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Leadership and Spirituality in the U.S. Midwestern Workplace: Life, Livelihood and the Spirit

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Leadership and Spirituality in the U.S. Midwestern Workplace:

Life, Livelihood and the Spirit

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We certify that we have read this dissertation and approved it as meeting departmental criteria for graduating with honors in scope and quality. We have found that it is complete and satisfactory in all respects, and that any and all revisions required by the final examining committee have been made.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to discover how the spiritual practices of Midwest leaders influenced them in the workplace. Numerous researchers link spirituality to effective leadership, however, the extent of the relationship continues to be debated among scholars. This study explored that relationship under specific circumstances. Major research questions were 1) how do leaders rely on their spiritual practices to achieve greater self-knowledge and self-growth and 2) how do they use the knowledge gained from spiritual practices to inform and influence their leadership? The data from interviews with twenty Midwestern leaders self-identified as having a spiritual practice revealed six themes and eleven subthemes. Regardless of the specific and diverse spiritual practices they used as individuals, the study participants believed one's spirituality is central to both life and leadership and served as a grounding force that influenced both themselves and the individuals they led. These findings support the understanding that some leaders effectively integrate all of their social identities into their work and leadership roles (Benefiel, 2005; Miller, 2013). Finally, as a result of analysis of these data and application of these theories, conclusions and recommendations for future research are offered.

Key words: spirituality and leadership, spirituality and workplace

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

"Spirit means life, and both life and livelihood are about living in-depth, living with meaning, purpose, joy, and a sense of contributing to the greater community. A spirituality of work is about bringing life and livelihood back together again and spirit with them" (Fox, 1994, p. 2).

As I reflected on the professional paths of leaders I have encountered over nearly three decades, I perceived an inextricable connection between their professional behaviors and their seeming belief in a higher spiritual authority. Professional characteristics included a calming presence in the midst of organizational storms. These individuals understood the importance of allowing others an opportunity to express opposing perspectives without judgment or ridicule. Somehow they seemed centered with a sense of peace. In turbulent circumstances, where others may have been uncomfortable, they held a thoughtful and reflective posture. They respected others and others respected them in return. Paradoxically, they possessed both confidence and humility. Others sought them out as mentors and way-finders. These are among the reasons I was drawn to study the connection between spirituality and the workplace.

I used an exploratory case study within the qualitative inquiry tradition to explore leadership and spirituality from the perspective of U.S. Midwestern leaders. Thoroughly investigating how Midwest leaders' spiritual practice influenced corporate leadership and organizational culture both informed and directed this research project. Following, I briefly described the problem statement, purpose, and significance of the study; identified the core research question and sub-questions; and defined key terms.

Statement of the Problem

With the advent of computers, the internet, social media, and an increasingly global aspect of many organizational enterprises, the role of leader appeared more complex and challenging than ever before. In recognition of this dynamic leadership, researchers suggested

leadership required an awakened presence to make sense of these challenges (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Bennis, 2009; Biberman, 2003; Biberman & Altman, 2004; Cacioppe, 2000b; Neal, 2000; Reave, 2005). As contemporary researchers sought to explore leadership effectiveness, a growing emphasis on the role of spirituality in the workplace emerged (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000b; Biberman, 2003; Dent, Higgins, & Wharff, 2013).

The spiritual leadership approach found the solution to these challenges in contemplation, to approach situations with an attitude of discernment rather than one of intervention (Cacioppe, 2000a; Fry, 2003; Korac-Kakabadse, Kouzmin, & Kakabadse, 2002). The emerging literature on workplace spirituality and leadership illustrated that a relationship did exist; however, scholarly debate continued as to the extent of this relationship. While this field is expanding, minimal scholarship exists exploring the interrelationship of spirituality in the workplace specifically among Midwest leaders. The world of work could benefit from further studies of the relationship between spiritual practice and leadership. Today, more than ever, the complexity of organizations requires leaders who are self-aware and adaptive to complex organizational contexts including social, political, cultural, or a combination of varied other constructions. Self-awareness often goes along with spirituality (Palmer, 1999).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of my study was to learn how leaders relied on spiritual practices to achieve greater self-knowledge and self-growth and how they used the knowledge gained from spiritual practices to inform and influence their leadership and organizational culture. I investigated how leaders navigated their internal and external worlds based on the premise that leadership went beyond the act of doing and encompassed the act of being (Bennis, 2009; Cashman, 2008; Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996).

By conducting an exploratory case study within the qualitative inquiry tradition, I hoped to contribute to the literature regarding how the cultivation of spiritual practices affects leadership and organizational culture. Exploring this phenomenon among Midwestern leaders could inform other leaders who sought to become organizational "sensemakers"; that is, individuals who interpreted meaning through the use of spiritual practices and self-discovery (Coburn, 2001; Weick, 1995).

Significance of the Study

Numerous studies were reviewed that reflected on the relationship between spirituality and the workplace. Many findings included similar thematic attributes such as the importance of trust and respect and the notion that spirituality provides a centering force in an individual's life and in the workplace. As suggested by Marshal and Rossman (2006), qualitative researchers are interested in the complexity of daily life and its meanings that individuals attribute to their interactions. My hope is that this study, which explores the depth and complexity of leaders' spiritual practice and its influence in the workplace, informs other professionals who desire to strengthen their own spiritual practice and discover ways to further integrate their spirituality in the workplace.

Research Question

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to investigate the relationship between the leadership and spirituality in the professional lives of selected leaders of the Dakota states in the US Midwest. I adopted the following question and sub-questions to guide my study:

1. How did spiritual practice influence leadership and organizational culture in the Midwest of the United States?

2. How did leaders use spiritual practice to become more self-aware and critically reflective of their role and actions as leaders?

3. What essential elements of their spiritual practice inform the leadership of leaders in the Midwest?

Investigating these questions both informed and directed this research project. The degree to which the questions interacted with one another offered the reader a more complete picture of the interrelationship of spiritual practice, leadership, and organizational culture and thus contributed to broadening scholarly efforts related to leadership dynamics.

Researcher's Perspective & Professional Background

My vocational journey has taken unexpected turns from human services, higher education, healthcare, to varied administrative roles. Each new opportunity revealed a deepening sense of the sacred and interconnected nature of my spiritual practice and leadership development. Spiritual practices influenced who I was, who I was becoming, and how I responded to the call to vocation. My growing interest in the connection between spirituality and leadership fueled my passion to conduct research among Midwest leaders who have a recognized spiritual practice. How do leaders navigate their internal and external worlds? This broad question and a series of others led me to adopt the research question for my study: How does spiritual practice influence corporate leadership and organizational culture in the Midwest? Exploring leaders' practices has the potential to inform other leaders who seek to become organizational sense-makers through use of spiritual practices and self-discovery.

Various people have guided my spiritual journey including spiritual mentors, spiritual friends, and colleagues who embodied and integrated their faith at work and inspired others to do the same. Internationally known New Testament scholar, lecturer, and author, Marcus Borg (2003) referred to these individuals as "spirit persons." These individuals lead from a place that encompasses the whole person – inclusive of the mind, heart, and soul.

My interest in the connection between spirituality and leadership began with the

influence of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary over two decades ago. This group of Catholic nuns resides in Fargo, North Dakota, which is where I have had my life-changing experiences with them. Most often called the Presentation Sisters, they are linked to a worldwide network of lay-people called the International Presentation Associates – individuals who work to carry on their mission in the face of the ever-decreasing numbers of women going into the religious life. Their global social justice work "is founded on respect for earth, universal human rights, economic justice and culture of peace" (Sisters, 2014). The sisters' charism is "doing what needs to be done" and their organizational symbol is the acorn. The seed of the acorn provides a backdrop and the imagery throughout this dissertation. This image represents the seed as spiritual practice and the essence of who we have the potential to become as individuals and as leaders. The habit of spiritual practice is the invisible seed that informs leadership from the inside out and ultimately strengthens the mighty oak – sturdy, mission centered, life and livelihood. The dynamic energy of the seed of spiritual practice guides participants' potential and impels their journey toward discovering their inherent gifts.

This avowed community of women who embodied mission, ministry, strength and spirituality influenced my day-to-day practices during the early years of my career. I engaged in numerous programs including retreat ministries, centering prayer, peace and justice council, and prayer board governance, and I eventually became a Presentation Associate – a layperson who shares in the Presentation spirituality having bonds to the congregation but who is not an avowed member. This participation helped me understand the power of leadership from within and also the significance of self-understanding and its connection to the mission of an organization's essence – past, present, and future. One profound experience had an indelible impact on my life.

In 1998, I participated in a leadership pilgrimage to the home of the Presentation Sisters' founder, Nano Nagle, in Cork, Ireland. The journey's purpose involved making the connection

between our work and mission and the place where the religious community took form. The pilgrimage experience taught me what it means to live one's mission, vision, and values and revealed the power in connecting spirituality and leadership. I noticed how the Sisters' spirituality influenced their community leadership. I observed how they conducted meetings and moved through decision-making processes carefully, identifying next steps in collaboration with others. This journey also helped me recognize and understand that leadership involves personal discernment, self-discovery, and awareness of the beliefs and values informing my actions. Their ways seemed somehow different than my tactics, team meetings, and calculated strategic initiatives. This recognition influenced the way I engage in the world and still aids in the ongoing development of my leadership identity, spiritual discipline, and ethical values.

The pilgrimage experience piqued my curiosity, and I began to wonder more deeply about the influence of spiritual practice on leadership. I began to witness how my own and others' spiritual practices influenced leadership. For example, several corporate leaders whom I knew to be engaged with developing their spiritual practice were already well-known and respected community leaders. Many led some of the most successful organizations in the region known for well-developed corporate culture, excellence in customer service and profitability. Most were engaged beyond their organizations and assumed leadership roles community wide serving on nonprofit boards and in varied local, state, national and international governing bodies.

My experiences and observations influenced my beliefs and assumptions moving into this research. I asserted that spiritual practice extends beyond the individual having the potential to influence leaders in the workplace. I anticipated that some of the leaders I interviewed would express similar views regarding the interconnected nature of spirituality and the workplace. I posited that the phenomenon of spiritual practice and its interaction within the realm of corporate

leadership might produce various outcomes. The definition of spiritual practice, for the purpose of this research, was discipline involving a deepening awareness of the sacred and an introspective journey that has the potential to become a way of life (Merton, 1961). Spiritual practice and contemplative practice were synonymous in my study and included meditation, centering prayer, and a variety of religious influences such as Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and other spiritual traditions.

Overview of the Dissertation

Chapter one identified the purpose of this investigative case study. The primary research questions included (1) how do leaders rely on their spiritual practices to achieve greater self-knowledge and self-growth and (2) how do they use the knowledge gained from spiritual practices to inform and influence their leadership? Chapter two reviewed existing literature related to spirituality and the workplace including specific spiritual practices, aspects of the inner life, and the influence of spirituality in the workplace. Interviews were conducted among twenty Midwest leaders. Seven interview questions were posed including what spiritual practices do you employ and how do your spiritual practices assist in developing self-understanding and your leadership identity? Interviews revealed numerous themes, identified in chapter four, that were part of participants' spiritual practices including daily commitment, gratitude, reading, ritual, nature, journaling, artifacts, community, and journey. Participants reported their spiritual practices and inner journey were meaningfully integrated in the workplace. These themes led to aspects of workplace integration identified in chapter five, which included leading with a servant mindset, serving with integrity, valuing relationships, respecting others, being nonjudgmental, and being a mentor to others. Chapter six included analytical perspectives including authentic leadership, transformational leadership and servant leadership. All provided the critical theory in this case-study analysis.

Definition of Terms

Calling: The experience of transcendence or how one makes a difference through service to others and, in doing so, derives meaning and purpose in life (Fry, 2003).

Centered: The ability to remain balanced in the midst of organizational complexity; being centered requires active listening and a sense of knowing when to take action and when to withdraw (Pheng, 1999).

Contemplative leadership: The adoption of spiritual practices as an embedded discipline resulting in greater self-awareness. A leadership approach which adopts "an attitude of discernment" (Korac-Kakabadse, et al., 2002, p. 180).

Contemplative organization: An organization that attempts to infuse a contemplative approach into the workplace (Center for Contemplative Mind in Society).

Contemplative practice: A spiritual discipline involving a deepening awareness of the sacred and an introspective journey that has the potential to become a way of life (Merton, 1961).

Contemplative practices: Includes meditation, centering prayer, and a variety of religious influences such as Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and other spiritual traditions.

Faith: A system of personal belief relating to a divine power.

Religion: A system of faith and worship related to the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal god or gods.

Senior Executive Leader: Owner or recognized leader in an organization.

Spiritual journey: Grounding daily experience in activities and practices that deliberately lead to feeling one's life has a higher purpose and one's actions result in greater meaning. Seeking a higher purpose and meaning (Conger, 1993).

Spiritual Practice: According to Drey (2010), spiritual practice can be anything that helps us see the unity and sacredness of life and calls us to ultimately responsible action.

Sensemaking: Sensemaking involves the leader's contextual interpretation and generation of meaning leading to the creation of possible new plausible options (Evans, 2007; Weick, 1995).

Spirituality: *"*The reflection of a presence of a relationship with a higher power or being that affects the way in which one operates in the world" (Fry, 2003, p. 705). I use this term interchangeably with the term faith.

Workplace spirituality: "A framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected in a way which provides feelings of compassion and joy" (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2004, p. 13). In addition, the extent to which leaders search for and express, within their work and their workplaces, that which gives ultimate meaning and purpose to their lives, especially in their relationships with others, within the world around them, and for many, with a higher power (Chamiec-Case & Sherr, 2005).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this literature review was to consider more specifically the integral nature of spirituality and leadership for the 21st century. How does spiritual practice influence corporate leadership and organizational culture in the Midwest of the United States? To respond to this question, I conducted a review of scholarly literature relating to spirituality in the workplace and the corresponding impact on organizational dynamics. I began my search using the following general terms – spiritual leadership, workplace spirituality, organizational culture, faith and work – to discover research studies in the databases Academic Search Premier, ERIC, and JSTOR archive. I reviewed approximately 70 peer-reviewed articles and 35 books corresponding to the topic of this study. The literature tended to fall into the following five categories: (1) broad discussion of spirituality in the workplace, (2) spiritual leadership, (3) spiritual practice, (4) organizational culture, and (5) influence of spirituality in the workplace. Analytical theories for this study included authentic leadership, transformational leadership, as well as servant leadership. Next I present the five major categories drawn from the review of the literature before delving into the analytical theories that informed the findings of the study.

Spirituality in the Workplace

The concept of spirituality in the workplace or faith at work in the early 2000s was an emerging academic field, and this phenomenon, according to Miller and Ewest (2013b), was evidenced in the number of resources found on the topic included in classrooms, management conferences, research articles, and books. Numerous researchers continued to investigate the relationship between spiritual values and organizational culture (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000b; Fry, 2003; Gibbons, 2000; Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002; Wheatley, 2002b). The topic of workplace spirituality was also emerging in organizational behavior textbooks and being taught at both graduate and undergraduate institutions (see, for example, Biberman & Altman, 2004; L.

Robbins, 2003; and S. Robbins, 2003). According to L. Robbins (2003), the Academy of

Management created a group entitled Management, Spirituality and Religion that enlisted more

than 500 members since its beginning. This membership contributed to the legitimization of the

study of spirituality in the workplace.

Miller (2007), the executive director of the Yale Center for Faith & Culture, expressed

the shared view that faith and work were not meant to be separated or isolated from each other:

"People in the workplace of all levels and types no longer seem willing to leave their soul with

the car in the parking lot" (p. 74). Employees wanted their work to be more than just a job and

may even express it theologically in terms of wanting to view their work as a vocation or

spiritual calling (Miller, 2007). The idea of feeling the spirit through one's work allowed

workplace spirituality to thrive (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002), adding to the sense of

community and shared values.

Multiple perspectives of workplace spirituality existed and were due in part to

globalization and the increasing pluralistic nature of cultural dynamics playing out in the

workplace community (Kahnweiler & Otte, 1997). Rego and Pina e Cunha (2008) offered the

following description of spirituality at work: "The recognition that employees have an inner life

that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of

community" (p. 55). Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2004) defined workplace spirituality as "[a]

framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees'

experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected

in a way that provides feelings of compassion and joy" (p. 13). This definition, according to

Pawar (2008), suggested workplace spirituality engages the organization in the process of

facilitating employees' understanding of spirituality. In contrast, the definition offered by

Ashmos and Duchon (2000a) centered in individual employee experiences of meaning while at

the same time acknowledged organizational mechanisms that may facilitate the experience:

> A workplace where people experience joy and meaning in their work is a place where
>
> spirituality is more observable than a place where people do not experience joy and
>
> meaning in their work … a workplace in which people see themselves as part of a
>
> trusting community, where they feel valued and supported, would be a workplace in
>
> which spirituality thrives. (p. 137)

Thus, a workplace might passively allow Muslim employees to find a private place to pray five times a day or it might actively offer classes in nondenominational meditation, depending on the cultural dynamics of the organization.

The literature considering the state of workplace spirituality or faith at work in the late 1990s and early 2000s revealed numerous definitional inconsistencies existed as well as concerns pointing to inadequate measurement tools (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2004; Miller & Ewest, 2013a). The literature concluded there was the unmet need specific to scale development and classification for spirituality in the workplace and faith at work. Miller and Ewest (2013a) suggested the course for the future include further psychometric scale development, a new rubric for analyzing the literature and more research into how people integrate their faith and how it is manifested into the workplace.

Spirituality is believed to enhance organizational learning (Bierly et al., 2000), unify and build communities (Cavanaugh et al., 2001), serve the need for connecting to others at work and to work itself (Khanna & Srinivas, 2000), and is the source of a healing and harmonizing expression of compassion, wisdom, and connectedness that transcends all egocentric, socio-centric, or anthropocentric forms (Maxwell, 2003). Additionally, Cavanagh et al. (2001) supported the notion of spirituality in the workplace as a unifying factor by describing some of the benefits including, but not limited to, stronger relationships within families and among

coworkers, increased workplace harmony, and overall connectedness contributing to future generations.

The influence of workplace spirituality isn't separate from other areas of employees' lives but rather becomes integrated and part of families and community networks, thus contributing to building relationships that can be strengthened over time impacting not only the present but, in turn, the future as well. Dent, Higgins and Wharff (2013) listed important factors for promoting a theory of spiritual leadership within the workplace by using a cognitive process to determine eight areas of differentiation: (1) definition, (2) connected to religion, (3) marked by epiphany, (4) teachable, (5) individual development, (6) measurable, (7) profitable, and (8) nature of the phenomenon. They concluded the importance of gaining conceptual clarity with workplace spirituality terminology. Although scholars utilized different descriptors acknowledging the benefits of fostering workplace spirituality, the common denominator was the resulting positive contributions which, in most instances, influence both the individual and their workplace environment.

According to Fry (2003), "Recent studies have shown that companies perform better if they emphasize workplace spirituality through both people-centered values and a high-commitment model of attachment between the company and its people" (p. 705). Krishnakumar and Neck (2002) identified two perspectives related to the integration of spirituality within both the organization-centered and individual-centered models. The former signified an orientation within the whole organization including both internal and external identity while the latter acknowledged individual spiritual expression. Incorporating spirituality at work encouraged a movement to create corporate life as a secure environment allowing employees to bring their entire selves to work thus becoming aware of their own whole personality and potential capabilities (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002).

And yet, while multiple studies linked spirituality and leadership, including, for example, Kouzes and Posner's (2007) discovery that some senior executives did use their intuition as a guide in their most important decisions, other senior managers found this view as too soft, going against a more bottom-line approach.

In short, spirituality is a neglected dimension in the workplace (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002). Researchers studying the phenomenon of workplace spirituality identified three distinct forms: the notion that workplace spirituality is an individual dimension, a collective one, or a combination of both (Dent et al., 2005). The majority of researchers I studied theorized that the research may best proceed with the assumption of an interrelationship between individual and collective spirituality with evidence suggesting that workplace spirituality leads to both positive personal outcomes and workplace productivity (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2004). Employees working within organizations considered spiritual contributed to a competitive advantage (Eisler & Montouori, 2003) and, according to Fry (2003), to a greater sense of employee satisfaction and completeness.

Definitional Distinctions and Measurement

Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, (2004) noted that one challenge in studying workplace spirituality is distinguishing between spirituality and religion as separate entities. Many studies viewed spirituality in a religious setting, but others did not. Ali and Gibbs (1998) argued that today's managers within the diverse work environments would gain from a general understanding of religious practices. On the other hand, scholars such as Ashmos and Duchon (2000a) and Dehler and Welsh (1994) asserted spirituality should be viewed as separate from a religious framework. They claimed numerous individuals are nurturing their growth in spirituality outside a religious context.

Religion, according to Fry (2003), is not the most significant contributing factor in

leadership effectiveness, but rather it is the experience of one's spiritual tradition that contributes to positive outcomes in the workplace. Fry (2003) contended that a spiritual workplace creates the dynamic of collaboration between leaders and followers. The challenge in distinguishing religion and spirituality contributes to the difficulty in measuring workplace spirituality. I wondered if my interview subjects would distinguish between religion and spirituality or see them as synonymous? If they did see religion and spirituality as separate entities, how would it influence the incorporation of spiritual practices in the workplace? I stayed alert to the variety of spiritual practices that might be embedded in the workplace such as time set aside for prayer, spiritual readings and other activities. Additionally, I observed whether alternative practices were accommodated.

Ashforth and Pratt (2003) and Duerr (2004) observed a continuum of workplace spirituality that ranged from encouraging individuals to explore their spirituality in relation to work to organizations that are more directive and even imposing. Comprehensive measurements of spirituality in the workplace pose differing perspectives (Dent et al., 2013). Some scholars believed they can broadly measure it (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000b) whereas others believed no one can measure spirituality (Cacioppe, 2000b; Fornaciari & Dean, 2001; Wilber, 1997). Dent et al. (2013) summarized measurement and noted, "It is, perhaps, most accurate to say that spirituality may not be measurable, but that there are closely correlated manifestations of spirituality which can" (p. 639). Studying the impact or outcomes of spirituality in the workplace offers a more tangible approach. Krahnke and Srinivas (2000) presented a point-counterpoint discussion regarding whether it is possible to measure something as "ineffable as spirituality in organizations" (p. 396). Like Dent et al. (2013), they believe that in order to obtain more rigorous measurement of workplace spirituality, researchers must place it into the context of multidisciplinary research (Krahnke & Srinivas, 2000).

A tension exists between western and eastern philosophies with many western philosophers ignoring interpretive knowledge to focus on a more analytical approach and eastern philosophers valuing interpretations. Wilber (2000) argued that "the interpretive knowledge is just as important as empirical knowledge" (p. 89). Krahnke and Srinivas (2000) concurred: "While the right-hand knowledge provides observable facts, it is only the left-hand knowledge that can provide the meaning. Interpretation is what provides the depth of the knowledge" (p. 400).

Inner Life

The concept of inner life, according to Palmer (1999), is an integral part of spirituality in the workplace. Spiritual practice invites the whole person to become fully engaged in life and livelihood. Engagement leads to a realization of the significance of nurturing both the inner life and the outer life. Being engaged in one's work is in essence an act of simplicity and calls forth the qualities of mindfulness which run counter to the emphasis of physical rewards. Palmer (1999) stated, "In the spiritual literature of our time, it is not difficult to find the world of action portrayed as an arena of ego and power, while the world of contemplation is pictured as a realm of light and grace" (p. 2). The act of reflectively pausing, especially for those who are leading busy, hectic lives, somehow allows one's truth to be revealed (Palmer, 2000). Deep listening sheds light on one's true call to vocation. Palmer (2000) suggested, "Before you tell your life what you intend to do with it, listen for what it intends to do with you. Before you tell your life what truths and values you have decided to live up to, let your life tell you what truths you embody, what values you represent" (p. 3). Listening to your inner self, according to Palmer (2000), allows your life to speak and, in turn, has the potential to influence lives beyond one's own and into the community: "The world still waits for the truth that will set us free – my truth, your truth, our truth – the truth that was seeded in the earth when each of us arrived here formed

in the image of God. Culturing that truth, I believe, is the authentic vocation of every human being" (p. 36).

The significance of this statement is that individuals are generally aware of the varied aspects of their busy outer lives – what they do, who they spend time with; however, there is an entire other part of our lives that goes unnoticed and unheard. This part is the invisible or unseen aspect of our inner life that is often untended. Incessant preoccupation with the outer life may keep individuals in a confused state. Vocational paths may be circuitous unless greater attention is paid to the inner life. The outer life is limited, whereas the inner life is limitless having the potential to create greater clarity, connectedness to the divine, and the life of the spirit (Palmer, 2000).

Spiritual Leadership

Successful leaders in the 21st century must address the human need for connectedness and greater meaning (Cavanaugh 1999; Pfeffer, 2003). Kouzes and Posner (1993) claimed that "leaders who make a difference to others cause people to feel that they can make a difference. They set people's spirit free and enable them to become more than they might have thought possible" (p. 31). Having a leader with spiritual values promotes workplace spirituality and is not only beneficial for the leader but also the follower (Reave, 2005). Reave (2005) further stated:

> In the case of effective leadership, we shall find that spirituality expresses itself not so much in words or preaching, but in the embodiment of spiritual values such as integrity, and in the demonstration of spiritual behavior such as expressing caring or concern. (p. 656)

Numerous CEOs and business leaders who view their work as a calling, not simply a career, positively influence workers' wellbeing and productivity (Fry & Matherly, 2006). The general theme cited among numerous researchers is that the essence of spirituality in leadership is the connectedness of one's inner self and the external world. Spiritual leaders work to transform

themselves from the inside out (Covey, 1991; DePree, 1993; Fairholm, 1996). Fry (2003) asserted that spiritual leaders concern themselves with the whole person and infuse a deep sense of purpose and meaning within their followers that aligns with their own deep sense of meaning.

Gaining an awareness of the self contributes to the notion of wholeness and the idea of who we are and how we fit into our world (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Reave (2005) described spirituality in leadership: "spirituality expresses itself not so much in words or preaching, but in the embodiment of spiritual values such as integrity, and in the demonstration of spiritual behavior such as expressing caring and concern" (p. 656). As the cliché goes, actions speak louder than words. Researchers Korac-Kakabadse et al. (2002) reviewed leadership praxis from the vantage point of spiritual search and contemporary management practice. Their research reflected on the qualities of spiritual leadership and the notion that spiritual leaders are also moral leaders who prefer not to compromise when followers and varied other internal and external constituents challenge their core values. Fairholm (1996) further emphasized that "the infrastructure of spiritual leadership is an idea of moral leadership focused on service and is uncompromisingly committed to the higher principle of selfless concern for others" (p. 13). Korac-Kakabadse et al. (2002) drew from the work of numerous researchers to depict the varied elements of spiritual leadership: building shared values, leaders inspire a sense of shared community values that provide the basis for sanction systems (Fairholm, 1996). Vision-setting leaders exhibit sustained ability to build consensus and lead within the framework of common vision (Fairholm, 1996). Sharing-meaning leaders create meanings for others while engaging the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 1987). Enabling leaders train, educate and coach followers, provide motivation, involve them in approved networks and then free them from situational constraints that hamper growth/transformation towards full effectiveness (DePree, 1993). Influence and power = leaders have no desire to manipulate others. They help followers feel powerful and able

to accomplish work on their own (DePree, 1989). Intuition - spiritual leaders are pioneers who try to produce real change that matters to people's enduring needs, regardless of the risk (Kouzes & Posner, 1987). Service - spiritual leaders are "servanted" and feel called to serve others (Greenleaf, 1977; DePree, 1993; Gross, 1996). Transformation - spiritual leaders transform themselves, others and their organizations (Covey, 1990; DePree, 1993; Fairholm, 1996).

In summary, these elements combined foster a relationship that is mutually beneficial. Spiritual leaders who possess these characteristics are able to engage others in partnership rather than from a hierarchical vantage point. Genuinely valuing others creates an authentic relationship and opens the way for the generation of ideas and inspiration. The corporate vision is shared, thus contributing to both purpose and productivity. Options appear to be limitless rather than hopeless. An attitude of optimism is internalized, shared, and reflected externally as transformation is understood and change embraced rather than resisted. Both leaders and followers appear equally committed to each other and the organizational vision, and together strive toward doing the morally right action.

Another approach to qualities of spiritual leadership is Covey's (1991). In his analysis of the qualities of effective spiritual leaders, he argued that listening is among the most powerful leadership skills. He asserted the concept that listening first facilitates the process of moving beyond the leader's own ego in an effort to understand the others. Cavanagh (1999) further addressed the benefit of spirituality in the workplace and the focus on listening which fosters relationship-building between people, generally contributing to workplace harmony. Spiritual leaders also possess the quality of encouraging followers through visualization, principles, and caring relationships rather than through anxiety, power, and control (Bowen, Ferris, & Kolodinsky, 2009; Daft, 2001; and Daft & Lengel, 1998). The qualities of both listening and encouragement foster relationships between the leader and follower and among coworkers, thus

contributing to creating a harmonious work environment. Key to developing spiritual leadership is spiritual practice (Fry, 2003). After analyzing leading scholars' views on the relationship between spirituality and leadership, I examined literature pertaining to spiritual practice in the next section.

Spiritual Practice

Thomas Merton (1961) described spiritual practice as

the highest expression of (human) intellectual and spiritual life. It is that life itself, fully awake, fully active, and fully aware that it is alive. It is spiritual wonder. It is spontaneous awe at the sacredness of life, of being. It is gratitude for life, for awareness, and for being. It is a vivid realization of the fact that life and being in us proceeded from an invisible, transcendent, and infinitely abundant Source. Contemplation is, above all, an awareness of the reality of that Source. (p. 1)

Drey (2010) addressed spiritual practice as an essential component of seeing things whole; in other words, there is an underlying unity that connects all things both visible and invisible. Drey's (2010) definition of spiritual practice, however, identified specific ways to engage in connecting with the spirit. In this study, I defined spiritual practice synonymously with contemplative practice. Contemplative practice, according to Drey (2010), can be anything that helps us see the unity and sacredness of life and calls us to ultimately responsible action. Spiritual practice is not limited to the monastery, nor is it limited to any one religion but rather includes a diverse array of exercises encouraged by many of the world's spiritual teachings which emphasize the essential nature of reflective practices including, but not limited to, prayer, spiritual reading, journaling, contemplation, and meditation (Alexander, Swanson, Rainforth, & Carlisle, 1993; Beauchamp-Turner & Levinson, 1992; Neal, 2000; Reave, 2005).

According to Steindl-Rast (1984), "any place can become a place of encounter with the

divine" (p. 103), and today's work environment is among the places where one can have such an encounter. Kouzes and Posner (2007) suggested the notion of leadership practice as being an affair related to the heart that accompanies one to work, thus indicating a relational essence – a way of being with others. In the 1990s, contemplative practices in the work environment became more popular (Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996) and preceded a visible rise in attention and interest over the past decade beginning to emerge as essential elements contributing to organizational success (Palmer, Walls, Burgess, & Stough, 2001; Reave, 2005; Tworkov, 2001).

Autry and Mitchell (1998) suggested the practice of setting aside time to be reflective moves one toward a more enlightened spiritual leadership approach. With this spiritual mindset comes benefits of personal growth and conscious awareness at work (Duchon & Ploman, 2005; Fry & Slocum, 2008). Bindlish, Dutt, and Pardasani (2012) underscored the growing recognition of the need to understand the interconnected relationship between spiritual practices and successful leadership:

> Researchers' interest in understanding the nature of leadership's relationship to spirituality has been fueled by a striking commonality among successful leaders with regard to their spiritual propensities. More so, now that the issues such as business ethics, social responsibility, and meaningfulness in work are taking prominence in organizations, the need for research is being felt to understand leadership from holistic dimensions. (p. 3)

What is contributing to the recognition of the essential nature of spiritual practice in the workplace? What is motivating both executives and scholars to understand this phenomenon? Perhaps the answer rests in talking to leaders and hearing directly from them the response to these questions.

Reave (2005) lists six spiritual practices related to leadership effectiveness: (1) "demonstrating respect for others' values," (2) "treating others fairly," (3) "expressing caring and concern," (4) "listening responsively," (5) "appreciating the contributions of others," and (6) "engaging in reflective practice" (pp. 673-78).

These concrete examples – including the practices of journaling, meditation, prayer, and spiritual reading – give business leaders tactics to employ in their workplaces. Reave (2005) noted these practices are by no means exhaustive and that other values included in the research of spirituality could be used to measure leader effectiveness. Reave (2005) also suggested how much empirical research has been done on the effects of thoughtful practice on the leader as an individual, but how little information has been gathered on effects on followers. Followers, however, are outside the scope of my research.

Scholars see spiritual leadership theory as an answer to the call for a more rounded direction that helps integrate the four central areas outlining the essence of individuals in the workplace: body, mind, heart, and spirit (Fry, 2003). In developing a theory on spiritual leadership, Fry (2003) believed the goal should be "to create vision and value congruence across both teams and individuals in order to foster higher levels of organizational commitment and productivity" (p. 693). Spiritual practices, although often perceived as an individual endeavor, have the potential to contribute to leadership effectiveness. One of the studies maintained spiritual practices influence both leaders and followers contributing to positive relationships and the ability to move more reflectively through workplace challenges (Fry, 2003). There is a growing awareness that leadership engages the whole person, and tending to matters of the heart is no longer perceived as too soft an approach. I will next address the body of literature about spiritual leadership and the culture of a given organization.

Organizational Culture

During each part of people's lives, they will be motivated to join different organizations based on their interests and life circumstances. These organizations help to satisfy their needs with "interactive and collaborative working" (Aydin & Ceylon, 2007, p. 159). According to Aydin and Ceylon (2007), "[O]rganizations are goal-directed, boundary-maintaining, and socially constructed systems of human activity, which focuses attention on the social processes involved in the genesis and persistence of organizations" (p. 159). In essence, organizations are socially constructed, thus contributing to varied relationship dynamics among and between individual employees. While each organization has the characteristic of arranging relationships and being socially focused, each organization has its own culture. In the 1990s, organizational culture became a popular topic of study in relation to workplace performance. Scholars at the time postulated the culture of an organization can determine overall performance based on efficiency, the effectiveness of administration, and organization behaviors (Alvesson, 1990; Hofstede, 1998). Organizational culture exists at three different levels: artifacts, values, and assumptions (Schein, 1985). The way organizational culture develops is formal and informal, ranging from shared humor and jargon, to shared values, attitudes, and assumptions (Martin, 2002; Barney, 1986; Stonehouse, Hamill, Campbell, & Purdie, 2004).

While Daniel (2010) maintained that leadership is capable of developing organizational culture,

> it is certainly true that organizational culture is constantly changing, covers several aspects of human functioning, is learned around major issues of external adaptation and internal integration, and is embodied as an interrelated set of assumptions that deal with important issues such as human relations, time, space, reality and the truth itself. (pp. 443-444).

Numerous researchers continued to investigate the relationship between spiritual values and organizational culture (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000a; Fry, 2003; Gibbons, 2000; Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002; Wheatley, 2002). Organizational culture encompasses many attributes, the first of which is motivation. The motivation of employees determines the effectiveness and success of each individual, each team, and the organization as a whole. Numerous studies linked spiritual leadership to increased organization engagement (Fry & Matherly, 2006; Fry, Vitucci, & Cedillo, 2005; Malone & Fry, 2003). Executives who invest time in their own or employees' spirituality can bring vision and contagious enthusiasm to the workplace (Cavanaugh, 1999). Fry (2003) provided an examination of spiritual leadership connecting motivation and human need for spiritual survival, while illuminating how incorporating spiritual leadership supports organizational development outcomes. Integrating spiritual leadership into the workplace helps to form a learning organization characterized by openness, willingness to take risks and inspiration to others (Ancona, Kochan, Scully, Van Maanen, & Westney, 1999). The benefit then of spiritual leadership in regard to motivation is two-fold: not only do employees experience motivation internally, but they also strive to motivate each other.

Much of Fry's (2003) research on spirituality and leadership involved awareness and motivation between individuals and across teams contributing to corporate commitment and shared values. Daft (2001) described the significance of leadership training and the foundational aspects of building a leader's ability to both analyze circumstances and consciously adapt one's behavior. Therefore, establishing a spiritual culture with morals impacts others to strongly desire and assemble a shared vision that defines the core of motivating through leadership.

Just as positive organizational culture and spirituality encourage motivation, both have a direct impact on productivity as well. Cacioppe (2000a) believed spirituality in the workplace is essential for both individual and organizational success. Fry's (2003) developing philosophy on

spiritual leadership indicated that when teams and individuals share vision and values, they contribute to organizational productivity. Some scholars refuted the notion that spirituality contributes to workplace productivity (Kouzes & Ryan, 1999) and point to cautionary literature that warns of the misuse of corporate spirituality (Elmes & Smith, 2001; Goodier & Eisenberg, 2006; Nadesan, 1999; Tourish & Pennigton, 2002). Phipps (2012) highlighted the cautionary literature, emphasizing, "The exercise of those personal beliefs by leaders may have positive or negative implications for followers, as well as for the organization as a whole" (p. 182). These divergent perspectives may have something to do with who is defining productivity. Is it the leader or the follower? The literature suggested that not enough research has been done with followers, and my research only engaged leaders.

However, to further support the positive impact of spirituality in regard to productivity, in her review of early leadership theories, Reave (2005) noted higher production when a company's focus was on people rather than production. Workplace spirituality leads to a positive culture of employees sharing an experience of transcendence through their work by facilitating a sense of being connected. Promoting work as a calling serves as a source of motivation for the follower. Some studies also note workplace spirituality as a factor in improving profit. In short, "Leaders who emphasize spiritual values are often able to awaken a latent motivation in others that has been found to increase both their satisfaction and productivity at work" (Reave, 2005, p. 666). Mitroff and Denton (1999) found similar results linking workers' expression of spirituality to workplace satisfaction. According to Reave (2005), satisfied workers build positive morale, thus contributing to profit in numerous ways such as "lowered rates of turnover, greater sustainability, and improved employee health" (p. 656). Mehta and Joshi (2010) similarly related the impact of workplace spirituality on organizational culture by way of increased productivity. Mehta and Joshi (2010) stated, "Organizational culture describes the psychology, attitudes, experiences,

beliefs and values (personal and cultural values) of an organization" (p. 223).

Furthermore, a strong culture is one in which staff respond to stimulus because their values are aligned with those of the organizational culture. Mehta and Joshi (2010) also explained that the way to measure organizational culture is by measuring employee engagement, team orientation and cohesiveness around connectedness to mission, vision and values along with numerous other variables. These factors listed, along with others, are also all impacted by the level of workplace spirituality. Mehta and Joshi (2010) stated that "a spiritually strong leader will establish a strong organizational culture by having a sound value system, clear mission, vision, and achievable and desirable goals" (p. 225). Building a strong organizational culture will strengthen employee motivation and build trust within the organization thus contributing to the spiritual intelligence (SQ) which has gained greater attention in the past decade (Wolman, 2011; Zohar & Marshall, 2004). According to Hyde (2004) and Vaughan (2002), SQ is the integration of both internal and external understanding that contributes to adaptability. Spiritually intelligent employees then contribute with the leader in making the workplace more spiritual. This spiritual intelligence also increases their motivation and helps them to become more self-motivated. A stable and flexible organizational culture focused both internally and externally is also a catalyst for higher employee productivity.

Employee productivity "is measured by the efficient use of resources that are available, to generate more output, reduce waste, and enhance organizational performance" (Mehta & Joshi, p. 224). Employee productivity is important for those obvious reasons, but productivity also reflects the organizational culture and each impacts the other. Just as organizational culture encourages higher productivity, higher productivity positively impacts organizational culture. Mehta and Joshi (2010) also expressed that "productive employees are generally more confident, goal-oriented, mentally positive, and willing to spread their mentality and disposition to others"

(p. 225). Employees, in essence, become the main contributors both expressing and maintaining a productive organizational culture.

Trust is crucial in researching employee satisfaction and team effectiveness because many positive benefits can exist if trust exists, and, likewise, if that trust does not exist, correlating consequences can occur. "Trust creates a positive environment for a team to function," Daniel (2010) argued (p. 446). Similarly, Erden and Ozen (2003) agreed an atmosphere of trust is the all-important factor in employee interaction. To support the need for trust, Lencioni (2002) proposed the effects due to a lack of trust are at the root of dysfunctional teams. In the same way, trust directly relates to team satisfaction. Driscoll (1978) studied the impact of trust within participation in making decisions as well as a predictor for satisfaction. Many other studies verified that when trust was tested against team satisfaction, which incorporates team effectiveness, a positive correlation existed between high levels of trust and high satisfaction and team effectiveness (Costa, 2003; Ward, 1997; Allen, Bergin, & Pickar, 2004; Gladstein, 1984). Similarly, Daniel (2010) proposed that trust has "a positive association with team member satisfaction and team performance, and a negative association with task, relationship and process conflict" (p. 453). Just as Erden and Ozen (2003), Daniel (2010), and numerous others depicted trust as essential, each of my interviewees also expressed trust as a critical underlying asset of team development and productivity.

Another element that is becoming increasingly important in meaningfulness and team effectiveness is creativity. If creativity exists within a group, then its members have potential for improvement and ongoing creation and development of new ideas which allows for the flexibility of an organization (Gilson, Mathieu, Shalley, & Ruddy, 2005). Several studies have noted that teams with creativity have the ability to generate more answers and solutions thus impacting organizational culture and team performance. One study (Gilson et al., 2005)

examined the relationship between creativity, team performance and team environment. Results displayed a significant relationship amongst these variables; Chong (2007) and Belbin (1993) concurred and discovered that teams who displayed characteristics like creativity, clear goals and coordination were likely to have a better environment and higher performance. All of these strengthen Daniel's (2010) findings that creativity is "positively associated with team member satisfaction, team performance, task related and process conflict and negatively associated with relationship conflict" (p. 453). The asset of creativity within teams stimulates cooperation and performance and leads to the ongoing generation of creative ideas and plausible solutions.

        Finally, respect is also becoming crucial to delve into as it affects team members and overall team effectiveness. Dillon (1992) defined respect as being about paying attention and taking the group and task seriously, and in contrast, disrespect involved a neglect and disregard of others. Dillon (1992) found where respect and trust are present, team performance is high and likewise, Daniel (2010) found where absent, teams frequently experienced failure. Daniel (2010) concluded that respect is "positively associated with team member satisfaction, task conflict and team performance, but it is expected to be negatively associated with relationship and process conflict" (p. 453). Grennan (2009) and Pryor, Pryor, Taneja, and Toombs (2009) both found correlation between the existence of respect within teams and the ability of the team to perform positively. In De Vries' (1999) study of pygmies, he noted that "respect among team members is essential for developing strong functionality, which leads to important levels of connectedness and satisfaction among team members" (as cited in Daniel, 2010, p. 451). Tenbrunsel, Smith-Crowe and Umphress (2003) also noted in their study that a climate for respect is an important component of an ethical infrastructure which directly impacts employee satisfaction. Tyler and Blader (2001) also supported this idea in that employees who feel respect within their team are generally more satisfied and also work harder, which then also has a positive impact on the

success of the team. Perhaps Senge (1990) best captured the words to describe a successful team experience:

> When you ask people about what it is like being part of a great team, what is most
> significant is the meaningfulness of the experience. People talk about being a part of
> something larger than themselves, of being connected, of being generative. It becomes
> quite clear that, for many, their experience of being part of a truly great team stands out
> as singular periods of self, lived to the fullest and some spend the rest of their lives
> looking for ways to recapture that spirit. (p. 13)

The presence of trust and respect contribute to positive relational dynamics that stir both meaningfulness and motivation.

In short, several scholars, including Fry (2003), Wheatley (2002), and others, supported the notion that spiritual leadership is a "significant determiner of organizational culture" (Karadag, 2009, p. 1398). In addition, Avolio and Bass (2002), Bass (2005), Trice and Beyer (1993), Davis (1984), and Schein (1985) also supported the concept that the leadership qualities practiced by those in the leadership role significantly impacted the relationship between leadership types and organizational culture. Next I will discuss the role of contemplation.

Korac-Kakabadse et al. (2002) expressed that one approach to spiritual leadership is contemplation:

> To approach situations with an attitude of discernment rather than one of intervention;
> with an attitude of acceptance rather than control; with an attitude of letting go rather
> than hooking on; with an attitude of listening rather than doing; and with an attitude of
> humility rather than incompetence. (p. 180)

This description of the contemplative mindset includes many of the same descriptors Cavanagh (1999) used to depict the benefits of spirituality in the workplace including an emphasis on

contemplation and listening to improve relationships among coworkers. Similarly, DePree

(1993) echoed many of these qualities when describing elements of spiritual leadership noting

the lack of desire to manipulate which corresponded with the notion of letting go found in Korac-

Kakabadse et al. (2002). The terms of contemplation and spirituality seem to merge in meaning

adding to the definitional challenges. Duerr (2004) conducted a study using an inductive

approach and defined broad markers of contemplative awareness and then studied what practices

and techniques people use to cultivate such qualities. Individuals interviewed served in

organizations where contemplative practices are a part of the work setting. Some of the

linguistic markers included "contemplative," "mindful," "reflective," "quietness," and "stillness"

(Duerr, 2004, p. 45). Interviewees expressed that the impact of contemplative practice in the

workplace included improved communication and an increased view of workplace community.

Duerr (2004) found five distinct elements of what constitutes a contemplative

organization:

> The contemplative organization strives to incorporate contemplative practices into all
>
> aspects of work, embody and explore organizational values, move between cycles of
>
> action and reflection, balance process with product, and have an organizational structure
>
> that reflects a contemplative philosophy. (p. 50)

In summary, spirituality in the workplace appears to increase individual efficiency in

both leaders and followers, which in turn correlates to organizational productivity. Spiritual

leaders are making a difference, and we can gain much by studying their practices more fully.

Following the topical review of literature, I examined the theoretical framework showing the

relationship to my proposed research and then considered analytical theories, including authentic

and transformational leadership. In the following section, I described studies addressing

spirituality and leadership and their influence on organizational culture.

Influence of Spirituality in the Workplace

Nine studies reflected the relationship between spirituality and the workplace (Flores, 2009; Pawar, 2008; Benefiel, 2005; Daniel, 2010; Karadag, 2009; Akin, 2013; Gardner; 2013; Major, 2013). The studies focused, to varying degrees, on individual spiritual development among employees and organizational initiatives contributing to spirituality in the workplace. Methodologies were varied and included quantitative and qualitative assessments, individual interviews, cultural assessment tools, and organizational artifacts.

Although each of the studies focused on the topic of spirituality in the workplace, none of them specifically addressed the leader's individual spiritual practices. Many of the findings included attributes that informed my study, including trust, respect, and being grounded among others. These attributes provided a lens from which I examined similarities related to my study.

Flores (2009) focused on the relationship between leaders' self-perceived integration of spirituality in the workplace and their self-perceived leadership style. Flores (2009) examined studies related to spirituality in the workplace, specifically addressing a leader's integration of spirituality and its impact on their leadership style.

Flores (2009) administered three surveys: the demographic questionnaire, the *Multifactor Leadership Self-rating Questionnaire* Short Form and the *Integration of Spirituality in the Workplace Survey* (p. 37). The participants selected were students enrolled in the weekend Master and Doctoral Leadership Program courses located in the South and Central Texas.

The qualitative data revealed that leaders' self-perceived integration of spirituality in the workplace utilized a transactional leadership style. Although the transformational leadership style initially failed to support a link between spirituality and transformational leadership style, the bivariate correlation was significant because of the moral core component of transformational leadership and the notion of the positive correlation with integration of spirituality in

the workplace.

Flores (2009) drew a number of conclusions, including (1) spirituality and good leadership are positively correlated, and (2) the practice of spirituality in the workplace could be an avenue where employees achieve what they sought most – a meaningful, purposeful life.

In another study, Pawar (2008) compares the individual-focused approach by exploring Chakraborty's (1993) research which examines, in an Indian business context, the process of implementing an approach to workplace spirituality that promotes spiritual experiences and encourages spiritual transformation of individual members. In this study, a large organization employing over 10,000 individuals, including 1,500 managers, were exposed to "cognitive and experiential modes of learning for their individual spiritual development or elevation of consciousness" (Pawar, 2008, p. 550). Based on the high percentage of positive feedback that indicated the strengthened personal motivation to work on values and an enriched work life, Chakraborty (1993) determined "if sound and self-transcending ideals and principles could be transmitted, with some amount of authenticity to a generally receptive and sincere group of employees, a greater sense of interconnectedness and personal responsibility could be inculcated in them" (p. 211). Pawar (2008) identified similarities and differences between the organization-focused and individual-focused approaches. Similarities in these two approaches include the following:

1. Focus on workplace spirituality.

2. Focus on values.

3. Focus on employee benefits.

4. Focus on organizational benefits.

5. Attention to contextual factors (supporting the facilitation process).

6. Models adopted for workplace spirituality facilitation.

7. Origin of spiritual values in the workplace. (Pawar, 2008, p. 554)

Differences in the two approaches include the following:

1. Guiding perspective/model. . . .

2. Originating point of the spiritual values in the workplace. . . .

3. Focus efforts for the workplace spirituality facilitation. . . .

4. Horizontal direction of the transmission process. . . .

5. Vertical direction of the transmission process. . . .

6. Reinforcements used for workplace spirituality facilitation. . . .

7. Source of spirituality experiences. . . .

8. Nature of intra-individual change. . . .

9. Depth of spiritual transformation of individual employees (occurs at deeper individual

    level in approach 2). . . . (Pawar, 2008, pp. 558-60)

Pawar (2008) concluded that although differences exist between the organization-focused and

individual-focused aspects of spirituality in the workplace, they are dynamically interrelated.

In another detailed study, Pawar (2008) investigated the definitions of spirituality in the

workplace, comparing the organization-focused versus individual-focused approaches to

workplace spirituality. In doing so, Pawar (2008), considered elements of Milliman, Ferguson,

and Condemi's (1999) research which explored elements of spirituality at Southwest Airlines

concluding interrelated aspects of spirituality also exist: "Southwest Airlines appears to have a

strong sense of spiritual-based values guiding organizational goals and practices. . . . [T]here

seems to be a genuine sense of spirit and affection in both SWA employees and customers" (p.

222). This occurrence of spirituality at work happens because business and individual plans are

aligned with the organization's spiritual values and human resource practices (Milliman et al.,

2003).

Many of these qualities show up in the conceptual framework and illustration of spiritual leadership for organizational transformation postulated by Benefiel (2005). In her examination of the Reell Precision Manufacturing (RPM) case, she illuminated what leadership looks like when leaders follow the spiritual path during challenging times and asked:

> What kind of leader helps an organization make the transition . . . in which the leader and organization understand that the spiritual journey is more about their own transformation than about what material gain they can reap [f]rom being on a spiritual path? (Benefiel, 2005, p. 732)

Benefiel (2005) suggested this question can be examined by considering both individual and organizational cases. Her scholarship focused on both leader and organization, asserting they were not mutually exclusive factors. RPM incorporated spiritual principles in its business practices and utilized spiritual discernment including employee input.

The company's commitment to coworkers came first; however, this value was challenged when layoffs loomed. Because of previously established practices of spiritual discernment, RPM workers did know how to be open to each other and how to be open to something that was beyond themselves, and they knew that to go through the process, they had to abandon their own agendas. I interviewed leaders who have seen economic ups and downs. Like the leadership at RPM, they are individuals whose faith practices inform their work. Benefiel (2005) examined one conceptual framework for spiritual leadership that informed my analysis.

Just as ability to express spirituality through work is key to finding work more satisfying, meaningfulness of team and team effectiveness are crucial to team members finding their work more satisfying. Daniel (2010) created a theoretical model that aimed to understand how organizational culture led by spiritual leaders influenced both meaningfulness and team effectiveness. Daniel (2010) uncovered some of the implications that workplace spirituality and

organizational culture can have on team effectiveness. Through these discoveries, he shared a

new theoretical model that indicated workplace spirituality has the potential to become an

integral asset contributing to the overall culture within an organization. From his research,

Daniel (2010) concluded that incorporating spirituality in organizational culture created a more

suitable environment for employees. He went on to say that when spirituality permeates the

workplace, certain attributes exist within the organization that directly affect team effectiveness,

such as trust, creativity, and respect.

Karadag (2009) completed a study of organizational culture based on the open systems

theory of Katz and Kahn (1978). This study analyzed the impact of spiritual leadership on

organizational culture. The approach that Karadag (2009) took in this study was to employ

structural equation modeling. The goal of the structural equation modeling was to assert that the

principals' "spiritual leadership behaviors affect the process of organizational culture formation"

(p. 1395). This study assumed that spiritual leadership behavior is the independent variable, and

organizational culture is the dependent variable. These assumptions assisted in determining to

what extent spiritual leadership behaviors influenced organizational culture. Finally, the

instruments used to measure these variables were the spiritual leadership scale and the

organizational culture scale (Karadag, 2009). Karadag (2009) analyzed

> how teachers perceived their principals' spiritual leadership behaviors and the connection
>
> that existed between that and the perception of organizational culture to test and develop
>
> an independent theoretical model. Also employed was structural equation modeling; this
>
> aided in determining the connection between spiritual leadership behavior and school
>
> culture in terms of acceptable cause and result variables. (p. 1396)

Results showed meaningful statistical significance that spiritual leadership of primary principals

positively affected organizational culture. However, Karadag (2009) cautioned other factors

should be considered to determine from a more comprehensive perspective the impact of spiritual leadership on organizational culture.

More recent studies provided examples. Akin (2013) focused on the company DaySpring Cards. The case study included ten one-on-one interviews with current employees. The culture of DaySpring is clearly to make Christ known and seek God for answers and guidance in business decisions. With this culture in mind, Akin (2013) noted advantages and disadvantages. One advantage was greater trust provided improved operating efficiency which led to further business success. A disadvantage was an aversion to conflict and a tendency to be more indecisive when business decisions needed to be made. Significant to note is that the organization was founded by two pastors of the Christian faith tradition.

At DaySpring, members of management are expected to be spiritual leaders. The leaders at DaySpring have a common characteristic of leading through participation and taking a genuine interest in people. That environment brings trust and partnership into relationships. Even during a recent downsizing necessitated by the downturn in the economy, the employees were proud to work for a company that handled the crisis well, and for the leaders who showed such care and concern for the people (Akin, 2013).

Akin (2013) concluded that DaySpring could not survive or exist without their spirituality and faith focus: "A strong sense of culture and loyalty is required among the people of an organization for that organization to succeed" (p. 558).

Faith and spirituality obviously played an integral role in establishing the company, and the legacy has continued as a part of their everyday culture at DaySpring Spa, playing a significant role in developing the company's leaders. For Akin (2013), "The ultimate purpose of this research is to serve as a reference piece for the current use of faith and spirituality in the workplace of today and to serve as a benchmark for other organizations" (p. 536).

However, in a workplace in which religion is put at the center of all decision-making, "[p]rayer and faith that God has the answers that they do not have" (Akin, 2013, p. 544), may not be a process that appeals to others. Companies, as well as other individuals, not associated with or who hold a different set of beliefs may view this type of decision-making process as institutional, dogmatic, and even rigid. Religion is emotional and personal to an individual's needs. A group of founders who rely on prayer to guide and direct their workplace may not appeal to the masses. In other words, individuals in the workplace need information beyond emotion that is based in fact and truth in order to make the most informed decision for the organization.

In the second case study, Gardner (2013) examined the spiritual development programs of Mercy Medical Center (MMC), a Catholic hospital located in Rogers, Arkansas: "The objective was to evaluate the success of employee development programs in health care and document how these programs enhance the value of the service organization" (p. 587).

Gardner (2013) interviewed eight MMC mission personnel in the hospital over 30 hours. She also observed daily activities of nurses, patient care specialists, and secretarial volunteers. Throughout the interviews, information and statistics of the success of various programs, initiatives were offered. Measurement of the success of the programs was based on demonstration of awareness of the Mission in daily behavior and decisions.

The work of this organization is "Rooted in the Mission of Jesus and the healing ministry of the Church, and faithful to Catherine McAuley's service tradition marked by justice, excellence, stewardship, and respect for the dignity of each person" (Gardner, 2013, p. 592). During this research study, the mission statement was in the process of being changed to be more specific about providing healthcare to the economically poor. The Mission statement is based on the core values: dignity, justice, service, excellence, and stewardship.

Near the turn of the millennium, the Sisters of Mercy Health Systems developed the Mercy Service Initiative, which called all physicians and coworkers to deepen awareness and understanding about their commitment to service. Mercy's standards developed through the Mercy Service Initiative are printed on every employee's badge and are used as an essential part of every coworker's annual evaluation. These standards include the following: treat everyone as a valued individual, giving first priority to our customers; seek out and address customer needs; make eye contact; greet and welcome everyone; display a positive presence; keep customers and coworkers informed on a regular basis; work as a team; maintain privacy and confidentiality; keep a clean environment; and "live the Mercy spirit" (Gardner, 2013, p. 593).

After completion of the implementation of the Mercy Service Initiatives, Sisters began to investigate how to provide leadership development, with an emphasis on spirituality, to all coworkers. With the declining number of Sisters of Mercy, there needed to be assurance that the Sisters' culture would continue. The formation programs began with the leaders of the organization. A new executive position, Vice President of Mission, was created to be an advocate of the Mercy Mission on the executive team. Each Strategic Service Unit (hospital) in the Mercy Health System now has a Mission V.P.

Among their corporate initiatives included one week every year designated as "Recommitment to Ministry Work Week" throughout the Sisters of Mercy Health system. It is a reminder of Mercy's Mission, involving every employee. During the week, every hospital and clinic within the system is visited by one of the Mercy coworkers (Sister or lay Mercy chaplains or designees) for a Blessing of the Hands. Within that week every employee is blessed, Catholic or not. It is regarded by many employees as the most spiritual ritual of the year. Another important ritual is the opening prayer, mandatory any time a meeting is held. It is not a requirement that the prayer be Catholic-based or even Christian. All beliefs are welcomed and accepted.

The Sisters of Mercy Definition and Expectations Guideline was published in 2004. The education department began to develop the first spiritual development program for their coworkers, the Pathways Leadership Curriculum. This program defined twelve Mercy Leadership Competencies which are (1)leads from a spiritual grounding, (2) inspires a shared vision, (3) sustains a climate of hospitality, (4) models compassion for others, (5) facilitates teamwork to accomplish the Mission, (6) develops others, (7) motivates others, (8) demonstrates accountability, (9) ensures technical competence in self and others, (10) ensures effective communications, (11) manages change, and (12) fosters continuous improvement (Gardner, 2013, p. 609).

The Pathways Leadership is no longer used but is the basis of all the spirituality programs in the Mercy system.

The Advanced Formation curriculum was built by Mission leaders along with the Mission officers in the corporate office for those who wanted to go deeper into their own spirituality and ministry of the service Mission. This program is administered in groups of 5-8 leaders who meet once a month for two-three hours for 18 months. They discuss how they will implement what they have learned, and the session closes with a ritual with candles, music, scripture readings and blessings.

Following implementation of the advanced Formation Programs, a group of Sisters prepared spiritual programs for the Board of Trustees. The four main areas of concentration are sponsorship, ministry, mission/values, and the ethical religious directives.

"Team Mercy Outreach" was created to partner with other organizations in the area to give back to the community. Physicians and coworkers were asked to volunteer one Saturday a month on their own time to give back to the community. Gardner (2013) cited the success of Team Mercy Outreach as an example of integration of faith and spirituality into the work/life

of employees.

Mercy has internally developed an interview tool to analyze the personality and behavior of applicants to ensure that all interviewers incorporate faith and spirituality. The questions used during the interview process are aimed at exposing a "Mercy personality." Overall, the recruitment practices were believed to have successfully strengthened the Mercy culture contributing to the job satisfaction of employees and resulting in lower overall employee turnover.

Patient satisfaction data improved significantly after implementing the spiritual development program, another indication of the impact of the program. Measurement of employee satisfaction through yearly surveys shows overall employee satisfaction has improved since beginning the spiritual development programs and is quite high overall.

Throughout all the interviews conducted in this study, Gardner (2013) found absolute consensus on the benefits and success of the programs in increasing a commitment to the Mission of the organization and the importance of continuing the programs. The programs in this study have been authorized for continuation, with some revision and improvement likely. The Mission leaders are dedicated to measuring these spiritual development programs and beginning more programs in the future.

There is a dedication to continue aligning with Catholic traditions and specifically the Mercy Mission and values. Even though a very small portion of employees are practicing Catholics, the Mercy culture and ideals are widely accepted and successful within the organization and provide a compelling argument for the appropriateness of spiritual development programs in any workplace.

This case study provides many valuable ideas for organizational leaders who want to implement spiritual development programs for employees and management. In the case of Mercy Health System, the gross success of the whole Mercy service initiative has surpassed the

sum of its parts. The question is whether these programs are all dependent on one another or if one of the programs could pursue its cultural goal alone.

The third example, from Major (2013), is a reflective account of how middle management improved the Hewlett Packard (HP) employee workplace experience and organizational performance. Even while HP faced closure, workplace spirituality influenced management, and in turn, the workers who were affected by the merger and reorganization. This analysis outlined the principles and organizational support used by management, and the business results and employees' reactions to the process. Major (2013) found, "In a nutshell, an environment promoting workplace spirituality will build a community around shared values, provide meaning and purpose, and acknowledge individual's inner life and connection to a power beyond human nature" (p. 521).

Ten years after being a leader during the closing of the Volume System (VS) division, Major (2013) studied the events as a retrospective observer. His study is based on approximately 200 documents in his possession: notes, emails, spreadsheets, charts, intranet postings and presentation material. He also used direct participant quotations from saved emails or notes.

These principles were used to guide senior staff decisions and behavior:

1) Take care of the business, 2) Do what is right for the people, 3) Improve results through operational excellence, 4) Proactively support the organization and 5) Address the "survive-die" paradox. From here, the HR team designed five levels of organizational support: 1) Workshops, 2) Community, 3) Communication, 4) Exemplarity and 5) Rituals. (Major, 2013, p. 523)

The leadership team was aware that employees needed to manage their personal situations, their careers and their stress levels. They designed workshops to address these needs. The management staff understood the importance of communicating openly and listening

effectively and did so at division coffee talks. It developed authenticity in the management team so they were seen as open and honest and shared information, including hard decisions. By modeling operational excellence, as well as empathy and kindness, the management team reinforced priorities and desired behaviors.

They designed rituals to bring people together around shared values including a closing ritual that helped employees acknowledge the company transition, which aided them in moving on. Major (2013) noted that 600 employees were calm and accepting as the closure was announced.

Although change is neither easy nor comfortable, Gardner (2013) concluded that the five levels of organizational support enabled the employees to navigate through difficult times:

> I suggest that rituals and staff exemplarity had greatest impact on all three dimensions of workplace spirituality. These two approaches are rarely found though in corporate initiatives and have been marginally addressed in organization theory, conversely to developmental workshops, community building and communication programs. (p. 529)

This study indicated that a positive relationship can exist during times of organizational transitions. Major (2013) concluded that workplace spirituality requires that leaders transform themselves and that spiritual development requires transformational, inner life experiences.

In brief, although these nine studies addressed the interrelationship between spirituality in the workplace, they did not specifically focus on leaders' individual spiritual practices. They did, however, inform this study by identifying the integral nature of individuals' spiritual development and its influence within organizations. All of the studies indicate that spirituality can positively influence leaders by informing their value and ethics. This next section will identify the analytical theories that informed this study.

Analytical Theories

Analytical theories provide a lens to amplify a study's findings and identify patterns and themes (Maxwell, 2005). Three theoretical foundations inform my study: authentic leadership, transformational leadership, and servant leadership.

Authentic Leadership Theory

Luthans and Avolio (2003) developed authentic leadership theory and defined it as "a process that draws from both positive psychological capabilities and a highly-developed organizational context, which results in greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of both leaders and associates by fostering positive self-development" (p. 243). Today, authentic leadership is a viable response to leadership encounters (George, 2006; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Luthans and Avolio (2003) believed authentic leadership can make an important difference in organizations by helping people connect more meaningfully at work through transparent relationships, which build trust and commitment among followers. Authentic leadership perspective expresses positive organizational viewpoints in both social sciences and psychology (Seligman & Csikzentmihalyi, 2000). Authentic leadership also comprises the positive leadership theories including servant, charismatic, spiritual, and transformational (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; May, Hodges, Chan & Avolio, 2003). In a study of entrepreneurs, drawing on the concept of positive psychology literature (Luthans, 2002a; Luthans, 2002b; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Seligman, 2002; Seligman & Csikzentmihalyi, 2000), Jensen and Luthans (2006) proposed a conceptual model based on the term "psychological capital" which is generally defined as an individual's positive psychological state of development that is characterized by possessing attributes of optimism and hope which contribute to one's perseverance and overall success in life (Jensen & Luthans, 2006).

Authentic Leadership Development

In a study of leaders, Avolio and Gardner (2005) focused on the constructs of authenticity, leaders and leadership development discussing the current state of authentic leadership theory and its positive directions for organizations. When discussing authentic leadership development, Avolio and Gardner (2005) suggested that unlike a person's core personality, which they perceived as being more fixed, people can strategically develop authentic leadership. Components of authentic leadership development include the following: "positive psychological capital, positive moral perspective, leader self-awareness, leader self-regulation, leadership processes/behaviors, follower self-awareness/regulation, follower development, organizational context, and veritable and sustained performance beyond expectations" (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 322). These components suggest authentic leadership influences not only the individual practitioner but followers as well (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Cooper, Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005).

Avolio and Gardner (2005) made the following observation about authentic leaders and their followers:

> We are struck by the uplifting effects of lower-profile but genuine leaders who
> lead by example in fostering healthy ethical climates characterized by
> transparency, trust, integrity, and high moral standards. We call such leaders
> authentic leaders who are not only true to themselves, but lead others by helping
> them to likewise achieve authenticity. (p. 344)

Authentic leadership is a journey for both leader and follower involving willingness to reach beyond superficiality and strive to genuinely understand and serve the needs of others.

Authentic leadership development is expressed as more of a journey in self-discovery rather than simply a destination (Shirey, 2006). Shirey (2006) studied authentic leadership in the

nursing profession and suggested the need to expand the definition of authentic leadership, considering its attributes and the ways in which it contributes to the workplace. The nursing profession is stressful, often leading to burnout that contributes to the ever-increasing shortage of nurses. Shirey (2006) noted, "A shortage of 400,000 registered nurses is expected by 2020" (p. 256). Shirey (2006) suggested incorporating authentic leadership in order to create a patient-focused, healthy work environment for nursing organizations. Shirey (2006) expanded the definition of an authentic leader: "an individual in a position of responsibility who is genuine, trustworthy, reliable, and believable" (p. 259). Within this definition, authentic leaders speak the truth, and therefore, followers perceive them as trustworthy within the nursing workplace. Leading authentically also contributes to being compassionate by getting to know all individuals with whom they work and engaging coworkers in communal meaning. Shirey (2006) described an applied guide founded on the expanded understanding of authentic leadership which provided explicit instructions on how to become an authentic leader since this leadership style is desirable for creating and sustaining a healthy workplace. Because strong work environments for nursing practices are important for both patients and staff, Shirey (2006) proposed a research agenda to advance the study of authentic leadership.

Shirey (2006) argued, "Although the proposed mechanisms by which authentic leadership creates performance outcomes appear to be plausible, a stronger research base is necessary" (p. 265). Shirey (2006) suggested this need as an opportunity to open research collaboration between nursing and businesses. Shirey (2006) also recommended continuing to practice authentic leadership in the workplace even as the science of authentic leadership continues to evolve. In closing, authentic leadership may be the missing piece of the puzzle for improving today's complex healthcare system: "This important work potentially may affect not only the nursing workforce but also the profession, the health care delivery system as a whole,

and society at large" (Shirey, 2006, p. 266). Although Shirey (2006) specified the profession of

nursing, the practice of authentic leadership is relevant beyond that vocational sphere.

With this approach, it was important to note whether the leaders in my study employed

distinct tactics to address this cohort of workers and whether or not the characteristics of

authentic leadership were evident. Shirey (2006) heightened my awareness related to a number

of key questions: Would the leaders in my study report the importance of expressing

compassion and the significance of getting to know the individuals in high-stress roles? What

were the leaders' practices and interventions? And, did they see their leadership as a journey

rather than a destination?

Similarly, Delbecq (1999) surmised that authentic leadership streams from one's spiritual

journey and thus connects one's personal life to the work environment. Shamir and Eilam

(2005) shared a similar developmental perspective and pointed to the significance of leaders'

meaningful life stories as a source of self-knowledge and clarity that therefore produce growth

from encountering leadership challenges over time. Luthans and Avolio (2003) described

leadership challenges using the term "trigger events" to describe life-changing experiences that

produced self-knowledge and clarity. Sparrowe (2005) perceived authentic leadership as the

path toward self-awareness as an autobiographical journey. He posited that the leaders' inner-

most values become an integral part of their life story. He identified four characteristics related

to the true self and its correspondents to authentic leadership:

> How awareness of self, independent of others, is necessary to be authentic; the static or
>
> enduring nature of the values or purposes that constitute the true self; the role of self-
>
> regulation in facilitating transparency and consistency; and the relationship between
>
> authentic leadership and moral leadership. (Sparrowe, 2005, p. 420)

Authentic leadership is about knowing oneself and understanding that self-awareness is not all of

a sudden achieved but rather uncovered over time even over the course of an entire lifetime. Genuine and meaningful interactions are constantly shaping and reshaping the leader's narrative journey. A characteristic of resiliency comes with being willing to continue to observe oneself within a set of circumstances.

Authentic Leadership Values and Virtues

Authentic leaders "not only inspire those around them, they bring people together around a shared purpose and common set of values and motivate them to create value for everyone involved" (George, 2006, p. 52). The development of relationship dynamics between leaders and followers has the potential to serve as a positive influencer; in essence, the authentic leaders' attributes become contagious to followers (Harvey, Martinko, & Gardner, 2006). According to Cooper et al. (2005), "the criterion of sustainable, veritable performance suggests that it is only over some period of time that the influence of an authentic leader is discerned" (p. 482).

While a review of literature revealed a variety of definitions for authentic leadership, Shamir and Eilam (2005), Jackson and Parry (2001), Kernis (2003), and Mitchie and Gooty (2005) all depicted the essential nature of being grounded in values. Shamir and Eilam (2005) presented the following definitional characteristics:

> Authentic leaders are originals and not copies, in that they have internalized their convictions based on their own personal experiences and the role of being a leader is a central component of their self-concept; authentic leaders are leaders whose behavior is self-expressive with actions that are congruent with their values; authentic leaders do not "fake" their leadership because having achieved a high level of self-resolution, it is part of their true self; and authentic leaders do not take on a leadership role or engage in leadership activities for status, honor, or other personal rewards, but lead from conviction because their goals are self-concordant. (p. 396)

In other words, authentic leaders walk the walk. Their actions are not inconsistent with their expressed values and are in keeping with a strong sense of connectedness to organizational mission and vision. This type of leadership serves to inspire followers to do the same.

Jackson and Parry (2011) drew on Kernis's (2003) definition of authenticity as being comprised of four categories: "a full awareness and acceptance of self; an unbiased processing of self-relevant information; action consistent with the true self; and a relational orientation that values openness and truth in close personal relationships" (as cited in Jackson & Parry, 2011, p. 117). Jackson and Parry (2011) suggested that leadership researchers tended to take for granted why one chooses to lead, and they found the most important yet challenging question that needed a response was "Leadership for what?" (p. 113). The character of a leader adds credibility to the extent it is "grounded on virtues such as love, integrity, duty, patience, compassion, peace, fortitude, trust, truth, and right conduct" (Sanikar, 2003, p. 50). The notion of right conduct resonates with the authentic leader's sense of moral conviction and desire to truly live out one's values.

Mitchie and Gooty (2005) also noted that values and ethics are the roots of authentic leadership. They further posited the important qualities of authenticity are self-transcendent values and positive other-directed emotions. This dynamic implied that authentic leaders are concerned with living out their own authenticity while at the same time focused on developing authentic relationships with followers. Mitchie and Gooty (2005) studied the effects of leaders' beliefs and emotions on leader authenticity. Authentic connectedness to core values as expressed in authentic leadership theory is among the common denominators in transformational leadership theory.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership theory, another approach to leadership research, has appeared in the literature since the 1980s and like authentic leadership is a shared process between leader

and follower. As transformational leaders individually develop, they also develop the capacity to

positively influence relationship dynamics among those being led (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Benson,

2003). In essence, the most important work a leader can attend to is developing more leaders.

The appeal of transformational leaders is they draw people in helping to forge interpersonal

relationships with those around them (Bass et al., 2003). Characteristics of the transformational

model of leadership include relational qualities focusing on relationship dynamics between

leaders and followers (Bass et al., 2003). As Northouse (2007) put it, "Transformational

leadership is a process that changes and transforms people. It is concerned with emotions, values,

ethics, standards, and long-term goals and includes assessing followers' motives, satisfying their

needs, and treating them as full human beings" (p. 175). This leadership focuses on others' needs

emphasizing the qualities of caring and serving. It is a process of engaging with others which

generates connectedness, thus raising the level of both motivation and morality in the relationship

between the leader and follower (Northouse, 2007). Fry (2003) drew from Bass (1998) who

stated, "Transformational leaders are attentive to the needs and motives of followers and help

inspire them to develop into leaders, reach their potential for growth and development, and go

beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group" (as cited in Fry, 2003, p. 702). Among

the fundamental principles of the transformational leaders is their ability to inspire followers to

embrace corporate mission and core values (Sheep, 2006; Wolf, 2004).

       Transformational leadership focuses on communal characteristics of communication,

empowerment, and inspiration. According to Bass and Avolio (1999), transformational

leadership is an exercise of both inspiration and motivation. Core traits present in either

transactional or transformational leaders include (a) charisma, (b) intellectual stimulation, (c)

individualized attention and consideration, (d) rewards, (e) management by exception, and (f)

laissez-faire (Avolio & Bass, 1999). These core characteristics contributing to leadership

effectiveness facilitate a sense of purpose and significance among followers.

Since the introduction of transformational leadership theory, researchers' interest developed in understanding how leaders increase followers' motivation and performance (Bass, 1985). Bass (1998) and others believed the ideal approach to leadership included both transformational and transactional.

Fry (2003) provided a distinction between these approaches:

Transactional leadership refers to exchange-based leadership through contingent reward and monitoring to intervene when necessary, and has a clear focus on follower personal self-interest. The essence of transformational leadership, in contrast, is that it converts follower motivation from self-interest to collective interest. (p. 843)

Scholars posited it is important to understand the distinction between these leadership theories, and Bass (2008) suggested the difference is only a matter of degrees. My study looked specifically at the attributes of transformational leadership; however, understanding the distinction between transformational and transactional leadership was important as both styles might have been a part of the leaders' repertoire. My specific interest in understanding the influence of spiritual practice on organizational culture explored the leaders' perception of how spiritual practice affects team motivation, productivity, decision-making and other team dynamics.

Various quantitative instruments assess both transactional and transformational leadership. For the purpose of my study, I was interested in being aware of and generally understanding assessments measuring transformational leadership. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio & Bass, 2002), measured four transformational leadership components:

1. *Idealized influence.* These leaders are admired, respected, and trusted. Followers identify with and want to emulate their leaders. Among the things the leader does to earn credit with followers is to consider followers' needs over his or her own needs. The

leader shares risks with followers and is consistent in conduct with underlying ethics, principles, and values.

2. *Inspirational motivation.* Leaders behave in ways that motivate those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers' work. Individual and team spirit is aroused. Enthusiasm and optimism are displayed. The leader encourages followers to envision attractive future states, which they can ultimately envision for themselves.

3. *Intellectual stimulation.* Leaders stimulate their followers' effort to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways. There is no ridicule or public criticism of individual members' mistakes. New ideas and creative solutions to problems are solicited from followers, who are included in the process of addressing problems and finding solutions.

4. *Individualized consideration.* Leaders pay attention to each individual's need for achievement and growth by acting as a coach or mentor. Followers are developed to successively higher levels of potential. New learning opportunities are created along with a supportive climate in which to grow. Individual differences in terms of needs and desires are recognized. (Bass et al., 2003, p. 208)

Although I did not administer the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio & Bass, 2002), I was most interested in understanding the characteristics measured utilizing this instrument. What would their preferred form of communication be – face-to-face meetings with the entire team and/or one-on-one meetings with individual team members? In what manner would the leader engage followers and communicate the mission, vision, and values of the organization? As each leader confronted challenges, it was especially important to be aware of the leader's communication strategies and to observe evidence of creativity and effort to inspire. Finally, I noted any evidence of succession planning and interest in the leader's intention to mentor and

offer ongoing learning opportunities for both individuals and the team.

Avolio, Bass, Berson, and Jung (2003) examined the question of how leadership ratings among staff units operating under stable conditions predicted future performance of the same units under high stress. These researchers examined 72 light-infantry rifle platoon leaders on post approximately four to six weeks preceding a two-week combat simulation by calculating the transformational and transactional leadership potency ratings. In the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, four components of transformational leadership measured idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Findings suggested platoon leaders' transformational and transactional contingent reward leadership ratings positively predicted unit performance. Additionally, moderate correlation of leadership ratings for platoon leader and sergeant were evidenced (Avolio et al., 2003).

Like the above transformational leadership measures, Podsakoff et al.'s (1990) model for assessing transformational leadership included both transactional and transformational leadership components among top leaders. Others' assessments, however, including Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe's (2011), developed a model measuring only transformational leadership entitled the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ). The nine qualities of the TLQ are summarized by Jackson and Parry (2011):

> Possesses a genuine concern for others; empowers and develops potential; has integrity, trustworthiness, honesty and openness; displays accessibility and approachability; clarifies boundaries, involves others in decisions; encourages critical and strategic thinking; is an inspirational networker and promoter; shows decisiveness, determination and self-confidence; and possesses political sensitivity and skills. (p. 32)

Jackson and Parry (2011) identified each of these qualities as part of their leadership study which sampled 1464 public sector managers in the UK. This research measured individual

characteristics of top leaders which is similar to the methodology I utilized. The population I

interviewed was top-level managers leading mid-size to large corporations; however, they were

non-militarily affiliated. They had experience leading during high-stress circumstances, which

was among the variables present in the Jackson and Parry (2011) study. Although I did not

utilize a Transformational Leadership Questionnaire in my research, the nine factors measured as

stated above were important to note. Moreover, it proved important to listen to the leaders' self-

reported perception of their performance during high-stress periods. Jackson and Parry's study

indicated transformational leadership ratings positively predicted unit performance, so presence

of characteristics was important to listen and watch for along with leaders' self-reported

perception of the team's performance in the midst of challenge.

In summary, transformational leadership concepts described leaders who define

organizational reality, articulate the vision, and generate strategies toward the vision (Jackson &

Parry, 2011). This leadership approach, according to Jackson and Parry (2011), labeled the

leaders as "sense-makers," a term popularized by Wieck (2007). Sense-making involved the

generation of meaning and created new, plausible options for organizations (Ancona, Malone,

Orklikowski, & Senge, 2007). As I interviewed my subjects, I asked how did the leaders

describe themselves and their role within the organization as sense-makers?

Servant Leadership

The third leadership theory to inform my study was servant leadership. The modern term

"servant leadership" was coined by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1970 (Keith, 2001). Servant

leadership is inspired by a desire to serve while identifying and meeting the needs of others.

Individuals who live out the service model have an innate feeling that they want to serve and to

be known as servant leaders. Until recently, little empirical research appeared on servant

leadership. Now, multiple studies have described servant leadership and validated its basic

expectations. A servant leader is a leader with motivation to serve others. Helping others gives someone who is termed a servant-leader meaning and great gratification in one's life and work. Greenleaf asserted that serving others required love. This mindset required a process in which the responsibility for others was viewed as infinite. Employees have been searching for a deeper purpose in today's challenging workplace. Servant leadership fits in because it involves getting people to grasp that higher level by leading: "Companies that take servant leadership seriously are great places to work, and that is a key element in their success. The ability to attract and keep good people is a strategic business advantage" (Keith, 2011, p. 35). However, there are downsides to this leadership style. For instance, servant leadership can be viewed as problematic in hierarchical cultures where leaders and/or key stakeholders are expected to make the majority of the decisions (Northouse, 2016).

Servant leadership is more than a leadership style, however; it is, rather, a way of conducting one's self over a period of time. The ten characteristics associated with servant leadership were noted in Northouse (2016): "listening," "empathy," " healing," "awareness," "persuasion," "conceptualization," "foresight," "stewardship," "commitment to the growth of people," and "building community" (p. 227-229).

Servant leadership transpires within a certain organizational context and a specific culture. Studies on servant leadership have a fundamental ethical conclusion: that leaders should be selfless and humanistic. Servant leaders do not use power to dominate others; rather, they make efforts to share the power and enable others to become more autonomous (Northouse, 2016).

Reproaches around servant leadership include the name itself, stating that the title "servant leadership" lessens the value of the leadership approach. Servant leadership is inclined to be perceived as fanciful and suggests following, which is the opposite of leading. Some researchers argue that they have been unable to reach an agreement on a common definition or

framework around servant leadership (Dierendonck, 2011). Regardless of the critiques, servant leadership remains an engaging leadership approach that holds potential. With further research around the process and complexities of servant leadership, a better understanding will emerge.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I described scholarly literature pertaining to spirituality in the workplace and the theoretical constructs informing my primary question – how does spiritual practice influence leadership and organizational culture in the Midwest? The literature reviewed provided valuable insight into the growing number of researchers interested in the nature of the relationship between successful leaders and their spiritual practices. Numerous researchers identified significant 21st-century challenges and the need to further consider the integral nature of spirituality and leadership and the role of leaders. Additionally, the literature revealed definitional inconsistencies in workplace spirituality and the need for further psychometric scale development. While much research existed on workplace spirituality, I did not find a study specific to the influence of spiritual practice on leadership and organizational culture among Midwest leaders. I also reviewed three theoretical foundations that were likely to inform my study: authentic leadership, transformational leadership, and servant leadership.

In the next chapter, I describe the qualitative exploratory case-study methodology, which I used to examine the influence of spirituality in the leadership of selected executives in the Midwest region of the United States.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate how spiritual practice influenced organizational leadership in the workplace in the Midwest. The Midwest region, according to the United States Census Bureau, is divided into the East and West North Central divisions and includes the 12 states of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin in the East and Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota in the West. My research subjects, for the most part, resided in the Western Midwest division. I chose an exploratory case study within the qualitative inquiry tradition because it provided, as Creswell (2013) put it, a contextually rich experience process to examine a phenomenon, which, for me, was spiritual practice and its interaction with leadership in the workplace. This study examined three research questions:

1. How does spiritual practice influence organizational leadership in the workplace in the Midwest of the United States?

2. How do leaders use spiritual practice to become more self-aware and critically reflective of their roles and actions as leaders?

3. What essential elements of spirituality affect the development of current and future organizational leaders in the Midwest?

This chapter includes a brief description of the study's qualitative methods and strategy. I also discuss selected participant and sample size characteristics, the research instrument, validity, and credibility as well as general procedures, data collection, and analysis and the suitability of exploratory case study within the qualitative inquiry tradition. I conclude the chapter with a description of the study's ethical considerations and limitations.

Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative research was best for my study in that it provided a framework to gain greater

understanding from participants about the dynamic relationship of spiritual practice and

leadership. This mode of inquiry extended the greatest degree of insight into the topic of

leadership and spirituality in the workplace. This study sought to gain a view of the larger

picture by interviewing leaders in their work environments and listening to multiple perspectives

as they responded to the primary research question: how does spiritual practice influence

organizational leadership in the workplace in the Midwest of the United States? According to

Creswell (2013), this preferred approach employs more subjective and exploratory means of

researching within the social environment's context, and it is this contextually rich and

interactive environment that draws me to the qualitative research design. Marshall and Rossman

(2011) noted that qualitative researchers "are intrigued by the complexity of social interactions

expressed in daily life and by the meanings that participants themselves attribute to these

interactions" (p. 2). Additionally, the interdisciplinary nature of qualitative research provides

both a multilayered and experience-rich discovery process. Schwandt (2007) contended that the

qualitative inquiry method integrates the "life-world as it is lived, felt, undergone, made sense of,

and accomplished by human-beings that are the object of study" (p. 84). I conducted an in-depth

study of how leaders experience and understand the influence of spiritual practice in the

workplace. Onsite interviews with senior leaders from varied vocations provided both a complex

and rich learning experience.

Case Study

According to Yin (2015), one should use a qualitative case study when the study answers

the "how" or "why" questions. Inquirers should also consider a qualitative case study when they

cannot manipulate the behaviors of the participants in the study; when the researchers intend to

cover contextual conditions that are relevant to the phenomenon under investigation; or in the

event the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are blurry (Creswell, 2013).

More specifically, Creswell (2013) defined case study as an in-depth investigation that is bound within specific parameters of time and includes varied data collection processes.

My study investigated how the phenomenon of spiritual practice influenced the ability of participants to lead their organizations. This exploration did not manipulate participants' behaviors as it occurred in settings of selected organizations in one single region of the Midwest United States over a period of approximately eight months. The bounded system is signified by the sample of twenty Midwest leaders over a defined period of time and represented the Midwest states of North Dakota and Minnesota. Furthermore, I studied the conditions surrounding spiritual practice and its influence on the leaders of those organizations. Site visits provided opportunity for observations and collection of varied data including policy documents; mission, vision, and values statements; strategic initiatives; and varied business prospectuses, marketing materials, and personal artifacts. These materials provided a more in-depth and close-up look at the organization and uncovered what was valued. Furthermore, my study unveiled important contextual nuances and values espoused by the individual leaders.

Exploratory case study. This research employed a qualitative exploratory case-study method. This approach was utilized because the intent of the study was to explore in depth the dynamic relationship between spiritual practice and the workplace and identify new insights with the goal of informing future inquiry (Yin, 2015). Yin (2015) contended that one should use an exploratory case study to examine situations when the phenomenon under study has no clear or no single set of outcomes. In the same line, I posited that the phenomenon of spiritual practice and its interaction with corporate leadership in the workplace would produce various outcomes. Therefore, I agreed with Yin (2015) and other scholars, such as Merriam and Tisdale (2015), that the best approach to the analysis for my study was an exploratory case study within the qualitative research methodology which allows me to assess leaders' interpretation of how their

spiritual practices influenced self-awareness and organizational culture. The varied descriptions

provided by the leaders during the semi-structured interview process were compared and further

developed in the results section of my research.

Population. Prior to obtaining the approval of the University of St. Thomas'

Institutional Review Board (IRB), I conducted a pilot study to identify participants for this study.

This initial pilot study included thirty individuals, of whom I invited twenty to participate in the

current study. Participants represented mid-size to large organizations and various sectors

including, but not limited to, manufacturing, business, agriculture, and the non-profit sector. The

largest organizations employed over 1100 individuals and mid-sized organizations

approximately 50.

This study's twenty participants included an equal number of both men and women of

varying ages and career paths. This selection of participants followed the construction model of

Patton (2014) and represented a small homogeneous sample purposefully selected in an effort to

yield greater in-depth meaning. Purposeful selection engaged people who were able to represent

a specific perspective (Maxwell, 2013)

I called these leaders "participants" throughout the study. Out of the twenty Midwest

Leaders, ten were males and ten were females. Ten were Lutheran and ten were Catholic.

Participants ranged in age from forty-three to seventy years. All participants had completed their

Bachelor's credentials with a variety of continuing education. Out of the 20, 4 had completed

only their Bachelor of Science (BS) degree with varied continuing education experiences, 9 had

completed their Master of Science degree (MS), 2 had completed their Juris Doctorate (JD), 2

their EdD, 1 MD, 1 PhD and 1 both MD and PhD credentials. (See Table 3.1) Appropriate

measures required by the University of St. Thomas Institutional Review Board (IRB) standards,

including the use of pseudonyms, provided essential participant safeguards.

Table 3.1

NAME	Gender	ROLE	EDUCATION	FAITH	ARTIFACT(S)
Adam	M	CEO/President	BS	Lutheran	Serenity Prayer, Bible Verse from Jeremiah, Rock, Spiritual Reading, Image of Christ, Image of an Eagle, Family Photo and Core Value Statements (Compass) Advocacy Correspondence, Picture of St. Benedict as a Child, Giving Award
Betsy	F	COO	BS	Lutheran	Family Photo, Plant, and Stuffed Animal
Curt	M	President	BS	Lutheran	Family Farm Image, Prairie Image, Scandinavian Homeland Image, Rock, Bible, and Cross, Philanthropy Award, Corporate Giving initiative
David	M	Executive Director	MS	Lutheran	Image of Mentor, Folk Art, and MLK Image
Ethan	M	CEO/President	MS	Catholic	Family Image, Moral Compass, and Glass Jar, Servant Leadership Book,
Franklin	M	Vice President	JD	Catholic	Native American Artwork, SW Art, Catholic Art, Images of Expansive Sky, and Image of a Man Polishing a Hat
Greta	F	Entrepreneur/ Owner	MS	Catholic	Plants, Palm Branch, Cross Necklace, and Daily Devotional

Hans	M	Program Director	MS	Lutheran	Image of a Lion, Journal, Cross, Book of Psalms, and Grandmother's Bible (1800s)
Isabelle	F	President	Ed D	Lutheran	Humanitarian Award, Coffee Pot, and Gift from Father
Janette	F	Vice President	MS	Catholic	Blessed Prairie Angel, Christ in the Bread Line, Metal from Middle Eastern Woman, Bible Verse from John, Books, African Angel, Sage, Bible Verse from Isaiah, and Family Photos
Keith	M	Director/State Office Holder	MS	Catholic	Bible, Rosary, Books, Business Cards, Diversity Award, and Daily Devotional
Lucy	F	CEO/Owner	MD	Catholic	Buddha Head, Essential Oil, Angels, Butterfly, Books, Inspirational Quotes, and Gratitude Cards
Mark	M	CEO/Owner	MS	Lutheran	Family Painting, Organizational Mission, Family Photos, Gold Leaf Star (Soviet Union), Greeting Card, Globe, and Russian Painting of Eluska, Philanthropy award
Nancy	F	CEO	MS	Lutheran	Poem, Image of Prairie Sky, Family Photo, Images of Nature, Mosaic of Churches, and Grand Canyon
Olivia	F	Program Manager	Ed D	Catholic	Cross, Kaleidoscope – Diversity Award, Community Awards, and Distinguished Service Awards

Phillip	M	President	JD	Catholic	Family Photo, Annual Report, and Donor List
Quinn	F	CEO	BS	Lutheran	Norwegian Image, Fire Fighter Symbol, Inspirational Quote, and Cross
Renelle	F	Executive Director/State Office Holder	MS	Catholic	Inspirational Quotes, Gift from Clients, Images of Flowers, and Willow Angel
Stacy	F	Vice President	MD & PhD	Catholic	Daily Devotion, Image from Retreat, Family Images, Corporate Mission Statements, and Stone Carvings of Heart and Hand
Ted	M	President	PhD	Lutheran	Mission Statement and Passage from Ephesians

Data collection process. First, personal correspondence extending the interview invitation (see Appendix A) preceded a call to establish the interview. After setting up the interview time, I called participants a day in advance of the interview to reconfirm availability and reviewed the various aspects of the visit including the onsite interview and interest in corporate materials earlier identified.

Prior to data collection, I secured IRB approval from the University of St. Thomas (Appendix B). In this study, data collection included participant interviews with the CEO or upper management persons, site-visit observations, and discussion of various artifacts. This method of data collection allows researchers to explore numerous activities, materials and processes engaging several individuals in single or similar institutions (Creswell, 2013).

I conducted twenty in-depth face-to-face interviews with the average length of interviews being approximately seventy minutes. Interviews were at a date, time, and location that were

most convenient to the interviewee. Sixteen interviews were conducted in participants'

professional work environment, three were conducted at participant homes, and one was

conducted at a coffee shop.

At the interview, I thanked participants for their engagement and told them about

the study to ensure both their comfort and understanding. The interview process began

with building rapport followed by the consent protocol and then a natural segue into the

semi-structured questions (Appendix C). During the interviews, I asked each participant to

identify at least one personal artifact, a tangible object (see Table 3.1) that represented that

individual's spirituality. Every participant shared at least one artifact, and several shared

more than one. The process of sharing these private, meaningful items produced a greater

sense of intimacy between the participants and me. I perceived a more authentic revelation

of the individual's spiritual commitment to others through this interchange that would not

have been evident without the introduction of the objects.

The interview questions were open-ended qualitative format that included verbs such as

"describe" and "explain" (Creswell, 2013) aspects of how spiritual practice influenced

leadership. The eight questions utilized what Gray (2004) referred to as a semi-structured format

allowing the researcher to consider questions beyond those predetermined. Developing

predetermined questions is an essential element of the qualitative research approach

(McCracken, 2009).

Data organization and analysis. I digitally sound-recorded face-to-face interviews, and

I took supplemental notes during my site visits, carefully noting the atmosphere and subject

interaction. I enlisted the assistance of a transcriptionist to transcribe interviews. The

transcriptionist confidentially prepared transcripts within a relatively short period after the

interviews so that I could send the transcripts to each participant in a timely fashion for

verification (Appendix D).

David and Sutton (2011) identified direction and purpose as the primary dimensions of qualitative analysis to which the researcher is continually drawn back. Upon completion of the interviews, observations, and site visits, I coded and categorized the transcribed materials. I analyzed transcripts line by line searching for themes and patterns related to the core research question: how does spiritual practice influence leadership and organizational culture? This process of coding is a specific facet of the qualitative research approach, which distinguishes it from the quantitative approach (McCracken, 2009).

Twenty-eight codes were identified and addressed leaders' spiritual practice and workplace integration. Codes related to the following themes: personal spiritual practices including daily practice, inward journey, spiritual reading, ritual and routine spiritual practice, journaling, communion with nature, translation into positive thinking including expression of gratitude, use of secular and religious artifacts, extending into community including family, mentors, church, and study groups, interrelationship between spiritual and personal and professional lives including liturgy at work, servant mindset, professional ethics including integrity, respect, compassion, and being non-judgmental, and finally, community building including valuing relationships and teams and collaboration. Aspects of workplace integration included leading with a servant mindset, serving with integrity, valuing relationships, respecting others, being nonjudgmental, and being a mentor to others. I identified each of these codes in the transcripts to depict relevant data.

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006) and Yin (2015), content analysis helps to identify, understand, and corroborate data from interviews and observations. Analysis continues until categories emerge with sufficient depth and saturation (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). During the coding process, I conferred with participants on an intermittent basis as I reviewed

transcripts and verified data. The use of thick description, in which the researchers provides rich detail and observations, is an integral qualitative research element, allowing the researcher to provide meaningful description and the reader to make transferability decisions to other contexts (Guba & Lincoln, 2003). I conducted detailed analysis, as Maxwell (2005) suggested, via sorting, categorizing, and connecting strategies in response to the research questions.

Through ongoing analysis, I compared each research participant response to others as themes, categories, and varied dimensions emerged (Merriam, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). I utilized the process of data reduction; according to Gray (2004), "analysis does not necessarily occur sequentially after data collection, but simultaneously with it and involves the teasing out of patterns, themes and grouping of data" (p. 321). This ongoing method of analysis led me to determine the point at which a category indicated saturation (Marshall & Rossman, 2011) where no new information emerged.

The data analysis exercises strengthened both my understanding of the qualitative interview process and my resolve. The identification of emerging themes and discovering ways to both code and weave a cogent story enforced the necessity of developing a system of organization.

Ethical considerations and confidentiality. Patton (2015) described various dimensions of qualitative fieldwork, each of which has ethical implications. Ensuring ethical practices of inquiry is paramount and safeguarded in numerous ways including maintaining confidentiality, anonymity, and careful attention to detail throughout the process (Creswell, 2013; Kvale, 2007). My study involved up to 12 Midwestern leaders who serve in high-profile positions. Their stories, despite anonymity, might have been recognizable to community members; therefore, guarding against the loss of anonymity and disclosure of any identifying information was of primary importance. The procedures and protocols outlined in the general

procedures section and within the IRB process ensured anonymity and confidentiality practices. Additionally, I securely preserved all interview recordings and transcriptions as well as consent documentation in a locked closet in my home office. I kept all electronic data in my personal computer the password of which was known to only me. Paper folders were shredded and original transcriptions retained in a password-protected home computer.

Issues of trustworthiness. Researchers Lincoln and Guba (2000) identified trustworthiness and authenticity as terms to describe qualitative case studies' credibility, instead of internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity, the more typical validation terminology analogous with quantitative research. According to Patton (2015), "In qualitative inquiry, the researcher is the instrument. The credibility of qualitative methods therefore, hinges, to a great extent, on the skill, competence, and rigor of the person doing fieldwork" (p. 14). Creswell (2013) suggested several primary strategies to ensure the researcher's accuracy in reporting findings including conferring with participants to confirm and verify transcripts thus strengthening accuracy (Kvale, 2007).

In this particular study, the sample size of twenty individuals included equal numbers of men and women to ensure data credibility. In forwarding to the participants the transcriptions of their interviews, as well other data for their review, I made sure of the integrity of those data and the unfolding results. Additionally, my use of the exploratory case study with in-depth collection of data including artifacts and site-visits, added to the trustworthiness of the study.

Researcher biases. First, I knew most of the individual interviewees because of my longtime professional associations in the region. This personal relationship could lead to potential complacency when responding to some questions regarding their own practice of spirituality. However, the professional atmosphere I created for the study mitigated this shortfall. Additionally, I took great care to prepare and attend to this personal exploratory

process. McCracken (1998) further emphasized the importance of the primary researcher

exercising caution in the interactive process seeking a balance between both comfort with the

subject and formality.

Second, I began this study with my personal experience of how my individual spirituality

has affected my professional leadership. My firsthand knowledge of the topic, along with years

of administrative experience have led interviewees' responses to match my preconceived views.

Such a bias, if not controlled, could result in an undue correlation between spirituality and

professional performance. Patton (2015) cautioned the researcher to be especially attentive

during the interview process. Being cognizant of this risk and using researcher's reflexivity

(Creswell, 2013) throughout the study allowed me to keep this bias under control.

Limitations. As with any scientific inquiry of quantitative or qualitative nature, this

qualitative investigation had limitations. First, I limited the study to a small cohort of individual

executives who resided in the Midwest. Therefore, my findings are not generalizable to a larger

population. Second, this study limited its scope to large and mid-size corporations of the

Midwest in general and the States of North Dakota and Minnesota in particular. However, an

inclusion of small-size corporations could have brought increased insights into the relationship

between spirituality and leadership. Third, researcher bias is always a limitation when

conducting qualitative studies. I based the interpretations and conclusions upon my own

objective understanding of the data in order to produce the highest quality research possible.

However, in spite of these limitations, this study provided useful insights into the influences of

spiritual practice on leadership in the workplace.

Conclusion

This study's methodology was qualitative by design, thus providing a framework to gain

greater understanding from participants about the dynamic relationship between spiritual practice

and leadership. I chose an exploratory case study within the qualitative inquiry tradition and addressed the following primary research question to guide my study: "How does spiritual practice influence organizational leadership in the workplace in the Midwest of the United States?" I identified 20 participants representing mid-size to large corporations and various sectors including but not limited to manufacturing, business, healthcare, agriculture, human services, the non-profit sector, government and education. Data collection and analysis included interviews with discussion of personal artifacts, site visits, documents and observations. The University of St. Thomas Institutional Review Board protocols ensured research subject protection. I collected and analyzed data by coding and categorizing them in order to draw recurrent themes, which I present in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 4: INNER-LIFE PRACTICES

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to learn how leaders' spiritual practice influenced and informed leadership in the workplace. Two themes emerged. First, all participants expressed the necessity of individual personal spiritual practice informing their self-awareness and capacity to become more self-reflective as ethical leaders with subthemes of daily prayer and reflection, spiritual reading, and a variety of other ritual practices. The second theme that emerged from the data is translation into action with three subthemes of mindset of gratitude, use of artifacts, and community. With both themes, all participants described the development of their faith as an ongoing journey. In this chapter, I present findings related to the internal spiritual practices from which the Midwest leaders who participated in this study operate and the mechanisms they utilized to turn their spiritual practices into actions.

Individual Personal Spiritual Practices

All participants expressed a commitment to individual spiritual practices. The great majority of the participants began their day with some form of spiritual practice in an effort to make a connection to God. Personal spiritual practices recorded were divided into three subthemes: (a) daily prayer and reflection, (b) spiritual reading, and c) various other rituals. All participants expressed a commitment to a variety of daily spiritual practices such as devotional reading, meditation, and reflection. The majority of the participants used inspiring spiritual readings, including biblical texts, devotional materials, spiritual books, and poetry. Several participants talked about the significance of journaling and how over time they recognized the hand of God at work in their life and livelihood. The majority of the participants utilized ritual, for example, frequent reflective pauses or communing with nature, such as, admiring the prairie sky and gardening.

Prayer and Reflection

The participants in this study experienced what Miller (2007) called a "quest for integration" (p. 74). All of the participants demonstrated a daily commitment to their own spiritual practices and acknowledged the interrelationship with all aspects of their life – social, emotional, spiritual, and physical. In addition to specifically religious daily practice, some leaders participated in other spiritual activities that offered similarly centering rewards.

For example, David, an executive director of a large non-profit, indicated that he did not pray like most people. For him, prayer happened in a variety of ways and included body, mind, and spirit. He was physically active most days whether engaging in yoga, riding his bike, doing yard work, or swimming – it was all considered prayerful. He shared, "It can involve spiritual reading and meditation," and, depending upon what is happening, his prayerful response varied. Self-care for David integrated body, mind, and spirit, and each of these areas was essential for health and spiritual well-being. David's observation was repeated by many participants throughout the study.

Stacy, for instance, talked about the integral nature of her daily practices. Stacy, who had her MD and PhD, served in a large healthcare corporation. She reflected on her reading of a daily devotional: "It's got the morning prayer and it's got the liturgy and it's got evening prayer and it's got some reflections in there. That's with me wherever I go." In fact, for many participants in this study, daily prayer was the spiritual practice that grounded them. Stacy called her spiritual practice "that thread to hold onto." She was a self-described introvert and knew herself well enough to determine when it was time for an extended retreat: "no cell phone, no laptop . . . that's really sustaining for me." Stacy planned retreats on a quarterly basis, and this spiritual practice complemented monthly spiritual direction, weekly centering prayer, and daily practice including seated meditation and walking meditation.

Similarly, Hans, who served in a large education setting in an administrative role, had a daily practice of "spending time with God's word." Doing so was at the heart of his leadership ethics, which led him regularly to what he sought – "the Truth," and he earnestly believed that everyone would benefit from full engagement with the Word. Hans kept his Bible in his office, and reading it daily was the "one thing that I have always done early in the morning. . . . I think it's a way that I set myself for the day. . . . I'm thinking about the positive things in the work environment."

Other participants also shared examples of daily attention to their spiritual selves. Janette, a long-time health practitioner and administrator, similarly discussed the significance of prayer before entering into the workplace: "I wake up praying every morning. I take time before I get up. I'm very grateful. My prayers are of gratitude, basically." Phillip, an attorney and CEO for a large Midwest foundation, also prayed daily: "[W]hat I'll do is take mini-breaks. . . [and] contemplate. . . why am I here? I try to make it a habit . . . throughout the day that there's some outward effort." Likewise, Lucy, a successful business owner and CEO of a regional healthcare facility, found that her commitment to daily prayer centered her and "directed [her] thoughts to a higher power."

Renelle, a recently retired executive director of a large regional nonprofit, who also holds a state-elected office, commented on her daily spiritual practices: "I committed to two hours a day of prayer and two hours a day of exercise. . . . That then shaped my current spiritual practice. . . . Essentially, I have a kind of daily prayer – personal daily prayer in the morning." Similarly, Philip developed a spiritual practice today much more intentional than in his past and included weekly fellowship with a men's group, a commitment to his church community, and daily practice: "I [pray] every morning as I do my workout. . . . I have a series of things that I read. Then meditate about how's that going to make a difference in my life today." Phillip's

daily discipline also included "mini-breaks" throughout his day that redirected him and helped him maintain a balanced perspective. Phillip saw daily focus on God as a habit: "I know I'm a better person when . . . I'm better about my contemplative side . . . and my relationship with Christ."

For Greta, a successful entrepreneur and small-business owner, her actions throughout the day became opportunities to offer prayer: "It's common in my family to say, 'Thanks be to God.' It can be just 'My car started. Thanks be to God.' Or, 'I didn't get stuck in the driveway (because we live on a gravel road). Thanks be to God.'"

Betsy served as COO of a large nonprofit agency. She similarly identified the significance of daily personal reflection: "[My spiritual journey] is at the forefront of what I think about all the time." Betsy's daily prayer began at home, continued on her way to work, and during working hours, and at the end of the day, she prayerfully reflected on her day: "[I] get up. . . and. . . say, 'What is my day going to be like today. . . and who can I help today? What servant service am I going to do today?'"

Ted, longtime educational leader and college president, also talked about the evolution of his spiritual practice:

> I would say a decade ago or more I found myself moving into devotional works. I would read from Scripture and then read a reflection on that followed by prayer. . . and part of it would be my own prayers of reflection. . . . My prayer life has changed over time.

Ted expressed that more and more each of his days was self-reflective: "I'm much more now given to impromptu prayers. On the way over here today, I was praying. I was anticipating my time with you." He reflected upon how earlier in his leadership, he might have taken actions that in looking back, he would not take today.

Several participants talked about their prayer life as being integral to their ability to gain self-knowledge and clarity. Mark, CEO and owner of a large international agricultural business entity, for example, stated, "I pray for wisdom in that context – your Father knows what you need before you ask. Part of the journey is character developed through difficulties. . . . For anyone's journey, there are going to be challenges and great difficulties."

Participants represented how individual practice of daily prayer and contemplation heightened awareness and contributed to the growing sense of how one's words and actions influenced others. Each of the participants expressed what Sparrowe (2005) called consistency contributing to self-awareness and growing understanding of how it relates to one's authentic leadership, someone who desires to become more true to one's self, continuing to increase self-awareness and align one's inner most values with actions.

Spiritual Reading

Reading a variety of spiritual materials represented another form of spiritual practice. Some readings related specifically to religious scripture, whereas other materials were more secular in nature. Reading, however, provided them with a sense of peace and being centered. The following examples represented both the similarities and varieties of readings participants encountered.

For instance, Ethan, CEO and president of a multi-state co-operative entity, shared, "I think probably a quarter of my library at home is books to help me understand the spiritual journey." Ethan indicated he typically has a number of books on his nightstand and a "long list of authors that I've really tried to immerse myself in. That's been really important." Ethan is continually educating himself through a variety of spiritual reading. He is especially interested in the concept of servant leadership

Another participant, Keith, served in the role of Director and also held an elected state office. Keith's daily readings, like Ethan's, incorporated a variety of books including the Bible

and daily devotionals. Among the resources he read and kept in his office included a booklet

called *Forming Conscience for Faithful Citizenship* and *Follow the Way of Love*. Keith also

happened to be a Gideon representative. These readings are about "basic Christian principles,"

and although he works in a public facility, he kept these reading resources on hand for others.

He said, "It's interesting; I have no official role here in terms of spiritual matters. We have no

chaplain here. . . . [People] come to me."

Janette also talked about her interest in continuing to connect her spiritual journey to her

intellectual journey and the importance of continuously reading and studying. This fulfillment

came in the form of completing a master's degree in spiritual direction and continuing to give

spiritual direction. She commented:

> The older I get, the more I'm interested. That part of my spiritual practice is important
>
> because it keeps me grounded and makes me smarter in the intellectual part of the faith. .
>
> . . It's understanding where things are coming from, what the historical understanding of
>
> these things has been. I'm much more into doing that now than I ever have been. It's to
>
> deepen my understanding.

Hans also used daily reading and reflection when his long list of to-dos at work got out of

balance. His spiritual readings reminded him to reconnect with God: "I love the Psalms. The

reason I love the Psalms is because it's a human being crying out and saying, 'Where are You,

God?' I think that's the basis of starting your spiritual journey no matter who you are.'"

Similarly, Mark found that reading Biblical scriptures also provided him with a strong

spiritual foundation:

The word is God speaking to me. . . . For me, primary guidance is reading the word and

studying the word and trying to understand what it says. . . . I see prayer as God speaking

to me through his word. . . . For my own spiritual practice, it would be centered on

reading scripture.

Ted, like Mark, relied on scriptural readings. Each year he would identify special texts and various

readings and use these materials during an extended period of time to read, study, and reflect:

I've taken retreats. I would get away in the summer for a week or two weeks for

[spiritual] study. That was, for me, a really deep dive – both personally and spiritually

and also intellectually. It was where I would try to keep myself growing intellectually in

my faith – understanding, if you will.

Janette also shared her devotion to reading: "I love to read. I love to glean ideas from them and

carry them in my heart. They help me [with] what I do." Similarly, Nancy, CEO of a large faith-

based nonprofit, shared that the older she gets, the more interested she is in spiritual reading.

Several participants also commented on the importance of spiritual readings with their

spouses. Renelle, for example, shared, "[My husband] and I love to read books together. We'll

find a spiritual book. We've read much of Richard Rohr." Adam, President and CEO of a large

regional non-profit organization, similarly shared, "[M]y spiritual practice consists of daily

devotions with my soulmate. [W]e read scripture and have a chance to reflect on that; I like to

take that into my day and into the practice of work."

In short, both daily prayer and spiritual reading were ongoing aspects of participants'

daily spiritual practices. Spiritual reading served as a complement to prayer and seemed to

satisfy participants' ongoing desire to continue a path of learning about spiritual matters. The

next section will explore the other varied and unique rituals among participants.

Other Ritual Practices

A ritual 'is a sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects, performed in a sequestered place, and performed according to a set sequence" ("Ritual"). A number of participants integrated ritual as part of their spiritual practice. This section explores those unique individual practices that can be defined as ritual as well as those that have become a spiritual habit or routine.

Several participants shared stories about the ways in which their spiritual practice evolved over time and became uniquely reflected in their own values and rituals. Pausing for ritual became a time to reflect more deeply, beyond superficiality, and engage more intentionally in honoring and caring for the spirit. The practice of ritual represented participants' efforts to uniquely strengthen their spiritual practice, heighten their self-awareness, and contribute to their ability to be mindfully present in life and leadership.

Spiritual journaling. Numerous researchers described the essence of spirituality and leadership as the ability to connect one's inner self to the external world. In this study, journaling was a practice that assisted some leaders in aligning their own values, providing deeper insight regarding their actions in the world. For instance, David, Hans, and Renelle expressed that the regular practice of spiritual journaling kept them rooted. Specifically, Renelle shared that journaling provided a discipline that kept her thinking clearly. She practiced journaling at the beginning and ending of each day: "Without [journaling], you don't see. Sometimes even, when you're in the middle of it, you don't see. . . . At night, I try to reflect and journal to some point of the things that I am most thankful for."

Journaling also provided that same sense of clarity for Stacy: "I plan to continue to do that, continue to journal. It's that introspective kind of work." Annual retreats also provided an opportunity for Stacy to delve more deeply into the practice of journaling:

I do annual retreats, at least a five-day, if not a weeklong retreat where – it's a

contemplative retreat, silent retreat – I meet with a director once a day. That was

incredibly helpful because I could journal about what is this calling for me.

The spiritual practice of journaling more deeply engaged participants in exploration of their inner

life and ultimately increased their self-awareness and leadership actions.

Communing with nature. Nature was also identified as a place of solace for a number

of participants and provided about a third of the participants with the ideal opportunity to

commune with God. As Janette put it, "All nature reflects God." Lucy used the identical words

to describe the spiritual influence of nature:

All nature reflects God. . . . Sometimes . . . I'll start digging in the dirt or maybe I'm

doing something in the yard or someplace and just to be connected and thank the Mother

for all of this – open the door and welcome whoever comes in, whoever is at your door,

welcome them as God is present in that person as He is present in you. It's connected.

Betsy also looked to nature and expressed that whether she was outdoors or in the house looking

at a house plant, she felt a connectedness to the miracle of God's creation. On especially

challenging days, the plants in her office and in her garden at home provided respite. She

commented, "Nature brings me so much peace and calmness. Call it spirituality, call it

calmness, call it whatever you want. That's my spirituality each and every day." Similarly,

Nancy found solace in the prairie sky and saw nature as "God's creation in physical form." She

viewed her practice of gazing upon the grandeur of nature as "that spiritual conversation" with

God. She loved to immerse herself in nature and long reflective drives were "important . . . to

stay grounded."

Unique rituals. Lucy's nightly ritual was far removed from her daytime complexities as

she engaged in a simple, loving, and fun word game with her son each night. Each said every

other word of the Lord's Prayer. Lucy shared, "The older I get, the more I appreciate the rituals

and routines." Similarly, Greta described her morning ritual as walking the same path on their

farmstead each morning and reflecting on the gift of another day. She would silently wonder

how she would bring a peaceful presence into her time at home and at work. This time of solace

in the open countryside provided an opportunity to quietly and intentionally invite the presence

of God into each day.

Ethan's weekly ritual gave him time to pause and reflect on his own mortality and the

significance of the gift of each new day. He kept a bowl of beads in his office that represented

the number of weeks he would live if he reached the age of 80 years. Every Friday he closed his

office door, gave thanks for the week, and placed one more bead in the bowl. "[The bowl of

beads] helps you understand the fact that your life [on earth] is finite."

Adam, likewise, shared another example of a weekly ritual:

On the weekends when [my wife and I] have more time, we have made a practice of

making a pot of tea and sitting in the living room to linger longer over the daily

devotions. Usually, before we get up, we place a note of gratitude in our gratitude bowl.

Sometimes when life is more challenging we dump out the gratitude bowl and read all the

notes out loud and inevitably we return to that place of gratitude giving thanks even for

the challenges life brings. We bought a beautiful cast iron teapot for this practice years

ago and now our girls have their own teapots and made this part of their practice too.

Rituals like these, whether at work or at home, indicated an intentional practice that brought

participants closer to the core of who they were.

When times were challenging and seemingly insecure, ritual could provide solace.

Isabelle may have said it best: "I . . . like the predictability of . . . ritual. I think there's kind of a

security." Nancy, in the same manner, expressed the necessity of the routine spiritual practice of

long quiet drives so she could take in the prairie sky: "I can drive for six hours in silence. . . . I

value the silence because it allows me to think." Nancy used this time to become more

thoughtfully present during challenging circumstances at work:

>For me, I need a quiet place. . . to get to that point of introspection. I value the silence
>
>because it allows me to think. . . . It did take me a long time to realize what's actually
>
>happening is, when you find that quiet, that's when you have that spiritual conversation.
>
>That's the other side of you.

Unique rituals provided a place for deep reflection, reminding leaders that even in the midst of

their challenging days, a certain solace could be found in their spiritual practice.

Translation into Action

While in previous themes participants concerned themselves with their personal spiritual

life, the current section presents how the leaders in this study translated those insular experiences

into positive thinking. Participants reported how several elements of their personal spiritual

practice greatly informed their practices in their work places and communities. Those spiritual

elements boil down to the following categories: cultivating a mindset of gratitude, use of spiritual

and secular artifacts in the workplace, as well as better appreciation of their working community.

Mindset of Gratitude

All participants stated that their religious expressions of gratitude have greatly informed

their professional leadership. Several said gratitude was foundational in their spiritual practice,

and it was the way in which they began and ended their days. Many participants referenced their

spiritual practice over time developing into a practice of thanksgiving and gratitude. They

expressed thankfulness for their families, for the privilege of purposeful work, for meaningful

relationships with colleagues. In particular, similar religious expressions of gratitude have

allowed them to be thankful for their colleagues and for those who report to them. For example, Philip said,

> [M]y favorite [lesson] is just being grateful. Gratitude for our very lives informs our daily interactions. . . . What do you do if you're grateful? Well, you behave differently, right? I feel that gratitude has helped me to be grateful for my staff. Bringing that here . . . making sure that when I do walk through the door that the gratitude for life itself from Christ is reflected in how I'm grateful for the gift of having my staff. If you're really truly grateful, they'll know that. They'll appreciate that. They'll rise to a level that they might not have risen to before. Plus, they can sense then that it's cool to be in a place that has gratitude. I think the leader has a special obligation to set the tone for the organization. It's evident if it's sincere.

Some participants indicated, as Philip did, that their religious practices pertaining to gratitude have encouraged them to see their job and their followers in a positive way.

Distinguishing between notes of gratitude and positive attitude presented a challenge as these attributes were often discussed together. The dynamic of gratitude and positive attitude influenced the individual leader and appeared in relationship interactions as Betsy observed: "I am just so lucky that we do have a good group of leaders and a good group of staff. I'm very blessed. It's not just about me and myself. It's about all of us. We can do this together."

In her leadership role, Isabelle is intentional about discovering ways to extend gratitude. She talked about an organizational change initiative that she felt was really "hard on people . . . hard on the organization. During this time, she developed a practice of sending positive notes to people to uplift them. This practice followed her into the board room and beyond including individuals working at all levels within the organization: "I try to say something, find something about each person that I appreciated or notice."

Janette also offered a silent prayer to all who entered her office space. She tried to live her life through prayer and acts of kindness: "kind words, kind actions, kind thoughts, kind everything. I think that's what it's all about, to be kind."

Over the years, Lucy expanded her spiritual practice to include mindful breathing and meditation. These practices, she believed, were "spiritual power tools in business." She commented on the importance of bringing her practice into the workplace in both subtle and not-so-subtle ways. She desired to create an aesthetically beautiful and uplifting office space. She shared the symbolism of the image of a butterfly she kept in her office that signified positive transformation and change. Lucy went on to discuss the importance of gratitude and its foundational nature in her spiritual practice:

> [A]nytime I think about God . . . the word gratitude pops into my head. [I]n every experience, good and bad, there's always that little glimmer of gratitude that it's either a blessing or a lesson. That's kind of a foundational attitude that I often feel, but I need to be better at sharing that feeling with others so that they feel it too.

Another of the practices Lucy brought to her office was gratitude cards:

> Every Wednesday we have our leadership meetings. I have a few decks of cards. Sometimes people roll their eyes. Some people feel that it's interesting. . . . [W]ork creates expansion. . . . If you open your heart and mind to receiving those messages . . . sometimes they actually open your heart and mind.

Many participants specifically stated the spiritual practice of cultivating a mindset of gratitude was an integral part of the beginning, middle, and end of each day. Janette, having lived overseas where clean water was a luxury, found a lot in her everyday life for which to be grateful. Phillip reflected upon the necessity of gratitude. He linked the practice to his faith. Curt, a successful business owner and entrepreneur, was grateful for the fact that he and his

partners and shareholders shared the same values, which he articulated as "a huge blessing –

more than people realize." Participants gave example after example of expressions of gratitude

that imbued their days. Betsy put it this way: "I'm the lucky one to have such a great life." She

believed that

> my spirituality comes from growing up in a great household and being part of the church,
>
> but it's also growing up in a household that has rooted beliefs. . . . I believe that others
>
> who I lead also understand who I am in my roots.

This rootedness shows up in the form of gratitude in the workplace. Betsy's focus is on building

relationships with coworkers and the individuals the organization serves. She said, "I love my

staff, I love the people we support, I love my coworkers. . . . I told somebody the other day who

was struggling that if you hurt, I hurt." The staff member called her later to thank her. Franklin,

Vice President and General Counsel for a national co-operative, contributed, "It's amazing how

fortunate we all are." Isabelle said that "gratitude is important." She described herself as a

mentor to her students and further expressed that it is her role and theirs to be a model of

gratitude in the world.

The spiritual practice of cultivating a mindset of gratitude gave the participants a

heightened sense of self awareness that contributed to a positive mindset. Every participant spent

time in personal reflection about themselves and the way in which their gratitude influenced their

life and the lives of others. This spiritual practice is reflective of transformational leadership.

According to Bass, Avolio, Jung, and Benson (2003), leaders also developed the capacity of

positivity which influenced relationship dynamics among their followers.

Use of Secular and Religious Artifacts in the Workplace

Secular spirituality often refers to some adherence to the personal development of the

individual without a religious framework; whereas religious spirituality almost always relates the

individual to a Higher Being or the Divine (Van Der Veer, 2009). Participants in this study

reported the use of both secular and religious artifacts and their significance in the workplace.

The transition from the personal sphere to the professional sphere in regard to spiritual

practice was interestingly similar among all the participants. Each had at least one physical

artifact at work that served as a reminder of the benefits of staying in touch with one's

spirituality in every setting but particularly at work. Table 3.1 references the diversity of

tangible artifacts, from crystal stones to poems and everything in between. Artifacts abounded.

Even ordinary secular items, such as plants, a gold-leaf star, a butterfly, sage, and business cards,

inspired participants. Christian artifacts included a cross necklace, daily devotionals, a blessed

prairie angel, and a favorite Bible verse. Two participants also shared non-Christian religious

artifacts. The participants' frequent reflection upon the artifacts in their midst provided an

awareness of the reality of God. What follows are participant comments related to both secular

and religious artifacts.

Secular artifacts. The secular objects, thirty altogether, conjured up meaningful

reflection that brought many participants back to their spiritual roots. For example, a secular

artifact Isabelle shared was a coffee pot next to her desk. To her, it represented offering

hospitality to all who enter. She commented, "I think that relationships are most important to

me. . . . I don't have many things on my shelves. . . . See my Keurig coffee. I think that, again,

hospitality is an important part of making people feel comfortable." She made a practice of

offering coffee to everyone she met within her office as a way of expressing hospitality. She

talked about "being a light on the hill, I think that is so important. . . . I think of that light on the

hill. What you do and what you are is very much a part of it. I think of my spiritual journey too

. . . is about gratefulness." The Keurig became much more than a coffeepot in Isabelle's office.

It became an object that represented an act of hospitality and being a light on the hill to

coworkers and friends. She also reflected on the influence of her family. The pictures in her

office were of family and included both old and relatively recent photographs. She talked about

the importance of relationships and the desire to be "that light on the hill." She kept two Bibles

in her office and said, "I do use them and I do take the time most days to read some passages that

are important to me. . . . They deal a lot with relationships."

A number of participants shared artifacts that related to gratitude such as inspirational

quotations, poems, objects, and images of the prairie sky, and how they shaped their lives. For

instance, Lucy shared a quotation from Melodie Beattie: "Gratitude makes sense of our past,

brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow." Nancy shared the following poem by

Minnesota writer Mark Vinz that depicts a depth of introspection which several participants

alluded to when describing their artifacts:

> Homesteaders
>
> When they came
> some of them already knew
> that here was more than flatness;
> here at last was a place
> where all things would be possible.
>   * *
> Call it ocean, call it desert;
> trails move off in all directions—
> tall grass, wheatfield, open range.
> Everyone here is traveler.
> No one knows the way.
>   * *
> The buffalo wallow is thick with prairie aster,
> coneflower, gentian, blazing star.
> We walk the fields till dusk,
> when deer come down to drink at the river
> and a cool wind ruffles the bluestem.
> The sky is full of old bones.
>
> Mark Vinz
> from *Minnesota Gothic*, Milkweed Editions, 1992

This poem depicts Nancy's love of the prairie and her affection for open spaces. The beauty and creativity of nature were part of her "introspective journey. . . I actually take great peace in it. . . . There's something about the pattern, the rhythm." Nancy took great care during a large organizational building project to consider how the space in the new facility would influence employees. She saw the project as part of workplace spirituality. She commented,

> Light reflects on your ability to think. . . . It's about how productive you are at your job, it's about how you're thriving as a person which relates to your ability to do your work. . . . Really, it's about helping people thrive that I think is bringing us to a center of understanding of how our work connects but also what it is that we are really trying to do. . . . We have a unifying goal that I'm really trying to infuse into everything we do. . . . That's important to the people who work here.

A number of participants shared awards they had won over the years. For instance, Olivia, a Program Manager at a foundation, shared a Kaleidoscope award, which to her represented the importance of accepting people with differences. The depth of respect she had for all people was part of the foundation of faith she grew up with and the same deep respect she brought into her leadership role. She commented,

> It reminds me – am I accepting of people or things no matter what it looks like? As details change, can I change with them? Can I can still keep all of that – the faith, the spirituality, the belief that I hold to be true? I have to be accepting. I can't put up walls.

Similarly, Adam, Curt, and Mark's awards depicted a lifetime of giving back to their communities. They were important reminders of their benevolence and values in action in the greater community.

Other unique personal items adorned offices, reminding participants of their spiritual foundations. Curt's painting of his family's farmstead signified a sense of rootedness to his

lineage and their role in shaping his life, values, virtues, and faith. Adam's rock was from a leadership pilgrimage he made to Assisi. It reminded him of the women of faith who founded the organization he now served and the importance of continuing to honor the rich tradition. He said, "I like to reflect on the four core values. They are reverence, integrity, compassion, and excellence. I try to weigh what we do each day in following those four core values; I see that as a spiritual practice." The moral compass atop Ethan's desk was a constant reminder to remain centered in the midst of the storms. He said, "It's been on my desk for almost 40 years" and Ethan continued to talk about the employees who have come in and out of his life over that time period: "We're kind of a menagerie of people and philosophies. All of that is connected. The benevolence, do the right thing always, shared values – all of that is connected with our faith. All of that has a root in our faith – in our faith walk." Among the artifacts he shared was a recently published book he co-authored about his organization and servant leadership principles within his industry. His organization is reading this book. He commented that his desire for ongoing learning through spiritual reading is not only for himself but for the organization's development.

Similarly, Franklin's simple painting, hung over his mantle of a fellow polishing a hat represented simplicity. He said, "The act of a man polishing a hat. A very simple guy. Doing something well with reverence. . . . It was done by a Sister. Franklin's simple mantra for life and work was "How can I help you?" Another participant, Quinn, who served as the CEO at a large nonprofit, shared the image of a firefighter that represented courage and determination to her. It also served as a reminder of her own father who was a volunteer firefighter and the values that were part of her upbringing. These are the positive values she desired to express in the workplace.

Religious artifacts. Nearly every participant also shared a Christian artifact. Several artifacts reminded Greta of the presence of God. For instance, she kept a palm branch hanging from her rear view mirror which is replenished every Palm Sunday: "It is just a very simple

reminder to me of my roots. It's not a language, but it's . . . a symbol which is with me at all

times." The palm branch brought her a certain joy that translated into her day in the form of

thanksgiving. Greta reflected on her family and looked for things throughout her day for which

to offer thanksgiving. In addition, before she spoke in a public venue, she found a quiet place.

She said, "I chat with God and say, I have a plan for this thing; but, if you want to derail it, go

ahead. It's your will, not mine, be done. Let's go see what we can do."

In contrast, Janette's work was oftentimes critically challenging involving life, death, and

ethical decision-making. Because of her heavy, challenging role, she desired to be intentional

about creating a lightness of presence that would bless the people she encountered throughout

her day. Janette described a "prairie angel" that was a gift from a patient:

> This angel is made of feathers and all from North Dakota. . . . I had her in my office
>
> because she just reminded me to be light and tread lightly. . . . Every morning when I
>
> would come to work, I would always stop, and I'd say a prayer. When I turned my key, I
>
> would say a prayer for all who entered and that they would be blessed. For all the phone
>
> calls that would come in, they would be blessed as well. I would see [the prairie angel]
>
> there.

The presence of the prairie angel reminded Janette to pray for everyone who entered her office.

Janette seemed to understand what others needed whether it was offering a prayer spoken out

loud or that she silently prayed in her own heart for others. Her spiritual practice influenced her

ability to be present, positive, and compassionate with others including patients and their

families, coworkers and community members. Janette identified a verse from John that she said

was "number one in [her] life: 'This is my commandment that you love one another as I have

loved you.' I think this is key. This was going to be my only artifact. I didn't think I even

needed another one."

Adam shared an image of Christ that for him symbolized the diversity of faiths and the connection of seeing the face of Christ in all people. Whenever he came across a worker from a minority group, he would remember his Christ's symbol of diversity. He also remembered this image during conversation when people held not only diverse faith perspectives but differing points of view: "We're called to respect everybody, but reverencing somebody really allows you to think about loving that person created by a higher power." This image was both a symbol of his Christian faith tradition but also a reminder that all people are created in the image of God.

Adam also shared a picture that depicted St. Benedict as a young boy. In this image, St. Benedict held his hand next to his ear with his head slightly bent to the side. Adam explained that "this is an image of listening with the ear of your heart." Adam's spiritual journey opened his heart to the experience of love and acceptance for the people he encountered in life and leadership.

Adam also found grounding in the Serenity Prayer. It was among the artifacts placed under the glass on the top of his desk in plain view. He read it frequently as a constant reminder to consider who is in control:

> [T]he first [reading] was the serenity prayer about God granting us the courage to accept the things we cannot change, the wisdom or the "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." I spend a lot of time on – is this something that's in my control? Is this something that's outside my control? I think that wisdom is the key to that whole prayer and then being able to take the courage to take the stance on things is also very important.

Finally, several participants spoke about their favorite Bible verses and had these printed out and placed nearby.

In contrast, several non-Christian religious artifacts represented a diversity of faith traditions. Franklin, for instance, had a deep and profound respect for Native American spirituality and had several pieces of art from the southwest. Lucy pointed to an image of a Buddha head that depicted a calming presence. Just as Adam's Christian artifact frequently reminded him to respectfully pause in consideration of others, so too, the non-Christian artifacts Franklin and Lucy shared reminded them of the rich diversity in the world and their desire to be respectful of all people whatever their faith tradition. Adam aptly summed up the meaning of these images kept in participants' workplaces when he said, "I think we're here on earth to learn how to love at a greater level."

Both secular and religious artifacts related to aspects of their spiritual journey, and in many cases, related in some way to individuals who served as spiritual mentors in their lives. Most participants shared a variety of secular and religious artifacts which symbolized their openness to diversity in expressing their spirituality. The artifacts represented meaningful images embedded in the discipline of spiritual practice. Whenever these images or artifacts caught participants' eyes, they brought participants back to that place of self-reflection and awareness. The artifacts provided a moment of pause in the midst of their busy days and described what Korac-Kakabadse et al. (2002) referred to as "an attitude of discernment" (p. 180). Whether artifacts were secular or religious in nature, they possessed meaning beyond mirror image and created opportunity for participants to pause thoughtfully in the midst of their work life. Although daily prayer and individual ritual played important roles in almost all participants' lives, community spiritual engagement was also significant.

The Role of Community

Community life contributed a great deal to shaping the inner spiritual life and spiritual practice of all the leaders involved in this study. All of the participants expressed a

connectedness to a community of some kind. The role of community in the participants'

spiritual practices came in a variety of forms and included family members, individual mentors

in the workplace and their spiritual communities, and the wider community including church.

Family

Genuine and meaningful interactions with mentors including family members and others

were constantly shaping and reshaping the leaders' narrative journeys. All participants talked

about immediate and extended family members who served as mentors on their spiritual journey.

These mentors modeled for the leaders their own role in developing spiritual practice and habits

as a part of their ongoing development.

Every participant talked about the foundational role their families played in shaping every

aspect of their life. Greta, for example, commented about the significance of her family and how

her mother served as a mentor in faith: "Family is [my] first community." She reflected on a

conversation with her mom that she had at the young age of about four or five:

> I was asking her "What's God? What is a God?" I remember her telling me that "He is
>
> your friend." "Well, what do you mean He's my friend?" "Well, you won't be able to
>
> see him, but He will always be with you." Mom would send me out to play. . . . I would
>
> come back and she'd say, "What did you do all day?" I would say, "Well, God and I did
>
> [various outdoor activities on the farm]." [God] was just always my imaginary friend. . .
>
> . We would have these conversations. . . . It became this very childlike thing that my
>
> parents supported.

Greta looked back and understood how this interaction with her mom nourished her journey of

faith beginning at a very young age.

For Betsy, communal spiritual practice also began with family:

I grew up in a spiritual household. . . . I believe that . . . a lot of [my spirituality] comes from growing up in a great household and being part of the church, but it also is growing up in a household that has rooted beliefs and very fortunate to have a good family that all stayed together and supported each other.

In addition, Ethan discussed his Catholic background and viewed religion as something one took part in with one's family and was something one had to do. He then shared what he called a "defining moment":

I was a junior at [college]. First time I was away from home. It was Sunday morning and the decision is do I go to church or don't I? No one is going to know. My parents aren't telling me to get up and go to church. That was a defining moment for me. I went. For me, it has been such an important part of my life. It's funny some of the things that my parents taught me that I didn't understand and are starting to make sense, particularly at this point in my life. I remember my mom saying, "Let's go and make a visit." We were running errands, just stop in and make a visit to church. I go – visit what, you know? Today I do that. . . . I have found particular solace in . . . how the parishes are bringing back adoration and that quietness, that solitude in the busyness and the clutter of our jobs and our life. It's been really important to me.

Mark also mentioned family as being a significant community influence: "Family is really important, including in the front office a painting of my grandfather. . . . [I]f I'm in the office alone and locking up at night, I will often go and just look at my grandfather and father." Similarly, Nancy shared,

My family was really a big part of my centering. . . . You get busy in the middle of your professional life and as a parent. I don't make a lot of time for friends, but I don't feel a loss because to me my family is my center.

Quinn, too, talked about the influence of her husband's daily practice: "I must say that I actually am very much inspired also by my husband and his practice." Olivia said this about her family and community upbringing:

> In my youth and the conversations I used to have with my parents as they were building and guiding our spirituality, we had a lot of Sunday lunch or dinner round-table discussions . . . talking about what went well with your week, what was your challenge, or what would you do in this situation? We knew part of our family was we had values and morals. They had high expectations of us . . . they could just say, "Remember you're representing yourself and our family."

Likewise, as Olivia moved into her professional roles, she was aware of their influence and the way of thinking and processing through challenges that her parents taught her: "It just became a way of practice when I got into my career." Like Olivia, Curt talked about the influence of family:

> You look back on your upbringing. You look back at some people that you've surrounded yourself, close to, and been connected to. That's probably all been an influence to you. You hope that your faith has been an influence in giving back. . . . Family has played a role. . . . Certainly, my parents . . . they had a wonderful influence on me.

In fact, each of the participants commented on family members as mentors in faith. Family held high expectations, held them accountable for their actions, shaped their values and ethics, and informed their leadership. Immediate and extended family members represented participants' first community, first teacher, and first sounding board. In most instances, it provided their first moral mirror and example of how one lives out one's spirituality in the world. And then, as their

lives progressed, participants were inspired by spiritual mentors to find ways to actively engage

in their own ever-expanding spiritual journey.

Church

For Isabelle, as for a number of participants, church services provided needed stability.

Her church community offered what she referred to as "predictability" and "security." Ethan,

whose spouse practiced a different faith, provided another example: he attended Sunday mass

and then accompanied her to her service to receive a double dose of communal spirituality each

week. Nancy highlighted the importance of her church and the pastors who served her

congregation: "We have a really great group of pastors who do a nice job of connecting

scriptural teachings to what we need to be doing. . . helping me to refocus and to just keep my

eyes in the right direction." Nancy also expressed a love for children's ministry:

> I do more of the youth end of the church. That keeps me connected to why we're there.
>
> Why is it important you have this faith tradition? What are you trying to help kids have
>
> this be part of them? That there's something about just the pattern, the rhythm, and the
>
> habit of a faith tradition and having adults who care about you and can ask and answer
>
> questions. I think that is important. I do that to stay grounded.

Franklin shared the nature of his daily spiritual discipline as it relates to his church community:

> [F]or the last three years, . . . I go to daily mass . . . 98 percent of the time. There's
>
> lunches I have to attend, then maybe I'll go in the morning. I have found that to be very,
>
> very helpful, for me anyway. . . . [I]t's kind of my spiritual exercise because it's much
>
> like going to the YMCA to lift weights or going to the elliptical. That discipline keeps
>
> me tied into the fact that there's something beyond my own ego and something that I
>
> have to respond to. I have to say it's really been helpful.

In addition, Lucy specified, "I think that we're quite good about church attendance which is 99 percent at the Lutheran Church." The discipline of regularly attending church services connected the participants to God and to others in a way no other activity could.

Community is about relationships, and relationships need work. Renelle focused in on the value community plays in her life:

> You cannot underestimate the importance of having a community base. The older I get, the more I understand my dependency on my community. I define my community pretty broadly but particularly your spiritual community. . . . I interact with them daily.

Renelle also participated in her community by playing piano at Sunday services and attending a multidenominational centering prayer group. Monthly, she participated in an early-morning reflection group, both of which she experienced as support groups. Renelle reflected, "[T]he older I get, the more important [my community base] is. . . . Because it really does keep you balanced." For Olivia, "Community, church, friends, I mean it's everything. It's all encompassing." She's extended the scope of her community engagement by serving in a number of community organizations. She reflected on the influence of her family's engagement with their church community and how that provided the example of how she lived and served in her own life.

Group Study

Several participants experienced community in spiritual practice through group study. For instance, Curt had been a member of the same Bible study group for twenty years. Mark also attended Bible study:

> I have been in a business Bible study for 35 years. Some of the people have been in there the whole time. . . . In that study, there's just interaction between 10-15 guys depending

on which week it is. There's an interaction – how do we live this out and trying to make

Biblical teaching practical?

Phillip also had a Friday morning Bible study group: "I . . . treasure them."

Janette talked about multiple community connections including Native American

traditions, a prayer group in New York, and a local group she referred to "early risers" who

would meet in the morning; she was also involved in the Mosque. She described how she felt

united, not only to her faith community but to a number of communities around the globe.

Hans also participated in a men's Bible study and sought out mentors who modeled the

way he desired to live and lead. His practice, over time, became more focused on the lives of the

individuals he works with. Prayerful time spent with community members for Hans and others

became both a necessity and a grounding force. Hans put it this way: "You need more."

Renelle talked about her 15-member prayer group which meets weekly: "I love that

group because it's all denominations, all ages, and its people with different backgrounds." She

referred to it as her "support group. . . . It's a theological kind of reflection about what's

happening with the presence of God in our lives." The discipline of this practice, she said,

"keeps me rooted. Without it, you don't see. . . . Sometimes even when you're in the middle of

it, you don't see."

Stacy said her "understanding the need for self-awareness changed in [her] mid-

adulthood." In her adult life, she recognized the need to expand her spiritual practice through

greater engagement with a community of faith. She began participating in a weekly centering

prayer group and was aware of the need to stay connected to her spiritual community. In

addition to relying on spiritual community, she honored her own need to take time away for self-

examination. She identified time on retreat, both individual and group retreats, as "incredibly

helpful because I could journal about what is this calling for me." She, like a number of other

participants, recognized the need to step outside of the day-to-day in order to regain a sense of being grounded.

Mentors

Once participants moved out of the personal sphere and the family circle, many of the participants discussed the importance of mentors in their spiritual community, which included individuals in the workplace. For instance, Franklin's daily practice aided him in becoming more self-aware and in doing so, helped him in relationship to the community of others especially recognizing when his ego needed to be checked. Likewise, Phillip stated, "[H]aving the relationship and the faith in Christ and then having the spiritual practices of making sure that I continue the relationship. Relationships need work, right? Those habits then form the relationship with Christ in my mind." In addition, Adam shared this about his work community,

> I have grown immensely in working with a number of spiritual leaders within the organization, Board members and sisters' group who have been guides in continually shaping and molding me. I think, from a spiritual and from a leadership perspective, we need to learn something new every day and to take that forward. I'm mentored every day. . . . I continue to be supported by all those groups and individuals on a daily basis. It's an ongoing process. You don't arrive. You're always continuously learning.

Isabelle, too, talked about the importance of strong mentors. One of her mentors was a preacher from her church; she was impressed by his openness. She shared,

> The one thing he always wanted was the light on everything. To have everything done in the open. If there was a question or concern or somebody brought him whatever, he'd say, "Let's open it up and have the council discuss it."

Greta also talked about mentors in her life. Early in her professional career, she sought out mentors who held positions she esteemed. She chose them because of their title and

influence instead of the values they espoused. She said, "The relationship[s] didn't last very long. I can look back now and say it's because [I] didn't start with the right people." She further reflected on her own lack of discernment in identifying mentors whose values she admired. Today, Greta has professional mentors who support her desire to be true to her values and stay grounded. She said, "When we get together . . . we always begin with . . . a moment of silence that's just sort of centering."

Phillip described his experience in this way:

If there's one thing that's been greatly illuminated for me in my spiritual journey, it was I had someone tap me on the shoulder, I've always been of faith but probably my habits weren't probably as well defined as they are today. They're still getting better, hopefully. That's why it's a journey. I don't think you ever arrive. I think it's a matter of continually working at your spiritual journey. I think we're always learning as human-beings. If we're not, we're stagnating.

Phillip's nudge to become more engaged in spiritual practice came from a long-time friend, mentor, and business associate.

Janette listed her mentors:

Mary Magdalene, in my eyes the first apostle, and I love her. There's Oscar Romero; Henry Nouwen; of course, Nelson Mandela who I admire very much who did so much for human rights and forgiveness; Dorothy Day; Gandhi, who says where there is love, there is life; Martin Luther King. This really has rung a bell with me that our lives begin to end if we remain silent about things that really matter. In my opportunities and my management roles, I have never had a fear to speak of what I thought was true because I thought of Martin Luther King and things that matter. I have not hesitated to speak what I see is true.

To conclude, participants' communities of faith represented a wide range of diversity including immediate and extended family members, the wider community of church and study groups, and individual mentors from varied religious traditions. All of these aspects were part of their ongoing journey of faith.

Inward Journey

Participants in this study acknowledged a deepening desire and insistent urging to expand their spiritual practice. They recognized there was always more growth to achieve and that they were responsible for seeking it out. As their leadership responsibilities expanded over time, all of the participants indicated their spiritual practice also expanded. The two aspects were inextricably bound together creating a sense of being grounded. Participants each expressed that as they matured and encountered new life and work challenges and varying circumstances, their spiritual intensity also matured and allowed them to become more self-aware. As the following examples represent, the maturing process, the aging process, and the process of spiritual development were all part of the same journey leading them toward a greater sense of wholeness.

To illustrate, Greta articulated, "I'm on a journey. I haven't arrived. It takes me a while. I'm not there yet. . . . Each day that passes [faith] gets stronger, which sometimes scares me and sometimes it excites me. [Faith] "points to a direction." Greta recognized the urging of her spirit and challenged herself to live out her faith in a larger way by continually examining herself.

Additionally, Curt saw that his disciplined practice of 20 years in a Bible study reflected a "commitment to the journey." Quinn similarly shared, "When I think back to my journey, I was definitely a [person] of faith growing up. I always felt a deep faith within myself, kind of an internal peace." Moreover, Franklin said, "I guess the search for truth, the search for understanding ourselves, it got better is kind of a continual thing for me." Likewise, Adam described his experience this way,

> Self-understanding is an ongoing journey. Every day, we're learning something new. . . .
>
> We say our goal is to strive to get perfect in these [organizational] core values of which
>
> [we aspire toward and are hopeful], we're going to get better each and every day. . . . I'm
>
> continuously looking at what did I do, how can I improve, what did I do in this situation
>
> that I could have done better? It's an ongoing process. You don't arrive. You're always
>
> continuously learning.

In his journey, Ted considered more deeply the concept of reconciliation and how that enters the workplace. He saw himself as someone who needed to facilitate dialogue in the midst of tension. All the while the tension was held, he wondered how the concept of reconciliation entered into the circumstance for himself, his leadership team, and especially for the individuals and/or groups being discussed. As his spiritual practice evolved, he was able to be more deliberately self-reflective in his leadership and desired to model this practice for others.

Olivia also commented about the essential nature of self-reflection: "I constantly had this kind of instant processing after a lesson, or I made notes so I could come back to it – very short, brief notes so I wouldn't forget. Today, Olivia said her spirituality is "subconsciously" informing her values and morals. Today she is committed to weekly worship and described her spiritual practice as "all encompassing . . . community, church, friends, I mean it's everything." Her inward journey still included the voice of her parents reminding her she was a family representative. That internal voice is everywhere and in all things and has become part of her ongoing self-examination influencing her life and leadership.

Additionally, Adam, shared that over time his inward journey contributed to his growth in self-awareness and knowledge regarding what he contributed to life and work circumstances: "There are things that I do that contribute to better understanding or there are things that I do that break down communication"

Many participants reflected on their inward journey and how over time, they became more aware. David, for instance, explained,

> The spiritual nature of who I am, I've become better at understanding that. . . . It's changed how I understand who I am. . . . As I've gotten older, if we're lucky, and I feel that I have been, that leads to better understanding of who I am, who we are.

Similarly, Janette shared, "I'm trying to be more in tune all the time with. . . promptings of the spirit." Lucy also commented, "I'm continually seeking ways to . . . listen for the guidance. I think I'm a big work in progress." Likewise, Nancy and several others talked about their inward journey as a process of maturing in their faith and the need to continue ever deepening and enriching their practice. She commented,

> That's the way I like to understand who I am by digging in and understanding more. . . . [I]t is a maturing in your faith. You have to first feel it and understand the direction you are going. Then I really want to understand it, so I can articulate it and have it be a bigger part of who I am.

Likewise, Adam shared that he will continue his practice of daily meditation and reading; however, he recognized a longing to do more:

> I will continue to do what I'm doing, but I need to go deeper. . . . I need to spend more time and time with myself, develop that discipline of reflection and listening. When I was called into this position, I could hear very well about what the plan was. The busier I get, the more things come at you, the more difficult it is to take that time, so it is a discipline to take that time and to listen.

And so the journey continued for them all.

Conclusion

The discipline of spiritual practice equipped participants to enter into each day with a presence and preparedness to meet whatever people and situations came their way. They recognized their practice gave them a sense of being grounded that brought them peace, and they also saw how their peace influenced those around them. This peace became part of their persona and authentic self. According to Fusco, O'Riordian, and Palmer (2015), the word "authentic" relates to one's ability to direct one's own life journey and over time develop who one truly is. The development of disciplined spiritual practices over time, including daily commitment to prayer, devotions, inspiring readings, unique rituals and artifacts all contributed to their growth as individuals and leaders. All of their practices combined allowed them to be integrated. Their spiritual practices were woven into their identity. Miller and Ewest (2013) recognized the significance of the relationship between strengthening one's spirituality and identity related to the way in which individuals identify socially. The cultivation of spirituality, according to Mitroff and Denton (1999) and several other scholars, supported the positive relationship between spirituality and the workplace.

Participants' spiritual practices represented a discipline that informed their lives and their relationships in the lives of others. Practices, although varied, all contributed toward nourishing their interior lives. Spiritual practice was the seed of their becoming and is represented in the symbolism of the acorn. Spiritual leaders did the hard work of transforming themselves from the inside out, recognizing the inner relationship between their practice of faith and how they live out their lives in the world and workplace (Covey, 1990; DePree, 1993; Fairholm, 1996). My findings suggested that among the components for successful leaders in the twenty-first century will include the element of spirit in the workplace. Chapter five will explore this integration.

Spiritual practices inform the inner life which represents the roots firmly planted within

the soil. A strong sense of being grounded results.

Figure 4.1 depicts the roots which symbolize participants' firm foundation.

INDIVIDUAL PERSONAL SPIRITUAL PRACTICES.

Prayer and reflection, Spiritual reading, Other ritual practices.

TRANSLATION INTO ACTION.

Mindset of gratitude, Use of artifacts.

THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY.

Family, Church, Group study, Mentors.

INWARD JOURNEY.
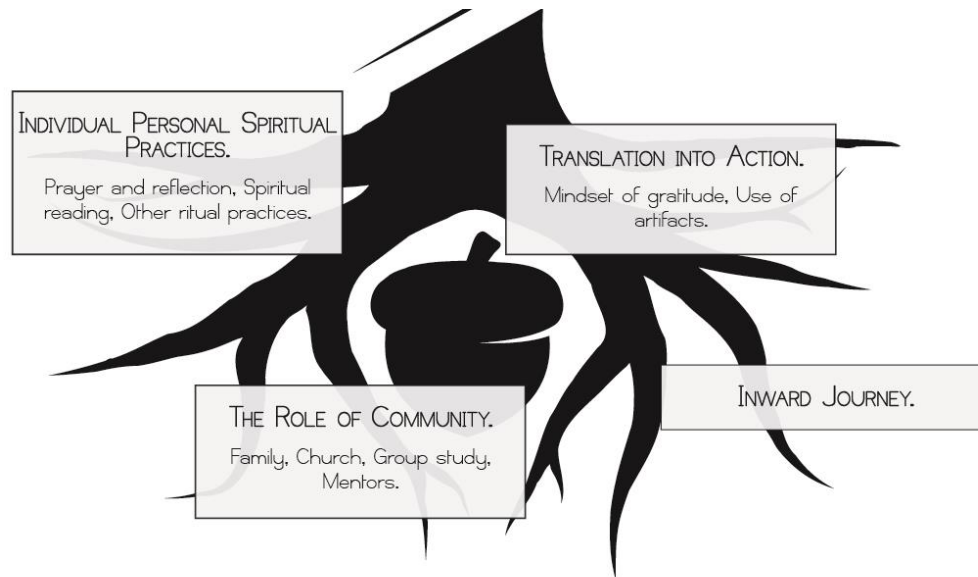
CHAPTER 5: INTEGRATING SPIRITUAL LIFE INTO THE WORKPLACE

The purpose of this case study was to examine how Midwestern leaders use spiritual practice to become self-aware and critically reflective of their role and responsibilities as ethical leaders in the workplace. This chapter provides insights into how participants integrated the elements of inner life described in chapter four into leadership in the workplace. All of the participants integrated their spiritual practice into their work lives. The themes that emerged from the data are reflective of the ways in which workplace integration took place. Findings revealed the following patterns pertaining to spirituality and professional leadership. Theme one showed interrelation between spiritual, personal, and professional lives with subthemes of a) liturgy at work, b) servant mindset, c) professional ethics, d) integrity, e) respect, f) compassion, and g) being nonjudgmental. The second theme was community building with subthemes of a) valuing relationships, b) teams and collaboration, and being a mentor to others. Each of these themes is developed in the following sections.

Interrelation between Spiritual, Personal, and Professional Lives

Data from this study suggested that life and leadership are meaningfully bound together. Adam, for instance, summed up the interrelationship between his spiritual practices and work life in a manner that each of the participants shared:

> I am who I am at home and at work. I am who I am in my spiritual life as I am in my leadership as president. They're inseparable. . . . The more I learn about the strength of faith and the strength of those spiritual practices, the better leader I become. I can share that with my organization. I live those values with my family. I think, again, they can't be different. They have to be the same. They have to be congruent.

Similarly, Hans reflected,

In my role, there is a strong spiritual component. . . . I really can't talk about spiritual

practice without talking about life experience. I think that life experience is work

experience. . . . I really do believe that, as a leader within a workplace, in a sense, your

role has been carved out. It's become your calling. If you're content and you're called to

do what you're supposed to do, your spiritual practice can't help but show up.

Hans talked about feeling a sense of calling into his current leadership role and the fact that he

was offered a promotion that he declined. His calling was continued in his current position, and

his spiritual practice helped him discern this choice. He referred to himself as a "quiet leader . . .

a servant shepherd."

Lucy also reflected many of the participants' understanding of the relationship between

spirituality and the workplace:

Spirituality is in the workplace. . . . I think we need to listen to the promptings of that

spirituality wherever we are. . . . It's God's work. I'm trying to be more in tune all the

time with those promptings of the spirit. . . . I don't really separate work and life very

much. They're all so interconnected. I think spirituality infuses a lot of my decisions.

Lucy began many of her team meetings with positive inspirational quotations. She engaged her

leadership team in reflecting upon the quotations and invited their feedback. This pause created

space that allowed others to express themselves, and conversation often occurred that spoke to

both personal and workplace challenges. Lucy also commented on one of her own recent

personnel struggles. One of the prayers she turned to at that time was "Dear Lord, help me be a

person who can handle this . . . struggle." Like many participants, Lucy relied on her spiritual

practice during workplace challenges. The butterfly was among Lucy's artifacts. She said,

I really think that the butterfly is a symbol of transformation. . . . [I]t's a very spiritual

symbol. . . . [I]t's a symbol of positive change. . . . That is what we're all about here:

happier, healthier, more beautiful lives – positive change.

Interestingly, the symbol of the butterfly could be found throughout Lucy's workplace in the

form of an object on tables, images on the walls, and in organizational promotional materials.

She was intentional to create a beautiful space for employees, and the butterfly was only one

among many artifacts she mentioned. She commented, "I really think of beauty in the big broad

sense of the word as kind of a transcendent experience that connects us with God." She was

mindful of drawing upon this connection in order to create a workspace that incorporated beauty

and gave employees a sense of peace.

Each of the study participants expressed the integral nature of their spirituality

contributing to an understanding of self that was genuinely and continually shaping their

leadership narrative. Some participants expressed this interactive dynamic in similar ways.

Olivia, for example, commented, "I use more spirituality than I probably recognize because it

becomes such an integral part of yourself in the decisions you make and the actions a person has

and so forth." She recalled a workplace disagreement that required her to keep her opinions to

herself: "[I]t's learning self-control. . . . [I]f you think you'll regret the words, don't say them."

She described her spiritual practice as a "day-in-and-day-out, hour-to-hour, minute-to- minute

. . . overriding influence . . . how I treat others." Olivia talked often about the influence of her

family and the example they set in their practice of faith and show of respect to all people.

Similarly, Nancy expressed, "I see [spirituality and work] as so much the same thing. It's often

hard for me to separate them. It's good for me because it's a very integrated way of thinking

about work and life and who you are and why you are and what you do." Nancy understood how

her spirituality was also part of her vocational journey and that her spiritual growth contributed

to heightening self-awareness in all aspects of her life.

Liturgy at Work

The vast majority of participants worked in the public sector yet discovered ways to

integrate their spirituality in the workplace. Renelle, for example, found a way to incorporate the

practice of liturgy at work "without calling it liturgy":

> The interesting thing about working in a public sector where you really don't publicly
>
> worship. . . . I'm committed to ritual. The richness of ritual. I have ritual in our general
>
> staff meetings. I would always bring food. I would bring the kind of traditional
>
> hospitality of welcome. I'd almost think of it as liturgy – a poem, a reading – something
>
> to reflect on. I would try to build liturgy in a public sector without calling it liturgy.

The result is that religious practice carried over to the workplace helped Renelle become a

welcoming, hospitable leader who constantly listened to the needs of her employees. Similarly,

Phillip expressed the sentiments of each of the participants in this way,

> I go to church on Sundays, but I don't see those activities separate from my role as a head
>
> of a foundation. . . . We can't be different at work. You don't check [spirit] out in the
>
> parking lot. Part of my praying and discernment is about how can I be a better leader?
>
> How can I develop my potential to serve through coming up with the greatest strategy for
>
> the foundation possible? How can I use the gifts that Christ has given me to then help
>
> others reach theirs? Those we serve are nonprofits, donors, community members. What
>
> can we do to help them?

Phillip saw his work as an extension of his spiritual practice, and he integrated it in the way he

worked to develop his own potential and the potential of others in the workplace. Mark similarly

expressed, "It's how I talk to customers, how I talk to employees. . . . [A]re you the same person

on Sunday and Monday?" He went on to share how his longtime Bible study group of business

men has processed work situations:

> [T]here's an interaction – how do we live this out and try to make Biblical teaching
>
> practical? . . . I try to live out the whole of the teaching in the workplace which means
>
> how we treat our employees. . . little things. . . . I write notes; in many cases, I can write
>
> some endearing things. I get letters back from many of our employees about that. It's a
>
> simple gesture that says they're valued.

The discipline of spiritual practice was shown, in part, in the way Mark thoughtfully tended to

relationships with employees and their families.

Several participants shared that their responsibility as a leader was to ensure that others

were comfortable expressing their spirituality in the workplace. Mark summed it up in this way,

> [T]rying to [express my spirituality] throughout the day and making sure that no one feels
>
> awkward expressing [their spirituality] in our workplace because society is telling us we
>
> should be awkward and we should not mention that and that's wrong. It's wrong. [W]e
>
> have a very difficult road in front of us as faith-based people.

Numerous participants expressed the importance of integrating their faith at work in a

way that was open to the diverse perspective of others. For example, Hans said, "I'm never

going to come across and say that this is what I believe and you should believe it." The leaders

in this study expressed their faith through their actions. Keith, for instance, lived by being an

example in the workplace: "The important thing is what you do. Not that you proselytize your

coworker. You live a life and you make decisions that are expressive of our beliefs." A

diversity award was among the artifacts Keith shared. It reflected his respect for all people and

their faith traditions including Native American traditions: "I really try to be attentive to Native

American issues. I think that's the group in our state where there is the greatest need." The

diversity award "is a symbol, an icon" of that respect. Hans too believed that he was asked to

step up in leadership during organizational challenges because of his spiritual practices and life

experiences:

> Let me paint a picture. . . . [O]ver time, I have become someone who is looked to
>
> develop. . . practices. . . in the event of a crisis or emergency. . . . [O]ver time, I think my
>
> spiritual practice has helped me align with those issues that I feel are most important for
>
> my organization. Because I have personal experience in it and a personal stake in what
>
> happens, I've been put in a leadership role.

Among the artifacts that Hans kept in his office was the image of a lion, which was a reminder to

be strong and courageous in the midst of challenges. Hans became that lion who was called

upon for leadership in a crisis.

None of the leaders in this study viewed their spiritual practice as separate from the

workplace. Rather it was integrated on a daily basis. The integration of spirituality and

leadership showed up during workplace challenges. Isabelle, for example, talked about the need

to take mini breaks throughout the day especially during times of challenge. During these mini

breaks she took time to contemplate her relationship with Christ. Among the questions she asked

herself included, "Why am I here? What am I doing? Am I doing the Lord's work?" The

humanitarian award she kept in her office reminded her of the importance of honoring all people.

She expressed,

> [H]ow important it is for everyone in the community to feel valued for the work that they
>
> do. . . . I have a lot of stories about different people who have helped me in whatever role
>
> I've been in. I don't usually share this one.

She shared a story about one of the custodians who could not read or write and was having

trouble performing specific tasks: "I worked with his supervisor." They developed a chart with

pictures indicating the spaces that needed to be cleaned and attended to each day. This method

became a new successful daily practice. Isabelle reflected on the humanitarian award and letters

from mentors she carried with her and shared the spiritual essence of these artifacts is that "it

talks about my relationships. . . . It gives you a goal to be better than yourself and to look

beyond yourself." Isabelle's desire was to "do well in the eyes of God." Her spiritual practice

contributed to her efforts to become more inclusive of all people in the workplace.

Renelle offered this specific example of the challenge of terminating personnel and

sometimes whole departments:

> The most difficult thing in senior management is always when you terminate someone.
>
> Those were times of great faith for me. . . . I will see people I've terminated. They'll
>
> give me hugs. . . . You never, ever, discount their worth as a person because they can't
>
> do a job.

She described the above challenge and numerous others as experiences that "deepened my work

experience and deepened my spiritual journey. . . . My spiritual journey changed my work

pattern." In addition, her spiritual community provided nourishment during challenges although

she referred to her daily prayer as her "primary practice." She also, however, acknowledged the

vital importance of being part of a spiritual community: "The older I get, the more I understand

my dependency on my community." Renelle's daily practices provided a strong base that

offered wisdom to convey difficult decisions in the workplace with great love and care. She also

relied on her spiritual community for ongoing strength and perseverance.

Each of the leaders in this study expressed themselves in an authentic manner. The

examples shared included the idea of an integration of their values and consideration of others in

the workplace.

Servant Mind-Set

All of the participants understood the concept of what it means to be a servant leader. Adam, to illustrate, expressed it this way: "[I]f you are a servant leader, if you are a leader that's steeped in spirituality trying to live out God's mission for you, you take time, you take time to reflect on where you're going and what you're learning." Organizational core values were among the artifacts Adam shared: "reverence, integrity, compassion, and excellence." He could articulate in great detail what each of them meant to the organization and the individuals the organization served. His notion of service was directly related to each of the core values he articulated, and he referred to these core values as "another aspect of my spiritual practice. . . looking at those core values ask me to live out the ministry of the church or the ministry of Christ." He took time to pause and consider how he was serving the organization and respecting the values:

> Sometimes that pause can be five seconds, just to set me back on the course of okay, how does this look if I'm thinking about integrity or compassion, or excellence, or reverence? Sometime it can cause me to get up and shut my door and think about something for 15 minutes in silence and close my eyes and really pray about it. . . . I really need to think about how I need to carry out what I need to do in relationship to what I believe and what I believe is on purpose for me.

Adam's actions reflected a deep and abiding sense of service and a desire to serve well according to God's mission. Hans, too, reflected, "I believe a leader should be . . . a servant."

Servant leadership, however, has not always been common in the workplace. Stacy, for instance, discussed how servant leadership was not a concept that was understood in her workplace; it was often thought about as being about religion, rather than being about self-development and growth. Like Adam, both Hans and Stacy took time to pause and pray about

the day ahead of them and the various challenges it might bring. Stacy shared she would arrive

at work "to mediate for 20 minutes, kind of a centering prayer. . . . That practice helped me to

develop collaborative relationships." This practice of considering and serving others was the

way Adam, Hans, Stacy, and numerous other participants moved through their days and felt a

sense of real purpose.

Janette shared an artifact that represented the significance of relationship. She related her

role as manager to being a "servant manager" noting it as "a great privilege . . . a responsibility. . .

an honor." The artifact came from external corporate evaluators. It was a written commentary

that she felt described her leadership accurately: "Spiritual companion, kindred spirit, daughter of

the earth, sister to all." The evaluators went on to share with her that she connected with the

people in her organization on many levels. She was said to be the voice of reason and caring,

walking through both the sorrows and the joys of her colleagues. She empathized and related to

the journey of others, putting their needs before her own. The evaluators even went so far as to

describe her as a midwife:

> A midwife you still are. You are drawn into the circle of life from its conception to its
>
> natural end and to everything in between. All that you do is grace. All that you do is a
>
> blessing upon the lives you touch.

This artifact, from an outside evaluator, recognized Janette's desire to serve others by being both

a leader and spiritual companion among individuals in the organization at many levels. Her

ability to care deeply at this level was connected to her disciplined and daily spiritual practice.

All participants realized their spiritual practice influenced the way they conducted

themselves in relationship to others.

As leaders' spiritual practice developed, participants expressed a heightened awareness of how they perceived themselves and others. Participants in this study referenced the importance of having a servant mindset and related it to their spiritual practice. For instance, Mark shared,

As I've grown in my faith, I've become more of a servant leader. . . . It's easier for me to have a sense of being servant leader to my employees as I've grown in my own faith.

There are times early on when I wanted people to know that I was in charge. In some circumstances, it was important for me to have people value the position. I think those are some insecurities that I had. . . . It's a sign that there's something a little empty inside versus being completely secure in your own identity.

Similarly, Stacy described her role as a servant leader as not telling others what to do but someone who was behind the scenes, supporting and guiding. Greta also said,

The more I understand about leadership, the greater the realization for the need to serve. It's not about being in charge. . . . It is about being in a position of serving others, recognizing the great meaning of influence one has in terms of modeling behaviors.

Greta was not focused on positional authority but rather, focused on the employees and individuals the organization served. Her desire was to set an example for others according to her values. She expressed,

My spirituality is bound to my role in the workplace by a set of values. I hope to uphold . . . what is critical to me is that the values that I hold most closely in my head and my heart are in line with the values that I convey and model.

Moreover, every one of the participants was engaged in service beyond the workplace into the community. Leaders emphasized the importance of the mindset of servant leadership not only within the organization but within the greater community. Janette provided examples of this: the first involved writing a grant for a homeless shelter and the second was being engaged

in global service. Janette described a gourmet soup event which engaged three hundred team

members: "That has grown so big now that we have to have it at a hotel. It generates money. . .

to feed the hungry.**"** Janette said this about her service in the community, specifically the

homeless shelter:

> I found out about ten years ago that my grandmother, who I was named after, always fed
>
> the people during the Depression. . . . It's something I'm called to do. I love this from
>
> Isaiah: "Is not the path I choose to loose the bonds of injustice, to let the oppressed go
>
> free? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless, poor into your
>
> house? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up
>
> quickly."

Janette referred to herself as a dawn breaker and someone who, because of her spiritual beliefs

and practices, was called to do this important work in the community.

One other example was from Lucy: "Generosity is always on our [organizational] list.

[I]t's also part of giving back as part of who we are. . . . By providing better service, hopefully

more abundance will flow our way." Lucy practices a servant mindset through her concern for

others and the generosity she is intentional to find ways to express in the workplace. She said,

"Anytime I think about God, the word gratitude pops into my head." Lucy brought the practice

of gratitude into her leadership team meetings, and it sprang forth from her commitment to

creating a beautiful positive space for employees to work.

Participants placed the needs of their organization before their own needs. Franklin. For

example, shared an incredible story about putting a coworker's career ahead of his own. He

could see the potential in a young professional who could not only replace him in his current role

but could potentially someday lead the entire organization. He shared, "There was a point when

I volunteered at the end of my career to switch jobs with . . . the assistant general counsel. I went

to my boss and said that this gentleman could be a successor." Adam similarly talked about how his organization operated with an inverted organizational chart where the president was at the bottom: "What that shows is our organization is one that's based on servant leadership. We're here to support people. We're here to assist others in becoming successful." The mind-set of servant leadership was part of Adam's makeup, and over the years he learned how to embrace this mind-set even more as he saw it as part of his spiritual practice. He said, "I learned a long time ago that I'm just an instrument." He recalled a teachable moment when he was agonizing over some organizational changes:

> [My mentor] said that you're easing God out. You've got to give Him the room in this situation. . . . It was wonderful advice at the time. I've never forgotten it. There's so much ego-playing. If you're a spiritual person, it isn't about us. It isn't about our ego. It isn't about our self-advancement. It's trying to find our mission in life and trying to offer other people peace.

Several leaders discussed the importance of expressing their gifts in the workplace and being stewards within their organization. Phillip summarized his leadership as a gift that needed to be cultivated and cherished: "This is a position to do good. . . . It really is a position to make a difference – a giant difference." He went on to share that leadership is "a gift [that] is meant to be cultivated. It's meant to be cherished." He concluded by explaining that "we are servants while we're here [on earth]." Quinn also felt that her talents and abilities were gifts and expressed these as "God-given abilities." She shared, "I've been blessed with my ability . . . my service . . . and my servant heart." These attributes were recognized as part of her spiritual journey through life and leadership. Among the characteristics of servant leadership are stewardship, commitment and building community (Greenleaf, 1991; Spears, 2002). Additionally, attributes including trustworthiness and integrity are illustrated in the following section.

Professional Ethics

Integrity. All participants reflected on how their spiritual practices influenced their ethical decision-making and, ultimately, their integrity as a leader. Their spiritual practices were expressed through a sense of being grounded, self-reflection, and decision-making.

Several talked about their spiritual practices and how those practices provided them with integrity and a strong sense of being grounded in their work. To begin, several participants shared how their spiritual practices allowed them to be more internally driven and introspective. For example, Quinn shared,

> I'm very much a leader that leads by introspection and also by example. . . . When you
>
> incorporate your faith into that, it keeps you grounded. . . . There are moments [during
>
> my workday] when I will be still. Especially in intense times, I kind of just find that
>
> space and be quiet and ask for God's presence.

Similarly, Betsy recognized the importance of pausing and practiced this ritual when she drove both to and from work noting this was the only time she had for herself to reflect upon her day. She believed "that my spirituality plays a really major role in all of our decisions. . . . It's not only what we do but how we do it." Betsy would ask herself a series of questions as she reviewed the day's events including some of the following: "Is this a good decision? Is it going to benefit people? Is it going to benefit society?" Betsy recognized these conversations, when she would invite God's presence, were part of her spiritual practice that contributed to her integrity.

Many participants discussed how their faith kept their ego in check and provided balance in the workplace. Hans, for instance, used the phrase "balanced and grounded mindset" and went on to explain the attributes of spiritual practice including "grace, forgiveness, compassion, empathy, long-suffering, perseverance." Similarly, Ted expressed the most important leadership component is maintaining one's integrity and being clear about one's sense of purpose. He

shared a difficult time of budget challenges and his desire to do the right thing by openly and transparently sharing the challenge with employees:

> We had public meetings so the people would know what we were doing. We were
>
> inviting them to make their suggestions known and try to do it in a systematic and as
>
> open a way as possible. I remember talking to the community about the first article of the
>
> creed – about creation and about our responsibility for creation. I remember thinking
>
> about that one of our responsibilities in pursuing the mission of the college was that the
>
> college would be strong so it could do its mission. That meant we had to be good
>
> stewards of the resources that we had. That involved difficult decisions. We weren't just
>
> free to follow our impulse or desire. We had to be disciplined, which is first-article stuff.

Ted's spiritual practice allowed him to draw from his knowledge of theology and reservoir of leadership experience and sensitively invite the community to consider challenges in light of God's teachings. These participants and others articulated that their spiritual practice gave them a sense of being grounded and raised their ever-growing sense of self-awareness.

A sense of integrity was accompanied by self-reflection, which led to heightened self-awareness. These qualities contributed to decision-making practices. Adam, for instance, shared how being self-reflective and taking time to pause helped set him back on course while at work. His frequent pauses to reflect and pray offered him a sense of greater solace. Stacy, similarly, recognized how important integrity was in the workplace and the notion of "walking the talk" in her former role as a physician as being willing to take extra call and not setting herself apart from coworkers whom she supervised. She shared, "How do you lead in a way that is modeling the behavior that you want to show as just being part of the way we work." Her contemplative practices contributed to a deepening self-understanding in relationship to others, and she referred to her practice as "just a part of who I am and how I go through the day."

Participants in this study also expressed becoming more open to the opinions beyond their own. Part of their leadership practice involved engaging others in decision-making, understanding that as leaders they don't always have all the answers. Hans, for example, discussed his change in leadership over time and that it involved becoming less self-oriented and more open to others' opinions: "We make decisions and choices that we think are right. In our own mind, in our own opinions. . . . I've gotten so much better, not just making a blanketed decision." Similarly, Adam said, "I always thought I was right in my leadership. . . . As I grew older, I realized there's a lot of gray area." For Hans and Adam and numerous other participants, their spiritual practice gave them a growing sense of who they were and who they weren't which seemed to contribute to a heightened awareness of their own weaknesses and the concept of humility. Adam summed this notion up well:

> One of our [organizational] attributes under integrity is humility. These are things that each of us need to know what we do well and what we don't do well. It's not that we can't have pride in what we do well. But we need to be humble about that. . . . We're continuously looking at 360-degree evaluations where people whom you supervise, people who supervise you and your peers, can evaluate you on areas of improvement and things you can celebrate. I think that brings us closer and stronger together as a spiritual team in knowing that none of us have it all.

Self-awareness contributed to a number of participants discussing their vulnerabilities and imperfections as human-beings. For instance, Hans reflected, "I just recognize my own fallibility more than I ever have. I think that that's the essence of humility." Mark said, "I think the truer I am to the real me the more vulnerable I am and . . . I can handle criticism a lot better."

Mark would also ask himself a series of questions incorporating others, including even his competitors:

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. . . . Does this [verse] apply in every

situation including when you need to lay people off, including when you have to

discipline somebody or fire somebody? How do you look at your competitors? Do you

wish ill for your competitors, especially competitors who might be a little bit

unscrupulous? If I'm to live that out in every area, what does that look like? Then I

think it does apply in every area.

Mark went on to say,

There are a number of times when I've had a tough decision, I ask [the above questions].

. . . When Jesus sent out the disciples in Matthew, he says that you're like sheep going

out among the wolves. I want you to be as shrewd as the serpent and as innocent as the

dove. Even in Luke 16, Jesus praises the unrighteous steward for his shrewdness. Jesus

never applauds naiveté. . . . There's a praising of shrewdness but simultaneously being as

innocent as the dove. At the end of that Luke 16 passage, Jesus says to make friends by

use of mammon and for heavenly purposes. . . . I don't have simple answers for all those

questions.

The above commentary provided a great deal of evidence regarding the relationship between

Mark's spiritual practices and his workplace decisions. Mark thought deeply about spiritual

matters and how they related to being a businessman with integrity in God's eyes. Like Mark

and numerous others, Ted reflected on the ethical decisions that were part of his leadership. He

specifically talked about the importance of wrestling with challenging decisions with team

members. He said,

Our leadership team [was] quite attentive to the ethical dimensions of what we were

about. . . . Some of the hardest decisions that I remember encountering as leader were

personnel issues where there had been misconduct and . . . inequality. . . . I remember we

would talk about where does . . . mercy fit into this? Because, on the one hand, you had a responsibility for the welfare of the institution. There had to be consequences. . . . [O]n the other hand, you believe in redemption. . . . [Y]ou had to kind of do that regularly, so you could keep your balance, if you will. . . . On the other hand, we hope that you may have a good life.

Each of the participants shared the nature of their spiritual practice as being connected to the process of ethical decision-making. Janette, for example, reflected that it was not only the big decisions that needed to be made but also the small decisions. Her spirituality informed her desire to do the right things in every circumstance. Mark also discussed the tactics employed by his international sales team: "[O]ur employees are instructed never stretch the truth in trying to sell a product. . . . [N]ever unfairly criticize a competitor. . . . I want all our employees to make decisions that. . . was the right thing to do. It was an ethical decision."

Nancy, too, expressed it was important "to make sure that I am making the ethical, the right, or the wise decision. . . . That part of my spiritual practice is important because it keeps me grounded and makes me smarter in the intellectual part of the faith." Nancy was intentional about bringing the intellectual aspect of her spirituality to the workplace in the form of documentary film. This practice was among her newest team initiatives:

> Team movie-watching events where we talk about *The Good Lie* which is a documentary movie about refugees and mentors. We talk about *Bully*, which is a documentary on bullying. Something that's fun but a little more intellectual . . . to me those are parts of a person's spirituality. It's part of how you center yourself. That's part of my job as a leader.

Adam also discussed the essential nature of his organizational decision-making practices. The model involved reflecting on the organization's core values:

It allows us to bring all those affected into the decision-making process, that collaborative

space . . . laying out alternatives – many different alternatives . . . speaking openly and

honestly, about the effects this decision will have on people or on the organization. Then,

we go back into a prayer and discernment process. Sometimes this [decision] can happen

in a day; sometimes it takes a week.

Adam shared another example of another decision involving whether or not to acquire another

organization as part of a corporate merger. He remembered this decision-making process took

over two years. Doing what is right takes time and involves thoughtful deliberations with team

members. Participants were unwilling to compromise their ethics. Betsy, like Adam, also

reflected on the decision-making process and engaged in a similar ethical discernment practice.

She shared how her spirituality played a major role in the decisions she made each day:

The influence for me in the workplace for spirituality is not only what we do but how we

do it. There could be decisions minor to major each and every day. . . . [E]ach and every

decision that we make in our line of work or each day for me affects a life.

On the other hand, Ted used a practice of going on an annual retreat to discern

organizational direction and decisions. He would spend time in the summer reading and

reflecting and considering how new light could be shed on organizational initiatives and certain

challenges. Like Nancy, he considered this as both a spiritual and intellectual activity. The

retreat was a place where

I would try to keep myself growing intellectually in my faith understanding. I was also

growing spiritually in my own discernment . . . because a lot of what I was doing was

about mission and thinking about how mission unfolds over time in an institutional sense.

I mean it was connected . . . with my vocation.

For Quinn, the simple rule of "Follow the mission" aided the most in discerning her organization's direction. Greta found that incorporating spirituality into her major decisions, during crises, in her various leadership roles was something she had to keep developing over time. Another example of taking a sustained period of time in the form of spiritual retreat was how faith sustained Renelle through challenging decision-making. Often in these difficult times she would turn to prayer. Renelle shared a specific experience working with a Native American family in the midst of making a decision to turn off a young girl's ventilator:

> Then the tribal leaders came in. We had this big tribal summit about what to do. They brought their drums. They did the sending forth ritual. . . . I got to share in their cultural experience . . . again, very spiritual, totally spiritual. . . . I wasn't afraid to talk about that. . . . I bonded with the family.

Franklin's story powerfully depicts the importance of doing the right thing:

> One of the first set of values we have is do the right thing always. That conflicted sometimes with what was legal. It's a higher moral plane to say always do the right thing. What's legally required is a lesser standard than that in most cases. It cost [a significant amount of money] to do the right thing that we could have said "no" to, legally speaking. Everybody understood that. We didn't know if that would bankrupt us at the time. It turned out to be a very good tactical decision.

For Franklin, doing the right thing even at great cost was most important: "that's higher than the legal. . . . I would say, okay, it's legal, but are we doing the right thing?" Relationships nurtured on a corporate basis were done so with the Golden Rule in mind. Franklin articulated one of his favorite sayings: "On a corporate basis, walk a mile in their moccasins. . . . That's a little untraditional. . . . That's just a nice way of saying the Golden Rule. Treat others the way you would like to be treated." Acting ethically turned out to be more tactically advantageous to the

organization because it gave them greater credibility not only among their customers but among

their employees.

In contrast, Nancy talked about her ongoing self-examination. Despite her confident

nature, she talked about the importance of stepping back, pushing the pause button and

reassessing the situation. She recognized that she's not always right and needs time to weigh

certain decisions within herself and with others:

> I'm a fairly confident and fairly self-assured person; [however] wondering if you're
>
> doing the right thing, if you're making the right decision, is there more that you could be
>
> or should be doing – you know all of those things that are just part of my own self-
>
> examination. . . . It's important to step outside of that moment and go back and find your
>
> center.

The following section provides numerous examples of respect being shown in the workplace and

its relation to spirituality.

Respect. Respect for others – employees, clients, and community members – was a value

all of the participants expressed. They all understood the importance of acknowledging others'

perspectives. According to Adam, for instance:

> We're called to respect everybody, but reverencing somebody really allows you to think
>
> about . . . loving that person. . . . What we try to do at our organization is to reverence
>
> each person that we support. . . . That deep reverence calls us to find the face of Christ in
>
> everyone we meet. It's not only for the people we support; it's also for the staff.

Stacy, like Adam, talked about the importance of reverencing individuals especially when

organizational mandates became difficult to share. She referred to these as "hard-to-take tells":

"These hard-to-take tells were done in person." Stacy shared this about her experience: "I think

that gives the sense of respect to the one who has to hear this information. It also gives the

chance for dialogue to hear the response back and to be present to them as they hear this stuff."

Her spiritual practice, built over the years, kept her grounded during these challenging times.

She said she made a "shift in my work and used contemplative practice. . . . It was evident in the

way [she] made decisions." During times of challenge and relating, "hard-to-take tells," she was

able to recognize her "default moments" and distinguish between her own needs and the needs of

others. Another example of difficult conversations and the relationship to spiritual discernment

was shared by Phillip:

> When we have a problem with . . . someone, it's very difficult to have that conversation
>
> and trying to have that conversation based on discernment. . . . Ultimately you have to
>
> remember that we're working for a higher purpose, that we serve the greater good.

Phillip went on and reflected on the challenges of letting people go: "I can still visit with those

people that have left the organization. . . . Everybody has worth; they might not be a good fit for

the organization and that's okay. That doesn't mean they're bad and we're good." Philip was

able to have those difficult conversations because they were "based on truth, on joy, peace, love.

. . . I think having the Christ-centered approach to it and discerning before you pull a lever, so to

speak, has guided the organization well."

Renelle also recalled a role she held several years ago working with individuals with

mental illness. When she left this role, the individuals made her a friendship plaque. This

plaque is still on her wall. She talked about attending a funeral for one of these individuals, and

when she arrived, she reflected on how important the friendships still were. Renelle said after

sharing her story,

> It really did teach me the importance of really being respectful of the individuals we
>
> interact with and the fact that they saw me, not as their case manager or the program
>
> supervisor or an administrative, they saw me as a friend.

Among the artifacts Renelle shared was a quotation by Goethe in keeping with the above

example: "It's not doing the things we like to do but liking the things we have to do that makes

life blessed." She saw her daily interactions with the individuals she served as part of life's

blessings. Her focus on building long-lasting relationships with clients and employees was a gift

returned in the form of friendship. Her spiritual practice "helped [her] understand the challenge

of leadership and how you really practice that. It shaped how [she] treat[ed] people."

Franklin put it this way: "I guess I've learned a long time ago that I'm just an

instrument." He went on to explain that, as a trial lawyer, he had seen all kinds of other lawyers

at work who made the court proceedings more about themselves than about their clients. Their

dramatic antics drew attention to them and overshadowed the client. If you're purely

representing someone and giving them their due and the empathy and the respect, which was an

easier sell." Each of the participants spoke of the importance of shared understanding, being

tolerant, and fostering sensitivity among all people. Franklin saw the client as the most

important person in the relationship. He actively listened in effort to more deeply understand:

> If you're a spiritual person . . . it isn't about self-advancement. It's trying to offer other
>
> people peace. I find the real battles in the corporate world are because somebody is
>
> trying to evoke their authority on someone else.

Each of the leaders also talked about the importance of diversity and being respectful of

all people. For example, Greta shared, "When I think about our family offices, [we] welcome

. . . any [faith] practice. As a destination, we clearly receive visitors and guests of all nations, all

ethnic backgrounds, of all spiritual backgrounds." Lucy similarly shared, "I always feel that I

need to . . . be more mindful of [creating a work environment of] . . . openness and peace."

Janette said, "I think [we are] all one. As soon as we realize that the people we are with also are

the Divine and represent God, we are made in the image of God, then we listen. There's respect.

There's love." Isabelle said simply, "I believe every person is a child of God."

Nancy similarly expressed,

It'll take time, but I think it just starts to be part of how you think about who you are.

What's interesting for us . . . is we have a very diverse workforce. We have about 340

employees . . . a couple staff who are Buddhists. I think we have probably one of the

more diverse workforce outside of the university environment of anybody in [location].

For me, the way I grew up understanding spirituality is really from a Christian

perspective. It's not limited to that in my mind. It's a much more human thing than it is

a denomination.

Over time, Nancy's spiritual practice became more inclusive. She brought this inclusivity to the

workplace welcoming a diversity of people representing a diversity of spiritual traditions. She

articulated that her Christian tradition and upbringing taught her to focus on "what is it you're

trying to do and what did Jesus want you to do in the first place? . . . What is this about

regardless of where you go to church?" She said of her diverse workplace, "I have people I love

very much around me."

Similarly, Renelle, shared this about respect and diversity:

I have to be painfully respectful of every person – respect is the word that I come from in

all of the conflicting kinds of issues because it's the force that I think we have to practice.

I personally respect and respect really significantly different world views. . . . What I've

really learned is to actively build relationships with people I would not naturally ever

have relationships with.

Renelle's public policy work in the realm of social justice was informed by her Catholic faith

tradition and spiritual practices. She saw her work as trying to find "common ground."

Challenging political battles that require a kind of "painful respect" remind her of the importance

of her practice: "Spiritual practices help keep you rooted."

Adam shared this about spiritual diversity in the workplace:

There are many ways to connect with that inner spirit. There isn't any one way or right

way. There are several ways, so we're always looking at how [the organization] can get

better at what we do, whether that's a spiritual practice or whether that's delivering a

service to somebody.

Olivia also reflected on circumstances in which she had to keep her opinions to herself even

though she disagreed; she learned it was better to express disagreement after her anger had died

down. Participants in this study had a high degree of self-regulatory behavior which allowed

them to be mindful of their actions and respectful in their communication. For Olivia, for

example:

[Spirituality] influences me day in and day out, hour to hour, minute to minute. . . it's an

overriding influence. How would I like to be treated? How should I treat others?

What's the best thing to do. . . . Of course, when you talk in those realms, you're . . .

talking about . . . respect.

Ted reflected on more challenging times in his life: "In moments of crisis, in moments of really

difficult . . . actions . . . my spiritual disciplines really were critical in that process because I

would certainly enter into prayer in a very focused way in anticipation of those actions or

decisions."

For Adam, "The busier I get, the more things come at you, the more difficult it is to take

that time, so it is a discipline to take that time and to listen." Likewise, Franklin asserted,

Based on what your [organizational] title is, sometimes the worse listener you are, the

bigger title you have. You think it's your job to speak. As a counselor, my job

description is to counsel people and solve issues. The only way I can solve personal

issues or policy issues I have to listen . . . that is out of respect. I've always learned that

I learn so much more in any relationship by listening more than talking.

The participants in this study clearly demonstrated the traits of transformational

leadership. According to Northouse (2016), "Transformational leadership is the process by

which a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation

and morality in both the leader and the follower" (p. 162). Kouzes and Posner (2012) explained

that transformational leaders "model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process,

enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart" (p. 15). Beyond respect, a deeper value that

expresses commitment to the values of justice and the common good is compassion.

Compassion. Each of the participants in this study expressed compassion, a solidarity

with others. They shared numerous stories of joy and challenge. Their actions provided healing,

empathy, and advocacy on behalf of those who were disadvantaged in their organizations and in

their communities.

Recognizing the Divine in others gave Adam, for example, a greater capacity

for compassion:

Knowing and appreciating all of God's creation has allowed me to delve deeper into

myself and to know that everything is connected and we're all connected and God dwells

in me, like He dwells in you, like He dwells in a person with a disability. That reverence

is recognizing that, although we may have differences in gender, or differences in

religion, or differences in ideas, we are really all creatures and creation of God.

In contrast, Renelle discussed encountering colleagues whose values did not align with her own:

"They were so anti-poor people that I struggled with the issues of my experience of the call to

social justice. . . . It was painful." Renelle continually expressed the importance of being open

to others' perspectives and how challenging it can be when there are conflicting points of view. Her spiritual journey has helped to expand beyond being judgmental, and she also recognized that there is a learning process when one changes environments and needs to navigate in the midst of difference: "How you practice your faith is really different." Legislative challenges are fodder for disagreement; however, in her spiritual practice of "active listening" and "actively building relationships with people," even with people she may "not naturally ever have relationships with, Renelle made a practice of deeply listening to others which contributed to her ability to understand colleagues during divisive discussions. Through listening she was also able to offer compassion to mentees who were struggling. She felt a "call" to listen deeply and to extend support in the form of mentoring.

> For Hans, compassion is the manifestation of spiritual grace:
>
> What I love about my spiritual practice is that I get to demonstrate, not just say it, but to demonstrate what grace looks like. Grace is that unconditional acceptance. . . . When you're working with me, you have value. You have worth.

To illustrate, Janette talked about her community service on a Board of Directors with a mission to serve the homeless population in the community. She was engaged in a project to build a homeless shelter that was met with continual resistance. Her call to social justice allowed her to continue to persevere despite strong adversarial opponents. She shared,

> We just have to keep going. No matter who calls us from [the newspaper], no matter who calls us from anywhere, we're all going to have the same message. We just keep going. . . . We were . . . dawn-breakers. . . . You get together and work on it. Someone else comes along and works on it, then someone else, then someone else and it works.

Renelle shared struggles similar to those of Janette in terms of being met with resistance: "I'm constantly challenged by different views – significantly different views. . . . At the same time,

expressing my beliefs in social justice, and my views – it's a real struggle because people have such strong religious beliefs that come out in their policies." Both Renelle and Janette, like a number of other participants, felt called to social justice work. Janette said, "I came in with it" meaning that she has felt impelled to serve from as early as she can remember. Their important community volunteerism and service beyond their professional roles was simply something they needed to contribute to society. Their spiritual practice heightened not only their self-awareness but their awareness and concern for the needs of others in their midst – their compassion.

Likewise, Isabelle shared a story about how she worked compassionately with someone whom others believed wasn't doing his job. She discovered a way, a system of doing things that helped him become successful. She went out of her way to work with his supervisor and consider ideas that had the potential to redirect the individual's work and aid in his understanding of it. They created pictures to map the work that needed to be done:

> Sometimes I believe that if we, as professionals, did what we know is right and best, we
>
> wouldn't have all the state requirements or rules and regulations that we have. . . . When
>
> we see our neighbor struggling in some ways, our responsibility is to them as well.
>
> Sometimes that can be to say, "Let me help you."

Isabelle shared another story about someone she worked with whose car broke down. He was very engaged in the culture of the organization and supportive to others; however, not everyone recognized his worth. When his vehicle broke down in the flood zone and was in danger of being towed, she offered to loan him the money for towing and repairs. He faithfully worked on paying it back in small increments until she forgave the balance of the loan. Isabelle shared, "I do works to be more like Jesus." She shared one more story about the importance as a woman of faith to recognize the idea of the two kingdoms:

. . . the idea that on this earth, we have laws we have to deal with. They can be physical

laws – laws of gravity or whatever it might be. They can be like you have to meet a

budget or you go broke, or your organization fails. I don't feel that God wants us to fail.

We have to act within certain parameters. . . . The more I think about the two kingdoms,

the more I'm willing to say, here's the circumstance. We've got to deal with these

circumstances. We've got to deal with these issues. We can't let his happen. That's

something God's expecting of us. He's expecting us to use our best judgment to make

that happen. The other part is the fact that I am free to do what I can. If I make a

mistake, I have that forgiveness and that expectation, you might say, to have life eternal.

The concept of the two kingdoms seemed to aid her leadership and assist her in transparently

identifying and naming circumstances that may be challenging but must be dealt with.

Participants were sensitive to the needs of others and the notion of creating healing

environment in the workplace. Many accomplished this through prayer. For instance, Janette

referenced how her entire day was filled with prayer:

As I go to work or a meeting at the hospital, I pray on my way. When I was going to

work, I used to pray for all the people who were patients, those who were near the end of

their life, those who were coming in. . . . I would pray.

Several participants also spoke of their engagement in social justice work beyond their

workplace and even across the globe. Keith shared one example of his social justice work that

took place in a long-term mission in Mexico:

There was a child in this village that was convulsing. . . . The women of this community

were all crying. . . . The men were standing by the door. . . . In my broken Spanish, I

said, "Well, why don't you take this child to the doctor?" Well . . . they don't have

money. There's no doctor that would see this child. . . . We weren't that far from the

border. So we drove. They turned us back at the border. . . . Then one of the border

guards said I know a doctor who would see you in Mexico. . . . We go there. We had

this child in my arms. I come in the door. There was this huge room – a lot of crying,

children and women. I had this child. It was like the Red Sea opening up. Everybody

went inside. They went up, saw the doctor. The doctor gave the child some sort of

medicine that stopped the convulsions. We took the child back to the ranchero. . . . The

experience was the futility that people feel when they cannot take care of their own. That

had a big impact in my life.

This is an example of caring for disadvantaged individuals who are deprived of basic healthcare

and reaching out with compassion and justice and entering into the sorrows of another. Keith's

work in the social justice realm, like numerous others', was informed in part by what he referred

to as "basic Christian principles." Among his artifacts was a book with an excerpt written by

Franklin Pierce that he read aloud,

I was looking for God and so I left behind my family, my job, my community; and I said,

"Help." First I went to a church, but I did not find God in the church. Next, I retreated to

a monastery, but I did not meet God in the monastery. Then, I made a pilgrimage to the

Holy sites, but I did not discover God in the Holy sites. Discouraged, I returned home.

As I hugged my family, I felt the presence of God. When I resumed my job, I perceived

God's guiding work guiding my work. In the midst of involvement in the community, I

realized that God was there with me. In awe, I hid my face in my cloak.

Keith referred to this reading as "kind of a philosophy" he agrees with. He sees his work in the

community as an extension of faith and his philosophy of serving in the world wherever he can.

He went on to say,

The whole church and state separation issue. It's my view there really is no conflict. It's

the same thing. It's a matter of making sure that we recognize that, as each person is

made in the image and the likeness of God, we have to realize that for that person to

express that or to manifest that image in likeness of God, they need food. They need

shelter. They need education. They need healthcare. They need a decent paying job.

He believed that "through politics that can be accomplished." Keith's vocation and avocation as

public servant was informed by his spiritual practices. He saw his work as God's work.

Nancy also explained her view about social justice and compassion in the workplace:

As a social ministry, we have part of the freedom that maybe some other organizations

don't feel that they have as much to be very overt in connecting your faith and belief in

social justice and sort of the values of faith with the values of our work. . . . I try to lead

from a place of empathy as much as anything else. Just trying to understand what the

other person is struggling with.

Janette shared a plaque she received to commemorate her compassionate service at a local

homeless shelter:

For recognizing the humanity and dignity of each person on earth, for seeing goodness

and hope where others do not, for looking into the eyes of those who are suffering with

the love of Christ, for including [this organization] in your work of making peace and

doing justice.

The bottom of the plaque contained a reference from Isaiah about "the bonds of injustice and

one's responsibility to the poor. Janette, like Keith and others, saw her work as God's work in

the world. Her spiritual practice was also her work.

Participants in this study were committed to the common good and expressed this through their compassionate leadership which was informed by their spiritual practice. Another attribute was being nonjudgmental.

Being nonjudgmental. Many of the participants expressed how the quality of being nonjudgmental grew along with their spiritual journey. Lucy, for one, believed in the importance of integrating one's spirituality in the workplace and the quality of nonjudgment:

If you look at anybody's vision and value statements, they're very reflective of a sense of a higher power. I think there's a way to do that in a nonjudgmental way. . . . Having that comfort level and being able to express those feelings, whether you're at home or at work.

Isabelle similarly reflected, "I was a department chair when I was thirty years old. I think I was much more black and white and probably much more judgmental." Isabelle went on to say that over time she grew in her journey of faith and gained a greater appreciation for what each person brought to every situation. Hans, likewise, shared, "I think only within the last five years or so where I truly understand that, no matter what somebody decides to do, it's not for me to judge. It's for me to accept. It's not for me to condemn. It's for me to pray for."

For Franklin, his role as the general counsel of the organization was to heighten awareness regarding biases:

It was my job to educate the others to say that you must be empathetic. You may think it's appropriate to make a joke or one thing or another. It's not. Sometimes you have to be ahead of the curve in advising and counseling people to be nonjudgmental.

Franklin considered himself a corporate educator. He was someone who reminded the leadership team about the "importance of representing people and trying to be responsive to people." He talked about applying the Golden Rule and interpreted it, in part, as learning how to love his

colleagues and others at a deeper non-judgmental level and shared, "Always, rather than being

judgmental, see what it's like to be them."

Similarly, Mark said,

When somebody stumbles in a big way, [if] I say how could they have done that? I'm

being judgmental. I'm being harsh. I'm basically saying that I could never do that. To

the extent that I see myself as the center in need of daily grace, it helps me in my own

walk. It also helps me be more understanding of others and less judgmental of others.

Mark talked about having "lifelong" relationships with various Biblical verses and writings. In

this context he said,

I'm helped greatly by writings of others. I think one of the deepest books on self-

understanding is St. Augustine's *Confessions*. Augustine begins by saying, "God, why do

you mean so much to me?' That question is easy compared to why do I mean so much to

you? You know my heart . . . but I know only you can clean the space in my heart.

This lifelong relationship with spiritual writings informed Mark's leadership and was important

for him to understand more deeply the concept of human frailty and the need for forgiveness.

His recognition of the need for daily grace informed his interactions in the workplace. Ted,

similarly, reflected on the concept of reconciliation and what it meant to him; it expressed itself

in being nonjudgmental and forgiving:

I've come to see reconciliation . . . in a broader or complicated way. You can have

people of different points of view and reconcile on certain values. That enables them to

live and work together. They reconcile at one level and that reconciliation includes

acknowledgement and respect for differences when you do that. That's the kind of thing

I grew in my understanding and articulation of. When I think of reconciliation, I think

it's more complicated and more real.

Ted shared a Bible verse from Ephesians that is among his artifacts. To him it was symbolic and related to his leadership philosophy. He said,

> There's an Ephesians passage about being reconciled to one another even as God in Christ is reconciled to you and then go forward and become reconcilers in the world. That image of reconciliation, I suppose, reflected both my internal values and yearning, if you will, and related to how I was attempting to lead.

Franklin expressed his spiritual journey was moving him to becoming less judgmental and shared this about his clients: "Always, rather than being judgmental, see what it's like to be them. . . . It's only been in the last couple of years that this whole thing of not being judgmental is part of the world that I'm trying to go." Franklin went on to specify that

> Christ really was serious when he said to not judge others lest ye be judged. . . . Well, the discipline in that practice is saying – quit being judgmental. That's a child of God. I'm a child of God. . . . How can I help them on their journey? How can they help me?

> Participants in this study understood that their leadership was also about who they were becoming as a human being and as a leader. In their role of becoming, participants were also aware of aiding others in their becoming. In this way they were mindful of the importance of being a mentor in the lives of others. The quality of mentoring concludes this chapter on integrating faith into the workplace.

Community Building

Valuing Relationships

All of the participants reflected on the importance of building relationships and teams within the workplace. They felt this imperative came directly out of their own spiritual practices. Every participant referenced their organizational core values and talked about the importance of how those core values are lived out in relationship with the individuals with whom they work.

Referencing her Keurig coffee machine, for example, Isabelle reflected on the importance of relationships and extending hospitality to all who enter her office. On the other hand, Keith kept business cards as a reminder that all he meets have significant value. He shared that in the past he tossed out the business cards that he did not think would be useful to him, but today, he keeps them all. To him, they symbolize the importance of every human being and respecting all people. He shared, "Early in my life I used to judge which person I wanted to keep in contact with. . . . I quit that. If I am in contact with somebody, there is a potential reason for that relationship."

Each of the participants shared their own version of extraordinary stories that showed the lengths to which they would go to develop and grow relationships with their employees. For instance, Renelle took time to nurture workplace relationships as when she made sure all 150 employees received holiday cards and individually made gifts.

Franklin also noted the importance of relationships and how it involved listening to one another:

> I had a client one time we asked who his best friend was in a case. I was surprised . . . he said it was me. I realized oh, my goodness. I'm probably the only one that's empathetically listened to him and was really responding to him. . . . In every relationship, people want to be understood. People want to be heard.

Franklin viewed himself as both servant and coach. In his leadership role, he would ask people, "How can I help you? How can I assist your career? Do you need other educational things? . . . If you're a leader, that's where that servant leader comes in of eliminating obstacles for people rather than creating obstacles for them." Franklin also shared, "I've had a lot of employees who [said] you're the first manager who's ever gone to bat for me. . . . I don't like being self-promotional. I've learned a long time ago to be promotional for other people."

Janette also exemplified a leader who valued relationships in the workplace:

My role was to work with Human Resources . . . to be as just and fair as I could with [employees] to do what I could to help them have a balance in their life and find out with people that I managed – my direct reports – learn more about what their skills were. . . . How do they like to be recognized?

Janette specified the ways she developed relationships with her employees:

Getting to know them so that they could help others. Making sure that they were getting just wages, that they were treated fairly. Moving any roadblocks out of their way so that they could be successful. . . . Share as much knowledge as I could with people that I knew . . . to keep them on track when there is so much going on around them.

Janette cared deeply for her team members. She shared a story about a colleague whom she would greet every morning:

Every time I saw her, I'd say, hello and there would be no response or she'd go by my office. All I would do is surround her with prayer and love. I said, "God, please take care of her today." I had no idea of the painful divorce and what she was going through. I would not have imagined that. When she shared that with me, she must have felt the prayers and love.

The next section is on teamwork and collaboration. This section is a reflection on participants extending compassion and caring to both employees and customers. Building their team of employees was an extension of their faith-based leadership.

Teams and Collaboration

First, Adam talked about the importance of the team and board members feeling comfortable expressing themselves and expressing contrary ideas. In his leadership role, he created an environment that allowed people to freely express themselves, highlighting the significance in the diversity of thought:

[T]he Board discussions can be very, very interesting; can be high energy; dialogue of

people expressing their opinions and concerns and how and what they see how this fits in

with what we do. It isn't just – we need to get better at it. . . . We're moving away from

the – let's review this report and approve. People serving the organization both as

employees and board members know their voices matter.

According to Northouse (2016), the complexity of the work environment and the

dynamic of team processes require the focus of all members. Among the authentic leadership

characteristics that Northouse (2016) identified are understanding purpose and holding strong

values. Several participants spoke about their organization's core values and integrated those

values in a variety of ways. Mark, for instance, showed respect by valuing the voices of board

members and employees. He discussed the importance of being intentional to create space to

allow generative discussion:

I try to live out the [core values] in the workplace which means how we treat our

employees. . . . We have a quarterly Board meeting, but we also have a quarterly meeting

with our employees where we give them an overview of what's going on in the business

– good, bad, and ugly. They have a chance to ask questions just as if they were a Board

member. It's saying you're important. . . . That gets back to, if I were an employee, how

would I want to be treated?

Like Adam and Mark, Ted also reflected on the importance of valuing varied voices. He

discussed the numerous changes that were part of his three decades of leadership. He felt it was

his role to call the organizational team members together as a community with differences. His

interpretation of differences of opinion provided opportunity to further strengthen the team

within those differences – holding the tension greatly and guiding the conversation. He shared,

The players are changing all the time, and the world in which we are called to live is

changing all the time. We have to have a dialogue – a dialectic – going on all the time. I

felt I was trying to both exemplify that dialectic and call a community to it.

Ted had a deep sense of calling and saw his role in the workplace as someone who needs to model

the way during challenging times. He simply stated, "[I]t was a matter of how I saw my calling."

Isabelle, like Ted, Adam, and Mark, shared the importance of honoring employees who

held varying opinions. She felt it was her role to bring people together in challenging

circumstances and figure it out together. She explained her strategy:

Let's talk with people who have other ideas. How can we meld these ideas together?

How can we do right by all of them? Again, when you think of it as a spiritual way, I

think it's a way. . . a way of honoring people . . . but also ways to challenge or to hold

them accountable.

Stacy, like other participants, recognized she didn't have all the answers and needed to

bring people with differing perspectives to the table in a way that felt safe to share:

It had to come from the folks who cared about the work. It was a culture where you

could be open about – let's figure this out together. [Spiritual] practice really was a

foundation of that. [O]ver time, it changed my idea of what a leader was.

. . . It's leading— not necessarily positional authority. How do you influence, how do

you ask the questions that will allow the others to take the ideas that they have and bring

them forward?

Adam had a similar story to share about the importance of bringing core values to life.

Despite the labor-intensive nature of nurturing core values, he believed it was time well invested.

He believed, like Lucy, that sharing stories that bring the core values to life further strengthen the

team. He shared,

[E]very year our management team goes out and we do core value breakfasts for all staff.

Each time we do that . . . our team comes away stronger because we all learn something

from each other. . . . It's a very collaborative team-building approach. . . . It also allows

us to be servant leaders within the organization.

Adam also provided the following example of collaboration and team-building around

business meetings:

Every meeting we have we open with an opening reflection. It can be a spiritual piece. It

can be a positive story. It can be sharing wisdom or even humor that relates to uplifting

our spirit. [T]he more we do that, the more our organization has done that over the years,

we have created a wonderful corporate culture.

In addition, Adam talked again about incorporating core values into the employee

evaluation process:

Each person, including myself, is evaluated every year on our four core values. . . so it's

part of our HR system as well. It's not [only] important that we do which is described in

our job descriptions, but it's also important how we carry that out.

 . . . It's 50 percent of our evaluation. You can do a great job; but, if you don't live out

the core values, you don't fit into our organization.

Lucy also reviewed the aspirational nature of corporate mission, vision and values and

the importance of making them real within the organization. The way she brought organizational

core values to life was to invite stories that depicted them in action. She shared,

I think we are very aspirational. . . . Our values are compassion, knowledge,

dependability, ABCD (Above and Beyond the Call of Duty), flexibility, and aspiration.

Always striving to be better and do better. [S]tories and examples will help us create an

even better place for all of us to work.

Lucy saw her role as someone who needed to live the mission and creatively consider ways to inspire her team members to do the same. She saw her spiritual journey as a form of positive self-development:

> My deepest hope is that it makes me a better leader, a better mother, a better person. I think that my hope is that it allows me to have more grace and be proactive and to respond with peace and calming to the stresses and the busyness and to feel more centered and less frenetic and scattered.

Stacy also talked about her role as leader, and the reality of leadership and management was centered in service to others. Her spiritual practice gave her the foundation to lead in this way: "[My spiritual] practice and that way of leading helped me to develop collaborative relationships amongst the department chairs and managers. . . . [Y]ou're not just a manager, you're also looking at how do we help [the individuals we serve]." Stacy went on to say, "[P]eople would generally know that I have an opinion. I think that they also understood that they could bring theirs, and that we could talk." Similarly, Renelle said, "It has to be collaborative. No one person can do it."

Adam was also conscious of the importance of ministering to staff believing that they were led to the organization for a purpose and that the organization has a responsibility to nurture team members' ongoing development: "Once we do that, it causes us to work collaboratively, work together, for the greater purpose."

Franklin, like Adam, understood the importance of nurturing – truly loving and caring about – team members: "Teamwork is knowing your role, caring about your teammate, also promoting the good for them as well."

Stacy talked about the importance of transparency. In the midst of widespread organizational change, there were certain mandates – changes that needed to be made that could

not be questioned. She shared, "Being open and honest . . . with your team, your leadership

team, I think is an important thing. . . . How are we going implement that in a way that makes

sense for us in our division, our people, our work? To be able to do that together." Stacy tried to

move through organizational change while "leading through the lens of servant leadership" in

more collaborative fashion. Rather than leading from a hierarchical standpoint, she preferred

"more matrix or flatter organization. I think you can probably live your authentic spirituality in a

way that is more acceptable than in one that's really hierarchical and driven by way of being."

Participants also cared for and nourished their team members. This nurturing is not

possible without valuing and respecting others. Integrity also was a quality all participants

expressed as integral in strengthening workplace collaboration.

Being a Mentor to Others

Participants in this study not only expressed the significance of mentors in their own lives

but understood the importance of being a mentor in the lives of their followers. Every

participant talked about mentoring. They expressed a desire to encourage and motivate their

followers. They motivated through establishing meaningful relationships. The following

statement was on an artifact shared by Renelle relating to mentorship: "The true meaning of life

is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit – Nelson Henderson." Like all of

the study participants, Renelle knew of the importance of nurturing and stewarding what she has

been given including mentoring others. Renelle also took time to serve in the role of mentor to

young people who engaged in civic service:

> I had an opportunity to put faith sharing with the young generation. I found partners and
>
> people committed to social justice. I found people who wanted me to mentor them – not
>
> on political issues but on spiritual issues. . . . I became a kind of spiritual mentor to four
>
> or five young legislators.

Similarly, Mark became a mentor in faith on his business trips to Russia:

> I've had a chance to develop some deep friendships that eventually do have deep spiritual
>
> conversations. . . . People who were formerly agnostics if not atheists who come to faith.
>
> Now, when I'm with them, mainly we talk some business; but they want to talk about
>
> their spiritual life.

Renelle shared a poignant story about taking one of her mentees to see the movie *42* about Jackie

Robinson and the abuse he took in the baseball league:

> That's because he was black in baseball and the experience of how he couldn't resist.
>
> They picked him because he was passive. We spent a week processing what happened.
>
> When you're in a powerless position, what you say matters. You may have a position,
>
> but do you have power? I feel like, in some way, God's called me to nurture and mentor
>
> and support. . . . Yes. I feel like [mentoring] is a call. A real call.

For instance, Nancy shared, "One of the things I try to do in my role here is to help other people

find their own way, to find their own center, to find . . . their own best way." In contrast, Isabelle

discussed her idea of mentorship and how she views it as "being a light on the hill."

> What was interesting about the dynamic of mentoring was participants talked about both
>
> those whom they supervised and those who supervised them. That is, they experienced
>
> mentoring below and above in that hierarchy. Franklin shared one example of when he re-
>
> directed what he referred to as a dysfunctional vice president group:

> There would be nine Vice Presidents around the table. It was like throwing meat to dogs.
>
> Everybody pounced on it. I talked to the CEO and said that this is crazy. You don't have
>
> appreciative listening. There isn't any. They're taking air time and fighting for air time.
>
> There has to be a way of appreciative inquiry. I said, "I'm new to this; and, not that I
>
> have a lot to say, but nobody's asking my opinion either." You learn after time of

watching dysfunction like that, dialogue is so important. I think the further up the chain

you go, the better listener you should be.

In addition, Adam had been mentoring his management team for over two decades and had been

instructing them not to get defensive in conversation but rather be open to listening. Interestingly

enough, Adam had created such an open and comfortable environment allowing people to share

differences that now the tables were turned and Adam's subordinates had become as comfortable

mentoring Adam in the same way he mentored them. He shared this observation: "You know

you've been successful when your staff starts doing that to you."

When opportunity arose to be a mentor in faith and honor all walks of faith, several

participants in this study stepped forward. Whether it was engagement in an interfaith dialogue

or participating in varied community diversity efforts, they embraced and modeled a spirit of

inclusivity. Franklin, in an earlier role as president of a national association, was asked to share

the invocation. He said, "I started reading from *Black Elk Speaks* about Chief Joseph. . . . It was

the incantation before the peace pipe when all these great warriors would get together, that was

part of their ritual. They talked of the Great Spirit. I started out ky yay a . . . the whole place

was wondering what is he doing now." He shared that this is the prayer that might have been

shared when a group of leaders and warriors gathered together 200 years ago. He went on to say,

> At the end of the day, everybody said that, when they first heard me, they thought I had
>
> flipped out. By the end, they said that it was really profound. . . . Once again, it's that
>
> unifying, trying to be that one respectful for everybody else's religious position too. I've
>
> got to be thinking that they're praying to the same God.

Renelle, similarly, talked about serving as a mentor in faith for several women in her

organization who filed a sexual harassment lawsuit: "I was senior management. . . . They came

to me, and I listened to them. . . . I decided to sign on with them." Renelle made the decision to

sign on with them because she had positional power in her senior leadership role and knew if she did not that their voices would not be heard. "Eventually, this changed everyone's life, because this was front page in the [newspaper]. This was lawsuits and courts and lots of internal turmoil for about a year." Renelle began meeting with this group of women and encouraged them to start journaling everything that happened so they had a legal base. She shared, "Then it became a journey of where to see God in it." Renelle went on to say, "It substantially changed my spiritual journey. It deepened my work experience and deepened my spiritual journey. My spiritual journey changed my work pattern. . . . It shaped how I treated people."

Like Renelle, Nancy felt her spiritual role definitely played a part in her decisions as a leader:

> One of the things I try to do in my role here is to help other people find their own way, to find their own center . . . to find . . . their own best way . . . to me those are parts of a person's spirituality. It's part of how you center yourself. That's part of my job as a leader of people is to help them find their best self in every way we can.

Isabelle pointed to a saying from her Methodist upbringing: "This is from John Wesley – 'Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can.'" Participants mentored through their service; it was a way of life.

Janette became a mentor with a vision for a community group interested in bringing parish nursing to homeless shelters. She influenced an initiative that brought vision to reality:

> As far as the vision, when I have a vision, a lot of times I might think I know what it looks like. It's usually a lot bigger and better and whatever than I could have imagined. I wrote a proposal, went to the Board. . . . I had an opportunity to put a group together and hire the next director of parish nursing – something I had helped start and it was so rough

going initially . . . it's just wonderful to see how [the initiative] has grown and one of the

top in the nation and how far-reaching it is. My dream was to have them in the shelters.

Now we have them.

Figure 5.1 below represents the effect of spiritual practice in the world. The branches reveal the

invisible seed becoming visible through integrating spiritual life into the workplace. The mighty

oak of leadership is manifested.

The following chapter will discuss participants' spiritual practices and their effect on

professional leadership utilizing the theoretical lenses of authentic, servant, and transformational

leadership.

INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPIRITUAL, PERSONAL, AND PROFESSIONAL LIVES.

Liturgy at work, Servant mind-set, Professional ethics.

COMMUNITY BUILDING.

Valuing relationships, Teams and collaboration, Being a mentor to others.

CHAPTER 6: THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

This chapter presents research findings regarding the significance of leaders' spiritual practice and how their practice is integrated in the workplace. Throughout this chapter, the theoretical lenses of authentic, servant, and transformational leadership theories are explored. The concept of the inner life (Palmer, 1999) encapsulated each of the theoretical lenses presented. In some instances, subcategories within each of the theories are also investigated.

This section represents my interpretation of the relationship between spiritual practice and leadership and authentic leadership theory and practice literature. According to Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, and May (2004), authentic leaders "know who they are, what they believe and value" (p. 804). Participants understood their values and were able to articulate them and act upon them. In many instances, their interactions with others, including family members, colleagues, and community members, showed their values in action. The theme of journey earlier shared in chapter four provided numerous examples of participants acknowledging how their spiritual practice over time aided them in becoming more self-aware. This self-awareness, in many instances, strengthened their clarity and contributed to their ability to process decisions and seemed especially helpful when encountering workplace challenges.

Application of Authentic Leadership Theory

According to George (2006), authentic leaders "not only inspire those around them, they bring people together around a shared purpose and a common set of values and motivate them to create value for everyone involved" (p. 52). Mitchie and Gooty (2005) indicated two important determinants of authenticity in their research: 1) self-transcendent values and 2) positive other-directed emotions. Luthans and Avolio (2003) further specified that an authentic leadership style results in greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors toward others.

Numerous themes in chapters four and five related to the theory of authentic leadership and included participants' development of personal spiritual practice and heightened self-awareness, the practice of gratitude and service in the workplace, and greater community that moved them beyond their own egos and toward the consideration of others, focus on relationship building and the practice of respect and compassionate action in the world. These relational elements including compassion and empathy are increasingly considered essential aspects of leadership and related to spirituality and positive other-directed emotions (Mitchie & Gooty, 2005). Participants in this study were keenly aware of the importance of being self-aware and how this awareness influenced their values and, as a result, the needs of others. Leaders identified their spiritual practice as integral in developing their values, and in turn these values were modeled in the way they "walked the talk" in the workplace. Participants expressed themselves through values that translated into action.

According to several scholars (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009; Cooper, Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005), there appears to be general agreement in the scholarly literature regarding four factors that represent components of authentic leadership including "self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency" (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009, p. 424). I consider these four attributes of authentic leadership relevant to the discussion of the role of spiritual practice and ethical leadership. The following excerpts highlight the above phenomena and provide examples of authentic leadership in action.

Self-Awareness

Authentic leadership is highly relational (Avolio et al., 2009) and expressed as an ongoing journey of self-discovery (Shirey, 2006). Each of the participants in this study expressed their leadership journey as inextricably bound to their life of faith and among the contributing factors in heightening self-awareness. Themes earlier identified in chapter five,

including integration and relationships, provide examples of participants becoming self-aware

and critically reflective of their role as leaders. This self-awareness includes understanding both

their strengths and weaknesses. When leaders understand themselves, they have a sense of being

firmly grounded in their core values and actions (Cooper et al., 2005). The following examples

refer to participant leadership insights and acknowledge the components of self-awareness at a

deep level.

  In describing self-awareness, a number of the participants expressed their weaknesses.

Adam shared, "None of us are infallible. I believe that over time, the practice of self-reflection

in situations . . . contributes to the outcome of situations." He seemed to be keenly aware of his

contributions both positive and, at times, negative: "there are things that I do that contribute to

better understanding or there are things that I do that break down communication." Another

participant, David, explained how over time he became more self-aware:

> To me, it's a reflection on maturity. It's a reflection on self-understanding. It's maybe a
>
> reflection on being more comfortable with . . . the spiritual nature of who I am. I've
>
> become better at understanding that. I almost was going to say it has changed who I am,
>
> but no. I think who I am was always there. It's changed how I understand who I am.

Similarly, Lucy commented on the importance of her faith in self-understanding: "I think I'm a

big work in progress." Like Lucy, Adam, felt the inclination to spend more time to develop his

spiritual practice: "I need to go deeper." Hans reflected on his own journey and the ongoing

yearning to learn more about himself through his spiritual practice: "No matter how hard you

try, it's never enough. You need more."

  Paradoxically, participants understood both their completeness and incompleteness.

Their spiritual practice raised awareness of spiritual truth and their divine connectedness to

something beyond themselves. This awareness also brought a sense of humility. They

understood that their practice supported their movement toward an integrated life that represented a wholeness which is the nature of the Divine. Their spiritual practice was an integral part of becoming and appreciating who they really are. Heightened self-awareness gave participants a closer look at who they were and who they weren't, including an understanding of their own vulnerability and imperfections. Mark said, "I think the truer I am to the real me the more vulnerable I am and . . . I can handle criticism a lot better."

Many participants expressed their growing self-awareness in a way that led to becoming less ego-centered; it's the paradox of better understanding one's self so that one is able to step outside one's self, beyond one's own ego. Mark's introspection led him to follow the Golden Rule. Hans, too, discussed his change in leadership overtime and that it involved becoming "less self-oriented and more open to others' opinions."

Self-awareness showed up in the form of being nonjudgmental as was earlier discussed in chapter five. It also relates to the theme of respect in chapter five. Mark came to recognize more readily his own judgements: "When somebody stumbles in a big way, and I say 'how could they have done that?' I'm being judgmental. . . . To the extent that I see myself as the center in need of daily grace, it helps me in my own walk."

Greta also acknowledged her search for self-awareness, and understanding of her own weaknesses coincided with her spiritual practice. She reflected,

> I'm on the journey. . . . If [God] were to sit down today and have a conversation, He'd have a number of issues He could bring up with me. He's nice enough to give me some time. I'm not there yet. It's like water. You're constantly mixing and churning. I think of a river. Sometimes I think that I'm smart enough that I can sit like a sandbar in the middle of a river and it will just wash by me. Then other times, I realize that the sandbar changes overnight. It's heavily influenced by the currents around me. That's a good

thing. The words have been very helpful because it usually takes me to the month of

January to land on one.

Greta also shared, "A blind spot for me as a leader is to be very reactive. If you present a

situation to me, I think of myself as problem-solver." She indicated people in the workplace

knew this about her because she shared with them "here's my word, this is what I'm doing, here's

my word. They knew my word was 'space.' That was the code for 'be quiet and just listen.'"

Another year she chose the word "patience," and everyone knew, including her

coworkers and her family members. She shared this story about the following year when she had

to do a "patience" do-over:

I totally suck at patience. When I was trying to come up with the word. . . I would sit in

the church. . . . Dear God, please help me. What should my word be? That that time – I

kid you not – the first time I am kneeling in the church, it was like a neon light: patience.

To which I said, "That's wrong. I'll check back with you." Later that week, I'm still

thinking on this. My son said, "Mom, I really think you should think about patience. It

would be a good one for you." It just kept showing up. I chose patience. My son had the

nerve to say, "You know. a do-over on patience would do you some good." He was

right. I did patience for two years. Do-over. They laughed at the office.

Greta's spiritual practice of choosing a word each year that she knew was a weakness of hers

helped to heighten her self-awareness. She was self-aware enough to recognize that patience

was a worthwhile do-over that would benefit not only herself but her family and her coworkers.

In somewhat similar fashion, Adam, in his story earlier shared in chapter five, had been

coaching his leadership team to be open rather than defensive in posture when someone held a

conflicting perspective. His coaching was so effective that now his team, after listening, became

comfortable openly sharing a perspective that challenged his. He was comfortable enough in his

own skin to recognize his own motives as he shared, "You know you've been successful when your staff starts doing that to you." He acknowledged as the leader he was only one person on the team with one perspective. He also was aware of his weaknesses and the need to be open to listening to varying perspectives that had the potential to strengthen the outcome.

Internalized Moral Perspective

According to Avolio et al. (2009), internalized more perspective referred to the act of being directed or guided by internal moral principles, which in turn self-regulated one's actions. It is a "self-regulatory process whereby individuals use their internal moral standards and values to guide their behavior rather than allow outside pressures to control them" (Northouse, 2016, p. 203). One's values influence moral perspective and a leader's ability to make informed choices regarding how one responds to varied circumstances (Northouse, 2007). As indicated in chapter four, participants' internalized moral perspective was in part influenced by family members, mentors, and their church community. All participants mentioned family as primary influencers shaping their values. The assets built during their formative years, including for some the discipline of faith, shaped their moral decision-making as leaders. For example, Oliva commented about the discipline of her parents' faith, the assets they built in their children, and the high expectations they held: "part of our family was we had values and morals, [my parents] had high expectations. . . . [Their example] just became a way of practice when I got into my career." Ethan similarly shared the story of his mother's adoration of Christ and how today, especially during times of challenge he said, "It's the solitude in the busyness. . . . It's been really important to me."

Participants were mindful of their values and the importance of adhering to them or as more than one participant shared, walking the talk. Numerous examples of participants' values in action were evidenced not only in the workplace but integrated into all aspects of their lives.

The discipline of spiritual practice appeared to influence the mindful way in which they self-regulated their behavior. For many participants, spiritual practice was ongoing throughout their day. One participant, Ethan, earlier shared in chapter five, reflected on his weekly ritual of ceremonially placing a glass bead into a jar which reminded him of the preciousness of how few days he had left on this earth. Ethan understood the importance of measuring his days. His deep reverence for life became an operating life philosophy and how he wanted to live and be remembered. This example relates in that it was an action that regulated his behavior every Friday when he was reminded of the beads going down.

Many participants talked about wrestling with decisions that were not black and white and the importance of understanding where they stood in terms of their own moral compass. Among the artifacts on one of the participant's desks was a literal moral compass which provided a constant reminder of doing the right thing. He commented, "I can't tell you the number of times that I'll close the door and get on my knees in this office." Another participant, Mark, talked about following the golden rule: "Do onto others as you would have them do onto you. If I'm to live that out in every area, what does that look like? I don't think Jesus meant [decisions] to be simple and clear cut. I think he meant that to be a reality that each person wrestles with." He went on to describe the challenge of doing business all over the world:

> There are custom officials . . . constantly trying to get some money to get something cleared. It's simply a matter of – I want all our employees to make decisions that, if anybody anywhere in the world saw the decision, that it was a moral decision. That it was the right thing to do. It was an ethical decision. It gets back to the Golden Rule. We often will do warranty that's often outside normal warranty. . . . We think that it should not have broken. [W]hen you build machinery, machines break. Things go wrong.

> People make mistakes. I try to build a culture where people are thanked when they bring back big problems so that we can deal with it.

As Mark acknowledged the development in his leadership practice over time, he said,

> I think that's part of the leadership identity that I have. . . . I can handle criticism a lot better. I can handle adversity a lot better. I'm really comfortable in my own skin. Success is not something you own. It's something you rent every day.

In addition, the theme of integrity earlier identified in chapter five relates to participants' desire to do the right thing in all circumstances and especially in some of their most challenging organizational dilemmas. For instance, during times of ethical decisions and inequality, Ted said he would question himself and encourage his team members engaged in the decision-making process to ask themselves "Where does mercy fit? There had to be consequences. On the other hand, you believe in redemption." Wrestling with organizational values and disciplinary actions became a time of internalized struggle. Similar questions loomed for Isabelle as indicated in chapter five. She would take mini-breaks during times of challenge to compose herself "to contemplate [her] relationship with Christ." Among the questions she asked herself included, "Why am I here? What am I doing? Am I doing the Lord's work?"

Another participant, Adam, discussed how his role as advocate challenged him to draw upon his internal values and beliefs when he found himself among the minority. He was advocating for maintaining current levels of services for vulnerable adults and was one among thirty-two providers in the state that challenged the reimbursement system proposed by the state department. His action caused delay in implementing the new system, and he was chastised by both the department and his state association. He held true to his moral convictions and advocated for the state's most vulnerable people. He stated that "what is right isn't always popular and what's popular isn't always right."

In each example presented above, the participants structured their behavior based on their internal values or beliefs, not based on what others did. Participants' spiritual practices predisposed them to ongoing self-reflection which ultimately influenced their internalized moral behavior.

Balanced Processing

Balanced processing refers to the ability to objectively consider options and in deliberate fashion, weigh all the pertinent data in advance of making a decision (Avolio et al., 2009). Participants' spiritual practice predisposed them to familiarity with thoughtful reflection and mental processing. According to Shamir and Eilam (2005), authentic leadership is viewed as part of one's spiritual journey. Every participant discussed the importance of their spirituality as an aspect of their lives that was related to their work. Many participants shared examples of defining moments that led them to reflectively pause throughout the day, sometimes in the company of others or alone in their office. One participant, Adam, discussed the integral nature of the organizational core values and the frequent pauses throughout his days to question himself: "Am I living up to what is expected of those four core values?" He went on to share that these pauses supported decision-making practices and were "a huge part of my daily spiritual practice that incorporates really everything I do."

Another participant, Ethan, explained that one of the stark realities that he realized when he moved from the role of CFO to CEO is that in his CFO role he always had someone to defer to: "There was always – well this is my opinion, but the decision is yours." Now in his role as CEO he said,

> Our former CEO . . . would say to me "gosh, this is a damn lonely job." I remember
> thinking yeah, for you it probably is, but it won't be for me. . . . He was right. It gets a
> little lonely. I think the faith aspect of it really helps you be stronger, helps shore that up,
> and helps you be okay with solitude, with the isolation sometimes. You're making

decisions. You ask yourself, am I making these decisions in the best interest of this

organization, of the employees, of the customers?

Another participant, Hans, reflected on his decision-making practices and the importance of

possessing a "balanced and grounded mindset." Ted used similar words – "grounded in one's

values and clear about one's sense of purpose" – when considering decision-making in the

company of team members. Several participants noticed a change over time regarding their

leadership and how their spiritual practice contributed to "becoming less self-oriented" and more

open to others' opinions.

Balanced decision-making, although lonely at times, more often engaged team members.

Participants valued the influence of team members, and many commented on the challenge of

most decisions in that they grew to understand the complex nature. Most decision were not

black and white and able to be addressed with a technical fix but rather required more thoughtful

deliberations – their own and with their team members. Nancy, for example, articulated well the

influence of spiritual practice and balanced processing when she realized some of the "running

conversations" she had with herself were really when she was having what she referred to as that

interior "spiritual conversation." She talked about having frequent spiritual conversations that

allowed her to step back and say,

> I'm not so arrogant to think that I either will be perfect or should expect that I will be. . . .
>
> [F]igure out – are you acting and are you thinking in a way that is consistent with your
>
> ultimate goal – with your center, with what you know is the right thing to do? Usually I
>
> can get back to the answer if I have a moment or two to think about it and think about it
>
> and to get out of the noise of the day. It is helpful to have [spiritual practice].

Participants seemed to understand the nature of their spiritual practice and how it influenced

decision-making. The notion of integration, as discussed previously in chapter five, relates to the

idea that participants seemed to also understand that their spiritual practice was an integral aspect of their leadership. Balanced decision-making is among the authentic leadership characteristics related to this theme.

Balanced processing, then, is part of authentic leadership in that it shares an ability to accurately reflect and deliberate options, considering all the relevant information before making a decision. This process was revealed in the participants' responses connecting to the discipline of their spiritual practice. The discipline of their practice further supported their decision-making process. This practice contributed to a heightened awareness and influenced how they arrived at a decision point in a more balanced way.

Relational Transparency

Relational transparency refers to being open and honest in presenting one's true self to others (Northouse, 2016). Kernis (2003) suggested relational transparency is self-regulatory which indicates leaders understand the importance of not only being true to their core values but also understand well their own motives and interactions with followers. Relational transparency can be strengthened through life experiences (Avolio & Gardner, 2005), and according to Shirey (2006), is a process of self-discovery. Participants shared numerous leadership challenges that shaped both themselves and their team members. These challenges, or "trigger events" (Luthans & Avolio, 2003), were opportunities for growth.

During times of workplace challenges, numerous participants expressed that their reliance on their spiritual practice helped them stay grounded. Delbecq (1999) suggested that authentic leadership is related to one's spiritual journey and influences both personal life and workplace. As discussed previously in chapter four, the practice of gratitude, for many participants, was integral, especially during times of challenge. Their expression of gratitude, both internal and external contributed to their positive mindset. According to Jesen and Luthans

(2006), authentic leadership is highly relational and characterized by an optimistic outlook.

Luthans and Avolio (2003) described authentic leadership as positive self-development. The

principles of relational transparency capture the essence of participants' leadership practices and

relate to the strength they derived from their spiritual practices including gratitude.

In referring to workplace challenges, Lucy said, "[I]n every experience, good and bad,

there's always that little glimmer of gratitude that it's either a blessing or a lesson." She

described gratitude as foundational to spiritual practice and integral to the way in which she

journeyed through each day. She also expressed the importance of continuing to nurture

gratitude as a spiritual practice and shared, "I need to do better at sharing that feeling with others

so they feel it too." Isabelle similarly explained, "I always try to think of the positive things

about this person – this person who's being difficult with me. What is this making me do that

can be more positive? What can I learn from that?"

Adam also expressed the importance of being able to listen to others with different

perspectives. He specifically talked about board member discussions and the intentional training

done on supporting generative dialogue. He described board meetings as lively and energy-

filled: "board discussions can be very, very interesting; can be high energy; dialogue of people

expressing their opinions and concerns. . . . [W]e're moving away from – let's review this report

and approve."

Similarly, Mark described the annual custom of asking the employees to play the role of

the board members and ask questions. Mark went on to describe the importance of taking the

time to develop relational transparency especially when an organizational action affects everyone.

He specifically discussed the organization's move to a high-deductible/health savings account.

This change was endorsed by the board of directors as the current coverage for employees would

have been untenable and negatively affected the bottom line. In this instance, rather than

delivering this message in the typical fashion through leadership and team managers, Mark sent a mass email notifying employees of the change. Instead of taking the time to explain the need for this change, Mark said, "We took the shotgun approach." Shortly after the mass email was sent, Mark sent a note of apology taking the blame, writing, "It's my fault, not theirs. I hope you will forgive me." He went on to reflect upon this experience as an important reminder to take the extra time to lay the groundwork for open transparent communication that builds trust. Mark described the typical corporate communication strategy that was overlooked in this circumstance that he will be careful to take the time to move through, especially in times of significant organizational change. The components of the organization's current communication strategy include the following: communicating changes in advance to supervising team members, conducting face-to-face meetings with teams, virtual CEO communications to all employees, hosting lunch-and-learn session throughout the origination, weekly email updates to all employees, and intranet communication – thus ensuring relational transparency.

Several participants talked about the importance of self-regulatory behavior during employee termination. Renelle shared, "The most difficult thing in senior management is always when you terminate someone. . . . Those were times of great faith for me. . . . I never got sued – never." She shared that because her organization was among the largest in the state, she terminated more employees than any other agency. She said people in the state office referred to her as the "termination queen." Renelle referred to these times as "holy moments." She explained the importance of transparency and honesty. She was able to make it clear that the termination was not about their worth as a person but their fitness for the work.

Philip similarly discussed the challenge of letting people go:

> I believe . . . having that conversation based on truth . . . you're dealing with someone's
>
> life. . . . I think that having the Christ-centered approach to it and discerning . . . has
>
> guided the organization. The culture is that . . . everybody has worth.

Similarly, Stacy talked about leading during a time of deep organizational change that required

downsizing. She expressed,

> I can't view people working here, taking care of patients as FTE's. I've got to be able to
>
> have a deeper way of looking at that. That's when I went on my first silent retreat and
>
> developed a practice of being able to come into work early. . . to pray. . . so that I could
>
> ready myself to be present to that conflict between the business of healthcare . . . and the
>
> clinical care of patients. This spiritual practice helped me to develop collaborative
>
> relationships.

Participants acknowledged the significance of their spiritual practice was an integral part

of developing relational transparency. The notion of spiritual practice as journey earlier

discussed in chapter four influenced not only participants' awareness of themselves but how they

brought this awareness into relationships in the workplace. Although the development of

relational transparency required additional time, participants recognized the value. Each of the

examples above, including employee relationships, relationships with board members, and

relationships during times of crisis, drew upon the foundational nature of their spiritual practice

and how it was a grounding force. The following section explores further implications of servant

leadership theory.

Application of Servant Leadership Theory

In the following analysis, I will identify the attributes of servant leadership – including

listening, empathy, awareness, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people and building

community (Northouse, 2016) – as observed in participants' discussion of servant leadership.

Servant leadership emerged with the writings of Greenleaf (1970) and is perceived as a

paradoxical approach to leadership:

> How can leadership be both service *and* influence? How can a person be a leader *and*
>
> servant at the same time? Although servant leadership seems contradictory and
>
> challenges our traditional beliefs about leadership, it is an approach that offers a unique
>
> perspective. (Northouse, 2016, p. 225)

Many scholars have continued to develop and define the concept of servant leadership and

however complex the ideas, the emphasis of servant leadership is on the needs of followers

placed above their own self-interests (Ehrhart, 2004). According to Northouse (2016),

Greenleaf's (1970) definition is among the most frequently referenced:

> [Servant leadership] begins with the natural feeling the one want to serve, to serve first.
>
> Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. . . . The difference manifests itself in
>
> the care taken by the servant – first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs
>
> are being served. The best test . . . is: do those served grow as person; do they, while
>
> being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to
>
> become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they
>
> benefit, or, at least, will they not be further deprived? (p. 15)

As discussed previously in chapter five, all participants understood the concept of servant

leadership and what it looks like to walk the talk, serving as role models, within their

organizations and their communities. They understood the notion of placing the needs of others

before their own and, more specifically, were inspired by what Keith (2001) identified as the

desire to serve well. Additionally, many participants described themselves as individuals who

strived to embrace the style of servant leadership. In defining leadership, one of the participants,

Janette, shared both the privilege and responsibility of being a "servant manager." Among the

artifacts Janette valued was a quotation about Janette from an external organizational evaluator:

> She connects with the people in your organization on many levels. She was said to be the
>
> voice of reason and caring, walking through both the sorrows and the joys of her
>
> colleagues. Much like the theory of servant leadership, she empathized and related to the
>
> journey of others.

The themes earlier described which affected participants' professional leadership including the

desire to integrate their spiritual practice, integrity, relationships, respect, compassion, mentoring

among others, capture the essence of many attributes of servant leadership.

Participants' spiritual practice also provided a way to become self-aware and critically

reflective of their role as leaders. Several participants recognized their spiritual practice played

an influential role in shaping their leadership and desire to become more servant-minded as

earlier mentioned in chapter five. What follows is an application of servant leadership

characteristics to the participants of this study including listening, empathy, awareness,

stewardship, commitment to the growth of people and building community (Spears, 2002).

Listening

Servant leaders communicate by listening and attending well to what is being said

(Northouse, 2016). Participants repeatedly expressed the importance of deep and reverent

listening. In chapter four, I described the varied and consistent spiritual practices, for many a

daily discipline, including the practice of gratitude, meditation, reflection, reading, journaling,

and communion with nature. Many of these practices appear to predispose participants to the

practice of listening. Greenleaf (1977) illustrated the power of listening:

> I have a bias about this which suggests only a true natural servant automatically responds
>
> to any problem by listening first. When one is a leader, this disposition causes one to be

seen as servant first. This suggests a non-servant who wants to be a servant might

become a natural servant through a long arduous discipline of learning to listen, a

discipline sufficiently sustained that the automatic response to any problem is to listen

first. I have seen enough remarkable transformations in people who have been trained to

listen to have some confidence in this approach. It is because true listening builds

strength in other people. (p. 17)

The act of listening applies to both oneself and others. Adam, for example, expressed the desire to

listen to the inner stirrings of the spirit when he shared, "I need to go deeper into the discipline of

meditation and prayer in an effort to develop that discipline of reflection and listening." Among

his artifacts was a picture of a young St. Benedict with his head slightly tilted and his hand raised

next to his ear. Adam explained, "Listen with the ear of your heart as Saint Benedict said."

In many instances, participants talked about the importance of stepping back and

listening, especially during times of challenge. For instance, David shared,

I try to pull back and reframe [workplace] discussion. . . . For me, that reframing, that

pulling back, comes from a spiritual place. It wouldn't happen if it was . . . ego-type

driven conversation. Hearing is what they need. It depends on whether I am able to

connect with them spiritually, rather than emotionally. Not that an emotional connection

is a bad one, but it can be counterproductive to effectively working with somebody.

Participants wanted an inclusive work environment that nourishes respectful relationships.

Chapter four includes numerous examples of how respect is shown through the act of listening

well to team members. In times of challenge, participants showed their respect by drawing from

the reservoir of spiritual practice which also influenced their ability to be present in conversation

and at the same time, regulate their behavior.

In chapter five, the theme of integrity and relationships supported participants' desire to "walk the talk" as it related to living out their core values in every aspect of their lives. Valuing others and being open to listening without judgement was another repeated phrase. Franklin referred to life as a "spiritual boot camp . . . the reason we're here on earth is to learn how to love at a greater level on our way to a loving God." He shared a profound story about discovering his client considered him his best friend just because he had listened compassionately to him.

Empathy

The act of listening is closely related to empathizing with another. Participants repeatedly expressed the need for acceptance and the importance of "standing in another's shoes." According to Northouse, 2016, "Empathetic servant leaders demonstrate that they truly understand what followers are thinking and feeling." Among the themes in chapter five that is closely related to the concept of empathy is compassion. Compassion and empathy are concepts increasingly associated with leading well (Mitchie & Gooty, 2005) and also related to servant leadership's focus on followers (Russel & Stone, 2002). Among the definitional distinctions between empathy and compassion is the notion of strength in action, in doing what needs to be done (Dutton, Workman, & Hardin, 2014). Participants expressed genuine care and concern which positively contributed to organizational culture. According to Fry (2003),

> The ultimate effect of spiritual leadership is to bring together fusion among the fundamental forces of human existence (body, mind, and spirit) so that people are motivated for high performance, have increased organizational commitment, and personally experience joy, peace, and serenity. (p. 727)

Franklin makes the connection between listening and empathy. The trait of being non-judgmental is another repeatedly expressed by participants. Among Adam's artifacts was a mosaic of Christ. If one looked at the picture closely enough, one would see historic figures including Mahatma

Gandhi, Dorothy Day, and Martin Luther King Jr. among others. The message depicted in this image, according to Adam, was one of acceptance of diversity and the importance of valuing all people. Janette said, "I think [we are] all one. As soon as we realize that the people we are with also are the Divine and represent God . . . then we listen." David expressed a special connection to the individuals served and described the connection as "very spiritual."

Several participants spoke about their work, volunteerism, and advocacy not only within their own communities but all over the world including Haiti, Mexico, Peru, Africa, and in the eastern Mediterranean region. For example, Janette shared the story of working among the Palestinian people during a time of chaos and disruption. She received the gift of a necklace which she continues to wear. It is a symbol of partnership in prayer and service. Today, Janette continues her work of social justice working with the homeless. As a nurse administrator, she was instrumental in placing nurses in the community shelters. Similarly, Keith's story about seeking life-saving measures for a child in Mexico continues to impact his life of service. Today he continues his advocacy among the Native American population as he serves in the legislature.

Awareness

Servant leaders are both self-aware and aware of their impact on others (Northouse, 2016; Stone, 2002). The concept of self-awareness is closely associated with authentic leadership (Avolio et al., 2009). Examples of participants' growing self-awareness abound in the data and are, in many cases, part of their spiritual journey. Numerous themes discovered in this study, including internal practices such as meditation and prayer, the practice of gratitude, unique rituals, and the aspects of spiritual practice that influence integration and outward expression such as relationships, influenced participant awareness.

Stewardship

Russell and Stone (2002) identified stewardship among the functional attributes of service. The concept of stewardship was addressed by a number of participants especially as it related to tending the mission, vision, and values of the organization. Stewardship extended beyond the organization and into the larger community. Many participants embraced the notion of stewardship as Russell and Stone (2002) identified in their research as a moral imperative.

To illustrate, Phillip expressed his leadership position this way: "This is a position to do good. . . . It really is a position to make a difference – a giant difference." Ethan, on the other hand, shared that among the most profound experiences was attending the organization's annual family picnic:

> Every time I go to the family picnic. . . I can't go there without getting a lump in my throat because I see the employees here every day. Then you see their spouses, and you see all the little kids. You realize those families, every one of those individuals is dependent upon us for their livelihood.

He went on to talk about the really good organizations are the ones that win more than employees' minds; they win their hearts.

Among Ethan's organization's initiatives is employee recognition. Their internal communication network provides a place for individuals to post selfless acts of service and kindnesses. Additionally, the organization began a benevolence fund to help employees and their families in times of need. Beyond tending to the needs of his own organization, Ethan serves on a number of community boards including the United Way and Hospital Board. He shared, "This is a time of giving back for me. We have a responsibility to the community. . . . Part of it is making sure that our community has the amenities that it needs to attract the people that we need to make sure we're doing our part."

Similarly, Curt talked about the influence of his family's heart for philanthropy and how it has grown over the years:

> You know it just kind of evolved. . . . A lot of people give back in different ways. For some it can be financial; for others it can't be because they don't have the means. Yet it may be their heart is as big as anybody's and they give back in their own ways as much as I have.

Among the artifacts Curt shared was an internal newsletter on their corporate-giving program. As part of the tradition, employees are given $1000 every year to give to a need in the community or anywhere in the world. As part of the organization's 50th anniversary, every full-time employee was given $2500. The idea is to "pay it forward" and, in doing so, widen the ripple effect of giving. Millions of dollars have been paid forward since the inception of the program in 2007. That program is a form of corporate stewardship.

Similarly, Mark discussed the importance of stewardship: "I've had the privilege of giving a lot of money away." He also discussed the pivotal point in his businesses history in that there is no one in his family who is interested in running the business: "The business has opportunity to have financial results long-term. . . . What do we do when I'm no longer in the business? That really is a stewardship issue. The money that's here – how will it be employed?" This is a decision that Mark continues to consider.

Commitment to the Growth of People

The primary aim of servant leadership is the growth of employees followed by the organizational bottom line (Bass, 2000). Every participant reflected on the importance of building relationships and nurturing growth among team members. Participants attended to the growth of employees through expressing their own commitment to organizational mission and "walking the talk." According to Kouzes and Posner (2007), leaders' actions including formal

and informal messages "must be consistent" (p. 16). Adam, as an example, addressed the growth

of employees not only through mentoring but through the act of devoting time every year to

offering an annual series of breakfasts which included reflecting upon the organizational core

values. He committed to hosting them every year and included members of his leadership team.

They traveled hundreds of miles to every worksite. He shared, "Each time we do that, I think

our team comes away stronger. . . . We all have this genuine reverence for each other. It's a

very collaborative team-building approach. . . . We have created a wonderful corporate culture."

Similarly, Renelle understood her role as mentor and was open to others who sought her

out. She reflected on a particularly challenging legislative session and five young legislators who

were shaken by the often contentious battles between party lines. Renelle recalled an especially

biting remark directed at one of her mentees:

> I'm watching this and she sat in the corner and sobbed; just sobbed. She was crushed.
>
> This woman was a [state legislator]. . . . I said, 'Okay, we're going out to dinner and then
>
> I'm taking you to the movie. . . . It's the story of Jackie Robinson and all the abuse he
>
> took. . . . When you're in a powerless position, what you say matters. . . . I feel like, in
>
> some way, God's called me to nurture and mentor and support.

Franklin, too, shared the importance of mentoring both individuals whom he supervised and

individuals and board members who oversaw his actions. He described an event where nine

Vice-Presidents were all talking over each other: "it was like throwing meat to the dogs." He

talked to the CEO following the meeting and said, "There has to be a way of appreciative

inquiry." All of these stories are indicative of the importance of attending to followers and at the

same time, modeling the way, "walking the talk" so that others have an opportunity to develop

themselves as leaders through participants' intentional mentoring.

Building Community

Servant leaders share their power with followers in a way that encourages both autonomy and at the same time community building (Northouse, 2015). The attributes of servant leadership including listening and encouraging, lend themselves to building community (Stone, 2002). In chapter five, I highlighted the significance of integration, servant leadership, relationships and team building; all contribute to community building. Among the examples was the way in which Adam built community through the simple gesture of opening business and board meetings with a reflection:

Every meeting we have, we open with an opening reflection. It can be a spiritual piece. It can be a positive story. It can be sharing wisdom . . . that relates to uplifting our spirit. [T]he more we do that, the more our organization has done that over the years, we have created a wonderful corporate culture.

A number of participants not only described themselves as aspiring to be that servant leader but also made great efforts to build the sense of community within their organization through a variety of initiatives. Adam, Curt, and Ethan were focused on improving organizational culture and tracked the pulse of the organization through a variety of survey instruments. Curt and Ethan's organizations conducted quarterly employee surveys to measure employee engagement. Ethan shared,

We used to do these employee satisfaction surveys. We don't do satisfaction surveys anymore. Four times a year we'll do what we call a pulse survey: small number of questions, all online, takes about five minutes to do. . . . There's thousands of other organizations that participate in this study. Then we're ranked. The national norm which is average, best in class which is 1 percent. When we started this, we had zero in best in

class. Today, I would say that we're best in class in a third of the categories. We still

have a lot of work to do.

Community outreach was also part of community building both within and outside many

participants' organizations. A number of participants shared artifacts in the form of community

awards including Isabelle's humanitarian award; Olivia's diversity award, community award,

and distinguished service awards; Mark's philanthropy award; and Keith's diversity award.

Ethan said this about his corporate benevolence committee:

> The benevolence of the organization. . . . That's the connectedness of the employees.
>
> That's the employees making sure they have each other's back. . . . We're kind of a
>
> menagerie of people and philosophies. All of that is connected. The benevolence, do the
>
> right thing always, shared values – all of that is connected with our faith. All of that has
>
> a root in our faith – in our faith walk.

Participants who were committed to their spiritual journey are emboldened to commit to the

journey of their organization as community.

Community is built through big corporate initiatives such as the creation of benevolence

funds and monitoring the pulse of employee engagement and in the following small ways. A

number of participants reported writing handwritten personal notes of thanks and sending

birthday cards. Curt talked about creating a "family atmosphere" and personally writing

numerous employment anniversary cards, thank-you cards, and birthday wishes. He shared,

"After they get a little older and nobody remembers their birthday except their mother. . . I still

do." Participants both understood and lived out the concept of servant leadership. The highly

relational nature of servant leadership was expressed as part of, not separate from, their spiritual

journey. The self-awareness gained through spiritual practice influenced who they were

becoming as servant leaders. The next section will explore transformational leadership concepts.

Application of Transformational Theory

Among the characteristics of transformational leadership is the focus on follower development (Bass & Riggio, 2006). One-to-one relationship development plays an important role in influencing followers and inspiring change (Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Northouse, 2016). The themes earlier discussed in chapters four and five, including community, relationships, teams and collaboration, respect, compassion, and being a mentor to others, all relate to factors one and four of transformational leadership; respectively, idealized influence and individualized consideration (Northouse, 2016).

Idealized Influence

According to Day and Antonakis (2012), idealized influence describes leaders whom others admire and are inspired to follow. They are leaders who gain trust and have the ability to rally followers toward a common vision. Most participants talked about organizational and economic challenges that required a new vision for the future. Ethan talked about the challenge of Y2K and indicated that prior to Y2K, their organization outsourced:

> We had 75 programmers working in India . . . that was a crazy unsustainable time in IT. We really made a conscious decision that, in order for us to be successful long-term, we can't do that. It might be cheaper to ship those jobs, ship that development, but long-term, we can't do that. For the quality of our product, the quality of support, we needed our own people doing that. It was a conscious decision to say we are going to grow our own people. We're not going to use headhunters to bring Prima Donnas in from Silicon Valley, because that's not who we are.

He went on to talk about how his spirituality played a role during this crucial time: "I think the faith aspect really is a huge asset because it relates to confidence." Ethan said the organization "bet the farm" when they decided to invest $300,000 million to rewrite their software product

internally. "If we were not successful, the organization probably would have gone away. . . . I

recognized that the best thing I can do is fill this organization and surround myself with really

smart and innovative people." Ethan's vision catapulted the organization forward. The right

people were hired, the software rewrite was successful, and individuals whose livelihoods

depended upon the organization's success benefited long term.

 Similarly, Mark shared an organizational challenge that took place in 1987 that could

have literally closed the doors of his business. The challenge "probably is remarkable as

anything that's happened in my business life." He learned that the bank had called his line of

credit and tried to "shut the business down immediately. . . . They were very aggressive." He

was out of town at the time and walking through the airport and "there's a greeting card staring

at me that says, "Don't quit." I walk in and read it. That greeting card was written by a lady in a

suburb of Jackson, Mississippi three months before that is copyrighted 1987." Mark felt the card

was written just for him. He called that moment a "game changer" and now shares this story

with others who are ready to quit. "It was just a message that, even though it looked hopeless, it

was a message I wasn't expecting. What happened in the next 12 month is just remarkable."

This incident required Mark to rally his team and believe in a new vision that led to turning the

organization around at a critical juncture. He lived out the notion of idealized influence by

providing followers with a sense of vision and mission (Northouse, 2016).

 This next section will focus on this concept which, according to Avolio and Bass (2002),

focuses on personal attention to followers and their need for ongoing growth and development.

Leaders attend to this need through the act of mentoring or coaching that leads to "higher levels

of potential" (Bass, 1998, p. 6). Numerous examples earlier shared in the authentic leadership

section of chapter six, including relational transparency and self-awareness, lend themselves to

the development of individualized consideration. Additionally, the sections of the attributes of

servant leadership, including listening, empathy, awareness, commitment to the growth of

people, and building community include numerous examples that relate to individualized

influence. For the purpose of this section, I will focus on the theme of mentoring earlier

mentioned in chapter five.

Participants related challenges both within their organizations and without. Numerous

participants were engaged in the work of social justice serving on various non-profit boards and

leading community initiatives. They set their sights on building homeless shelters and serving

indigenous populations oversees. Janette talked about a community challenge and an initiative

she was part of to build affordable housing. She was part of a committee that wrote a grant.

Several community groups were opposed to the affordable housing in their neighborhoods.

Janette shared that

> some of the words [of the opponents to the housing] expressed were offensive to me but
>
> more offensive to people who had experienced homelessness or were homeless who were
>
> at the meeting. There were threats . . . it was kind of hard because some of the people I
>
> knew were saying these things. In the midst of all that, you need to pray, need to be
>
> calm, and not join in the fire, and let people say what they need to say.

The project was not approved and nearly 100 families were turned away. Many people who

served with Janette were ready to give up the fight; however, she said,

> I felt very strongly we had to keep going, that the timing just wasn't right. I mentioned
>
> that at a Board meeting that was very hot as well. I said that all we had to do is just stick
>
> to our mission. . . . We have to keep going.

This example was indicative of idealized influence and the importance of rallying others toward

a common mission and vision. Despite the challenges, Janette, maintained the vision and was

committed for the long haul. She referred to herself as a "dawn breaker," someone who

recognized current and urgent community needs; however, the time was not right at that moment

to move the housing initiative for the homeless forward. Although disappointed at the time, she

was committed to stay the course and continue to serve in the capacity of being a "dawn

breaker," a woman ahead of her time fighting for social justice.

Individualized Consideration

Participants not only sought out mentors themselves but understood the importance of

being a role model and mentor in the lives of others. Renelle, also a state-elected official, took it

upon herself to mentor young women who were newcomers in the realm of state government.

She shared, "I found people who wanted me to mentor them – not only on political issues but on

spiritual issues." Similarly, earlier shared in chapter five, Mark's numerous business trips to

Russia became opportunities not only to develop his business network but also to develop new

friendships and to become a mentor in faith. He shared, "Now when I talk to [international

business associates], they want to talk about their spiritual life." Nancy's role as mentor in the

workplace, also mentioned in chapter five, became an opportunity for her to "help other people

find their own way, to find their own center . . . to find . . . their own best way." She viewed this

as part of spirituality in the workplace. Nancy's artifact with the famous John Wesley quotation

echoed participants' expression of the significance of mentoring. In their role as mentor, many

participants served as transformational leaders through the ability to look beyond their self-

interest and consider the individualized needs of others (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Participants in this study understood the importance of transformational leadership that

engages team members toward a greater vision of the future. Transformational leaders are

visionaries who inspire others to act (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). The above examples exemplify

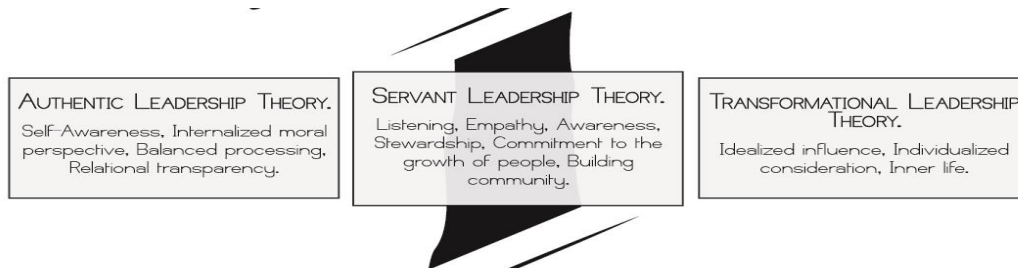both idealized influence and individualized consideration.

Inner Life

The inner life, according to Palmer (1999), has limitless potential. Cultivating one's inner life is often seen as counter cultural in a world that values the speed of change. Each of the analytical theories described above possesses components related to the inner life of which Palmer spoke. Among these components are heightened self-awareness, sound moral judgment, relational transparency, the gifts of listening, empathy, and the commitment to the growth of individuals and the community. Leaders who acquire these attributes through the habit of spiritual practice achieve greater clarity and connectedness to the Divine (Palmer, 2000). Participants in this study understood the power of reflectively pausing and listening deeply to their call to vocation. In doing so, their actions in the world were not portrayed in what Palmer (1999) called the arena of ego but in the realm of mindfully contributing in every aspect of their lives.

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Summary

</div>

This chapter identifies the theoretical relevance of authentic, servant, and transformational leadership. These theories are relational in nature and resonate with the participants in this study. Also noteworthy is participants' spiritual practice and the ways they draw strength and meaning from their internal journey and how it interacts with their professional leadership.

Figure 6.1 represents the medium connecting spiritual practice to leadership practice. The core of authentic, servant, and transformational leadership shows the slow, steady growth of the leader's journey over time moving toward the canopy of branches. These three leadership lenses provide the essential nourishment for one's leadership journey.

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP THEORY.
Self-Awareness, Internalized moral perspective, Balanced processing, Relational transparency.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP THEORY.
Listening, Empathy, Awareness, Stewardship, Commitment to the growth of people, Building community.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY.
Idealized influence, Individualized consideration, Inner life.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION, SUMMARY OF THE STUDY,

CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter I present a brief discussion of my interest in this study, summary of the

study, conclusions and recommendations for future research. I pursued this study with a twofold

purpose: to understand the components of participants' spiritual practice and how their practice

contributed to their role and responsibility as leaders; this exploratory case study applied the

analytical lenses of authentic, servant, and transformational leadership and offered important

insight into the integration of spiritual practices in the workplace.

Discussion

To begin, I became interested in the relationship of spirituality in the workplace through

nearly two decades of fundraising. My vocation led me to individuals who were recognized

leaders and community champions. I had the privilege of seeing firsthand their benevolence in

their workplaces among their employees that extended into the greater community. I became

interested in learning more about their successes and sought them out as mentors in my own life.

This engagement with numerous leaders began to reveal their compassion, integrity, deep sense

of reverence and respect for others, and a spirit of being nonjudgmental. Many of these leaders

were also leaders outside of their organizations and engaged in various works of community

service including their church, serving in the role of capital campaign chairs, church council

board members, and congregational presidents. They served on non-profit boards in higher

education, healthcare, and human services, and some were engaged in public service including

legislative appointments. Many were well known in their community for their philanthropy and

volunteerism. Their work and the way in which they worked influenced my leadership, and I

began to wonder how their experiences had the potential to impact other leaders. I believed an

exploration of their spiritual practices might inform their leadership, so I began to consider an

exploratory case study with the essence of the question being: "How does leaders' spiritual practice influence their role and actions as leaders?"

Among the important aspects of this study is the limited number of published studies directly relating leaders' unique spiritual practices and influences in the workplace. The published studies explored in this research indicated the positive correlation between spirituality and leadership (Benefiel, 2005; Flores, 2009; Cooper et al., 2005; Pawar, 2008). Many of the studies described attributes such as greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive characteristics, balanced processing, moral perspective, and being non-judgmental (George, 2003; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Sparrowe, 2005). The studies suggested spiritual practice influenced participants in related ways.

Summary of the Study

I interviewed 20 Midwest leaders who had demonstrated leadership within their organizations. They had all previously participated in a pilot study I conducted during which they responded "yes" to defining themselves as spiritual practitioners: someone who seeks to understand the unity and sacredness of life and whose life incorporates a deepening awareness of the sacred that has the potential to become a way of life (Drey, 2010). Interviewing this group of individuals allowed me to explore their unique spiritual practices and how they used the knowledge gained from their spiritual practices to inform their leadership.

Participants were interviewed through a series of open-ended, directive interviews. I listened for the ways in which the leaders appeared responsive to follower needs and how they interacted day to day even in the midst of organizational challenges. In each interview, I asked participants about their spiritual practices, how they cultivated their spiritual practice and how their practices were connected to their leadership. Participants were generous with their time and receptive to engaging in a conversation that described a deeply personal spiritual journey. A

strength of this study was the wide variety of vocations represented among participants including private sector for-profit businesses, non-profit organizations, and healthcare, education, human services, banking, etc. Additionally, participant experience spanned the decades from relatively new professionals to recently retired, offering multigenerational perspectives. Among the diversity of participants, common themes emerged including a commitment to deepening their inward spiritual journey, which contributed to their expression of leadership. Upon analysis and interpretation, I gained insight about leaders' spiritual practices and the effects of these practices on their leadership. Some of the common themes included an ongoing commitment to their spiritual practice, respect, being non-judgmental, and compassion.

In advance of this study, I assumed that leaders' spiritual practices could positively affect the whole person and thus affect both life and livelihood. Positive effects could include greater self-awareness and critical reflection, which in turn could influence leaders' roles and responsibility. I assumed spiritual practice may contribute to every aspect of an individual, including body, mind, and spirit, and in some way influence service and the common good. According to Fry (2003), spiritual leadership contributes to a sense of wholeness that has the potential to increase organizational commitment and positivity. I assumed that spiritual practices may inform leadership from the inside out. I expected common attributes could emerge that informed their leadership. The assumptions drawn were evidenced in the study. Every participant said their spiritual practices evolved over time, and each of the leaders reflected on their spiritual practice as a lifelong journey. Internal spiritual practices – including daily commitment, unique rituals, and a sense of gratitude – imbued their life and livelihood and were highly impactful for nearly all participants.

Conclusions

This study of Midwest leaders suggested that spiritual practice was among the positive influencing factors contributing to their leadership. Numerous common themes emerged that were integral aspects of both their personal spiritual practice and effects on professional leadership. Components of personal spiritual habits included the importance of regular prayer, meditation and reflection, spiritual reading, ritual practices, spiritual journaling, and communion with nature. Additionally, the resulting positive thoughts were expressed through their practice of gratitude, use of religious artifacts, and service to their community with subthemes of family, church, study groups, and mentors. Effects on professional leadership included participants' experience of workplace integration and building community in the workplace. Each of these effects were evidenced and applied to the theoretical lenses of authentic, servant, and transformational leadership.

Many participants explained the nature of their spiritual practice and how it deepened over time and became inextricably related to heightened self-awareness, which influenced relational elements evident in both their life and livelihood. Authentic leadership, servant leadership, and transformational leadership include self-transcendent values and positive other-directed emotions (Mitchie & Gooty, 2005). Consistent spiritual practice among participants, although varied, was a grounding force and actively reflected in their lives through community engagement and leadership practices. Repeatedly, they indicated the importance of daily meditation and, in some instances, how they relied upon their practice at crucial times in their life and in the life of their organization. Perhaps the most prevalent influencing factor proved to be their early relationships with family and the firm foundation of faith that supported them on their spiritual journey. Spiritual mentors, including community associations with church, spiritual groups, and retreat experiences, all influenced their spiritual journey.

Another significant component of participants' spiritual practice was the uniqueness of artifacts and rituals as sources of caring for their spirit and an ongoing reminder to pause, reflect, and return to their center. Ritual provided meaning and sometimes solace. Varieties of ritual abounded, for example, in the form of prayer organized on iPads, glass beads representing the approximate number of Saturdays left in life and the significance of the one's actions and choices made within the context of each day, long quiet drives on the prairie to refocus and reframe workplace challenges, and time for tea and daily expressions of gratitude placed in a gratitude bowl. For many participants, these rituals provided an anchor supporting their spiritual health and workplace presence. Participant artifacts, in many instances, served a similar purpose and also reflected their values of family, relationships, openness to diversity and acceptance of others. In many cases – family photos placed in their offices, images of family farms, humanitarian awards acknowledging their commitment to community and its diversity, folk art made by clients, statements of organizational core values, plants, and palm branches – each of these items, part of participant spiritual practice, were intentionally placed as a reminder of their spiritual foundation. They relied on these frequent reminders of how their self-awareness through spiritual practice is an integral aspect of leading reflectively with an awareness of others.

All participants integrated their spiritual practice into the workplace to varying degrees. Participants understood and were able to articulate the integral nature of their spiritual practice and the ways it shaped their leadership practice. Their spiritual practice imbued their days, and as their practice and work responsibilities grew, they became increasingly aware of the connectedness between the two. The time spent nurturing their practice helped them clarify their values and make conscious connections throughout their days. These sometimes small, helpful pauses in the midst of their busy days brought them back to their spiritual center. The expression from Acts 17:28, "in God we live, move and have our being," became how I identified the

essence of their daily walk and movement toward greater wholeness in life and leadership.

Spiritual practice helped participants meet challenges and understand the importance of

navigating challenges from their spiritual center that many referred to as being grounded.

Spirituality was part of their core makeup. Many participants expressed the need to return to

these quiet moments and that today, in this digital age, when there is rarely space that is

unconnected, finding the inner quiet reservoir is becoming even more important.

Many participants made a daily commitment to their spiritual practice, and all

participants understood how their practice influenced both their inner and outer life including the

workplace. Participants took a deep dive within. They appeared to understand their values, and

beyond merely articulating them, they walked the talk through their actions in the world. They

modeled the way and became important mentors to others during both ordinary and

extraordinarily challenging times.

The relationship between spiritual practice and professional leadership appeared to

support participants' heightened awareness and self-regulation. Luthans and Avolio (2003)

specified that authentic leadership results in greater self-awareness and self-regulated behavior

toward others. These characteristics were evidenced in participant decision-making processes

and follower interaction. Moreover, spiritual practice influenced how some leaders navigated

through workplace challenges from the way in which human resource dilemmas were resolved to

times of economic crisis and critical decision-making impacting their ability to continue to

operate as a vital business. Spiritual practice influenced participants' self-awareness and

awareness of others. These relational elements are evident in each of the theoretical lenses

utilized in this study including authentic, servant, and transformational leadership theory and the

aspects of understanding oneself and consideration of others. Further compounding the positive

dynamic of relationship interaction is the practice and expression of gratitude. Several

participants incorporated the practice of gratitude, and many said it was foundational to their spiritual practice.

Participants' personal spiritual habits were among the influencing factors contributing to their values in life and effects on professional leadership. Every participant expressed that they were the same person at work as they were at home. Many participants expressed the desire to be a servant leader. The value participants placed on developing respectful relationships was another significant component in this study. All participants understood the significance of relationships built upon respect, and that understanding was manifested in numerous ways both within the workplace and without as indicated in the community accolades they received. Among the most deeply valued human motivators is continual reinforcement of positive messages and encouragement that come in the form of being loved and valued. According to Morris (1997), these are the "soft issues" that matter and imply a sense of spiritual union in the workplace. Even in the midst of participants delivering uncomfortable news, they did so with deep respect and reverence. When workplace circumstances were especially challenging, many participants relied on inner strength which supported their ability to maintain their balance. Many participants relied on the reservoir of their spiritual practice in order to self-regulate their communication with others. Deep respect seemed to be related to participants' expressed compassion both in the workplace and in the community where many were engaged in social justice activities. Related organizational examples included internal corporate benevolence funds helping employees in need and philanthropy within the communities in which their businesses resided, among others.

Related to the theme of compassion is the subtheme of being non-judgmental, which was a quality that seemed to deepen along with their spiritual practice. Many participants expressed that earlier in their careers, their experience of the world was more black and white, and

consequently, they were more judgmental. Participants understood their leadership was

becoming more about reconciliation, forgiveness, and being non-judgmental. Morris (1997)

suggested leadership is about who people are becoming as human beings and as leaders.

Participants desired to become mentors and did so by establishing meaningful relationships

focused on the growth of others. They served as mentors, in some instances, below and above

the hierarchy, and were committed to collaborative working relationships, which valued and

further developed team members. Many helped others discover their authentic selves. The

leaders had a desire to nurture the concept of "their own best way" among employees and in their

community and social justice work.

      Numerous scholars recognized that individuals increasingly view work and spirituality as

integrated elements (Dent et al., 2005; Fry, 2003). Guenther (2001) noted an increase in the

interest of spirituality within the workplace that moves beyond the taboo of separating matters of

the spirit and workplace integration.

      In addition to my findings, I discovered an interesting side discussion by many

participants on the distinction between faith and spirituality. Of the 20 participants, 10 identified

as Lutheran and 10 as Catholic. The religious affiliation of participants was unplanned, and the

symmetry was purely coincidental. What they had in common was they all made a distinction

between their religion and spiritual practice. While religion was not an acceptable topic for the

workplace, spirituality was. While specific religious practices were kept private, spiritual

practices could be shared with clients, coworkers, and visitors. While their faith tradition was

specific and defined, their spirituality was diverse, exploratory, and open to the different

spiritualties experienced by others. Stacy captured the sentiments of most participants when she

explained, "I really differentiate spiritual practices from religious practices. I think that, for

some people, those are the same. For other people, they're completely separate. For many of us,

they overlap." All participants found ways for their spirituality to enter the workplace. With the

exception of one participant, they all talked about not necessarily being religious but being

spiritual. Hans was the only participant to assert "faith in the workplace is essential;" and he was

intentional about using the word faith rather than spirituality.

For most participants, their spiritual practices seemed to open their perspectives and

interests in not only exploring other aspects of their practice but honoring the diversity of others'

spiritual practices. The following data provide examples of this phenomenon. Adam said,

"Although we may have differences in. . . religion, we are really all creatures and creation of God.

There are many ways to connect with that inner spirit. There isn't any one way." For David,

religion is seen as separating people while spirituality is universal. More than one participant was

celebrated with community awards acknowledging them for their inclusiveness. Isabelle was

especially proud of an award, included among her artifacts, which was a humanitarian award

given by the local Jewish temple community of faith. As a Christian receiving the Jewish

community's humanitarian award, Isabelle reflected on God's inclusivity of all.

Many participants valued this same inclusiveness. Janette shared, "I don't have a

competitive nature. I believe more in partnership. I felt the competition and yet, I believe that

what we need to do is build community. I believe in relationship . . . our relationship with God

and all others who reflect God. All people do reflect God and so does nature." Janette's spiritual

philosophy overrode any traditional religious requirements when it came to making sure that

Native American practices of burning sweet grass and offering sage were welcomed in the

organization's chapel.

Nancy felt a greater freedom working in a faith-based institution and recognized that she

and her colleagues have greater freedom than secular organizations to integrate spirituality into

their social justice work. At the same time, her workplace is religiously diverse with Christians,

Muslims, Buddhists and others. Spirituality is "a much more human thing than it is a denomination." One's religion, then, is just one variety of spiritual practice available in the world but not the only one and not the "best" one.

While several participants talked about the importance of the separation between church and state, Keith thought about it differently:

The whole church and state issue. It's my view there really is no conflict. It's the same thing. It's a matter of making sure that we recognized that, as each person is made in the image and likeness of God, you live a life and you make decisions that are expressive of your beliefs. That's important. That's holy. The holiness of ordinary life needs to be addressed more.

Like Keith, Greta shared similar sentiments:

People try to be very cautious about separation of church and state – church and business. It doesn't really matter to us who or where you're from. I have mentors I seek their guidance on improving me as a leader. They are all spiritual people. It happens that they're all Christian. That's a function of where we're located in our little place in the universe, not necessary I need them to be that. I don't need them to be Catholic. I don't need them to be Lutheran. I don't need them to be Evangelical. None of that matters to me. I need them to be grounded. I need to know they acknowledge a being greater than themselves.

The source of the distinction for some participants seemed to be variations on the theme of separation of church and state: caution from a legal standpoint, reluctance out of sensitivity to others' comfort levels, fear of appearing competitive, possibly just an interest in letting others have their say rather than dominating with their own perspective. But it was clear that almost all of the participants were at ease discussing and practicing spirituality in the workplace while

specific references to a particular religion were to be avoided, even by people who considered

themselves to be traditionally faithful. They talked about spirituality in the workplace, and some

were cautious about how they spoke about their faith.

Renelle shared having "worked in the public sector most of [her] professional career [she

was] "very careful about religious symbols" in her workplace. Being nonjudgmental about

another person's "experiences of God" was important to her spiritually. Some participants spoke

about the notion of competition between faith traditions and how it seemed counter to their

developing spiritual practice. Franklin shared, "My God isn't bigger than your God. We're all

seeking that same God. For me, there's a fine line between balancing religion on your sleeve or

truly trying to be spiritual."

So is this sensitivity to open-ended multi-dimensional spirituality the positive outcome of

the poorly named political correctness? Is there some embarrassment about being associated

with a traditional religion that muffles these leaders or are the most effective leaders so attuned

to the needs of others that they will not even chance a negative reaction to bringing in their own

religion into the workplace? The answers are far beyond the scope of this study, but further

research is warranted.

For organizational leadership, the study's practical implications could show leaders the

importance of having a spiritual practice is among the integral aspects of leading well. Overall,

the findings of this study identify that on-going commitment to spiritual practice positively

affects leadership in the workplace.

In summary, there are a number of clear links, as described in the literature review, to be

drawn between the themes identified in this study with certain orientations such as

transformational, servant, and authentic leadership. These leadership constructs place a priority

on core values, and one possible inference is that leaders who are committed to spiritual practice

are more equipped to place a high priority on people and positive relationship building. Spiritual

practice contributed to participants' ability to successfully navigate through challenging

circumstances. Their practice influenced their mindset and was an integral part of the beginning,

middle and end of their days and contributed to effective leadership practices.

Recommendations, Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

The scope of this study specifically sought to determine how spiritual practice may have

the potential to affect the practice of leadership. Because the study followed an exploratory

qualitative research design, the results cannot be generalized. Yet, this research addresses the

specific question about spiritual practice and the workplace. Further related study has the

potential to reveal more useful data about the phenomenon of spiritual practice and its

relationship to leaders' self-awareness regarding their role and responsibility as leaders.

My leading recommendation is leaders can be encouraged to integrate their own unique

spiritual practices into their workplaces. Engaging in spiritual practice that is meaningful,

including the use of creative rituals, has the potential to remind leaders of their core values and

spiritual center. Although participants were reluctant to bring their religions and religious

practices into the workplace, allowing one's self to practice one's spirituality contributes to being

more authentic, more transformational, and a better servant leader.

Leadership implications are suggested for both individuals and organizations including

chief administrators. For individuals, the study's practical implications could show leaders the

importance of viewing work and spirituality as integrated elements. Developing one's spiritual

practice has the potential to build key leadership attributes including integrity, respect,

compassion, and being non-judgmental. Additionally, based upon this study, leaders who are

spiritual practitioners acknowledge the importance of building one's spiritual reservoir as a way

to navigate workplace challenges. Practically speaking, organizations could implement

innovative ways to incorporate spirituality in the workplace. Viewing work and spirituality as integrated elements and supporting the development of who people are becoming as human beings and as leaders has the potential to nurture the development of the whole person- body, mind, and spirit. Human resource development and policy implications could include building connectedness to organizational mission, vision, and values through incorporating mini and extended retreats, contemplative practices, unique ritual, and attention to workplace setting. Organizational leaders who develop inner life practices can positively influence outward leadership practice through expressing a servant-mindset, valuing relationships, honoring diversity, enhancing collaboration and team building, serving as mentors, and walking the talk through ethical practices.

The first recommendation for additional study is to examine the role of the followers in the organizations where leaders are defined or seen as spiritual practitioners. This research could also yield results for organizational development practices.

Second, I recommend study to examine how spirituality in the workplace might be nurtured. This research could identify successful strategies and tactics utilized in organizations where a spiritual practice is consciously integrated into workplaces. Further study could identify positive corporate culture and practices. An additional area could be to examine, more specifically, organizational initiatives employed by leaders who identify as having a spiritual practice.

Third, this study was based on the Christian faith tradition – 50% of participants were of Lutheran faith tradition and 50% Catholic tradition. Expanding beyond these two denominations and exploring varied faith traditions may be worthwhile pursuing. First, a researcher could conduct a qualitative study featuring a larger sample of faith traditions, beyond Lutheranism and Catholicism. This study would expand the data and understanding of the role of spiritual practice and its effect upon leadership. A few research questions come to mind: Would all faith

traditions influence spiritual practice in the workplace in similar ways? What might the unique

spiritual practices and rituals reveal?

Fourth, another exploration should investigate leaders beyond the Midwest ethos. Is

there a Midwest ethos? The study could include leaders from a wider geographic cross section

and analyze similarities and distinctions.

Fifth, a quantitative or mixed-methods study could further expand the pool of data and

reveal valuable information regarding organizational implications including strategic planning

and resource development. Various scales of spiritual measurement and assessment could be

employed in conjunction with qualitative interviews. The idea of a spiritual assessment tool

could be employed to complement the study.

A final area of recommended research emerged from the data. Is there an important

distinction to be drawn related to religions and spiritual practices? How might these distinctions

positively or negatively influence leadership and consequently followership?

These recommendations are envisioned to contribute to the study of spirituality in the

workplace. It is my hope that they will further expand upon the nature of leaders' spiritual

practice and how these habits affect leadership. It has been a rare privilege to listen to "spirit

persons," people who have frequent and vivid experiences of the sacred, who model the way for

me and so many others what it means to translate spiritual practice into leadership practice.

Final Thoughts

As Fry (2003) put it, spiritual leadership is a force that unites spirit, body, mind, and heart

inspiring employees to be highly productive, loyal, and happy. With increasing organizational

pressures facing leaders, discovering positive ways of developing leaders' inward journey and

self-awareness is becoming more and more important. Marketplace demands require ongoing

adaptation, change, and balanced perspectives to address the road ahead. Spirituality, according

to Wellman et al. (2009), complements competent leadership. Participants in this study

exemplified many themes related to positive leadership which are essential attributes for others

who desire to pause long enough to equip themselves for twenty-first-century dynamics of

change. In his recently published book, *Thank you for Being Late*, Friedman (2016), discussed

the tectonic shifts informing our world today and the importance of pausing so that one can

reflect on the possibilities and the pitfalls. He referred to our current times as the *supernova*

during which an extraordinary shift in energy is reshaping everything and creating opportunities

to either save or destroy our very future.

Leaders preparing for these dizzying changes must consider the significance of pausing

long enough to strengthen their spiritual practices as a way to successfully navigate toward

success. Spiritual practice would benefit individuals who lead the way but also followers, who,

according to Neal (2000), are looking for both workplace mentors and added meaning in the

environment where a good portion of their lives are spent – spiritual practice as life and

livelihood empowering our very future.

A leader's self-understanding through disciplined spiritual practice – whether an

individual is Catholic, Lutheran, male, female, experienced in leadership or novice, to name a

few distinctive qualities – is an integral element in equipping leadership professionals in

becoming more critically reflective of their role and responsibility as leaders in a global society.

Leadership is a process of transformation, an ongoing journey; it begins with the seed of spiritual

practice and becomes a part of the growth of one's interior and eventually the seed becomes a

transformative force that contributes to one's leadership and further influences professional

practices. This dynamic relationship between spiritual practice and professional leadership is

essential in today's workplace.

This study confirmed the overall positive effects of spiritual practice and some of the resulting leadership attributes. Leaders' development of their inner life through purposeful spiritual practice was not only integral to their individual journeys but to their outward leadership practice. Through varied and unique practices such as prayer, meditation, and reflective pauses during challenging workplace events, leaders are better equipped to stay grounded in their values and consciously translate their values into positive actions. Their actions nurture relationships and inform their responses both within and outside of the workplace. Qualities revealed, such as deep respect and being nonjudgmental, inform their ethics and doing what needs to be done in the right way. Leaders who desire to become more self-aware and grounded in their values should seek out ways to incorporate their spiritual practice in the workplace; they can learn from the examples shown in this study.
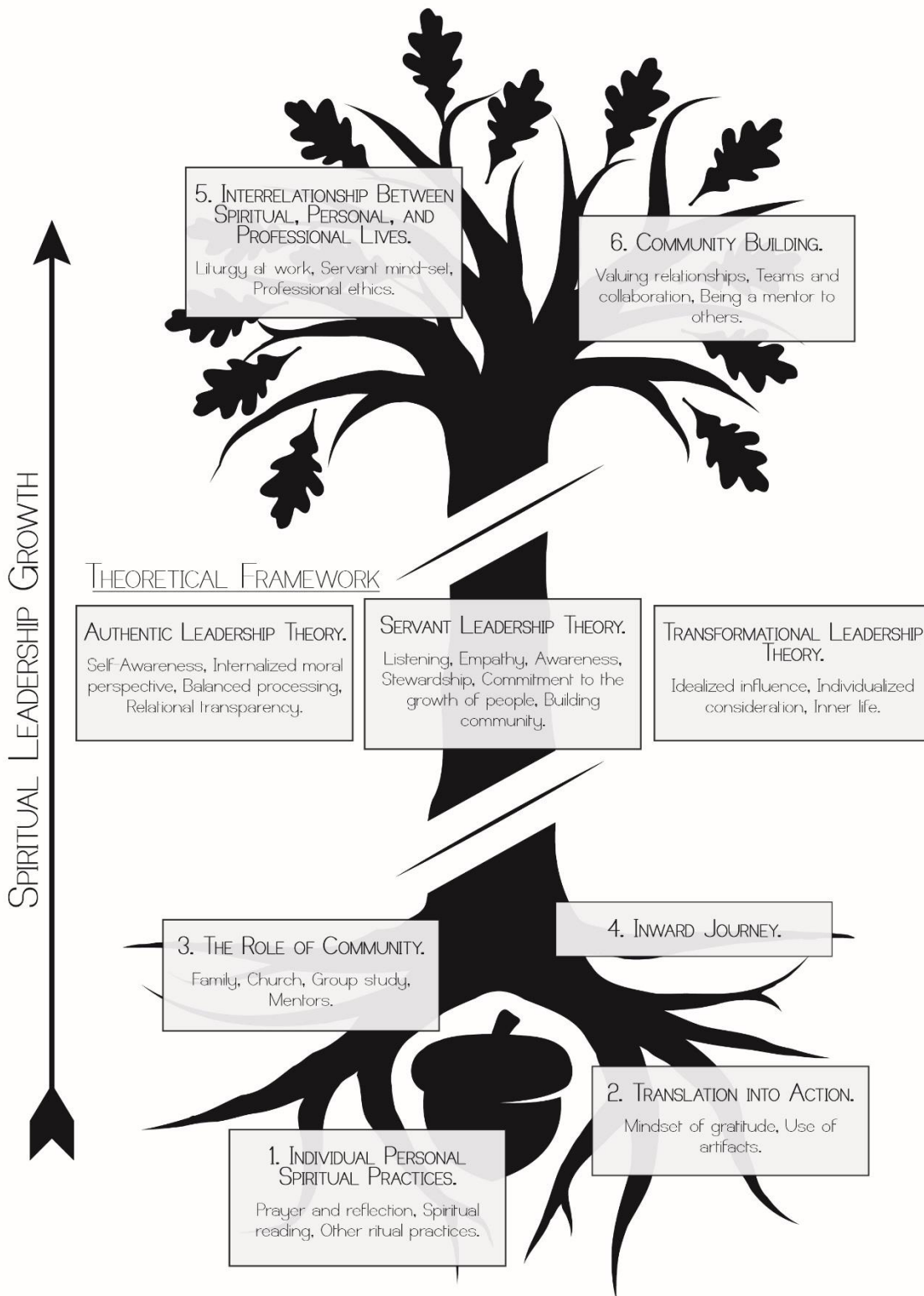
Leaders who commit to developing their inner life recognize the transformative nature of the spiritual journey and its relationship to influences in the workplace. They discover meaningful ways to integrate "liturgy" at work and value a servant mindset that embraces a leadership style of "walking the talk" and leading with the whole and integrated self. They also recognize that there is no one way to integrate their spiritual practice and are open to diversity of perspectives and the innumerable ways one's spiritual practice can be expressed in the workplace. Leaders should assess the ways they currently incorporate their spiritual practice and encourage an openness to dialogue regarding the benefits/strategies of integrating spiritual practice in the workplace.

This study makes a contribution to the existing literature regarding the effects of spiritual practice and its positive relationship to the workplace and also provides insight into ongoing research in this area. The findings have important implications for leadership. This study has the potential to offer both the reader and researchers a more complete picture of the

interrelationship of spiritual practice and leadership practice and thus contributes to broadening

scholarly efforts related to leadership dynamics and informs other leaders who seek to become

more self-aware and grounded in their leadership through the use of spiritual practices and self-

discovery. The intention has been to stimulate thought regarding how individual leaders use

spiritual practice to become self-aware and critically reflective of their role as leaders.

Overall, the participants viewed their spiritual practices among the variables that

contributed to their leadership effectiveness. This exploratory case study completed the goals

identified. I pursued this study with a twofold purpose: to understand the components of

participants' spiritual practice and to learn how their practice contributed to their role and

responsibility as leaders.

Figure 7.1 as seen below, symbolizes the great power of the seed, the acorn ultimately becoming

the mighty oak. As Meister Eckhart, 15th century Dominican once said, "What we plant in the

soil of contemplation, we shall reap in the harvest of action."

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP GROWTH

5. INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPIRITUAL, PERSONAL, AND PROFESSIONAL LIVES.

Liturgy at work, Servant mind-set, Professional ethics.

6. COMMUNITY BUILDING.

Valuing relationships, Teams and collaboration, Being a mentor to others.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP THEORY.

Self-Awareness, Internalized moral perspective, Balanced processing, Relational transparency.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP THEORY.

Listening, Empathy, Awareness, Stewardship, Commitment to the growth of people, Building community.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY.

Idealized influence, Individualized consideration, Inner life.

3. THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY.

Family, Church, Group study, Mentors.

4. INWARD JOURNEY.

2. TRANSLATION INTO ACTION.

Mindset of gratitude, Use of artifacts.

1. INDIVIDUAL PERSONAL SPIRITUAL PRACTICES.

Prayer and reflection, Spiritual reading, Other ritual practices.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Letter Requesting Participation

Dear (Participant),

My name is Lonnie Pederson. I am currently completing research for my dissertation at the University of St. Thomas. The focus of my study is to examine the topic of leadership and spirituality in the workplace and its impact on core leadership competencies. It is my hope that the results of this research will contribute to the growing number of leaders and organizations that are acknowledging the value of those who intentionally engage in spiritual practices to achieve greater self-knowledge and growth and how they use the knowledge gained from spiritual practices to inform and influence their leadership and organizational culture.

I will soon contact you to inquire about your willingness to participate in the interview process. It is anticipated that each face-to-face interview will last approximately one-and-a-half hours and take place onsite at your primary business location. Study participants will receive a copy of the interview questions in advance of the scheduled interview. All responses will be kept confidential. Each respondent will be assigned a number, rather than a name, to ensure confidentiality.

The results of this study will be available to all participants upon request. Your consent to participate will be acknowledged by the consent form provided by the University of St. Thomas. I will make this document available upon your affirmative verbal response to participating. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you in advance for your consideration to participate in this research study.

Sincerely,

Lonnie Pederson

Phone 701-799-9975
Email pede2099@stthomas.edu

Appendix B – IRB Materials

Action: Project Approved
Approval Date: May 22, 2015
Expiration: May 21, 2016

Dear Lonnie Pederson:

Thank you for submitting your research protocol with requested modifications. The University of St. Thomas Institutional Review Board has read your protocol and approved your project as reflected in the modifications that you submitted. Please note that all research conducted in connection with this project title must be done in accordance with this approved submission.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and assurance that the project is understood by the participant and their signing of the approved consent form. The informed consent process must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between you and your research participants. Federal law requires that each person participating in your study receive a copy of the consent form. All research records relating to participant consent (signed consent forms) must be retained for a minimum of three years after completion of the project.

Please note that any revision to the procedures approved by the IRB must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to your making changes to your research study.
Any unanticipated problems involving risks or harm to project participants or others must be reported promptly to the IRB. Any non-compliance issues or complaints relating to the project must be reported immediately.

Approval to work with human subjects in connection with this project will expire on May 21, 2016. This project requires continuing review by the IRB on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms in IRBNet for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received at least two weeks prior to the expiration date of May 21, 2016.

Please direct questions at any time to Sarah Muenster-Blakley at muen0526@stthomas.edu and include reference to the title of your project in your correspondence.
I wish you success with your project.

Sincerely,

Sarah Muenster-Blakley, M.A.
Director, Institutional Review Board

Consent Form

University of St. Thomas

Leadership and Spirituality in U.S. Midwestern Workplace: A Case Study

691054-1

I am conducting a study about how leaders use spiritual practice to become socially aware and critically reflective of their role and actions as leaders. I invite you to participate in this research. You were selected as a possible participant because you earlier completed a short survey that was part of a research methods pilot study or were recommended by a pilot study participant as someone who fit the criteria for this study. Prospective participants are organizational leaders in the Midwest United States who engage in spiritual practice. For the purpose of this study, spiritual practice is defined according to Thomas Merton (1961) as a discipline involving a deepening awareness of the sacred and an introspective journey, including elements such as prayer and meditation which have the potential to become a way of life. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Lonnie R. Pederson of Sioux Falls Cohort 3 of the UST Doctorate in Leadership Program, Dr. Jean-Pierre Bongila, Advisor.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is: To explore how spiritual practice influences leadership. The primary research question is: how do leaders use spiritual practice to become socially aware and critically reflective of their role and actions as leaders? The following sub-question supports my main question: what essential elements of spiritual practice affect the development of leaders and their organizations in the Midwest? I will use an exploratory case-study strategy to discover the conditions surrounding spiritual practice and its influence on the leaders of Midwest organizations. The exploration of this topic may open a new way of seeing possibilities within

the complexities of leading, specifically within the 21st century organizational climate in the Midwest United States.

Procedures:

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you agree to be in this study, you will be among approximately 20 leaders in the Midwest to provide in-depth information about the dynamic relationship of spiritual practice and leadership. Study participants will include an equal number of men and women of varying ages and career paths. I will ask you to participate in an audio recorded interview lasting 60 to 75 minutes conducted on-site in your natural work environment in a private, mutually agreed upon setting. You will be asked to bring 5-10 selected artifacts that, to you, represent evidence of spiritual practice in the workplace. The procedures followed will ensure your anonymity and confidentiality. A pseudonym will be used for your name. Digital recordings and transcribed interviews will be securely stored. I will enlist the assistance of a transcriptionist who will sign a confidentiality agreement ensuring all research information remains secure.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

The study encompasses Midwest leaders and includes the 12 states of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. While this is an expansive region and every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality, I cannot guarantee your anonymity. There is a possibility that people may recognize your responses in a report that I may publish. You will receive no direct benefit or payment associated with participation.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept confidential. The types of records I will create include interview recordings, transcriptions, and consent forms which will be retained for at least

three years. Each of these items will be securely stored in electronic format in my home office

and destroyed following completion of the dissertation. The use of pseudonyms and secure

storage of all documents will provide essential participant safeguards.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to

participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of St. Thomas or

the researcher. I will honor your request to withdraw involvement before December 31, 2015

without penalty. You may contact me directly at 701-799-9975 to request withdrawal. Data

collected from your interview will not be utilized if you choose to withdraw. You are also free

to skip any questions I may ask.

Contacts and Questions

My name is Lonnie R. Pederson. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have

questions later, you may contact me at 701-799-9975, pede2099@stthomas.edu. I am a current

student enrolled in the UST Doctorate in Leadership Program. You may also contact my advisor,

Dr. Jean-Pierre Bongila, at 651-962-4700, jpbongila@stthomas.edu. You may also contact the

University of St. Thomas Institutional Review Board at 651-962-6035 with any questions

or concerns.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I consent to participate in the study and agree to the audio-taped interview. I am at least 18 years

of age.

_____   _____

Signature of Study Participant   **Date**

_____

Print Name of Study Participant

_____   _____

Signature of Researcher   **Date**

University of St. Thomas
Institutional Review Board
IRB Application Form

Last edited by: Lonnie Pederson	☐ Full	☑ Expedited
Last edited on: May 18, 2015	☐ Exempt	☐ Classroom

[691054-1] Leadership and Spirituality in U.S. Midwestern Workplace: A Case Study

Completion of this form is the first step in seeking the institution approval that is required for all educational and research projects whether or not they are funded. Answer all questions on this form completely, include attachments, and obtain all signatures prior to final submission of this package on IRBNet.

The University of St. Thomas Institutional Review Board (IRB) will process your application, coordinate review and notify you of their determination. **Research activity may not begin until you receive notification of APPROVAL from the IRB Office. Submissions to the IRB Office that are incomplete will be returned.**

I. Principal Investigator

Name:	Lonnie Pederson	**Status:**	Graduate Student
Department:	Leadership & Policy Administration		
Phone:	7017999975	**Email:**	pede2099@stthomas.edu

II. Research Advisors   N/A ☐

Name:	Jean-Pierre Bongila		
Department:	Leadership & Policy Administration		
Phone:	6519624700	**Email:**	jpbongila@stthomas.edu

III. Co-Investigators and Other Personnel   N/A ☑

Name:		
Department:		
Phone:	**Email:**	

IV. Review Information

Projected Completion Date:	08/31/2019

Generated on IRBNet

Institutional Review Board

UNIVERSITY of ST. THOMAS

- The information provided in this form is true and accurate.
- The principal investigator will seek and obtain prior approval from the UST IRB office for any substantive modification in the proposal, including but not limited to changes in cooperating investigators/agencies as well as changes in procedures.
- Unexpected or otherwise significant adverse events in the course of this study which may affect the risks and benefits to participation will be reported in writing to the UST IRB office and to the subjects.
- The research will not be initiated and subjects cannot be recruited until final approval is granted.

Appendix C - Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement

Institutional Review Board
UNIVERSITY of ST. THOMAS

TRANSCRIBER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate in the study. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

Project Name	Leadership and Spirituality in U.S. Midwestern Workplace: A Case Study	IRB Tracking Number	691054-1

Agreement	
I agree to transcribe data for this study. I agree that I will:	
1	Keep all research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the information in any form or format (e.g. disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the researcher who is the primary investigator of this study.
2	Keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) secure while in my possession. This includes: • using closed headphones when transcribing audio taped interviews • keeping all transcript documents and digitized interviews in computer password-protected files • closing any transcription programs and documents when temporarily away from the computer • keeping any printed transcripts in a secure location such as a locked file cabinet • permanently deleting any e-mail communication containing the data
3	Give all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) to the primary investigator when I have completed the research tasks.
4	Erase or destroy all research information in any form or format that is not returnable to the primary investigator (e.g., information stored on my computer hard drive) upon completion of the research tasks.

Statement of Consent	By checking the electronic signature box, I am stating that I understand what is being asked of me and I agree to the terms listed above.		
Signature of Transcriber ☒ *Check to sign electronically*		Date	
Print Name of Transcriber	Diane Yard		
Signature of Researcher ☒ *Check to sign electronically**		Date	
Print Name of Researcher	Lonnie Pederson		

*Electronic signatures certify that::
The signatory agrees that he or she is aware of the polities on research involving participants of the University of St. Thomas and will safeguard the rights, dignity and privacy of all participants.

Revised: 7/6/2011   Page 1 of 2

Appendix D – Research Questions

691054-1

1. For the purposes of this study, spiritual practice is defined as a discipline involving an introspective spiritual journey with the potential to become a way of life. Using this definition, are you involved in a spiritual practice?

2. How do you cultivate your spiritual practice; i.e., what spiritual practices do you employ to deeply reflect?

3. Does your spiritual practice play a role in your decisions as a leader? If so, how would you describe the influence of your spiritual beliefs in the workplace?

4. Does your spiritual practice play a role in your decisions as a leader? If so, how would you describe the influence of your spiritual beliefs in the workplace?

5. How do your spiritual practices assist in developing self-understanding and understanding of others whom you lead?

6. How would you describe the nature of the connectedness of your leadership identity to your faith journey?

7. In what ways do your spiritual practices direct your moral and ethical decision-making?

8. How has your spiritual practice aided you in the strategic decision-making processes?