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 172. (See also 4.1.2.3.1)
[29] See 4.1.2.4.2

around him. He respected them, listened to them and believed in their capacities. Such an attitude in him attracted the young to him and they felt at home with him.[30]

5.2.5 Skilful Integration and Synthesis

The fine ability to integrate and to synthesize different ideas and views, retaining their originality and without losing one's identity, is one of the qualities that shaped the work and contribution of Francis de Sales and Rogers. Rogers was a man of synthesis. Rogers developed his psychology and his method of therapy integrating ideas from different philosophers and psychologists. He borrowed many ideas from them and modified them to suit his method of therapy. His idea of self, concept of self-actualisation, unconditional positive regard etc. are best examples of his integrative approach. These concepts were not originally invented by Rogers; but he developed them in his own way.[31]

Influences of Otto Rank's relationship therapy are clearly visible in Rogers. One of the ideas that influenced Rogers most was that the therapist is not himself the director of therapy but only a supporter or helper.[32] Rogers is also indebted to Rollo May for his ontology and to Abraham Maslow for his concept of self –actualisation. As already seen, Rogers was less interested in theory but was very practical and empirical. He was gifted with a very pragmatic approach.[33] He was also basically open to the idea that someone else could also try to use and modify his theory and therapy to a different frame work.

Francis de Sales, in a similar way, was able to perfectly integrate humanism into his spirituality and spiritual direction without diluting Christian values and theological basis. He accepted what was good in secular humanism, modified it and developed his own humanism based on a sound Christian theology. In his writings we find abundant reference to the Greek literature, the Fathers of the Church, doctors of the Church and the literature of his time.

5.2.6 Personal Touch, Spontaneity, Gentleness and Openness

What helped Francis de Sales and Rogers dear to people and stood them in good stead to win the hearts of many people through their encounter was their personal approach that radiated warmth, friendliness, openness and spontaneity. In his preaching Francis de Sales could speak to the

[30] See 4.1.2.5.7
[31] See 4.1.2.1.3- 4.1.2.1.6
[32] See 4.1.2.1.5
[33] Cf. KIRSCHENBAUM, *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, pp. 234-235.

hearts of the people. He relied on spontaneity and personal approach. Regarding preaching he says, "*The supreme art is to have no art***.** Our words must be set aflame, not by shouts and unrestrained gestures, but by inward affection. They must issue from our heart, rather than from our mouth. *We must speak well, but heart speaks to heart, and the tongue speaks only to men's ears*." [34]

Francis de Sales was also a person who could freely enter into personal contact with people. His gentleness and pleasing manners attracted people to him. They found it difficult to turn away from his compelling personal characteristics like gentleness, patience, warmth and empathy. Francis knew well the magnetic power of these qualities or virtues. Those who came to him and got to know him, found him irresistibly personal and welcoming. He was one of the most person-oriented spiritual directors. His success lay in the fact that he was very personal and he could orient himself to every person and to his particular situation. Each one was guided according to his or her need and the way that suited the person and for the period of time they needed his help.[35]

This quality of personal touch and spontaneity is also seen very much in Rogers. These qualities attracted many to his talks, lectures and training programmes. Everyone felt that he was speaking to him personally. This is true even in the case of reading the works of Rogers – the reader feels that Rogers is speaking to him directly. It is very clear and Francis de Sales and Rogers not only practised therapeutic qualities in their spiritual direction and psychotherapy, but their whole lives were characterized by them.

5.2.7 Differences in Person

I have mentioned here (only) some of the major similarities in the personalities of Francis de Sales and Rogers. In spite of these similarities, there exist many major noticeable differences. These differences are bound to occur as they come from two different fields which are apparently contradictory.

Francis de Sales was a deeply religious and spiritual person throughout his life. As stated earlier, Rogers left institutional religion in his younger days. Although Rogers believed in some spiritual

[34] Francis de SALES, *On the Preacher and Preaching*, p. 64. (See 2.3.2.5.1) Italics mine. *AE*, XII, « Le souverain artifice c'est de n'avoir point d'artifice. Il faut que nos paroles soyent enflammees, non pas par des cris et actions desmesurees, mais par l'affection intérieure; il faut qu'elles sortent du cœur plus que de la bouche. On a beau dire, mais le cœur parle au cœur, et la langue ne parle qu'aux oreilles» p. 321.
[35] See 3.2.1.2.1

and transcendental realities towards the end of his life, he was not a religious person and never acknowledged to be one. It is also interesting to note how they both overcome the most difficult crisis in their lives: while Francis de Sales turns to prayer and total surrender to God for healing, Rogers takes recourse to therapy for the same.

There was something of a mystery around the person of Rogers. Although many people were close to him, no one knew him intimately. There was a part of life which he kept only for himself. Brian Thorne, his friend and colleague, says:

> To his colleagues Carl was warm, accepting, the attentive listener, the conscientious scholar, the trusting delegator of responsibility. He was, in short, the perfect empathiser who could move around in other people's skins and feel at home there. But who was he? One of his colleagues of those days, T.M. Tomlinson, put it succinctly: 'He is one of the most important people in my life. I hardly know him'… It would seem from this revealing comment that, despite his warmth and empathy, Carl was at this time essentially aloof and not much drawn to self- disclosure. [36]

One the moral side, Rogers has been accused of deliberately neglecting his duties to his wife towards the end of her life for the sake of following his own ways of pleasure. He has also been accused of promiscuous and adulterous relationships. One is shocked at his craving for sex and pleasures in the later years of life. One tends to ask oneself: is yielding to temptation the best way of overcoming it? Many aspects of Rogers' personal life can by no means be justified. He was also an alcoholic. Critics ask whether he has been a psychological wreck lost in adultery, promiscuity, alcoholism and lack of self-control.[37] The attempt here is not to judge Rogers or to condemn him, but is to see the reality critically.

5.3 Looking for a Common Ground

I have already described some of the major similarities in the personalities of Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers. Now it is time to look for common elements in their respective approaches that would serve as a foundation for a combined approach to pastoral counselling – the main purpose of this study.

Without a common ground one cannot speak of integration. To integrate the approach of Francis de Sales with that of Rogers (or vice versa), requires some common elements – in their theory and praxis. Therefore, in the following pages I make an attempt to point out some of the

[36] As quoted by THORNE, *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment*, p. 64.
[37] See 4.1.2.5.8

outstanding similarities in their approaches. I also argue that an integration of PCA into spiritual direction and pastoral counselling in the spirit of St Francis de Sales is possible on the following common elements found in both of them.

5.3.1 Humanistic Anthropology

After a close reading of Rogers and Francis de Sales, I have come to the conclusion that there are many common features in their anthropology. Regarding the nature of human being, both are influenced by humanism which lays emphasis on the worth and dignity of human being. Rogers' anthropology is characterised by an aggressive optimism. Francis de Sales also has a very positive idea of human being and has an optimistic outlook towards human nature. His optimism is at the same time, is more tempered and realistic through Christian theology.

Francis de Sales is a humanist but he acknowledges that human nature has both positive as well as negative elements. To neglect this fact would be closing one's eyes to the reality. Man has to take into account this reality and acknowledge that he is prone to evil. He has not only to assert his strength but also to admit his weakness in order to reinforce the former and to fight against the latter. Human beings are not perfect and no humanism can negate the reality of sin, evil and human weakness. That would be illusionary. Psychiatrists today believe the readiness to accept oneself, which necessarily includes the readiness to accept one's weakness and failures, is central to the healing process.[38] Francis was well aware of the evil and the imperfection present in himself and in all human beings.[39]

Three centuries before Rogers, Francis was familiar with the workings of the human mind. He was a humanist of the human heart. His learning and his familiarity with humanism helped him to understand human beings better. He was, one could say, very familiar with the 'psychology of his time.' Pope Benedict XVI says, "In reading his book on the love of God and especially his many letters of spiritual direction and friendship one clearly perceives that St Francis was well acquainted with the human heart."[40]

Just as Rogers used his anthropology to help his clients, Francis de Sales used his knowledge of human beings to guide anyone who sought his help – especially by infusing hope and confidence

[38] Cf. Raphael BONELLI, *Wir sind alle unschuldig! Wirklich?* in *Psychologie Heute*, 2013, No.12. pp. 63-66. In this article Dr Bonelli and well known Viennese doctor and psychiatrist portrays the dangers of denying our fault and the tendency to hold the other as responsible. He makes an earnest appeal to accept one's weaknesses and failures without which no healing is possible.
[39] See 2.1.2.2.3 and 2.1.2.2.4
[40] Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience on 2 March 2011, in Vatican.

in them and not in judging or condemning them. And Francis enjoyed doing it and found meaning in it. As a humanist, he showed great understanding for human situation. Pope Pius IX called him 'the wisest guide of souls.'[41] Although it was a difficult task Francis enjoyed it; he did it with love. In his own words, "The guidance of persons individually is a difficult task, I admit, but one which brings comfort as in the case of people gathering crops or picking grapes, who are happiest when they have plenty of work to do and heavy burdens to carry."[42]

Pope Benedict XVI also acknowledges that Francis de Sales is a Christian humanist who perfectly combines humanism with Christian spirituality: "St Francis de Sales is an exemplary witness of Christian humanism; with his familiar style, with words which at times have a poetic touch, he reminds us that human beings have planted in their innermost depths the longing for God and that in him alone can they find true joy and the most complete fulfilment."[43]

Francis de Sales is considered a humanist because he believed strongly in human freedom, freedom of the will, capacity of the human soul to raise itself to God and in the glory and responsibility of human beings as the crown of creation.[44] Francis de Sales at all times emphasized the grandeur as well as littleness of man. All that he has, he has received from God. God has abundantly blessed by Him. He is nothing before God. His nothingness without God makes every human being weak, fragile and prone to evil and at the same time his grandeur with the help of God makes him gifted, unique and able to turn to his Creator.[45]

Carl Rogers is one of the forerunners of humanistic psychology. Humanistic psychology values human beings as persons of worth, as creative and as growth-oriented beings. Perhaps Rogers prized human person more than any other psychologist. He believed in the inner capacities of the human beings, especially the tendency to actualise. He believed in the capacity of human beings to heal himself, provided appropriate conditions are provided. He was optimistic that human beings are always growth-oriented. Later in his life he believed that human beings are also capable of transcendence. At the same time, Rogers has been criticised for being over-optimistic about human beings and neglecting the negative side of human beings.

[41] Pope Pius IX, *Dives in Misericordia Deus*.
[42] Francis de Sales in the Preface to *IDL*, p. 29.
[43] Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience on 2 March 2011, in Vatican
[44] Cf. Francis de SALES, *TLG*, Bk. 1, Chs. 1-5, pp. 21-34. In these five chapters Francis de Sales deals with many philosophical, psychological and anthropological matters like the human will, the powers of the will, sense appetites, emotions, the role of love etc.
[45] See 3.3.4

Regina Bäumer and Michael Plattig argue, to the rescue of Rogers, that Rogers' picture of human being was developed in sharp contrast to the fundamentalist evangelical picture of human beings that he experienced at home in his private familial circles at that time. It could be seen as a reaction of Rogers and should be understood as such. They are also of the opinion that Christian theology has over the years over-emphasized the aspect of sin, with more negative consequences as positive. Rogers' idea of man is very radical in its positive direction. It is a challenge and provocation the positive or the good in human beings to accept and to appreciate.[46] Similar views have been expressed by those biographers who are sympathetic towards Rogers; for example like Kirschenbaum and Thorne.

Both Christian and Rogerian anthropology rest on a common ground: both believe in the basic goodness of human beings – in the capacity of human beings to grow, develop and to love. In the anthropology of Francis de Sales, it is a God-infused quality in a human being and without God's help he is prone to go astray. Christian theology believes in the need of grace as human nature is fallen, but redeemed. Focusing on sin does not bring healing. But focusing on God's grace and mercy brings healing and redemption.[47] Rogers' positive approach to human beings can easily be offset by his aggressive optimism that negates the weakness and fallen nature of human beings. This exposes his anthropology to the danger of being unrealistic and presumptuous. It is the subjective experience of most human beings to experience weakness, sin, evil and helplessness in themselves. Rogers, who lays so much worth on subjective experience, fails to notice this aspect of human experience.

Even though Rogers has been severely criticized for his aggressive and unrealistic optimism regarding human beings, his affirmation that 'Man is a Man, not a Beast'[48] contains a great truth that we can never neglect. In spite of all his failures, weaknesses, evil committed, he remains a human person. Rogers believes, given the opportunities, he can be gained back to the good. He is basically trust-worthy and growth-oriented. Therefore, counselling and therapy should begin from the foundation that the client is a human being - whatever the evil has done - and that he has the capacity to change and grow, when the proper therapeutic climate is provided. The underlying truth behind this assumption is the basic goodness of man and the tendency in him to regain it when he has lost it.

[46] Cf. BÄUMER / PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele*, pp. 91-92.
[47] Cf. Christian E. BRUGGER, *Psychology and Christian Anthropology*, in *Edification: Journal of the Society of Christian Psychology*, Vol. 3, No.1, 2009, pp 5-18.
[48] ROGERS, *The Nature of Man*, in *Pastoral Psychology*, p. 23 (See also 4.2.1.9.2).

Good spiritual direction or pastoral counselling, therefore, makes effort to provide the directee this climate of growth. A person who seeks help is accepted as a positive, constructive person and is enabled to grow to the fullness of his stature. Francis de Sales argues that human beings have the will and power to respond to God's love. He says, "It is the greatest gift to us that without end we can grow more and more in the love of our God while this frail life shall last."[49]

In conclusion, both Francis de Sales and Rogers were influenced by humanism. Rogers followed a humanism that convinced of the absolute goodness of human beings, to a great extent neglecting the negative side of human beings. Francis de Sales, on other hand thought in line with Christian revelation and theology that human being are created in the image and likeness of God and are good.[50] But human beings lost the original nature and have been redeemed by Christ. We need God's grace to be in the redeemed state. Francis de Sales believed that relationship or spiritual companionship can be a great help in this process of regaining our original goodness.

On the basis on the considerations above, it is important to note that in pastoral counselling one should not reject or 'write off' anyone – everyone is a child of God with capacity for growth. Even the worst sinner can be a saint, because he is a child of God and is basically good and has the potential in him to get back to this original nature. This positive and optimistic approach should be a fundamental concern in pastoral counselling.

5.3.2 Primacy of Love

Does love play a role in person-centred therapy? Does Rogers speak about love in his therapy at all? As noted already, one of the colleagues of Rogers, Oliver H. Brown, proposed the term 'love' to refer to UPR, but this proposal was rejected for the danger of being misunderstood.[51]

Love does play a role in psychotherapy. Love plays a central role in person-centred therapy.[52] The role played by love has been acknowledged by many experienced person-centred therapists.

[49] SALES, *TLG*, Bk. 3, Ch.1, p. 149.
[50] Cf. Genesis 1:31.
[51] See 4.2.3.1.4.2
[52] Cf. Stephen A. DIAMOND, *Essential Secrets of Psychotherapy*: *What's Love Got to Do With It? : How Therapy Helps* in *Psychology Today*, Online Version, Posted 30.09.2011. www.psychologytoday.com/blog/evil-deeds/201109/essential-secrets-psychotherapy-whats-love-got-do-it-part-one. See also part II published on 21.10.2011: *Essential Secrets of Psychotherapy: What's Love Got to Do With It? Part Two*: https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/evil-deeds/201110/essential-secrets-psychotherapy-whats-love-got-do-it-part-two and a third article: *What's Love Got to Do With It?: How Therapy Helps* in *Psychology Today*, (Online Version, September 27, 2012), https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/evil-deeds/201209/whats-love-got-do-it-how-therapy-helps (06.1.16).

In the opinion of Brian Thorne, it is ultimately love that brings about healing in person-centred therapy. He says:

> It is my conviction, as I have argued earlier, that the work of the therapist is not essentially concerned with dispensing wisdom or expertise or even with the deploying of skills. It is more to do with embodying values consistently no matter how great the client's confusion, resistance or even hostility. For me, this means not only that I attempt to demonstrate unambiguously the unique value that I place on an individual life, *but also my conviction that in the last analysis it is love with understanding that heals*.[53]

Robert Kugelmann, quoting Jean-Luc Marion, French philosopher and psychologist, says that there are certain phenomena which can know only through love. They are beyond the realm of human beings, access to which is possible only through charity or love. Any attempt to integrate faith and science should, therefore, follow the lead of love: "When we practice our psychology with charity, then something of integration takes place"[54]

There are other person-centred therapists like Sheila Hugh and Paul Wilkins who believe that UPR can be understood as love. Therapeutic relationship is a loving relationship. Quoting Tudor and Worrall, Sheila Hugh believes, "UPR demands, legitimises and makes room for a kind of loving within the process of therapeutic relationships."[55] Hugh argues that UPR can also be understood as gentleness: "We can do the same thing with gentleness - a sub-item of unconditional positive regard, which could be seen as careful use of words, and/or a soft voice."[56] In my Survey 92.77% agreed that gentleness is a useful attitude in pastoral counselling.[57]

Paul Wilkins, another therapist and prolific author in the person–centred orientation, believes UPR is required to replace the self-less love that is gradually disappearing from the human society today: "Is the unconditional positive regard of a therapist necessary to replace the selfless love which may previously have been offered elsewhere? Arguably, there is a recognition of the value of something like unconditional positive regard to well-being and growth in the tenets of major religions. …'forgiveness' and compassion are at the heart of Christian (and other) belief.

[53] THORNE, *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment*, p. 55. Emphasis mine.
[54] Jean-Luc MARION as quoted by Robert KUGELMANN in *Psychology and Catholicism*, p. 422.
[55] Keith Tudor und Mike Worrall as quoted by Sheila HAUGH, *Kindness, Concern and Love*, Presentation at European Person-Centred Symposium, Prague, April 24-25, 2014.
[56] Sheila HAUGH, *Kindness, Concern and Love*. (Presentation at European Person –Centred Symposium, Prague, April 24-25, 2014. Unpublished material).
[57] See Survey, Q. 10. (57.83 % found gentleness useful *very often* in guidance).

If these are to be offered to their fullest extent, perhaps there is a requirement for acceptance of the other on the part of the bestower."[58]

Brian Thorne argues that to provide the client with the therapeutic conditions as demanded by PCA and to offer him 'presence' is, in effect, to love them unconditionally. "I recognised instantly that to offer clients the kind of relationship characterised by the presence of the core conditions was, in practice, to love them."[59] Experienced person-centred therapists UPR as an aspect of diaconia or agape. Wilkins, for example, believes that UPR is an aspect of love or agape, but it means much more in therapy:

> Love or agape is what is offered by a therapist extending the facilitative conditions, and that this reflects the wisdom of thousands of years of human experience and the conclusions of 'great philosophers of various times and cultures' ... However, unconditional positive regard is only one of these facilitative conditions … *It seems, therefore, that unconditional positive regard is not the same as agape, but is an aspect of it - if undoubtedly an essential aspect and perhaps the most important*.[60]

Different forms of psychotherapy recognise the value of love without directly acknowledging it. Inability to love and to be loved is a serious psychological disability. Even in psychoanalysis the importance of love is taken for granted. Erich Fromm says:

> Whatever complaints the neurotic patient may have, whatever symptoms he may present, are rooted in his inability to love, if we mean by love a capacity for the experience of concern, responsibility, respect, and understanding of another person and the intense desire for that other person's growth. Analytic therapy is essentially an attempt to help the patient gain or regain his capacity for love. If this aim is not fulfilled, nothing but surface changes can be accomplished.[61]

To love and to be loved is a basic human need. All humans seek love. They want to be accepted, appreciated, valued, recognized and want to love. In the modern society many are sadly deprived of love. Many receive it neither from their families, their friends nor from other relationships. Many turn to therapy to seek this 'deprived' love or to overcome the neurosis caused by lack of love.[62]

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[58] Paul WILKINS, *Unconditional Positive Regard reconsidered*, in *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, Vol. 28. 1, (23-36), 2001, p. 25.
[59] THORNE, *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment*, p.75.
[60] WILKINS, *Unconditional Positive Regard reconsidered*, p. 25. Emphasis mine.
[61] Erich FROMM, *Psychoanalysis and Religion*, New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1950, pp. 86-87.
[62] Cf. Stephen A. DIAMOND in *Essential Secrets of Psychotherapy*: *What's Love Got to Do With It? How Therapy Helps* in *Psychology Today*, Online Version, September 2012, https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/evil-deeds/201209/whats-love-got-do-it-how-therapy-helps (06.1.16).

In the opinion of Stephen Diamond real love means unconditional acceptance, appropriate limit-setting and the capacity for concern, empathy and warmth. Not receiving this kind of real love can impede the growth of a human being. People who have not received this love have also difficulty later in receiving love and being loved – a problem known as intimacy inhibition in psychotherapy.[63]As Psychologist Theodor Reik remarked, "Work and love; these are the basics. Without them there is neurosis."[64]Most psychologists and psychotherapists acknowledge the value and the need of love in human life.[65] Accepting a person means also accepting that he is a person capable of loving and being loved. Every human being has this capacity. It is also one of the important goals in spiritual direction to make the directee feel valued, accepted and loved. This motive can be clearly seen in Francis de Sales and in his guidance.[66]

Diamond believes that psychotherapy, by its very nature, is love. It is spiritual love. It is love of all that is human. It is love of humanity - with bright and dark sides: "Love even of the dark and tragic, seemingly sometimes senseless side of life. And this is, for want of a better term, a *spiritual love*. Psychotherapy is, for these reasons, an essentially *spiritual process*."[67]

Psychosynthesis therapists Ann Gila and John Firman also argue that Psychotherapy is a special type of love. It is love characterised by deep empathy and respect. Love facilitates even self-actualisation. Love is one of the essential needs of human life which psychotherapy has to provide. And all approaches of psychotherapy can be seen as different forms of offering this healing love:

> It appears that all these different approaches perceive, though from quite different vantage points that *human being flourishes within an empathic, respectful communion with others, a communion that we believe can be called 'love'*. It seems that it is love that facilitates the innate drive of synthesis, wholeness and actualization; love that supports the human journey over the course of a lifetime; love that allows the human spirit to thrive. Looking even more closely at the operation of this love, however, we can see that this is a particular type of love. This is a love that can see and embrace whole of who we are - *in short, an empathic love*.[68]

[63] Cf. Stephen A. DIAMOND in *Essential Secrets of Psychotherapy*: *What's Love Got to Do With It?*
[64] As quoted by Stephen A. DIAMOND, in *Essential Secrets of Psychotherapy*: *What's Love Got to Do With It?*
[65] Cf. M. Scott PECK, *The Road Less Travelled. A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth*, Ebury Publishing, Kindle Edition, 2012. Part II of this bestseller from the well-known psychotherapist titled 'Love' treats this topic in detail from a psychological and spiritual point of view.
[66] See 3.2.1.1.3.1- 3.2.1.1.3.3
[67] Stephen A. DIAMOND, *What's Love Got to Do With It?.*
[68] Cf. Ann GILA / John FIRMAN, *A Psychotherapy of Love: Psychosynthesis in Practice*, New York: State University of New York Press, 2010, pp. 2-3. Emphasis mine.

It is true that Rogers does not speak explicitly about love in his therapy. But living out the three core conditions – empathy, UPR and congruence – could be understood as concrete expression of love. In Christian sense, it can be understood as love in action.[69] Gila and Firman believe that Rogers meant in effect therapeutic love or empathic love when he spoke of unconditional positive regard.[70]

Francis de Sales was well-aware of the power of love and he showed it in his life. As bishop of Geneva, Francis wanted to re-conquer diocese Geneva from the Calvinists. He knew only one way how it could be possible. He said, "We must bring down the walls of Geneva with charity; we must invade by *charity* … It is by hunger and thirst, endured not by our adversaries but by ourselves, that we must repulse the enemy…"[71] Francis knew that no other weapon was more powerful than love 'to conquer' people. That was the weapon used by Jesus. 'Everything by love, nothing by force' was dictum in dealing with people. This attitude - of relying on the power of love, charity and gentleness - is a hallmark of Salesian approach, which should not be neglected in any form of pastoral counselling which bases itself of Salesian spirituality.

Francis' approach is also characterised by giving enough room for personal freedom and the liberty of spirit. Unlike the spiritual directors of his time, he was neither a taskmaster nor a demanding disciplinarian, who would force obedience upon his directees. He appreciated his directees when they accepted his instruction and guidelines; but he did not want them to do so in a subservient manner. Francis did not want his directees to feel compelled, constrained or forced. The relationship and friendship should be based on freedom, liberty, independence and maturity. As noted earlier in this work, he told Madam de Chantal that love and not fear should be the reason for her obedience and her course of action.[72] In his guidance of Madam Brulart it is very clearly visible how Francis de Sales exudes therapeutic qualities like warmth, openness, congruence and genuineness.[73]

A method of pastoral counselling that bases itself on PCA and the spirituality of Francis de Sales has to be based on love and personal freedom. Pastoral counselling, because of its diaconal nature, has to express itself in concrete form of love that embraces all aspects of human life – a love that is expressed in feelings, emotions and gestures. It is a love that is concrete in its expression – with readiness to help and to accompany and to make sacrifices for the client. This

[69] Cf. 1Cor.13: 4-13.
[70] Cf. Ann GILA / John FIRMAN, *A Psychotherapy of Love: Psychosynthesis in Practice*, p. 5.
[71] RAVIER, *Francis de Sales: Sage and Saint,* p. 57. See also 2.2.1
[72] Cf. SALES, *Selected Letters*, p. 67. See 3.4.3 for details.
[73] See 3.2.1.2.1- 3.2.1.2.2

love should take form in counselling/therapy as unconditional acceptance, kindness, gentleness and patience with respect for the other and his personal freedom. Finally, as Brian Thorne believes the therapist should also have the freedom and courage to love and to be loved.[74]

5.3.3 Importance of Relationship

One of the most important similarities between Salesian spirituality and person-centred approach is the emphasis placed on relationship. It is ultimately in a loving relationship characterised by empathy, unconditional acceptance and genuineness, that the person finds healing, strength and a new approach to life. In Francis de Sales this relationship is characterised by love, freedom, acceptance and gentleness.

5.3.3.1 Human Life is Relational

Salesian anthropology is basically relational.[75] Human beings are called to live in relationship with one another. It is in our relationships that we come to know ourselves and our fellow-beings better. A person who lives in isolation has very limited knowledge of himself and of other human beings. As Christians, we work out our salvation on earth in communion with others. The mutual relationship that exists between human beings reflects the Trinitarian relationship. Human beings are called to work out their salvation here on earth in relationship with other human beings.

The very human and amiable approach of Francis helped his spiritual children to open themselves fully to him. People placed their confidence and trust in him. At a time when psychotherapy was unheard of, Francis could help people through his personal relationship, wonderfully aided by his warmth and personal qualities. No spiritual direction or psychotherapy can be helpful when the client is not able to trust himself to or and open up himself fully to the director or the therapist.

5.3.3.2 Quality of Relationship

Rogers is perhaps the first psychologist who stressed that quality of human relationship is central to counselling and psychotherapy. This is one of the marks of distinction which differentiates PCT from other forms of therapy. It is not enough to have the therapeutic attitudes. These attitudes must be both lived and expressed by the therapist in a genuine interpersonal relationship. They should be expressed in the core conditions of the therapy. To be a counsellor

[74] THORNE, *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment,* p. 59.
[75] Cf. John W. CROSSIN & Sheila GRACIA, *Practical Holiness*. (Unpublished article; available online: http://www.oblates.org/dss/practical_holiness/practical_holiness.pdf). See also 3.4.5 ff.

is to be a facilitator and to provide a healthy and salutary climate for the client to use his own capacity and potential for self-change.[76]

Regina Bäumer and Michael Plattig, who have already made attempts to combine PCA with spiritual direction, have also emphasized the relevance of relationship. They believe that the underlying principle is that a healthy, constructive, positive relationship can cause a healthy change in another person. In order to effect change, the relationship has to be characterised by the six conditions proposed by Rogers. To encounter another person in therapy means to give him the possibility and the chance to grow and develop and to be (become) his own self.[77]

5.3.3.3 Relationship Heals

In PCT the relationship between the client and the therapist is central to the healing process. The relationship provides the client with new insights into his person and life. The actualising tendency in the person is activated by this relationship which is characterised by the therapeutic conditions (especially the core qualities) provided the therapist. The client finds new confidence and he develops trust in himself through the therapeutic relationship. This kind of a relationship calls for the full involvement of the therapist. It is not a problem-centred approach, but a person-centred approach which gives the person power to help himself.[78]

Therapeutic relationship provides the client the safe atmosphere for self-exploration and enables him to make use of his own inner capacities – to help his actualizing tendency to take over. The relationship provides the facilitative atmosphere essential for healing. The therapist does not 'treat' the client like a patient, but provides the client a climate of healing through a relationship characterised by the therapeutic conditions. The quality of the relationship is more important than expertise or techniques. As Wilkins says, it is more 'being' to the client and 'doing' to the client.[79]

5.3.3.4 Relationship for Peace and Mutual Co-Existence

Bäumer and Plattig argue that the emphasis Rogers placed on relationship neutralises the criticism against him that he promoted individualism and narcissism. By placing emphasis on the relationship between persons, not only in the context of therapy, but in the whole gamut of human experience – in the family, in the class room, in the society etc.– Rogers tried to work

[76] Cf. THORNE, *Carl Rogers*, p. vii.
[77] Cf. BÄUMER / PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele*, p. 77.
[78] Cf. SCHMID, *Personale Begegnung*, pp. 51-54. See also 4.2.1.10.
[79] Cf. WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, pp.171-172.

towards peaceful co-existence and towards the reduction of tension. Being-in-relationship, and not independent existence, is one of the cornerstones of Rogers' philosophy.[80]

The aspect of relationship in spiritual guidance has also been sufficiently emphasized by Francis de Sales. He speaks in terms of spiritual companionship. Francis de Sales emphasized very often the need for a companion on the journey of life.[81] It is true that he does not directly speak about empathy, UPR and genuineness as the psychologists of today. But Francis de Sales speaks of faithfulness, [82]gentleness, confidence, simplicity and mutual trust:

> I say to you, dear Philothea: if you want to set out earnestly on the path of devotion, find some person to guide and direct you. *This is the most important advice ... It is necessary to have, more than anything else, this faithful friend to guide our actions by his advice and counsels and so keep us safe from the snares and deceits of the evil one*… But I tell you once again, ask God to give you such a person and when you find one, give thanks to God. Be faithful and do not look for others. Rather move on with simplicity, humility and confidence, for your journey will be full of happiness.[83]

He warns everyone that such companions are very few and one should be very prudent and selective in choosing such guides in life: "Choose one from a thousand, writes John of Avila. And I insist, choose one from ten thousand, for those who are fit for such task are very few indeed."[84]

It clear from the comparative study of Rogers and Francis de Sales that relationship plays a vital role in their therapy and spiritual guidance respectively. For healing to take place in a person, this relationship has to be characterised by therapeutic qualities as proposed by Rogers and by love, freedom, acceptance, gentleness and respect as shown by Francis de Sales. Both Francis de Sales and Rogers show us that the art of dealing with human beings does matter very much.[85]

5.3.4 Focus on the Person

One of the main concerns of Francis de Sales and Rogers in all their interaction with human beings was to give importance to the person. They asked themselves: how can I be of help to this person? It has been sufficiently explicated in this work what it means to be person-centred and

[80] Cf. BÄUMER / PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele.* pp. 92-93.
[81] See 3.4.1
[82] In my opinion faithfulness is a quality which comes very close to genuineness.
[83] SALES, *IDL*, Part I, Ch. 4, pp. 43-44. Emphasis mine.
[84] SALES, *IDL*, p. 44.
[85] See 4.2.1.9.4

person-oriented.[86] Although there are some differences in what these terms mean, one thing is clear: it is the person who is at the centre of the action and the action is oriented towards the person.

In the person-centred approach of Carl Rogers, the client has the power – he has the power to decide, he has the power to take the necessary course of action in therapy and he alone has the power to take decisions that affect his life. The therapist is only a helper or a 'midwife' who accompanies him and creates the right climate for growth.[87] My survey also produced a similar result: 77.11% responded that they found non-directiveness useful in their ministry.[88]

By giving up on power and influence - which normally a therapist enjoys- he tries to come closer to the inner feelings and the inner frame of reference of the client. The therapist has to be a person with certain qualities that helps the healing process in the client. The client perceives them and is enabled to help himself. The therapist should also be at home with his own faith and beliefs. Through his authenticity and congruence he can be a witness, without being aggressively catechetical, moralising or 'missionary'. Bäumer and Plattig discourage the 'extra dose of religion' in counselling or spiritual direction.[89]

In spiritual direction and pastoral counselling, the counsellor/director should believe that it is primarily the Holy Spirit who is at work. The director/counsellor is only an agent of God's grace. It is indeed a challenge to his faith and trust (in God) as well as his faith in the other to believe that they can grow of their own. In this sense, this experience of the counsellor is one of God's grace and goodness. God is at work at both sides of every spiritual conversation or direction or pastoral counselling. He is on the side of the client as well as that of the pastor.[90]

In the person-oriented approach of Francis de Sales, the spiritual director is a companion or a friend on the way. True, compared to person-centred approach, in spiritual direction the companion plays a more directive role. However, he is only a companion and his actions are oriented to the directee whom he helps in love, gentleness and patience. In guiding people, Francis de Sales was very careful in dealing with each person according to his life-situation, environment, vocation and personal qualities. Francis respected the freedom of the persons who came to him for direction and guidance. Therefore, we could still stay, that directee is still the

[86] See 3.4.4 ff. and 4.2.1.2 ff.
[87] Cf. 4.2.1.2.1
[88] See Survey, Q. 12.
[89] Cf. BÄUMER / PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele*, p. 125
[90] Cf. Ibid., p.125.

centre of all his actions. It is a way of being person-centred.[91] Francis was also very personal and took into account the uniqueness of every individual. He believed that the uniqueness and diversity in human beings was the handiwork of God.[92] Taking into account the uniqueness of the individuals and guiding them accordingly involved being very personal with them, getting to know them well and accepting the differences in them.

As noted above, Francis' method of guiding was very personal, too. It was characterised by inner freedom and personal closeness. This closeness can be seen even in his letters. Even today, reading his letters makes one feel that the saint is speaking to him directly. How much for personal and warm he must have been in direct person-to-person encounters! Such an approach of Francis helped the directees, in turn, to open themselves to him. Such was his personal warmth and personable nature.[93]

It is a very relevant point in the context of India, a country characterised by diversity and difference. In such a scenario it is very important to respect diversity and at the same time to appreciate the uniqueness of individual and his culture.

5.3.5 Mystical Dimension

Can mysticism be a common element between the deeply spiritual Salesian approach and the so-called 'secular' PCA? It may sound absurd to state that a school of psychotherapy is mystical. Schools of psychology and psychotherapy are believed to be strictly secular and non-religious. However, many who follow PCA have discovered a mystical dimension to it.

Christian life is basically a call to mystical life. Every Christian is invited to it.[94] This clarion call becomes more emphatic, louder and meaningful with every passing day. In today's post-modern society, Christians have to take this call seriously. It is intimately connected to the call to holiness.[95] In the second half of the last century Karl Rahner appealed to all Christians in the world that that a Christian of the following decades had to be a mystic or no Christian at all.[96] The mysticism that Francis de Sales' advocates is one that is perfectly in tune with the daily life

[91] See 3.4.4
[92] Cf. PERUMALIL, *Perfection. A Salesian Perspective*, p. 34.
[93] See 3.4.4 ff.
[94] Cf. Wojciech ZYZAK, *Call of Lay People to Mystical Life* in *The Person and the Challenges*, Vol.1, No.2, 2011, Cracow: The Pontifical University of John Paul II, pp.137-148.
[95] Cf. LG, Nos. 39-42 exhort every baptised Christian to holiness. This holiness has to be lived in the world with a mystical dimension.
[96] Cf. Karl RAHNER, *Frömmigkeit heute und morgen*, in: *Geist und Leben* , 1966, No. 39 pp, 326-342, see esp. p. 335. (See also *Frömmigkeit früher und heute*, in *Schriften zur Theologie*, Bd. 7, Einsiedeln: 1966, pp. 11-31).

of a Christian. Francis de Sales always emphasized in his spiritual direction the mystical dimension of daily living.[97]

The modern understanding of mysticism is more practical and simpler. It is different from that of the earlier centuries where only someone who had unusual, and sometimes, unnatural mystical experiences and visions was considered a mystic. It is not anymore flight from the world, but living the daily life in a mystical spirit.[98] As Francis de Sales understands it, it is about personal experience of God and living out this experience in daily life.[99] In this sense, it is very much connected with the subject matter of PCA – personal experience, subjective experience, person-centred experience.

No wonder, PCA has also been considered mystical by many. In the recent years there have been many efforts to see person-centred approach from a mystical point of view. Spearheading this view is Brian Thorne, an experienced person-centred therapist and author of numerous books on person-centred therapy. Thorne says, "The future of the person-centred approach may well depend on its capacity to embrace the world of spiritual reality."[100] He speaks about the use of tenderness, compassion, and the effectiveness of praying for the client in PCT. He also recommends meditation and even devotion to the Eucharist for counsellors.[101]

In the recent years therapists have become increasingly aware of the challenge to respond to the spiritual dimension of the client. Many clients do have spiritual experiences and they bring them to therapy. If the therapist takes the experience of the client seriously, as it is the case in PCA, then the therapist cannot neglect the spiritual dimension of the client's experience. William West is also convinced of this fact and argues against neglecting the spiritual dimension of the clients: "As it turns out both clients and therapists continue, like the rest of the population, to have spiritual experiences, though many clients remain too inhibited to raise such matters with their therapists. The process of therapy itself can, at times, have an overtly spiritual dimension to it: indeed, it is possible to view therapy as a spiritual experience."[102] Bäumer and Plattig are of the opinion that PCT, because of its open-ended approach - although criticised by other

[97] See 3.4.8
[98] Cf. Wojciech ZYZAK, *Call of Lay People to Mystical Life*, pp. 142-144.
[99] Cf. John W. CROSSIN, *Everyday Holiness* (Collection of Essays) Washington DC: De Sales School of Theology, 1994. (Unpublished material).
[100] Brian THORNE, *Person-Centred Counselling: Therapeutic and Spiritual Dimensions*, London: Whurr, 1991, p. 127.
[101] Cf. THORNE, *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment*, pp. 40, 52, 149, 239, 243. (There are numerous references in this book where Thorne narrates the usefulness of spiritual activities and exercises in PCT).
[102] Cf. WEST, *Psychotherapy and Spirituality*, p. 1.

psychologists as naïve and unscientific - gives a chance for theology to bring in the transcendental dimension into it.[103]

Being spiritual and mystical is not against the spirit of PCA. Towards the end of his life Rogers began to be 'spiritual' - however, not in a religious sense of the word. But he was open to spiritual and transcendental experiences, mystical dimension of human life, universal consciousness and so on. In fact, Rogers emphasized the need of having spiritual experiences. Speaking about the 'person of tomorrow' in his book, *A Way of Being*, Carl Rogers tells that being spiritual is a quality of the person of tomorrow: "A yearning for the spiritual. These persons of tomorrow are seekers. They wish to find a meaning and purpose in life that is greater than the individual. … They wish to live a life of inner peace. Their heroes are spiritual persons – Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Teilhard de Chardin…"[104]

Biographers like Kirschenbaum and Thorne who were closely associated with Rogers believe that Rogers had a spiritual dimension.[105] Thorne argues that Carl Rogers believed in the mystical dimension of persons and of PCA, but he did not elaborate much on these topics in his works. He believed being a mystic is more of being than employing techniques, just like PCA emphasises that being the therapist is than applying techniques. Perhaps he did not want to risk his reputation as a psychologist, too.[106] In an interview shortly before his death, he said, "Another time, a group of young priests were trying to pin me to the wall, saying that I must be religious. I finally said to them and it is something I still stand by – I am too religious to be religious – and that has quite a lot of meaning for me. I have my own definition of spirituality…"[107]

When one considers mysticism from a person-centred viewpoint, then one has to be also open to the fact that people make personal experience of things differently. A non-religious person may also make experience in his own way - he may have transcendental or spiritual experiences which he may not relate to any religious phenomena. People who are religious are more likely to have religious experiences and may connect their experiences to God. If one values subjective experience, then one should also admit that the experiences of persons have their own validity. So a Christian may have a 'Christian mystical experience'.[108] PCA which lays stress on

[103] Cf. BÄUMER / PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele*, p. 133.
[104] ROGERS, *A Way of Being*, p. 352. (See also 4.1.2.5.10). Interestingly, it sounds very close to what Karl Rahner said about Christian mystical living.
[105] Cf. THORNE, *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment*, pp. 220-228.
[106] Cf. Ibid., pp. 78-79.
[107] As quoted by KIRSCHENBAUM in *The Life and Works of Carl Rogers*, p. 490.
[108] Cf. Steven PAYNE, *The Christian Character of Christian Mystical Experiences*' in *Religious Studies*, Vol. 20.3, Sept 1984, pp. 417-427.

subjective experience has to be open to the personal experiences of persons, even if they are religious and mystical in nature.

Salesian spirituality presents a very practical understanding of mysticism. For Francis de Sales, mysticism is to be practised not only in the monasteries or cloistered convents; nor is to be lived out only in the deserts or mountain tops, but in the world - in the midst of our daily activities and in our loving relationship with others. Salesian understanding of mysticism is not only about direct God-experience, but of constant awareness of God and concrete living out of this experience in one's life situation and relationship with others especially through the practice of the small virtues which make this relationship easier and meaningful.[109]

5.4 Some Major Differences

In spite of some of the stunning similarities between the Rogerian and Salesian approaches, and the striking resemblances that one finds between them, it would be naïve and a gross mistake to neglect the differences. There are not only differences, but there is also a constant tension between psychotherapy and ministry, each claiming that the other is one-sided and prejudiced. From its inception, psychology has been accused of deliberately neglecting religion and spirituality.[110]Critics say it takes no cognizance of the spiritual and transcendental dimension of human persons. It offers only worldly help. Psychology, on the other hand, claims that religion, spirituality and faith are unscientific and irrational and those who are responsible for religion and faith, cannot be good therapists. In this sense we can say that both are competing fields.[111]

Another point of digression is that psychology in itself does not often feel the need of values and morals. The Christian/pastoral counsellors cannot neglect the moral values, says Brian Thorne.[112]Over-emphasizing psychological ideas leads to loss of values in the society. The misplaced emphasis on individual freedom, unrealistic ideas of personal power and self-actualization have had severe drawbacks. Paul Vitz argues, "It is already clear that psychology has systematically pushed antireligious values, especially antifamily values, for many decades … In the name of self-actualization and related notions, psychology has, over the years,

[109] See 3.4.8 . (Salesian idea of mysticism is dealt with in detail in this part).
[110] Cf. RICHARDS / BERGIN, *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy*, pp. 29-31. See pp. 29-48 for a detailed description the interaction between psychotherapy and religion. (See also 1.4 ff).
[111] Cf. BÄUMER / PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele*, p. 124.
[112] Cf. THORNE, *Person-Centred Counselling: Therapeutic and Spiritual Dimensions* p.11.

systematically pushed for divorce, for open marriage, for sexual permissiveness of all kinds, for pornography, for abortion, even for incest ("intergenerational" sex)…"[113]

Most of those who responded to my survey- although most of them were open to the use psychology in pastoral field- also expressed many cautions regarding the application of psychological principles in pastoral ministry.[114]

Whatever be the efforts made to integrate psychotherapy into ministry, it should be admitted that there are many point of divergence. Some of the major differences between Salesian spirituality and PCA in the light of this work are the following.

5.4.1 Anthropological Differences

In spite of all the similarities and common elements we find in the anthropology of Rogers in comparison with Francis de Sales, there are some incompatible and irreconcilable elements in the anthropology of Rogers. The too optimistic idea of Rogers which does not recognize sin and the fallen nature of human beings. The idea of self- redemption as propagated by Rogers and other humanistic psychologists are contrary to Christian theological views on sin, grace and redemption. Pastoral psychologist Isidor Baumgartner argues that in such an anthropology there is no need for God, no scope for the reality of sin and responsibility for the evil that human beings cause.[115] It is not the intention of Christian theology to suppress or rule out human freedom, but to accept the reality of human weakness and sin and to receive the salvation in Christ. Christian anthropology is realistic and directed at redemption in Christ. It is a realistic optimism oriented towards healing in Christ (*Heilsoptimismus*).[116]

The anthropology of Francis de Sales is Christian humanistic anthropology which acknowledges sin and the need of grace for human salvation. Salesian Christian anthropology acknowledges the transcendental reality of God. It is more realistic in the sense that it accepts the wounded nature of human beings and admits that without God's help human beings can easily go astray. Whatever the efforts we make to integrate the two, a purely psychological anthropology cannot

[113] Paul C. VITZ, *The Dilemma of Narcissism.* in *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, Vol. 3.1, (9-14), 1985, p. 11.
[114] See Survey, Q. 21
[115] Cf. BAUMGARTNER, *Pastoralpsychologie*, pp. 478- 482.
[116] Cf. Ibid., p. 479.

perfectly agree with Christian anthropology. Although Francis de Sales emphasized the positive nature of human beings, he did not deny the reality of sin and human frailty.[117]

Unlike psychological anthropology, Christian anthropology is based on the existence of a personal and loving God with whom human beings can relate. God seeks communion with his people through his Son and the Spirit. The Church is the concrete expression of this communion.[118] To quote Paul Vitz again, "A Christian interpretation of personality begins by assuming that God exists and that He is a person with whom one is in relationship. This relationship has psychological consequences. … The assumption of theism is no less rational than the assumption of atheism."[119] Salesian anthropology also places great emphasis on the relationship aspect of Christian anthropology. Francis de Sales is optimistic that every human being can love God and relate to Him as we relate to fellow human beings. Pocetto argues, "Francis de Sales' spirituality is rooted in a very positive and optimistic Christian anthropology."[120] This relational dimension of Christian and Salesian anthropology is very relevant for Indian context which is generally characterised by less 'ego-feeling' than in the West and more interconnectedness in the society, church and in the families.

Psychological view of human beings is not based on values, but on drives, instincts and inner forces. Paul Vitz argues that psychology has distorted even the very concept of person which was basically a Judaeo-Christian idea. He believes that even the concept of person central to many schools of therapy has a spiritual and sacred meaning. The loss of this spiritual dimension or replacing it with a modern secular and psychological meaning has given rise to the loss of respect for persons in the recent times. There are many differences in Christian understanding of person and the psychological understanding of this concept. Paul Vitz argues that psychology/psychotherapy should turn to religion as a plausible source of values.[121]

Another major anthropological difference we find is that of personal responsibility and the formation of conscience. Personal freedom involves personal responsibility. For Rogers, it is not a matter of consideration to answer before God for one's actions, as Christian theology believes.

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[117] Cf. John W. CROSSIN, *Reflections on Salesian Anthropology*, originally published in *With Mind and Heart Renewed ... Essays in Honors of Rev. John Harvey, OSFS*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001. Available online http://web1.desales.edu/assets/salesian/PDF/Crossin-Anthropology.pdf (19.1.16). For more details see also 3.3.4 ff.

[118] Cf. LG, Nos. 1-8.

[119] Paul C. VITZ, *Reconceiving Personality Theology from a Catholic Christian Perspective* in *Edification: A Journal of Christian Psychology*, Vol. 3.1, (42-50), 2009, pp. 42-43. (The journal *Edification* is renamed as *Christian Psychology. A Transdisciplinary Journal* from 2013, Volume 7.1).

[120] Alexander T. POCETTO, *Positive Psychology, Francis de Sales and Character Formation: An Introduction* in *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*, Vol. 43.4 (575-591), 2014, p. 577.

[121] Cf. VITZ, *The Dilemma of Narcissism*, pp.12-13

It is true that Rogers' anthropology gives people enough freedom, it does not manipulate, it does not try to interfere with their inner processes or free choice - because everyone has the tendency to actualize - but it does not speak about personal responsibility. Christian theology, especially Catholic theology, believes in the formation of the conscience. Pastoral Counselling has a great role to play in the formation of conscience, especially in countries/contexts when the clients request for it. But this should be done in a person-centred and person-oriented way.

The Christian concept of human person is much broader and deeper than that of the psychologists which is fixed only on the material and the empirical. Unfortunately, each school of psychology/psychotherapy has its own version of human anthropology, each limited and skewed in its own way and very often totally different from one another. Psychologists need a sound common conception of human beings. In this scenario the scope of Christian anthropology is very great.[122]Christian anthropology deals with many topics which psychology neglects, but which are part of the core of human life and experience. Christian anthropology and Christian philosophical and theological truths:

> (…) provide a normative cosmological, ontological, and eschatological backdrop for situating human existence in a disordered world. They provide answers to weighty transcendent questions such as the origin, nature, and destiny of the human person and the problem of evil, which are relevant to a profession that deals daily with the gravest disorders of the human soul. And they provide an epistemological foundation, as stated above, for psychology's underlying assumption of the basic goodness of the human person as well as grounds for hope in the universe.[123]

In my survey, too, many expressed the concern that Psychology has a tendency to negate the transcendental dimension of human beings.[124]

5.4.2 Divine Role and the Following of God's Will

Divine role is an unavoidable element in Christian guidance. In fact, in the Christian understanding, the Spirit is the third person invisibly present in every encounter between the client and the counsellor. The approach of Francis de Sales lays stress on the importance of the divine, without which human beings are nothing. Discerning God's will and following it is one of the major goals of Salesian spiritual direction. This sometimes means detaching oneself from

[122] Cf. Christian E. BRUGGER, *Psychology and Christian Anthropology*, in *Edification: Journal of the Society of Christian Psychology*, Vol. 3.1, 2009, pp. 5-18.
[123] Ibid., p.15.
[124] See Survey, Q. 21.

the world and attaching oneself to God.[125] In Salesian tradition God's will has primacy over human will.[126] Sometimes discerning God's will and following it can be seen as foolishness from a psychological perspective. For example, a rich businessman leaving his business to become a priest, a young person committing himself lifelong to a life of chastity, poverty and obedience, someone taking up penitential practices like abstinence, fasting etc. are meaningless seen from a purely psychological point of view. Sometimes, the director has to help the directee to discern such apparently 'preposterous' steps in order to follow the will of God.

Discerning God's will is one of the most important tasks in spiritual guidance. Sometimes it can take a long and painful period of time; for example, it took many years in the case of Jane de Chantal to discern her vocation and his future mission. That calls for patience, perseverance, humility and understanding on both sides. The director has to stand by the directee in this sometimes-agonizing process. Francis de Sales says that by doing God's will and delighting in it, we become more like God: "By delighting in God we become like God. Our will transforms itself into that of the divine majesty by the delight which it takes in the divine will. Love, said St Chrysostom, either finds similarity or makes its resemblance. For example, those who love have a gentle, unnoticeable influence and authority over us. It is necessary either to quit them or to imitate them."[127]

Although psychotherapy is becoming increasingly open to spirituality, many schools do not give any direct importance to God or religious practices. The undue emphasis placed on the capacity of the person and the over-dependence on the self can lead to dangerous limits. Christian psychologists like Paul C. Vitz argue that some good Christian practices like self-acceptance and altruism are neglected by psychotherapy. Many schools of psychotherapy, especially the humanistic school, are often accused of promoting unhealthy 'centrality of self-centredness', selfishness and narcissism.[128] Rogers' psychotherapy does not recognise anything called Divine Will. Following the precepts of Christianity is not a goal in his therapy.

[125] See 3.2.1.1.3.4 & 3.2.1.1.3.8.
[126] See 3.4.2.
[127] SALES, *TLG*, Bk. 8, Ch.1, p. 389.
[128] Cf. VITZ, *The Dilemma of Narcissism*, pp. 9-14.

5.4.3 Directive Elements in Salesian Guidance

Although the method of Francis de Sales was based on love and freedom, one also finds some directive elements in his spiritual direction.[129] It is not totally person-centred in today's understanding of the term. One has to understand it from the context. He was guiding people at a time when most people were illiterate and inexperienced. In most cases the spiritual directors were more educated, learned and experienced and it was quite natural for the directees to ask for specific instructions. Francis was a well-known guide and director of souls among the people. As a well-known and experienced guide, people expected concrete and practical guidelines from Francis de Sales as to how they should deal with a particular situation. In many of the letters of spiritual direction ones finds the writers asking him for very concrete advice that could be helpful in their particular situation. People expected it from him and they were happy when Francis obliged them. Therefore, in many instances Francis de Sales gives very concrete guidelines as requested by his directees based on his experience and knowledge.

In his guidance Francis de Sales tried to lead people to holiness and to a life of devotion. Devotion, love of God in action, should permeate the whole life of the person. So he stressed that devotion and moral life cannot be separated from each other. Therefore, the aspect of catechesis and instruction in faith and virtues are also visible in the guidance of Francis de Sales.[130]

Self-actualization in a Christian sense should invariably involve also character formation and cultivations of virtues. This type of 'self-actualization' can be seen in Francis de Sales where he tirelessly helped people in the cultivation of virtues. Francis helped the directees with the cultivation of virtues that were needed for day-to-day living - especially gentleness, patience and humility.[131]

5.4.4 The Use of the Scripture

Another important factor that differentiates Christian approach from that of the psychological is the use of the Holy Scripture in the process of guidance.[132] Secular therapy rarely makes use of the Scripture. For them, guidelines are to be solely found in psychology guidebooks and research

[129] In fact, the whole content of the book, *An Introduction to the Devout Life* is directive and instructive in nature. This book was meant as a guide for spiritual direction of lay people. Francis de Sales explains in detail what concrete steps should be taken to grow in holiness.
[130] Cf. BÄUMER / PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele*, p.119.
[131] Cf. POCETTO, *Positive Psychology, Francis de Sales and Character Formation: An Introduction*, pp. 585-591.
[132] See 1.4.2 and 1.4.5 (See also 1.3.4, 1.3.8.1.4, 1.3.8.2.2, 1.3.8.2.4, 1.4.6 for more details).

and diagnostic manuals. Pastoral counselling, Christian counselling and spiritual direction make use of God' Word. Experienced Christian therapists find inexhaustible, reassuring source of wisdom, insights and hope in the Bible. Arnold Mettnitzer, a well-known Austrian psychotherapist and author admits, "The comforting power of Bible passages is a recurring feature of my therapeutic work."[133] As Hebrews 4:12 states, "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." The Bible helps us to change our perspectives and offers us new perspectives and courage to go new ways. Mettnitzer says, if used properly, the Holy Bible can become a 'healing Bible.' The passages in the Bible have such an amazing healing power and are ever new. They offer new insights for life.[134] Sometimes the parables and stories of the Bible can have an 'explosive' and catalytic effect on the reader.[135] In India the pastoral counsellors make very free use of the Bible passages and the clients are more open to it.

We find generous use of the Scripture in Francis de Sales. He wonderfully crafted quotations and examples from the Holy Bible into his writing to strengthen his ministry of guidance – in his books, preaching and letters. He used the Scripture to console, comfort and to enkindle hope and optimism in the directees. This was done also to show that it was not his personal views that he expressed, but in was in line with the Holy Scripture. This gave a divine dimension to his ministry. Francis de Sales was a master craftsman in the use of images and similes. His deep knowledge of theology and scripture enabled him to make creative and copious use of the Scripture.

5.5 An Integration is Possible: The Factors that Contribute

Now that I have presented some of the major similarities and differences between the two approaches, the fundamental question to ask is: is an integration possible? If so, how should it be? How should a person-centred and person-oriented Salesian approach to pastoral counselling in the context of India look like?

[133] Arnold METTNITZER, *Steh auf und geh. Die therapeutische Kraft biblischer Texte*, (= Get up and go. The therapeutic power of Bible passages), Vienna: Styria Premium, 2013, p. 13. „*Die ermutigende Kraft biblischer Texte ist seit Jahren eine immer wieder auftauchende Begleitmelodie meiner therapeutischen Arbeit*." Translation mine.
[134] Cf. METTNITZER, *Steh auf und geh*, p. 12 (‚*Die Heilige Schrift – Heilende Schrift*')
[135] Cf. Ibid., p. 19. (‚*Biblische Geschichten wie Sprengstoff wirken können*')

As I have already noted in the first chapter, psychotherapy and spiritual direction have common goals, to a great extent.[136] Both aim at healing of the human person. They aim at better functioning of the person – be it in his personal life or in his relationship with other human beings or with God. So the common goals include: healing of the human person, better functioning, better relationship (with God, with others..,) to be fully-functioning etc. [137]

In the recent decades social and human sciences have had definitive influence on pastoral theology and the pastoral ministry of the Church. However, one is often disappointed to find a kind of scepticism on the one side and exaggerated enthusiasm on the other.[138] This was also clearly visible in my survey. Although many of the respondents believed that psychotherapy can be successfully applied in a pastoral field, they expressed numerous reservations, cautions and caveats.[139]

Many therapists in the recent times have called for a healthy integration of spirituality and psychotherapy. In fact, different schools of psychotherapy help and equip the ministers/ pastors/pastoral counsellors with knowledge and insights regarding human nature and behaviour which could be helpful in preaching, meaningful celebration of the sacraments and above all, in their encounter and conversation with the faithful. Bäumer and Plattig believe that an integration of PCT into spiritual direction – pastoral counselling, for that matter – is possible because both have similar goals. In PCT the ultimate goal is, as Rogers says, to be the person that one really is. It is also one of the main goals of spiritual direction.[140] Mettnitzer believes that the Bible encourages everyone to be one's real self (*Selbstwerdung*). It is a fundamental concern of the Bible narratives. The Bible encourages the journey into one's inner self to be what one truly is.[141]

Francis de Sales puts it succinctly in his letters, 'Be what you are and be that at its best.' This is one of the primary ends of spiritual direction - to help the person to be or to become what he truly is in the eyes of God, or what God wants to him to be. This intention of Francis de Sales can be seen very clearly in his spiritual guidance of Jane de Chantal. It took long time for her to

[136] See 1.3.6 ff.
[137] See 1.2 and 1.3.6 ff. Chapter one deals with this topic in detail.
[138] Cf. SCHMID, *Personale Begegnung*, p. 209.
[139] See Survey, Q. 21.
[140] Cf. BÄUMER / PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele*, pp. 111-112.
[141] Cf. METTNITZER, *Steh auf und geh*, pp. 19ff. Here Mettnitzer speaks of *Selbstwerdung- ein biblishes Grundanliegen* (= Self-realization, a fundamental concern of the Bible).

decide what God wanted from her. Francis accompanied her in this long journey and in the process of discernment.[142]

Seen from this perspective, one can say the goals of PCT and spiritual direction, especially in the spirit of Francis de Sales, are very similar. In addition, the relationship between the directee and the spiritual director in the Salesian tradition is in many ways similar to that of the relationship between the client and the therapist in PCT. Both relationships could be characterised as therapeutic – because both aim at positive change in the person – one from the perspective of search for God and God's will, the other mainly from the perspective of one's psychological well-being. There are enough similarities that provide a strong common ground. At the same time, as we have seen in the previous part, we should also make a clear-cut difference between the two. If they work within their legitimate limits, PCA can enrich spiritual direction and vice versa.[143]

Pastoral counselling today has come a long way and is not understood as just moral lessons or catechetical instruction, as considered decades earlier. Pastoral counselling today makes use of the modern knowledge and developments in the field of psychology and counselling.[144] Depending on the school of psychology that the counsellor follows, his approach also will be different. Many of the respondents of the survey (76.83%) agreed with the view that Salesian spirituality can be combined with person-centred approach.[145] But almost all of them had reservations and cautions.[146]

I consider the following points important for integrating PCA into Salesian spirituality for a combined approach to develop a method of pastoral counselling in the context of India. In proposing these points I have kept in mind the pastoral context of India - especially that of Kerala - which is drastically different from that of the West. My conclusions are arrived at in the light of the preceding research, hermeneutic study and have been reinforced by the survey.

5.5.1 The Positive Idea of Human Being

First of all, a concept of pastoral counselling for India should emphasis the basic positive value of human beings. India is a land where the value of human beings is much less respected than in

[142] See 3.2.1.3 ff., esp. 3.2.1.3.4.
[143] Cf. BÄUMER / PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele*, pp. 111-112.
[144] See 1.4 ff.
[145] See Survey, Q.22
[146] See Survey, Q.21.

the West. Although India makes progress in human rights, India is far behind many developed societies in this aspect.[147] Every human being is a child of God, precious in the eyes of God and valuable to the society. Even in the pastoral field, there is so much of self-damaging negativism which does not help people to grow. Unfortunately, sometimes even the ecclesiastical hierarchy exploits this situation to exercise undue control over the faithful. In pastoral counselling it is of paramount importance to instil a sense of worth, dignity and honour in the person that he can see himself as a child of God, basically positive in nature gifted with abilities and having innate power oriented to growth.

I have tried to make it amply clear in this work that this positive approach to human beings was one the basic principles in Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers. This is also one of the urgent needs of Indian pastoral scenario today. As Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers emphasize, human beings are human beings in spite of all their failures and brokenness and are basically positive. As Rogers says, there is only man in a man, and not a beast. The innate capacity of human beings to move towards God, to get up again when he has fallen, to start all over again, this capacity has to be stressed in pastoral counselling in Indian context. The authoritarian and extremely clericalized pastoral climate in the country necessitates this step. It requires the spirit of Salesian anthropology and optimism.

To accept this basic dignity and positive nature of human beings is a challenge in the Indian pastoral context. It demands from the counsellor that he treat every client who seeks his help with utmost respect and believe that he has within himself the capacity to grow. As Francis de Sales believed, his growth can take place only in an atmosphere of freedom and love.

As one becomes more aware of the positive nature of human beings and their capacity to grow, there will be less emphasis on authoritarianism, moralization and the tendency to judge. As Mettnitzer advocates, the doctors (for that matter therapists, too) and pastors are not gods in white coats or black cassocks. Their call is to be the 'advocates of human beings' and they should be sensible to the afflicted fellow human beings and their sufferings. They should be able to see 'with the eyes of the other' and 'feel with the heart' of the other.[148]

[147] See *Human Rights World Report 2014* by Human Rights Watch, pp. 334-341. Available online: https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2014 (10.1.16).
[148] Cf. Arnold METTNITZER, *Couch & Altar. Erfahrungen aus Psychotherapie und Seelsorge*, (= *The Couch and the Altar. Experiences from Psychotherapy and Pastoral Care*) Vienna: Styria, 2008, p. 63.

A positive image of human beings, of the clients in particular, promotes more acceptance, empathy and congruence. This helps to promote Salesian optimism and confidence which believes in the power of God as well as that of every human person.

For the pastoral counsellor to have a positive image of human beings in the light of the Gospels and Christian theology and dealing with the client in light of this positive outlook is vital to facilitate a positive change in the client. The client should see himself positive and accept himself. He should consider himself worthy and capable of rising again with God's help, whatever be the situation he is in – sin, failures, personal problem etc. For him to take the first step to recovery, he should accept himself as positive, unconditionally loved by God. Only a counsellor who holds a positive image of human being and accepts him with unconditional love can help the client in this regard.

5.5.2 Therapeutic Conditions & Personal Qualities

A major concern of this work was to find out the role played by the therapeutic conditions in causing positive changes in the personality of the client and to advocate the application of the same in pastoral ministry. We have seen how important the core conditions are in PCA. In the same way, we have also seen the personal qualities of Francis de Sales that played a significant role in his pastoral ministry, especially in his spiritual direction. It goes without saying that a pastoral counsellor should strive to hone his skills and abilities and work constantly towards acquiring the additional personal qualities that he requires to be effective in counselling.

In the biographical sketch and later in the comparison of the two persons it was made clear that one of the fundamental determinants of their effectiveness was their personal qualities. In the same way, a person who takes up pastoral ministry should have a liking for it, nurture his talents and get trained in the field. In the early church a lot of emphasis was laid on the personal suitability of the minister.[149]This is particularly true of pastoral counselling. The counsellor should have basic suitability and additionally the personal qualities required.

In both Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers one sees, how personally suited they were for their particular profession. Empathy, gentleness, immense capacity to listen and to understand, compassion for all that is human and utmost respect for human persons characterised their conduct and activities. In the same way one who takes up a ministry in the Church, should make

[149] Cf. Friedrich WULF, *Kriterien der Eignung. Ein geschichtlicher Überblick*, in Hermann STENGER (Ed.), *Eignung für die Berufe der Kirche. Klärung –Beratung – Begleitung*, Freiburg in Breisgau: Herder, 1988, pp. 11-30.

himself suitable for the ministry.[150] Hermann Stenger, basing himself on Erik Erikson, says the capacity to love, the capacity to care for the other and the capacity to be level- headed or prudent are basic qualities required of someone aspiring to a be a minister.[151] It does not, however, mean that everyone who feels called to a ministry in the Church should be perfect and completely professional. But it does mean that the person should have the basic orientation, suitability and the willingness to perfect his God-given skills.

Developing therapeutic conditions and personal qualities can help the counsellor not only in his ministry but also in his life. These qualities can also enrich his day-to-day life. Is it possible for a true counsellor to be empathic, accepting, gentle and genuine during the counselling sessions and to be something else outside? In which case, it means that these qualities have not been sufficiently internalised in the therapist. Thus, a counsellor learns to live these qualities not only during his sessions but in all his interactions with persons.

William A. Barry and William J. Connolly believe that a 'surplus of warmth' is a necessary quality for a spiritual director: "How does this "surplus of warmth," this love for people as they are, show itself in spiritual direction? It appears in three attitudes: commitment, effort to understand, and spontaneity."[152] Interestingly, that sounds very close to UPR and empathy in PCA.

Francis de Sales considered knowledge as one of the essential qualities of a spiritual guide. Regarding the qualities required of a good spiritual director, he says, "For those who are fit for such a task are very few indeed. He must be full of charity, of knowledge and of prudence. If he lacks any of these three qualities, there is danger."[153] One who takes up the field of guiding others should have genuine love for others, have sufficient prudence to distinguish and to discern, and he should keep himself updated on the field and seek necessary training.

Canon Law, Nos. 242 §1, 245 §1 emphasize that those called to priestly ministry should be sufficiently trained during their period of formation for ministry. They should also develop human qualities required for their ministry: "They are to learn that ministry is always carried out in living faith and charity fosters their own sanctification. They also are to learn to cultivate

[150] Cf. Hermann STENGER (Ed.), *Eignung für die Berufe der Kirche. Klärung –Beratung – Begleitung*, pp.100-111. This book explores in details some of the necessary qualities and competence required for someone who wishes to do a pastoral ministry in the Church.
[151] Cf. Ibid.
[152] BARRY / CONNOLLY, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, p. 133. The chapter nine of this book titled, '*Becoming a Spiritual Director*' deals with many aspects of this particular topic.
[153] SALES, *IDL*, Part 1, Ch. 5, p. 44.

those virtues which are valued highly in human relations so that they are able to achieve an appropriate integration between human and supernatural goods."[154] This holds true not only of priestly candidates but of any ministry in the Church. Canon Law here makes it clear that human qualities that are required from human relations are very important for the ministry of a priest. Canon Law further states that they are to constantly update their knowledge required for pastoral ministry: "They are also to acquire knowledge of other sciences, especially of those which are connected with the sacred sciences, particularly insofar as such knowledge contributes to the exercise of pastoral ministry."[155]

Presbyteroroum Ordinis (PO), the decree on the ministry and life of priests states that priests are bestowed with, "the spirit of grace and counsel, so that with a pure heart he may help and govern the People of God, just as in the desert the spirit of Moses was spread abroad in the minds of the seventy prudent men and using them as helpers among the people, he easily governed countless multitudes."[156] The same number further states that the bishop has the responsibility to provide continual formation to the priests. The decree adds that hospitality, kindliness, solicitous approach towards the needy should be characteristic of a priest.[157] Priests should hold the laity in high honour and in freedom. Priests should also develop an attitude of listening to the other.[158]

Francis de Sales demanded that knowledge be the eight sacrament of a priest and knowledge is, in his opinion, one of the prerequisites for direction of souls. He said to his priests, "My very dear Brothers, I implore you to attend seriously to study, because knowledge, to a priest, is the eighth sacrament of the hierarchy of the Church. [Without it] a greater misfortune happens to the priest than when the Ark [of the Covenant] is found in the hands of men who were not Levites" [159]

In the case of pastoral counselling empathy, willingness and capacity to listen, openness to accept persons who are different and holding back judgement are indispensable qualities. These qualities are seen in Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers. A pastoral counsellor should also radiate the power of gentleness and humility. As Francis de Sales said, with a spoon of honey one would

[154] CIC 245 §1
[155] CIC 279 §3
[156] PO, No. 7.
[157] Cf. PO, No.8.
[158] Cf. PO, No.9.
[159] SALES, *Exhortation to Clerics: That They Should Apply Themselves to Study*, Tr. by Thomas F. DAILEY, (Original: AE, Tome XXIII, pp. 303-305). English version available online: http://web1.desales.edu/assets/salesian/PDF/ExortationstoClerics.pdf (10.1.16).

be able to move more hearts than barrels of vinegar.[160] Herman Stenger argues a certain ability to guide people is part of personal suitability for a pastoral ministry.[161]

Rogers' therapeutic conditions are basically human qualities. These qualities, empathy, UPR and congruence, have changed- and continue to change- the lives of thousands of people in the world. These qualities can also be part of day-to-day lives of ordinary human beings. They have the power to change the way we relate to clients and the whole extent of our lives – in the family, society, school, office, friendship and even international relationships.

In addition to therapeutic qualities, basic human qualities like gentleness, patience and humility can contribute a lot to human relationships and pastoral ministry. Joe Mannath, priest, preacher, spiritual guide and well-known author in India says, "The human comes first…What matters most is to become a really good human being. The measure of religion and holiness is how deeply human it helps us to become. Whatever makes a person less human (less loving, less compassionate, less creative, less honest, less courageous…) cannot come from God. What is from God will make us more human."[162]

All these statements above explicate sufficiently the importance of therapeutic conditions and human qualities in inter-personal relationship and in effecting behaviour change. One of the classic examples of this today is Pope Francis. His personal warmth, welcoming and accepting nature and non-judgemental attitude have changed the impression of many towards the Church and has created a many bridges. These personal and human qualities are greatly desired of one, if he one to be effective in the social and pastoral situation of India.

5.5.3 The Need for a Healing Relationship

Closely connected with the previous point is the need for a really 'therapeutic' or healing relationship in pastoral counselling. It is not enough to have a positive anthropological foundation and the necessary qualities and conditions, but these have to be lived out and made tangible to the client in a healing relationship. Enough has been spoken about the importance of relationship in Salesian approach and in PCT. The emphasis placed on relationship is a major

[160] Cf. Jean Pierre CAMUS, *The Spirit of St Francis de Sales*, Kindle Edition, 2012, p. 76. The original quote goes like this: "Always be as gentle as you can, and remember that more flies are caught with a spoonful of honey than with a hundred barrels of vinegar."
[161] Cf. STENGER, *Eignung für die Berufe der Kirche,* pp.146-152.
[162] Joe MANNATH, *A Radical Love: A Path of Light*. *The Beauty and Burden of Religious Life*, (3rd Edition), New Delhi: CRI House, 2014, p. 111. This books has been a bestseller in India ever since it was published in India in 2013. It looks very critically, but constructively, at many of the unpleasant realities present in the Indian ecclesiastical scenario with special reference to the Religious.

point of convergence between the two approaches. The quality of relationship is one of the most important factors contributing to the success of spiritual direction as well as psychotherapy. It has been sufficiently proved by research. Michael Lambert et al. established 1994 through meta-research four major factors that contribute to effectiveness and grouped in the following way: [163]

Quality of relationship – 30%
Extra-therapeutic factors – 40 %
Expectancy (placebo) factors -15%
Specific techniques – 15%

Ten years later, in 2004 Lambert's detailed research once again established that therapeutic relationship is one of the important factors that contribute to the success of therapy:

> I should come as no surprise that helping others deal with depression, inadequacy, anxiety, and inner conflicts, as well as helping them form viable relationships and meaningful directions for their lives, *can be greatly facilitated in a therapeutic relationship that is characterized by trust, warmth, understanding, acceptance, kindness and human wisdom*. These relationship factors are probably crucial even in the more technical therapies that generally ignore relationship factors and emphasize the importance of technique in their theory of change. This is not to say that techniques are irrelevant but their power of change is limited when compared with personal influence.[164]

These empirical research findings vindicate great emphasis placed on relationship by Francis de Sales and Rogers. The research in this field points out that greater attention is to be paid to the quality of relationship in pastoral counselling and in pastoral activities in general.

What makes person-centred relationship unique is the presence of the therapeutic conditions. The six therapeutic conditions, more importantly the three core conditions, make PCT effective. It has been established that empathic listening, total acceptance of the person through UPR and being authentic (genuine) give a totally new dimension to relationships. It holds true in the case of pastoral relationships, too. As noted earlier, Barry & Connolly call for a 'surplus of warmth' in spiritual relationships. In the same way the gentleness, warmth, acceptance and love radiated by Francis de Sales in the relationship played a curative factor. Many pastors in India still behave like autocrats towards the faithful, showing extreme lack of gentleness, human respect.[165] It has

[163] Cf. Michael J. LAMBERT / Allen E. BERGIN, *The effectiveness of psychotherapy* in Allen E. BERGIN / Sol Louis GARFIELD (Eds.), *Handbook of psychotherapy and behaviour change* (4th ed.), Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 1994, pp.143-189.
[164] Michael J. LAMBERT / Benjamin M. OGLES, *The Efficacy and Effectiveness of Psychotherapy* in Michael J. LAMBERT (Ed.), *Bergin and Garfield's Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behaviour Change*, (5th ed.), New York: John Wiley & Sons, (139-193), 2004. Here pp.180-181. Italics mine.
[165] Cf. MANNATH, *A Radical Love: A Path of Light*, pp. 22, 117, 165-167,

partially to do with clericalism and the special status enjoyed by the priests in India as 'God's special representative.'

A combination of Salesian and Rogerian approach could be ideal for Indian pastoral context. A gentle, warm, listening and accepting pastor can work more effectively with the client than a dominating, 'lecturing' and 'all-knowing' pastor. This inner attitude should also be shown not only in counselling but also in daily pastoral activities. The above-mentioned qualities and attitudes can give a new dimension of compassion and human touch to the service of the minister/pastor. Experienced guides and authors in India advocate that in the pastoral context of India as well as in the area of religious formation, importance should be given to qualitative therapeutic relationship and love. Reflecting on the situation in India, Joe Mannath advocates, "Most human beings are wounded, and need healing. This can happen in counseling or group therapy, in spiritual direction, in retreats and in loving relationships."[166]

5.5.4 The Role of Love

An attempt to combine spirituality with psychotherapy cannot sidestep the element of love, the core of Christian identity. It is love that characterises Christian life and all Christian activities. As St Paul says, without love Christian life is meaningless.[167]

As highlighted in the section 5.3.2, love is an important element in PCT. As Brian Thorne says, "In the last analysis it is love with understanding that heals."[168] It is not only the experience of Brian Thorne, who combines spirituality with person-centred therapy, but it has also been the experience of many experienced pastors and spiritual directors. Peter F. Schmid, well-known Austrian person-centred expert and a friend and follower of Carl Rogers, believes the core conditions of Rogers' therapy converge in a Christian concept of love. This kind of creative love leads to communion; it offers new possibilities in life and is diaconal in nature.[169] Father Bernhard Vosicky, a Cistercian monk and well-known spiritual director and confessor in Austria, reveals the secret of his ministry: "To heal with love became my programme of life. As priest I

[166] MANNATH, *A Radical Love: A Path of Light*, p. 70.
[167] Cf. 1Cor. 13:1-3.
[168] THORNE, *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment.* Already cited in this work. (See 5.3.2)
[169] Cf. SCHMID, *Personale Begegnung*, pp. 395-397.

have experienced time and again how love can heal human beings. Only love heals."[170] Love was also the main tool employed by Francis de Sales, the 'doctor of love.'[171]

As Jean-Luc Marion argues – already mentioned in this work - any attempt to integrate faith and science should, therefore, follow the lead of love. Love is the connecting bridge between psychology (psychotherapy) and spirituality. The integration automatically takes place when one practices psychology with love.[172] Joe Mannath says in his bestseller, "Genuine love brings out the best in people."[173] And he believes religious formation is basically teaching people to love.[174]

Love also means accepting a person in his uniqueness and giving him undivided attention. In the language of the person-centred approach it means unconditional positive regard for the person and being in the 'process of empathy'[175]with him as a genuine person. To quote confessor and spiritual director Bernhard Vosicky again, "It is all about that the person who comes to me should be aware that in the confessional he is the only important thing for me at the moment."[176] Such love and acceptance in a relationship of freedom can surely put a person into an inner process and effect healing and growth. Love can also be understood as nurturing another's growth and in the process of doing so, one nourishes oneself spiritually. Well known psychotherapist and author Scott Peck says, "I define love thus: The will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth." [177]

Offering the clients/directees, the therapeutic conditions for their growth in effect means to love them. To accept the client, to prize him, to be genuine with him, to listen to him with empathy, to be extremely gentle and patient with him – that is nothing other than offering him love in concrete form. Counsellors who are spiritually oriented are convinced that all person –centred therapeutic conditions can be summarised as love. Thorne says, "I recognised instantly that to offer clients the kind of relationship characterised by the presence of the core conditions was, in practice, to love them."[178] Swizz psychoanalyst with a deep catholic orientation, Stefan Blarer

[170] Bernhard VOSICKY as quoted by Hinrich BUES in *Pater Bernhard: Nur die Liebe heilt!. Erzählungen über das Wirken Gottes in meinem Leben*, Heiligenkreuz, Austria: Be & Be – Verlag, 2015, p. 29.
[171] See 3.4.3
[172] See 5.3.2.
[173] MANNATH, *A Radical Love: A Path of Light*, p. 65.
[174] Cf. Ibid., p. 68-73.
[175] Carl Rogers sees empathy as a process. See 4.2.3.1.3 ff. See especially 4.2.3.1.3.3 (*Empathy as a Process*).
[176] Bernhard VOSICKY as quoted by Hinrich BUES, in *Pater Bernhard: Nur die Liebe heilt*, p.182. („*Mir geht es darum, dass die Menschen, die zu mir kommen wissen, dass sie im Beichtstuhl die einzig Wichtigen in diesem Moment sind*.") Free Translation done by me.
[177] M. Scott PECK, *The Road Less Travelled. A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth*, Ebury Publishing, Kindle Edition, p. 69. Part II of this bestseller makes a detailed study of love from a psychological and spiritual point of view.
[178] THORNE, *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment*, pp. 75, 87, 132.

says, "Effective psychotherapy demands 'therapeutic love'; likewise genuine pastoral care, 'pastoral love.'"[179]

Morton T. Kelsey, spiritual author and minister, argues that practically all forms of modern therapy acknowledge the value of love in the healing process and use it as a tool in the process of therapy:

> I have learnt more about the importance of love from modern psychologists than I have from modern theologians or my religious teachers. Except for those who believe that we can best be changed through the kind of conditioning with which we train dogs or pigeons, *psychologists repeatedly emphasise the nature and quality of love as part of the therapeutic process*. We modern Western Christians are more likely to take love seriously once we realize that *most clinical psychologists find it a necessary ingredient in the healing process*.[180]

If psychotherapy as well as spiritual direction involves paying attention to another person, offering him the climate for growth and facilitating it, then it can be understood as loving and caring for the person. Psychotherapist M. Scott Peck says paying attention to the other is an act of love. It helps his growth:

> The principal form that the work of love takes is attention. When we love another we give him or her our attention; we attend to that person's growth. When we love ourselves we attend to our own growth. When we attend to someone we are caring for that person. The act of attending requires that we make the effort to set aside our existing preoccupations (…) and actively shift our consciousness. Attention is an act of will, of work against the inertia of our own minds.[181]

Love is at the heart of Salesian spirituality and Salesian method of guiding people. As seen above, Francis de Sales is not along in his thinking. One cannot think of a Salesian (or any) method of pastoral counselling or spiritual direction that does not incorporate love as its essence. Love should invariably be at the centre of a person-centred and person-oriented pastoral counselling in the spirit of Francis de Sales.

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[179] Stefan BLARER, *Die Kunst seelsorglicher Liebe, Plädoyer für einen erneuerten Zölibat*, Freiburg (CH): Topos/Paulus Verlag, 2012, p. 61. („Wirksame Psychotherapie erfordert die „therapeutische Liebe." Ebenso verlangt echte Seelsorge die „seesorgliche Liebe.") Although the major topic of the book is defence of priestly celibacy, the author at many places explores the similarities between pastoral ministry and psychotherapy.

[180] Morton T. KELSEY, *Companions on the Inner Way. The Art of Spiritual Guidance*, New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1983, p. 202. Italics mine.

[181] PECK, *The Road Less Travelled*, pp.108-109. Emphasis mine.

5.5.5 The Spiritual and Mystical Dimension

In line with Brian Thorne, William West and others, I argue that pastoral counselling for the present times and for the future should take the spiritual and mystical dimension seriously. People in India are generally spiritual and religious. Many people, especially in the context of India, who seek pastoral counselling and spiritual guidance, have an earnest desire to grow in spirituality. It could be partially because of the general spiritual tradition of India and the religious upbringing of the faithful in India. Moreover, people in India are open to insights from the Scripture and the teachings of the Church. In many cases, that is what they are looking for. Many are keen to know how they can deal with their problems being true to their faith. In this respect, the pastoral context of India is totally different from that of the West.

The value of praying together, meditation, reading of the Scripture and such spiritual interventions can have its appropriate place in pastoral counselling if the counsellee desires it. Such spiritual interventions are sometimes even recommended. Richards and Bergin say, "These practices have endured because, in different ways, they express and respond to people's deepest needs, concerns, and problems. Research indicates that there is significant healing power in some of them.... Spiritual practices can be used as adjunctive interventions in therapy to assist clients in their efforts to cope, heal, and grow."[182]As explained in the preceding pages, many other therapists like Thorne, West, Mettnitzer,[183] have found them useful, too. Latest research also tends to subscribe to this fact.[184]

As Thorne opines, praying for the client, holding the client in our thoughts and prayers can be very helpful.[185] Christians believe in the power of prayers. It is all the more true in a strongly religious culture like the one in India. Our prayers for the other have such a value and effect. It also increases the therapist's perception of the client and his understanding of the situation.

[182] P. Scott RICHARDS / Allen E. BERGIN, *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy*, (2nd ed.), American Psychological Association: Washington D.C, 2005, p. 251. In the 9th chapter of this book, *Religious and Spiritual Practices as Therapeutic Interventions*, pp.251-279 Richards and Bergin undertakes a study of some of the spiritual practices as therapeutic interventions such as prayer, meditation, repentance and worship and their effectiveness based on large empirical research. In following chapter of this book, *Spiritual Interventions Used by Contemporary Psychotherapists*, pp.281-309, they make a detailed study of the spiritual interventions used by the psychotherapists today and come to the conclusion that in the recent times many of them have been integrated into therapeutic practice by the licensed mental health professional and practitioners and found to be effective. At the same time, they suggest more research in this field.

[183] Three books from Mettnitzer are worth mentioning at this point. 1.*Couch & Altar. Erfahrungen aus Psychotherapie and Seelsorge*, (2008) 2. *Klang der Seele. Sinn suchen, trösten, ermutigen in Psychotherapie und Seelsorge*, (2009) 3. *Steh auf und geh. Die therapeutische Kraft biblisher Texte* (2013) All from Styria Publishers Vienna.

[184] Cf. *Spiritual Interventions: Research on Prayer and Healing*, in Harvard Health Publication, 01.12.2006. See also *Easing Grief Through Religion and Spirituality*, in Harvard Health Publication, 25.08.2015.

[185] Cf. Brian THORNE, *Counselling and Spiritual Accompaniment*, pp.146-149.

Letting God work is an integral part of pastoral counselling. Psychotherapist Mettnitzer is convinced that prayer has such value in our lives. He says, "It is my personal conviction that the most decisive factor is not to which religion one belongs, but whether or not one is a praying person."[186]

However, religious and spiritual exercises should not be used or promoted aggressively in any form of counselling. If done so, it can have a quite contrary effect. Aggressive form of spirituality is a contradiction in itself. The counsellors should also be able to take into account the situation of the client and see what spiritual interventions are useful in a particular context. To quote Richards and Bergin again, "There may be some therapeutic religious practices that are unique to individual religious traditions. We hope that the therapists who have an expertise in specific traditions will identify and apply in therapy those religious and spiritual practices that have the greatest therapeutic value for clients from those traditions."[187] This requires good discernment on the side of the therapist and, as I would say, a person-centred and person-oriented approach.

William West argues that therapists need training in dealing with spiritual issues because it is not unlikely that clients of psychotherapy have mystical experiences. Clients generally tend to avoid topics which the therapists turn a deaf ear to. Many clients, especially who have grown up in religious families, are influenced by religion and spirituality and the therapist cannot just ignore this essential dimension of their personality.[188]

Human beings have a desire and tendency for transcendence. St Augustine referred to it as 'human restlessness' and human longing for God. Blaise Pascal would speak in terms of 'man goes beyond himself'. Thomas Acquinas, Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, C.S Lewis – and many others- spoke of this 'transcendent urge' in man.[189] Christian theology emphasises the transcendental dimension of man. It is the duty of practical theology to show sensitivity and sensibility in the face of human pain and other human conditions and to instil deep desire for

[186] Arnold METTNITZER, *Klang der Seele. Sinn suchen, trösten, ermutigen in Psychotherapie und Seelsorge*, Vienna: Styria, 2009, p. 113. Translation mine. („Nach meiner persönlichen Überzeugung ist es nicht entscheidend, welcher Religion ein Mensch angehört; entscheidend ist vielmehr, ob ein Mensch betet oder nicht.")
[187] RICHARDS / BERGIN, *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy*, p. 279.
[188] Cf. WEST, *Psychotherapy and Spirituality*, pp.16-18.
[189] Cf. John COTTINGHAM, *Human Nature and the Transcendent* in C. SANDIS / M. CAIN (Eds.), *Human Nature* (Royal Institute of Philosophy, Supplement 70), (233-254), Cambridge: University Press, 2012, pp. 233-234).

human transcendence. One sees in Rogers this openness for transcendence especially in his later years.[190]

Man is nothing before the majesty of God. In spite of his 'smallness' God has given him such a lofty position in the universe. God wants man to communicate with Him through prayer, silence and wonder. Therapists believe that in counselling a believer, spiritual practices like prayer, silence, wonder and blessing can play a healthy and healing role.[191]

Human life is less human when human beings forget their mystical and transcendental dimension. Francis de Sales helped his directees to be mystical in the midst of the world, not losing the transcendental dimension, being fully immersed in the mundane day-to-day activities. Salesian idea of mysticism is characterised by its practicality and its inseparability from day-to-day life. By helping the directee to live always in the presence of God through acts of love, short prayers, raising the heart and mind to God etc. the counsellor/director gives a mystical dimension to his life. Francis de Sales encourages daily meditation as a means to self-purification and growth in devotion.[192] Modern therapists also encourage the use of meditation in the process of healing and personal growth.[193] Not forgetting this mystical dimension helps us sometimes to see the events of life in the proper perspective and with equanimity, inner freedom and trust.

The mystical dimension of human beings cannot be neglected by science, psychology or any form of psychotherapy. As Teilhard de Chardin says, "We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience."[194]

5.5.6 Person-Oriented and Person-Centred

Having seen what it means to be person-oriented and person-centred,[195] I feel the need of concrete application of these concepts in the pastoral situation of India. Pastoral counselling has to be person-oriented because each person is unique and has specific needs. Each human being is a mystery.[196] Each person is formed by his genetic endowment, his environment and his cultural

[190] Cf. BÄUMER / PLATTIG, *Aufmerksamkeit ist das natürliche Gebet der Seele.*132.
[191] Cf. METTNITZER, *Klang der Seele,* pp. 111-133
[192] Cf. SALES, *IDL,* Part 1, Ch.8, pp. 49-50. (See also 3.4.8)
[193] Cf. Mary Anne LA TORRE, *Meditations and Psychotherapy: An Effective Combination* in *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, Vol. 37.3, 2001, pp.103-106.
[194] As quoted by RICHARDS / BERGIN, *A Spiritual Strategy for Counselling and Psychotherapy*, p. 5.
[195] See 3.4.4 ff. See also 4.2.1.1 - 4.2.1.4 , 5.3.4
[196] Fyodor DOSTOYEVSKY, cited in Bruce CRANE (compiled) *Man is a Mystery. It must be unraveled…A collection of Dostoyevsky's Thoughts on Human Condition from Anger to Youth*, Lincoln, NE: Writers Club Press, 2001, p. xiii, (The original quote goes like this: " Man is a mystery. It must be unraveled, and if it takes a whole lifetime, don't say it is a waste of time". F Dostoyevsky to his brother Mikhail Dostoyevsky in a letter in 1839).

milieu. Therefore, it is not possible to follow a method that fits all.[197] Taking into account the present situation of India, a more person-centred approach is helpful.[198] The counsellors and directors should be more open to the person, believe in his - the client's - power to take appropriate decision for him. Pastors should learn to relinquish their power over the other and empower the other to 'be what he really is and to be that at its best'. Francis de Sales and Rogers believed this 'empowering' can take place only in an atmosphere of freedom and love.

In counselling and spiritual direction it is important to pay attention to the personal qualities of each individual and to provide a healthy climate to help him to find healing and growth rather than to make him 'fit into a mould'. Then the world would be a 'garden of different flowers' in different colours, sizes, fragrance and appearance, as Francis de Sales says.[199] This demands from the pastors - in an overly clericalized and authoritarian pastoral climate like in India - to be servants and facilitators rather than masters. One should keep in mind the truth that any form of pastoral ministry is primarily service and not dominance.[200] It requires of the ministers to abandon their bossing and moralizing attitude towards those who seek their help and to be willing to respond to the person from his point of view and trying to understand his reality from his phenomenological aspect. He has to also pay attention to the client's subjective experience and accept them as valid for the client. Taking seriously the subjective experience of the client is essential to understand the client and his experience.[201] That does not, however, mean subjectivizing or relativizing the truth. From the experience of many mystics in the Church it is clear that spirituality and mysticism allow room for subjective experience. Accepting a person does not also mean endorsing him and all his actions. It means accepting his as a 'child of God in need' and treating him with the respect due to him. Such an attitude is in line with the spirit of the Gospels. Mettnitzer argues that Jesus received such people with tenderness – he touched them, allowed them to touch, caress and kiss him, shared meal with them etc. This aspect of tenderness disappeared in the course of time from Christian traditions and is regrettably associated with sexuality. [202]

Indian society remains deeply conservative and traditional. It is true of Indian pastoral scenario, too. There is, in general, openness to spirituality and religion. Although many people today do

[197] For details, see 3.4.4
[198] For details, see 4.2.1.1 - 4.2.1.4 and 5.3.4
[199] See 3.4.4.3 (See also 3.4.4. ff.).
[200] Cf. SCHMID, *Personale Begegnung*, p. 217-222. In this part Schmid develops the idea that pastoral ministry is service. He states, „Seelsorge ist immer 'Dienst' nicht Herrschaft" p. 218
[201] See 4.2.1.4
[202] Cf. METTNITZER, *Steh auf und geh*, pp. 60-63. The Gospels are full of examples wherein we find that Jesus receives the needy and the downtrodden with special love, tenderness and care.

not like to be indoctrinated as in the earlier times and tend to resist the moralizing and pedantic attitude of the counsellors/ministers/priests, there is a general openness to the teachings of the Church in the Indian context. Very often people seek clarification on controversial issues like abortion, divorce and pre-marital sex. The Catholics in India expect to get a clear direction from pastoral counsellor or the minister on these matters. A totally non-directive approach would not be helpful in this context wherein people seek information and clarification sensitive matters. Here comes the importance of the method of Francis de Sales, who clearly and directly explained the teachings of the Scripture and the Church to his directees.[203]

Openness to religion and spirituality, however, does not mean that pastoral counselling should be reduced to mere moral and advice-giving sessions. It should be more of an encounter of two persons based on God's relationship with the human beings.[204] The old model of an 'all-knowing' priest or parish priest who always had 'ready-made' answers to all the problems of the faithful who come to him is already outmoded and totally pointless today. Such a priest-centred ministry is passé today – not only in the West but also in the East.[205] What people are looking for in a pastoral counsellor today, very specially in a priest, is loving acceptance, patient listening, willingness to help and the assurance of spiritual assistance. They expect him to be genuine and want him to understand them with empathy. To achieve this goal, a non-directive approach, as proposed by PCA is highly helpful. The pastoral counsellor has to treat his client as a person of dignity, as a child of God. To treat a person who seeks help in a pastoral context as patient would be totally counter – productive.[206] There are enough doctors in the world outside to treat a patient, but very few to help a psychologically and spiritually suffering person. Therefore, the pastoral counsellor's duty lies in accepting, understanding and accompanying him and not in manipulating or to 'programming' him. Their duty is to be companions and 'midwives' on the journey. As Paul Wilkins says, "In this and related forms of practice, clients formulate their own goals and therapist are companions on the journey, not leaders."[207]

In this respect, the therapist has to be more person-oriented and person-centred than sticking to the strict rules and psychological guidelines. Sometimes the pastoral counsellor has to see what

[203] See 5.4.4
[204] Cf. SCHMID, *Personale Begegnung*, p. 231. (See also pp. 231-254).
[205] Cf. Paul M. ZULEHNER, *Zulehner zum Laienapostolat:'Priesterkirche' ist passe*, 09.11.15, in Katholische Presseagentur Österreich. Available online: http://www.kathpress.at/goto/meldung/1315688/zulehner-zum-laienapostolat-priesterkirche-ist-pass (06.1.16).
[206] See 4.2.1.1
[207] WILKINS, *Person-Centred Therapy: 100 Key Points*, p.146. ('In this and related'… means, in PCT and related forms of therapy).

the counselee at that particular moment requires, what his expectations are and what can help him. The counsellor should hold the person as the centre of his actions.

A person-oriented and person-centred approach also means more non-directivity. Non-directivity is not just about 'reflecting' or meditating over what the client has said or just repeating it back to the client. Much more, intense listening and reflection of feelings helps the client feel accepted, appreciated and loved. It helps him to go deep into himself and to explore himself. It is also one of the means of appreciating and showing empathy for the client. It also involves intense listening, listening with empathy and understanding, to the client- a quality which the pastors in India have to pay special attention to. However, non-directivity has its own limits. Many therapists, from all forms of therapy, believe that a totally non-directive therapy is not effective. They pitch for a more eclectic approach.[208] There are times when the therapist has to intervene because of his experience, expertise and professional qualifications for the sake of the client. This is very much true of pastoral counselling and spiritual direction. The counsellor has to take into account that the client is in distress or in incongruence and he is duty-bound to help him. But that does not give room for restriction on personal freedom and choice. It goes without saying that a fully directive and authoritarian method is neither desirable nor salutary even in pastoral counselling.

Concluding Remarks

Drawing from the foregoing discussion, I come to the conclusion that any form of pastoral guidance – pastoral counselling, spiritual guidance and spiritual direction – in Indian context requires a more optimistic and realistic anthropology which accentuates the positive and creative nature of human beings. To be effective, the counsellor should exhibit and live out the therapeutic conditions in a genuine relationship which provides a climate conducive to healing and growth. Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers stand out as good models in this regard.

It should, however, be stressed that undue emphasis on psychology which neglects the spiritual and transcendental dimension of human beings and which promotes unhealthy and unrealistic anthropology and expectations are to be avoided. As Francis de Sales believed, virtue lies in the middle – in the healthy integration of the two.

[208] Cf. Denis A. KENSIT, *Rogerian Theory: A Critique of the effectiveness of the pure client-centred therapy* in *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 2000, Vol.13.4, pp. 345-351.

One important point to be kept in mind is that the Western Psychology and its methods cannot be applied in the Indian context. After decades of blind acceptance of western psychology, the psychologists in India in the recent years, have come to this realization, there has to be an indigenous psychology that the aspects of indian culture and spirituality.[209] Experienced counsellors in India caution against any such naïve acceptance: "Because of cultural differences between Eastern and Western countries, a direct application of Western approaches to persons of Eastern descent may have negative consequences."[210] Soundarajan and Balachandra further argue for the introduction of spiritual intervention and traditional practices in counselling: "Incorporating indigenous methods of healing has a therapeutic value for Indians. Thus mental health clientele need to incorporate traditional modes of healing into their counselling practices (…) to increase counselling effectiveness and to ensure client satisfaction."[211]

Pastoral counselling, as a ministry of the Church, should never neglect the diaconal dimension of it. As a form of pastoral service/ ministry, it is her primary duty to stand by the suffering person and to lend a helping hand than moralising or catechising. It requires enormous faith on the part of the pastoral counsellor to trust that the God can work with this particular person in need and it is his duty to be a channel of God's love and grace to facilitate healing and growth in this person in need. The therapeutic conditions of PCA are effective tools for achieving this goal. As Arnold Mettnitzer suggests, the doctors and pastors are not gods in white coats or black cassocks. To be the 'advocates of human beings' should be their prime motive; and as such to be sensible to the suffering and afflicted fellow human beings is their part of their primary duty. They should be able to see 'with the eyes of the other' and 'feel with the heart' of the other. [212]

Along with Brian Thorne, William West, Peter F. Schmid, Bäumer and Plattig and many other person-centred oriented therapists/counsellors I believe, that PCA can be applied in the pastoral context. Moreover, I believe that it can be integrated with Salesian spirituality for a method pastoral counselling suitable for Indian pastoral scenario.

[209] Cf. Radhika SOUNDARARAJAN / Aruna BALACHANDRA. *Urgent need for indigenous models of counselling* in *Counselling: Theory Research and Practice*, Nov Rattan SHARMA / Ashok K KALIA / Akbar HUSAIN (Eds.), New Delhi: Global Vison, 2008, pp. 205 – 211.
[210] Radhika SOUNDARARAJAN / Aruna BALACHANDRA, Ibid., p. 205.
[211] Ibid., pp. 208-209.
[212] Cf. METTNITZER, *Couch & Altar. Erfahrungen aus Psychotherapie und Seelsorge*, p. 63.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

My hypothesis that there are some similarities between Salesian spirituality and the person-centred approach (PCA) to counselling was the starting point of this study. It was based on the initial reading of available literature on both these topics. My initial thinking that the humanistic roots and the optimistic outlook of both Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers could pave the way for developing a strategy to confront the challenges of the Indian pastoral scenario became stronger and inevitable with the passage of time. In my interaction with scholars in India, Europe and in the US in the field of Salesian spirituality and PCA during the course of this study, I was also greatly encouraged and ably supported in my undertaking.

In order to ascertain the thinking of people in the field, a survey was conducted. Although the conclusion of the study is not based on the outcome of the survey, it gave me a glimpse into the thinking of the people who are actively engaged in the field. The survey surprised me with the discovery that many people who are familiar with Salesian spirituality have been trying to apply it in their ministry of guidance. Most of the respondents were in some way or other related to the field of guidance. Salesian spirituality helped treat the client/directee/person with more human dignity and to show more empathy. Surprisingly, Salesian spirituality also helped them accept human beings as they are and to be more person-oriented. I hope this study will be a valuable contribution to this field.

Most respondents answered positively regarding the application of psychological methods and insights in pastoral ministry. The vast majority - 85.37 % - of the respondents believed that there are similarities between these two approaches and that PCA can profitably be applied in spiritual direction and pastoral ministry.[213] That was indeed an eye-opener. On the other hand, the same respondents vehemently cautioned against integrating imprudently and unwisely the methods of psychology/psychotherapy into pastoral counselling. The long 'danger-list'[214] is a clear indication of this apprehension.

In drawing my conclusions, I have based myself on the vast Salesian literature, and the still more copious literature on PCA, the research findings available in the field, my own study and personal interview with experts in the field. As mentioned earlier, the survey results have corroborated my conclusions.

[213] See Survey, Q. 23. (See also Q. 22).
[214] See Survey, Q. 21. (See also Q. 24).

At the end of this dissertation, based on the considerations carried out till now, the following conclusions may be drawn.

There is a Need for a Healthy Psychological Approach.

A pastoral counsellor, since his ministry is all about dealing psychologically and spiritually with human beings, should possess a profound knowledge of human persons. It calls for sound and sufficient knowledge of topics like the workings of the human mind, personality development, knowledge of personality theories and the handling of emotions. He should also have deep knowledge of common psychological illnesses like anxiety disorders, depression, stress-related problems etc. and how to deal with them. Such knowledge is important in pastoral counselling. A pastoral counsellor also has to familiarise himself with problems associated with the stages of growth, gender-specific problems, problems related to aging, etc. to deal effectively with the people who seek his help. For example, a counsellor who is not familiar with the physical and psychological effects of bodily developments in puberty cannot understand the problems of teenagers or deal competently with them. Another classic example: psychological insights into human pain and sorrow can help a pastoral counsellor/priest to deal with bereavement. Such psychological knowledge and insights can add a new dimension to pastoral counselling and make it more human, humane and effective. Such knowledge also makes one aware of one's own limitations, of how far one can handle situations, and where one should gracefully make way for more mature experts. Failure in this area can result in the pastoral counsellors becoming fanatical, narrow-minded know-alls who only preach, pre-judge and moralise.

As provost, Francis exhorted his priests to learn continuously, because he believed that knowledge was the eighth sacrament for a priest. This exhortation of Francis de Sales is still valid today. It is applicable not only to the spiritual realm, but all relevant fields of knowledge. It is to be understood as a call to acquire knowledge and skills, to apply them and to update them from time to time.

A pastoral counsellor has to grow familiar with developments in the field of psychology and psychotherapy if he has to deal effectively with the rapidly changing social situation of today. Knowledge of how human beings behave, their way of thinking and how they react to and are affected by developments in the society is important to deal successfully with human beings. Special attention is to be paid to the research findings and insights of indigenous psychology as human behaviour varies from region to region and country to country. This knowledge is not to judge or to categorise people, but to understand them and their problems – in order to help them.

The Church should not hesitate to integrate the findings of psychology into her pastoral ministry as advocated by numerous Church documents. Jesus' attitude of openness should be an inspiration for pastoral counsellors: 'But Jesus said to him, you must not stop him: anyone, who is not against you is for you' (Lk 9:50). When psychology does not go against faith but works for humanity, it stands ready to serve humanity and cannot be against Christian faith. After all, the Church should have no reservations against integrating the methods of psychotherapy into her pastoral care. She should have the confidence that psychology/psychotherapy cannot destroy her ministry or even weaken it. Compared to the long tradition of the Church - which is almost two thousand years old in the care of the needy and the suffering - psychotherapy is still in its infancy. The Church has no reason to feel threatened by it. Paul's advice to the Thessalonians could be applied here: 'Test everything and hold on to what is good and shun every form of evil' (1 Thess 5:21-22).

Pastoral Counselling Is a Basic Ministry

This dissertation has to a large extent explored the relationship between the Church and psychology/psychotherapy. One cannot fail to notice a conspicuous openness on the part of the Church in recent decades. This openness to psychology and psychotherapy in recent times is a welcome sign. It opens up opportunities for pastoral counsellors. Thousands of priests, nuns and pastors around the world today serve as psychotherapists. The Church does not any more feel threatened by psychology. On the other hand, the Church has come a long way to successfully integrating it into her pastoral ministry. Today this is a self-evident fact. Not unsurprisingly, as noted at several places in this work, many practising psychotherapists now realize the role of spirituality in people's lives and without hesitation incorporate religious practices/interventions in their therapy.

Pastoral counselling is to be viewed as an essential ministry of the Church in continuation of the healing ministry of Jesus. As a basic element of the pastoral ministry of the Church, it is an integral part of practical theology. Pastoral counselling should be seen as a diaconal service in the spirit of Jesus who was compassionate, merciful, and non-judgemental in his dealings with people. Taking into account the complicated current situation in Indian society, one can fearlessly assert that pastoral counselling has become a pressing need in the Church in India at this time.

Be Inspired by the Two Giants

The detailed biographies of both St Francis de Sales and Carl R Rogers in the earlier part of this dissertation had twin purposes. It was done firstly to delineate their personalities in order to understand them better and to study the influences that shaped their lives and thoughts. The second purpose was to trace the evolution and development of their ways and methods which were closely connected with their lives. Both Francis and Rogers were deeply influenced by their culture and background, and, in turn, they exerted their personal influence on their times and successive periods to come.

Both men were motivated by an intense desire to be of help to others. The fundamental question that motivated Rogers was: how can I be of help to this person? Rogers was consistently motivated by human considerations. Francis de Sales, on the other hand, felt irresistibly drawn by the love of God and neighbour. The desire to help, the inner drive to alleviate human suffering, to lend a helping hand to the suffering person has been a fundamental Christian trait. It is also an expression of the Christ-like compassion and mercy which the world today stands desperately in need of.

Several other elements in their personal characteristics too were in common. Both were susceptible to novel ideas and constantly kept improving their manner of guiding people. Both alike absorbed and incorporated fresh insights and useful information from different sources into their fields of service. In the case of Francis de Sales, the tradition of the Church contained a vast reservoir of useful ideas to adapt from.

Rogers is credited with revolutionising the field of counselling with scientific and empirical methods. As the first therapist to make audio and video recordings of counselling sessions, Rogers meticulously evaluated the outcome of such projects. His new inspirations and insights were brought out in a large number of books and numerous scientific articles. As a gifted writer and speaker, Rogers' style of communicating was characterised by a penetrating personal touch.

One notices a similar attitude in Francis de Sales who too was rather unhappy with the traditional practice of spiritual direction, characterized as it was by authoritarianism and based on strict obedience and dehumanizing practices. Francis opted for a new approach based on freedom and human qualities. He believed that one should try to be fully human before trying to be an angel; hence the importance he attached to human qualities. Unlike other spiritual directors of the time, Francis considered the mortification of the heart more important than corporal austerities. As a

divinely gifted preacher and voluminous writer, he was singularly personal and thoroughly person-oriented in his writings that made the reader feel that Francis was directly speaking to him/her. Almost four centuries later, one who reads his letters gets the same feeling today.

Humanistic thinking was another feature that made them birds of a feather. Both appreciated and promoted the good and positive qualities of human beings. These two great souls possessed endearing personal qualities that helped them in their respective profession/ministry – personal touch, gentleness, empathy, patient listening, and a deep understanding of human nature, to list just a few. These qualities are all too important even today – perhaps more sine qua non than ever before. As highly reputed humanists, Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers encourage pastoral counsellors to concentrate on the positive characteristics of human persons, in the Church and in the society at large.

The Need for Human Qualities

Anyone who wishes to deal with human beings should acquire the above-cited fundamental human qualities before one goes for more difficult psychological techniques and complicated methods of psychotherapy. Rogers' therapeutic conditions are highly efficient means of dealing with human beings. One who desires to enter into or is called to the field of helping ministry – be it personal counselling, pastoral counselling, priestly ministry, spiritual direction – requires an abundance of these human qualities. These qualities – gentleness, patience, empathy, understanding, genuineness – are essential not only in a pastoral and psychotherapeutic context but even in day-to-day life. From a Christian point of view these qualities can be seen as a concrete expression of love. They can make a huge difference to the entire gamut of any human relationship. Church teachings demand that pastors acquire basic human qualities.

Francis de Sales and Rogers call for more empathic listening. This can never be overemphasized in the pastoral context of India. Contemporary Indian pastoral context is often characterised by authoritarianism, clericalism and rigidity. The time has come for a healthy change: to treat every human being with respect, love and understanding. Each person deserves to be respected – even the worst of sinners. Pastors and pastoral counsellors need to imitate the merciful and compassionate Jesus. Pastors must learn to be totally empathic and understanding, without moralizing and sitting in judgement. Church documents on pastoral and priestly ministry and priestly formation underline this point. This has to be put into concrete action in the Indian context. In the survey conducted by me most of the respondents underlined the need for human

qualities like empathy, gentleness, genuineness and patience in pastoral ministry and counselling.

It can axiomatically be stated that those who take up the counselling ministry or the vocation of guidance need to keep themselves constantly updated. That calls for keeping abreast of the latest developments in the field, acquiring and honing requisite skills, informing oneself of the quick changes in society, and studying how the developments in the society affect individual persons and families, etc. One could assert that this learning and training is the 'eighth sacrament' [as proposed by Francis de Sales] for a pastoral counsellor/spiritual director.

Pastoral counselling, as a branch of practical theology, has to keep itself open to further research, especially in psychology and psychotherapy, and constantly update itself for ministry. Psychological insights can enrich ministry, and vice versa. Pastoral counsellors should have knowledge of their clients and their ways of behaviour and should be able to identify problem behaviour without 'diagnosing' them. Knowledge of the common mental and psychological problems of the people, in order to keep the pastor abreast of the developments in the field of spiritual direction, counselling and psychotherapy is essential.

Precious little research has been done in the Indian context concerning the country's pastoral needs and problems. The time has come to do serious research in the Indian pastoral context so that problems can be solved based on ground realities rather than on the utopian estimation and evaluation of the hierarchy.

The Primary Place of Relationship

When comparing the two approaches, one is struck by the emphasis both Francis de Sales and Rogers place on relationships. It is hardly enough to possess the above-mentioned qualities; they should be concretely expressed in relationships.

Why is relationship so important? It is precisely because it is in the very nature of human beings to be related. A relationship where these qualities and conditions are lived out is indeed therapeutic and provides the right atmosphere for recovery, growth and healing. This comparative study makes it amply clear that both Francis de Sales and Carl Rogers were convinced that the manner of dealing with human beings does matter.

'Be genuine, masquerading does not help!' – is the warning given by these two eminent guides. In the helping professions, especially in pastoral ministry and counselling, sooner or later people

discover/unmask the real nature of the counsellor and what motivates him; hence, 'be what you are, but try to be the best you can; be your real self.' Although PCA might appear to overemphasize the conditions or to be naïve about the causes of psychological problems, there is a lot of truth in its view that incongruence is a major cause of psychological problems. Lack of genuineness in life can lead persons to debilitating mental insecurity.

A healing relationship should always respect the uniqueness of the person. It is God's plan that each person is uniquely different. Each individual is called to be as God wants him/her to be. It is the moral obligation of the pastoral counsellor to help one, as Francis de Sales says, to 'be that and to be that at its best' or, as Rogers states, to 'be the self that one really is.' A pastoral counsellor should never manipulate his client, but should help him/her to use the immeasurable resources within – they are gifted by God to that person – through this loving, therapeutic relationship. Respecting the uniqueness also means that there cannot be an established pattern of dealing with human persons. Each person has to be helped, taking into account his/her unique life-situation. Such an approach has to be totally person-oriented.

The process of therapy involves self-evaluation. The conditions and therapeutic relationship should facilitate this process. Francis de Sales often advocated regular self-evaluation especially at the beginning of a spiritual direction relationship.

Lay Emphasis on the Spiritual Aspect

As has been sufficiently described in this Dissertation, undue stress on psychology and its methods is unhealthy in the pastoral context of India where people still are religious-minded and tradition-bound. Admittedly, a blind acceptance of Western methods is neither prudent nor effective in the Indian pastoral context where deep spirituality, strong traditional attitudes, and orthodoxy still hold sway.

Pastoral counselling in the Indian context can also include spiritual interventions. It can include praying with the client, reading the Word of God, thinking of, and praying for the client – 'holding the client', as Thorne would say. Francis de Sales often did it. He frequently wrote short letters to his directees to let them know he was thinking of and praying for them. The importance of prayers and spiritual interventions cannot be overruled in the Indian context as the clients are susceptible to them and, in fact, desire them. Non-classical PCA shows great openness in this regard. In a pastoral context, PCA, or any school of psychology, has to be approached with much prudence and extreme caution.

As already seen in the earlier parts of this dissertation, there exist obviously irreconcilable differences between PCA and the Salesian approach – the role of faith and transcendental dimension, God's presence, acceptance of the fallen nature of humans, the need for grace, etc. Rogers' extreme emphasis on the self as the ultimate judge of everything leads to moral relativism.

Psychological methods, no doubt, are helpful. One should, at the same time, not forget that 'grace can do much more' than psychology. Psychology/psychotherapy alone cannot heal/save people. It may help them solve their problems and function better. Spirituality, on the other hand, shows ways for humans to be saved. God's grace alone saves people.

Pastoral counselling is a ministry of the Church. It is a service to the faithful, to humanity. This diaconal dimension should always be kept in mind. Too much professionalism at the expense of the spiritual dimension can prove counter-productive.

A Solution to the Challenge: Person-Oriented and Person-Centred Approach

At the end of this dissertation what emerges is the conviction that a combination of person-centred approach and the approach of Francis de Sales (Salesian approach) is ideally suited to the Indian pastoral context. What is required in contemporary Indian pastoral context is a model of counselling based on freedom, uniqueness of individuals and respect for persons. To be denounced is authoritarianism, clericalism and male chauvinism in the pastoral context – the malaise of the Indian pastoral scene. A person-oriented and person-centred approach is a solution to the pastoral challenges of India today. The survey conducted in this connection also corroborates these convictions.

APPENDIX: SURVEY

Survey: Pastoral Counselling in the Spirit of St Francis de Sales

This online survey was done through LimeSurvey (www.limesurvey.org) through the official portal of the Katholisch Theologische Fakultät (KTF), Universität Wien. The survey was conducted from June 2015 to December 2015.

83 persons responded to the survey, either fully or partially. The entries in the column 'other,' where the respondents were free to enter their own points are given - unedited and in original wording - at the end of the table.

A few questions that deal with personal details are withheld to ensure privacy.
Please note that question 21 has been placed at the end, as it has many entries.

Survey table name:	lime_survey_61974

Title:	**Pastoral Counselling in the Spirit of St Francis de Sales (ID 61974)**
Survey URL (English):	http://umfragen.ktf.univie.ac.at/index.php?sid=61974&lang=en

Field summary for 001 **Please enter your full name**		
	Count	**Percentage**
Answer	82	98.80%
No answer	0	0.00%
Not completed or Not displayed	1	1.20%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 002 Your gender		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
Female (F)	6	7.23%
Male (M)	76	91.57%
No answer	0	0.00%
Not completed or Not displayed	1	1.20%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 003: Your age	
Calculation	**Result**
Count	82
Sum	4073
Standard deviation	12.48
Average	49.67
Minimum	29
1st quartile (Q1)	40
2nd quartile (Median)	46.5
3rd quartile (Q3)	58
Maximum	88

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 004		
Your profession/ vocation		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
Priest (SQ001)	70	84.34%
Nun/Sister (SQ002)	2	2.41%
Consecrated person (Brother, secular Sister etc) (SQ003)	10	12.05%
Lay person/lay faithful (SQ004)	6	7.23%
Other	2	2.41%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 005		
Your field of work/ministry		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
Counsellor/ Therapist/ Pastoral Counsellor (005a)	14	16.87%
Educator/ Teacher/ Professor (005b)	40	48.19%
Formator (005c)	35	42.17%
Spiritual Director/Guide (005d)	19	22.89%
Preacher (005e)	18	21.69%
Pastoral Ministry (005f)	34	40.96%
Other	14	16.87%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 006 Your nationality		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
India (006A1)	59	71.08%
Austria (006A2)	6	7.23%
USA (006A3)	7	8.43%
England (006A4)	2	2.41%
Germany (006A5)	2	2.41%
other (006A6)	5	6.02%
No answer	1	1.20%
Not completed or Not displayed	1	1.20%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 008A Are you in some way familiar with Salesian Spirituality?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
very well (008A1)	17	20.48%
well (008A2)	45	54.22%
somewhat (008A3)	16	19.28%
very little (008A4)	3	3.61%
not at all (008A5)	0	0.00%
No answer	1	1.20%
Not completed or Not displayed	1	1.20%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 008B		
Have you ever thought that Salesian Spirituality could be applied in guiding people?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
very often (008B1)	42	50.60%
often (008B2)	30	36.14%
occasionally (008B3)	6	7.23%
rarely (008B4)	2	2.41%
never (008B5)	1	1.20%
No answer	1	1.20%
Not completed or Not displayed	1	1.20%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 009		
Have you ever tried in any way to use Salesian Spirituality in your spiritual direction/guidance/counselling?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
Yes (Y)	73	87.95%
No (N)	8	9.64%
No answer	1	1.20%
Not completed or Not displayed	1	1.20%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 009A Have you found it useful?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
very useful (009A1)	47	56.63%
useful (009A2)	24	28.92%
somewhat (009A3)	2	2.41%
not useful (009A4)	0	0.00%
No answer	0	0.00%
Not completed or Not displayed	10	12.05%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 009B Please specify how?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
in assuring human dignity given by God (009B1)	42	50.60%
in giving hope and confidence (009B2)	41	49.40%
in being more person-oriented (009B3)	31	37.35%
to be more empathic and understanding (009B4)	39	46.99%
to listen patiently without judging (009B5)	46	55.42%
to be more human (009B6)	50	60.24%
to accept human beings as they are (009B7)	39	46.99%
Other	11	13.25%

Other

compassion39start all over again40to be joyfully available41to be joyfully available42to be joyfully available55to think positively even when the circumstances do not suggest so57in knowing that everything takes place in accordance with God\'s Will in life81Encouraging the person to connect with the goodness of God and goodness of the human person91to be practical98Experience God112To make the people understand that their life is meaningful and they are important as they are children of God and loved by God

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 010 Have you found gentleness useful in your guiding of people?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
very often (010a1)	48	57.83%
often (010a2)	29	34.94%
occasionally (010a3)	4	4.82%
rarely (010a4)	0	0.00%
never (010a5)	0	0.00%
Other	0	0.00%
No answer	1	1.20%
Not completed or Not displayed	1	1.20%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 011 What Salesian attitudes/virtues/approach have you found most useful in spiritual direction/ guidance/counselling? Please specify.		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
Gentleness (011a1)	52	62.65%
Patience (with oneself and the client) (011a2)	53	63.86%
Love and freedom (as the basis of all human actions) (011a3)	36	43.37%
Avoidance of coercion or manipulation of human beings (011a4)	23	27.71%
Use of gentle persuasiveness (011a5)	30	36.14%
Empathic listening (011a6)	49	59.04%
Other	8	9.64%

Other

humility40equanimity and surrender41equanimity and surrender42equanimity and surrender91humility; practical application of Salesian Spirituality for everyday living103genuineness124Self examination / Awareness of personal feelings / Congruence / Counter-transference128Being non judgmental or merciful

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 012		
Do you find allowing personal freedom/ liberty (= not using force) and applying non-directiveness useful in your ministry/ field of work?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
very often (012a1)	22	26.51%
often (012a2)	42	50.60%
occasionally (012a3)	14	16.87%
rarely (012a4)	1	1.20%
never (012a5)	0	0.00%
Other	0	0.00%
No answer	2	2.41%
Not completed or Not displayed	2	2.41%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	83
Total records in survey:	83
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 013		
Do you think that there is any simlarity between congruence, unconditional positive regard (UPR) and empathy in person-centred approach and gentleness, warmth, kindness and genuineness in salesian approach?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
I think so strongly (013a1)	22	26.51%
I think so (013a2)	43	51.81%
I don't know (013a3)	7	8.43%
I do think so (013a4)	1	1.20%
I don't think so at all (013a5)	0	0.00%
No answer	8	9.64%
Not completed or Not displayed	2	2.41%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	82
Total records in survey:	82
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 014		
What aspects, do you think, of person-centred approach could be most useful in spiritual direction and pastoral counselling?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
Congruence (Genuineness on the part of the counsellor) (014a1)	43	52.44%
Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR) (014a2)	39	47.56%
Empathy (014a3)	46	56.10%
Non-directiveness (014a4)	7	8.54%
Non-judgemental approach (014a5)	44	53.66%
Leaving the decision-making entirely to the client (014a6)	22	26.83%
Positive picture of humang being (014a7)	39	47.56%
Respecting and valuing the client (014a8)	37	45.12%
Other	5	6.10%

Other

love for prayer87Valuing the client I am doubtful. It depends on when we are valuing the client , not necessarily all the time. If there are descripencies in sharing skill confrontation(care-fronting) does not value client.88Valuing the client differs when and where. During discrepancies care-fronting is to be used.98Guidance when needed124Reflective dialogue

Results	
Number of records in this query:	82
Total records in survey:	82
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 015		
There is often the complaint that many priests lack understanding and empathy in dealing with people and are often too authoritarian in their approach. Do you agree?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
I agree strongly (015a1)	4	4.88%
I agree (015a2)	45	54.88%
I don't know (015a3)	13	15.85%
I disagree (015a4)	13	15.85%
I disagree strongly (015a5)	0	0.00%
Other	5	6.10%
No answer	0	0.00%
Not completed or Not displayed	2	2.44%

Other

depends on place. In Cameroon I feel Priests are often too authoritarian in their approach.84Anecdotally, you hear everything91This is a tough question to assess. I want to say that religious priests are probably more empathetic and understanding due to their charisms. I confidently feel that The OSFS are this way in their pastoral approach as it is such a part of Francis and our charism. I have had contact mostly with religious (especially the Augustinians) who seem to possess a unique charism thst is part of religious life whose approach is not authoritarian. I would conclude that I view religious as less authoritarian than diocesean priests. I base this on peoples\' comments about our genuiness in contrast to that of the diocesean clergy. However, there are certainly wonderful, pastoral and non-authoritarian members of the diocesean clergy. This question is difficult. It is certainly one that Pope Francis seems to be combating with the clergy and hierarchy in genewral.98I agree to some extent125sometimes

Results	
Number of records in this query:	82
Total records in survey:	82
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 016		
Do you think that love, freedom and acceptance seen in every director-directee relationship are in some way similar to genuineness, unconditional positive regard (UPR) and empathy in a therapeutic relationship?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
I think so strongly (016a1)	17	20.73%
I think so (016a2)	48	58.54%
I don't know (016a3)	11	13.41%
I don't think so (016a4)	1	1.22%
I don't think so at all (016a5)	0	0.00%
Other	3	3.66%
No answer	0	0.00%
Not completed or Not displayed	2	2.44%

Other

It is much more than that. It is good to deal clearly with terms in psychology like transference and counter transference .88yes. But transference and counter transference are important even in spiritual direction. Please make note of it124It depends on the view of what it means to be a person

Results	
Number of records in this query:	82
Total records in survey:	82
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 017		
Do you think love, gentleness and patient acceptance of oneself and the other is necessary spiritual direction and pastoral counselling?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
I think so strongly (017a1)	48	58.54%
I think so (017a2)	28	34.15%
I don't know (017a3)	1	1.22%
I don't think so (017a4)	0	0.00%
I don't think so at all (017a5)	0	0.00%
Other	2	2.44%
No answer	1	1.22%
Not completed or Not displayed	2	2.44%

I want to answer \"I think so strongly\" but what is meant by love? If it is \"willing the good for the other as other,\" then \"yes.\" If it is a strong emotional attachment, I am not sure tnnis is a necessary component for these two relationships (spiritual direction and pastoral counselling).124Yes, but there must be room for the encounter to be fiercely authentic even when respectful, loving and non-judgemental

Number of records in this query:	82
Total records in survey:	82
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 018		
Do you agree that to be salesian in approach in spiritual direction and pastoral counselling, it is important to strengthen the directee's confidence in God & in oneself and to encourage the directee to persevere, even if the methods are not fully non-directive?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
I agree strongly (018a1)	34	41.46%
I agree (018a2)	42	51.22%
I don't know (018a3)	2	2.44%
I disagree (018a4)	0	0.00%
I disagree strongly (018a5)	0	0.00%
Other	1	1.22%
No answer	1	1.22%
Not completed or Not displayed	2	2.44%

Confidence cannot be given, it can be cultivated under the right conditions of growth. The notions of \'God\' and \'oneself\' can vary from person to person in the peron-centred approach. PCA is not dogmatic. I am not sure about any organised spirittual tradition being free to dogma

Results	
Number of records in this query:	82
Total records in survey:	82
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 019		
People who come to pastoral counselling/spiritual direction often expect from the counsellor/director concrete directions and guidelines in the light of the Gospels and the teachings of the Church. Do you agree?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
I agree strongly (019a1)	14	17.07%
I agree (019a2)	51	62.20%
I don't know (019a3)	4	4.88%
I disagree (019a4)	9	10.98%
I disagree strongly (019a5)	1	1.22%
No answer	1	1.22%
Not completed or Not displayed	2	2.44%

Results	
Number of records in this query:	82
Total records in survey:	82
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 020		
Do you think that the psychology of self-actualising tendency and that of self-healing as proposed by Carl Rogers - if it is accepted as it is- can go against Christian Theology of sin, grace and salvation and human dependence on God?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
I think so strongly (020a1)	2	2.44%
I think so (020a2)	17	20.73%
I don't know (020a3)	21	25.61%
I don't think so (020a4)	27	32.93%
I don't think so at all (020a5)	3	3.66%
Other	6	7.32%
No answer	4	4.88%
Not completed or Not displayed	2	2.44%

I AM NOT SO FAMILIAR (in depth) with Carl ROGERS\' Thesis; and so am unable to judge49My Knowledge of Carl Rogers is very much limited so I am not in a position to give a response to this question57I am not sure, since I do not have the full understanding of Roger\'s theory. But certainly, any theory which denies God\'s Grace and human dependance on God, would be unacceptable91Iam not steeped enough with Carl Rogers\' understanding of these two concepts to answer adequately. I fear they might leave out God and/or the power of the religious experience.93could be124Rogers did not talk about self-actualisation. This is a common misunderstanding. Rogers talked about organismic actualisation.

Results	
Number of records in this query:	82
Total records in survey:	82
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 022		
Do you think the person-centred approach gives one chance for its application in spiritual direction and pastoral counselling without compromising on Christian Theology, with the possiblity of incorporating Christian values and methods into it?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
I think so strongly (022a1)	14	17.07%
I think so (022a2)	49	59.76%
I don't know (022a3)	7	8.54%
I don't think so (022a4)	1	1.22%
I don't think so at all (022a5)	0	0.00%
Other	5	6.10%
No answer	0	0.00%
Not completed or Not displayed	6	7.32%

depend on situation/ person74I don\'t know91Again, not knowing Rogers handicaps me in answering. While I view spiritual direction as seeing the hand of God in one\'s life and it is the individual who is central to the dynamic, I think the spiritual life is more about being God-centered than person centered. The person needs to become singularly focused on God.124I am not sure. I guess this would depend upon the values and aspirations of the client, and the genuine person-centredness of the spiritual guide

Results	
Number of records in this query:	82
Total records in survey:	82
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 023		
Do you think that the apparent similarities between the salesian approach and the person-centred approach could provide useful insights for spiritual direction as well as pastoral ministry?		
Answer	**Count**	**Percentage**
I think so strongly (023a1)	23	28.05%
I think so (023a2)	47	57.32%
I don't know (023a3)	4	4.88%
I don't think so (023a4)	0	0.00%
I don't think so at all (023a5)	0	0.00%
Other	2	2.44%
No answer	0	0.00%
Not completed or Not displayed	6	7.32%

St. Francis de sales is man ahead of his time. in his spiritual counselling we find underlining currents of person centred, gestalt, logo, reality, CBT, REBT Reality therapy techniques.124Same as above

Results	
Number of records in this query:	82
Total records in survey:	82
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 024		
Finally, what elements in Rogers or in other psychological schools could be contrary to Christian spirituality and values? Where should one be careful in adopting person-centred approach or any other psychological method into pastoral field?		
Atheism - Denial of God	27	32.93%
Undue glorification of human beings	39	47.56%
Denial of Grace : over-dependence on human power	51	62.20%
Narcissism, individualism	35	42.68%
Denial of sin and human weakness	31	37.80%
Negation of things beyond this world (reality outside the senses, spiritual world, life after death etc.)	32	39.02%
Negation of the value of suffering and pain	33	40.24%
Undue emphasis on subjectivity and negation of objective truths	39	47.56%
Other	3	3.66%

God is the centre of life33God\'s love is the source, purpose and goal of the human creation. It cannot be denied.9Tendency to identify oneself as spiritual not religious is not a healthy trend Eternal life is the ultimate goal33Glory of God is man/woman fully alive.
Forgiveness and Mercy of God33Human person cannot be saved without divine mercy and forgiveness.82AA\'s 12-steps integrates need for grace well. Person centered approach shouldn\'t leave God out33Our basic call is to be in communion with God and one another. It is because of sin God became man. If there is no life after death, life is meaningless No sanctification without suffering. No Easter Sunday without Good Friday.82even sacrifice can be a hard concept for poorly trained psychologist. Relativism is a danger33Negation of objectivity is negation of truth.

Results	
Number of records in this query:	82
Total records in survey:	82
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for 021-1 [1]

What, in your opinion, are the major dangers in accepting psychology into spirituality and pastoral ministry - espeically in the field of spiritual guidance and pastoral counselling?

There are no dangers in integrating psychology into spirituality if the counselor is integrated8 Less importance to God in one\'s life.9 Over emphasis on psychology10self centeredness11individualism12to be subjective13Mechanical20lack human approach21The posiblity of keeping God out27Relativism28That Man is his own creation30 From my overall knowledge of the Rogerian Approach, I see no serious danfer31one sided approach32too much person-centred33It may lead to imbalanced growth34There is no danger at all37lack of listening39more technique centerd40the tendency to look at the person more as a client/patient41tendency to overdo, to the extent psychology overhauls spirituality42tendency to overdo43only depending on the Psycology will limit the growth of an indivitual44Psychology mainly deals with the psycho of each person.46Client approach48dependence of Theories49Psychology is the study of human mind50biased ideas51Making Stereotypes on the basis of prejdices of the counsellor54Today outside we find a growing number of counsellor and people frequenting them.55If totally psychological it can Can become very therapeutic56mixing psycosomatic with spiritual57Consideration of only human capabilities being enough to solve all problems of life60The psychologist should be inspired and motivated by God.65projection69there can be a tendency to misunderstand the real issue that person faces,70too much consecration on psychology and not on God and His grace72Difficulty to distinguish certain problem as spiritual and psychologique74This question is very vague. It depends on what aspects of a particular psychological school of75there can be over-emphasis on psychology76It is often seen as one-sided.77Psychology need not be always hundred percent correct79Atheism - Denial of God81Could become problematic if the focus on God is not maintained82spirituality is larger than psychology not vise versa84re-enforcing self-centeredness85temptation of self-redemption88Giving too much importance to Mind power90Overinterpretation91the priority of faith over psychology93Make a confusion spiritual area / psychological area94If the councilor is not a well balanced person he can go wrong.95in my view psychology has to be a part of spirituality and pastoral ministry96can be too clinical an approach98Overemphasis on psychology to99Too much Psychology will lead to in human approaches103There could be a tendency to interpret every thing in terms of psychology105a secular attitude107Mystery aspect is neglected108pprimacy of for god is lost109may questions the the primacy for God112too academic113Too much reliance on individual rather than on God115If the guide is competent in psychology and rooted in spirituality I don\\\'t find any danger.116Pathologising the Client120psychology alone cannot solve most human problems.123relativism124The limiting notions of \'mind\' and \'neuroscience\'125denial of god126Lack of knowing the right direction127emphasising non Gospel values128Concentration on the body and not the soul that is spiritual.

There is danger in the counselor or the director is not integrated well.8More importance to one\'s own feelings9Trying to explain everything in the light of psychology10loss of dependence on God11Freudian theory12to build his own faith20more on intelligent level than heart level27less importance to Grace28He can achieve anything if he want to30Salesian Spiritual Direction is person-centred (both Director - directee) BOTH surrender to God\'s Wi31too much dependence on human efforts32God and Faith on the sidelines33It may end up in one-sided or distorted approach34

They are complementary37misunderstanding39lack of holistic approach40the tendency to psychologise too much the reality or the problems of the client,41tendency to be more problem-centred rather than person-oriented42tendency to look at the person more as a client/patient43Trust in grace of God will help more44Man is created with body, soul and mind. It deals wth only the mind.48dependence on Technicalities49Spirituality the the study of the human in relation with the divine.

50judgemental51Projection of one\'s own weakness on to the other54Applying psychology in spirituality we may try to make it look more secular.55The God aspect may be lost if one is not careful57Limiting problems to having only physical factors, and not being aware of transcendental realities60Those psychologist who are not inspired by God only dangers the life of the client.65rel. immanentism69psychologist fails to approach the person with prayerfully and not psychologically.72People like to treat the problem more spiritually than psychologically74thought is utilized.75possible side-lining of God\'s grace76Psychology believes that it can interpret everything77Psychology is only a part of Human Science.79Denial of sin and human weakness81If it remains solely at the level of self-actualisation and doesn\'t lead to self-transcendence82psychology can help one understand human condition and behavior - spirituality builds off this84selfish self esteem based on material successes or imagination85psychological technique88Over emphasis on individuals potentialities90Paternalism91a fear that some may see tham as mutually exclusive93Use psychological skills without the appropriate formation94The personal nobility of the councilor is an important aspect.95a danger could be in a solely immanent view of psychology excluding the transcendent dimension96can be emphasis on \"fixing\" client rather than allowing gradual maturation98neglect of spirituality99Psychology without spirituality can make the client suffer103Spirituality can be reduced to a mere psychological satisfaction105Giving no importance to God107Posibility of Judging112less spiritual113Most of the time sense of sin is not accounted for116denying differences120an integrative apaporach is desireable.123lack of appreciation for Christian virtues124The mechanistic view of a human being\'s \'inner world\'125negation of spiritual world127having preconditions

It negates the importance of sacrifice in one\'s life.9Forgetting the word of God10egoism11biological aspects of human mind27Tendency to explain all28Not accepting Grace30Submission to God\'s plan is central31overlooking the healing power of prayer33It may lead to denial of God.37proud39less onGod and human relationshipelat40tendency to be problem-centred rather than person-oriented41tendency to substitute spirituality with psychology42tendency to be more problem-centered rather than person-oriented43finding balance between both44Lack a wholistic approch.48tendency to believe that one knows everything49People are not very much aware of the psychology and its benefits here in Cameroon.50critical51Unhealthy Conditionings54There may be some who want only biblical and up from above solutions.55The relationship between the director and directoree can become very much a doctor client relation60Psychologist may be prejudiced by clients past history.65narcissm69it doesn\'t help us to understand certain very personal /spiritual/circumstantial issues.75possible over-reliance on the ability of the guide and client on techniques than on the Holy Spirit77Possibility of reduce a human into mere Psychology.79Denial of Grace81grace builds on nature, we must not avoid the human but we also need to be open to God\'s action82Salesian spirituality presumes human understanding (healthy psyche)84enabling independence rather than interdependence88Lack of distinction between humanness and divineness90Lack of opening on the part of the client94It is not the person but the issues that are to be dealt with.99Psychology degree is often obtained in universities who styles are far from pastoral103There could be a tendency to belittle the role of God in personal and spiritual life.105depend only on human resources107Possibility of manipulation124Dogmatic atheism127going away from person oriented

It often negates the importance of grace in one\'s life.13Person oriented and not God oriented27 less importance to Scripture28Not thinking God is in charge30If the above is contrary to Rogerian Approach then, the DANGER31looking more negatively at human experience33It may lead to egocentric spirituality.37no simpathy39negation of human longing for God40tendency to substitute or override spirituality with mere psychology41tendency to dichotomise between psychology and spirituality, instead of harmonising42tendency to dichotomise between psychology and spirituality, rather than to harmonise49Clinical psychology is concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders51Treating clients not as persons60Psychologist pre-conceived idea of the clients life.65...69the greatest danger is not understanding the real pastoral need of the people81self-esteem is often the issue, but we can build a true foundation on our sense of being loved by G82Greatest gift of psychology to spirituality: better understanding of the unconscience84loss of a sense of the divine presence and action88Loss of sense of sin and fear of God99Many psychologists do see clients as objects103The Sacraments will be looked down on, and could be interpreted as mental satisfaction107To categorise

people124The notion of psychology as a pure science - separate from philosophical and spiritual values127not respecting others freedom

Not to emphasize that discernment of God\'s will33It may fail to lead to a well-balanced and integrated approach.37lack of time40tendency to dichotomise between psychology and spirituality, rather than harmonising49Where as the spirituality is concerned more about the spiritual growth.51Failure to understand the relative value of psychology60Clients seeking for immediate result.69psychological values are given more importance than spiritual values81if we neglect prayer and remain only with psychological103There could be a tendency to give undue importance to human power107Determination theory124The medicalisation of human distress.

It may overlook the need for divine grace.37lack of patience49The issues studied by psychologists cover a wide spectrum, including learning, cognition, etc51Stubborness in terms of application60Inability to contain psychology within spirituality.69selfish desire for fame of the counsellor is given more importance103There will be a tendency to deny God and glorify human beings.

It may overlook the importance of prayer.49In the pastoral ministry we may not get time for such a detailed study51Lack of openness60spiritual exercises need not solve psychological problems. It may sideline the work of the Holy Spirit.49The methods used in psychological research include observation, interviews, etc60psychology if not empowered spiritual life, then guidance and couselling seems mere obligation. Danger of negating the power of intercession.49We may not be able apply these methods in the pastoral ministry.60without knowing the clients real imbalance in humane and spiritual life.

Danger of neglecting devotion to saints.49There are dangers all the same for a good spiritual direction spirituality and psychology are a must60lack of trust and faith in the client.

ABBREVIATIONS

AE	Annecy Edition of the Works of St Francis de Sales (*Œuvres)*
APA	American Psychological Association
CCC	*Catechism of the Catholic Church*
DA	Deutsche Ausgabe (*Deutsche Ausgabe der Werke des Hl Franz von Sales* – German Editions of the Works of St Francis de Sales)
Ed.	Editor
ed.	edition
IDL	*Introduction to the Devout Life*
GS	*Gaudium et Spes*, The Pastoral Constitution of Vatican II
Hrsg.	*Herausgeber* (Ger.), Editor/Publisher
IJS	*Indian Journal of Spirituality*
LG	*Lumen Gentium*, Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution on the Church
LThK	*Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*
NJB	The New Jerusalem Bible
OT	*Optatam Totius,* Vatican II Decree on Priestly Training
PCA	Person-Centred Approach
PCEP	Person-Centered & Experiential Psychotherapies (Journal)
PCT	Person-Centred Therapy
PO	*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, Vatican II Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests
SC	S*acrosanctum Concilium,* Vatican II Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
TLG	*Treatise on the Love of God*

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Lumen Gentium, (LG), Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution on the Church.

S*acrosanctum Concilium* (SC), Vatican II Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.

Optatam Totius, Vatican II Decree on Priestly Training.

Presbyterorum Ordinis, Vatican II Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests.

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ABSTRACT (English)

This dissertation, as the title suggests, is an attempt to develop a strategy for pastoral counselling in the context of India today. In this attempt, the effort is to integrate the person-oriented approach of Francis de Sales with the person-centred method of Carl Rogers. The similarity lies in their humanistic approach. Both were influenced by humanism – the former by Christian humanism, and the latter by psychological-philosophical humanism.

As pastoral counselling is still in its infancy in India, the need to contribute to its growth without neglecting its specific pastoral and social context is urgent. The rapidly changing economic, social, and pastoral scenario of India demands that the Church help the needy in their spiritual, emotional, psychological, and social needs. In this process of drastic socio-political changes, individuals and families remain vulnerable. Many become disoriented and end up suffering undue stress and mental problems. Unlike in the West where people consult psychotherapists without hesitation, in India, many Catholics still consider the Church their primary haven of refuge and the priest the first person to consult. The Church has to adequately respond to this challenge. Unfortunately, the Indian pastoral scene is largely authoritarian and from top to bottom clericalised. Many priests are neither suited nor qualified to deal satisfactorily with such situations and to treat their flock empathically and insightfully.

Francis de Sales has been one of the outstanding spiritual directors in the history of the Catholic Church. In addition to guiding many people personally, – some for several decades at a stretch! – he is credited with having written over 20,000 letters to different persons, mainly for the purpose of spiritual direction. Even as the bishop of a vast diocese, he looked on spiritual direction as his principal ministry. His letters, books and talks provide glimpses into his personalized way of direction. He was a totally person-oriented director. Moreover, with his deep insight into human nature and through his personal qualities like goodness, gentleness, patience, kindness and understanding of human nature, he could guide numerous people. This topic is one of the major concerns of this dissertation.

Carl Rogers is the founder of the person-centred approach (PCA) in counselling and psychotherapy. Through his ground-breaking approach, he laid the foundation for the counselling movement, to which the origin of pastoral counselling is closely connected. The person-centred approach of Carl Rogers has a number of similarities to the way of spiritual direction practised by Francis de Sales: the humanistic influence, emphasis on the freedom, dignity and worth of persons, avoidance of manipulation of persons, trust in the dynamism of inner human capacities, etc. Both were convinced that through establishing healthy relationships, the spiritual director/therapist could help the other.

The therapeutic conditions, of which Rogers speaks – congruence, empathy and unconditional positive regard (UPR), – could be understood from a Christian point of view as concrete expressions of love. Both Rogers and de Sales place great emphasis on human qualities in the process of guidance and believe that it is ultimately the healing

climate provided by a relationship characterised by the above-mentioned qualities that initiates healing in the person who seeks help. Researches have also shown that the acquisition of therapeutic qualities contributes substantially to the effectiveness of spiritual direction, too.

There are factors common to both approaches that facilitate a combined approach – humanistic basis, positive idea of human being, emphasis on personal qualities, insistence on freedom, the central role of relationship, etc. Moreover, therapeutic conditions can be seen as concrete expressions of love from a Christian point of view. At the same time, however, there are also obviously irreconcilable differences between the two – the role of faith and transcendental dimension, God's presence, acceptance of the fallen nature of humans, the need for grace, etc. The human person has a transcendental dimension. Physical well-being alone is not the final goal of life. Besides, humans cannot save or redeem themselves. Only God's grace can save them.

This dissertation at the same time warns that a blind acceptance of Western methods is neither prudent nor effective in the Indian pastoral context where deep spirituality, strong traditional attitudes, and orthodoxy still hold sway. What is needed is a way of providing pastoral counselling based on freedom, uniqueness of individuals and respect for persons. A person-centred and person-oriented approach to pastoral issues is a felt need in India. To be denounced is authoritarianism, clericalism and male chauvinism in the pastoral context – the malaise of the Indian pastoral scene.

Pastoral counselling, as a branch of practical theology, has to remain open to further research, especially in psychology and psychotherapy, and constantly update itself for ministry. Psychological insights can enrich ministry, and vice versa. One must, however, be prudent. This dissertation highlights the need for more intensive training, further research and development in the field of pastoral counselling in the context of India.

The inevitable conclusion is that a holistic integration of Salesian spirituality and person-centred therapy is a fitting response to the pastoral challenges in India today. The survey I conducted also corroborates these conclusions.

ABSTRACT (German)

Diese Dissertation versucht eine Strategie des Pastoralgesprächs (*Pastoral Counselling*) für den pastoralen Kontext Indiens zu entwickeln. Dabei versucht der Autor den person-zentrierten Gesprächsansatz nach Carl Rogers mit dem person-orientierten Ansatz von Franz von Sales zu verbinden. Die Gemeinsamkeit liegt in ihren humanistischen Wurzeln. Beide waren humanistisch geprägt.

Pastoralgespräch ist ein dringendes Bedürfnis in Indien heute. Die Gesellschaft in Indien befindet sich in einem ständigen Fluss aufgrund sehr rascher Entwicklungen. Das hat auch ihre negativen Auswirkungen, wodurch vor allem Einzelpersonen und Familien betroffen sind. Viele geraten in Orientierungslosigkeit, Stress und psychische Probleme. Anders als in der westlichen Welt, wo viele Menschen in ihren Problemen den Psychotherapeuten aufsuchen, ist in Indien (zumindest für die Katholiken) noch zumeist die Kirche die erste Anlaufstelle und der Priester der erste Ansprechpartner für die Betroffenen. Leider ist das indische Pastoralszenario sehr autoritär und klerikalisiert. Viele Priester sind weder geeignet noch qualifiziert und ausgebildet, in solchen Situationen adäquat zu handeln und einfühlsam mit den Menschen umzugehen.

Franz von Sales ist einer der wichtigsten Geistlichen Begleiter in der Geschichte der Kirche. Er hat über 20.000 Briefe zu diesem Themenfeld geschrieben. In seiner Lebenszeit hat er viele Menschen begleitet – manche viele Jahrzehnte lang! Sogar als Bischof hat er die geistliche Begleitung als seine Hauptaufgabe angesehen. Seine Briefe, Bücher, Gespräche usw. hinterlassen einen tiefen Einblick in seine Art. Er war ganz und gar ein person-orientierter Begleiter. Außerdem konnte er durch seine persönlichen Eigenschaften wie Güte, Milde, Sanftmut, tiefe Einsicht in die menschliche Natur und Verständnis für das Menschliche, viele Menschen bewegen. Dieses Thema stellt den Schwerpunkt dieser Dissertation dar.

Carl Rogers ist der Begründer des person-zentrierten Ansatzes in der Psychotherapie. Er hat einen bahnbrechenden Ansatz entwickelt, der die Grundlage für das Pastoralgespräch (Pastoral Counselling) gelegt hat. Der person-zentrierte Ansatz von Carl Rogers und die Art der geistlichen Begleitung bei Franz von Sales haben viele Gemeinsamkeiten: die humanistische Prägung, den Akzent auf der Freiheit und Würde der Menschen, den Verzicht auf Zwang und Manipulation, das Vertrauen auf die Fähigkeit der Personen usw. Beide sind auch überzeugt, dass man nur durch eine heilsame Beziehung dem Anderen helfen kann.

Die therapeutischen Eigenschaften, von denen Carl Rogers spricht – Echtheit, Empathie, Bedingungslose Akzeptanz (UPR) –, kann man im christlichen Sinne als konkreten Ausdruck der Liebe verstehen. Die beiden legen in ihrer Begleitung sehr viel Wert auf menschliche Qualitäten. Franz von Sales und Carl Rogers glauben, dass letztendlich eine Beziehung, die durch die oben genannten Eigenschaften gekennzeichnet ist, Heilung wirkt.

Dennoch gibt es auch einige deutliche Unterschiede zwischen den beiden. Als Psychologe übersieht Carl Rogers die Wichtigkeit der geistlichen Dimension der Person. Der Mensch hat auch eine transzendente Dimension. Und der Mensch kann sich im Übrigen nicht selbst erlösen. Nur durch Gott und durch seine Gnade kann er gerettet werden. Körperliches Wohlbefinden und psychische Gesundheit allein sind nicht das letzte Ziel des Lebens.

Forschungen haben deutlich gezeigt, dass das Erwerben von therapeutischen Eigenschaften wesentlich zur Wirksamkeit der Geistlichen Begleitung beiträgt. Diese Dissertation plädiert für mehr Ausbildung, weitere Forschungen und eine Weiterentwicklung im Bereich der Pastoralen Begleitung im indischen Pastoralszenario.

Die Dissertation warnt zugleich vor einer unbedachten Übernahme der westlichen Methoden und Anwendungen in die indische pastorale Praxis, da der indische pastorale Kontext in vielerlei Hinsicht anders ist als im Westen.

Der Verfasser kommt zu dem Schluss, dass die Verbindung zwischen den beiden Ansätzen möglich und erwünscht ist, und er ist überzeugt, dass es eine konkrete Antwort auf das pastorale Bedürfnis in Indien in der heutigen Zeit darstellt.

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