St. Stephen's College

The Journey for Authentic Relationship: Exploring the Decision to Self-Disclose Sexual Orientation

by

Marc Doucet

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Abstract

Through hermeneutic phenomenology, I explore my experience of self-disclosing my sexual orientation to a group of Clinical Pastoral Education students during initial phases of the supervisor-teacher relationship. My purpose or intent was to come to a clearer and deeper understanding of the meaning of self-disclosing my sexual orientation as a teaching supervisor. The exploration included unfolding meaning of the self through my role as the provisional supervisor, the Roman Catholic man, and the mature supervisor. Through these interviews and reflections with each part of self, insights and interpretations emerged. The hermeneutic circle was realized accessing external sources a number of times to review themes and deepen my insights and interpretations. The findings indicate that the nature of authenticity with self and others is constructed, constantly shifting, changing and ever deepening. A process of discernment, the internal forum, emerges which takes into consideration safety and security, the cultural, political and social context, and authenticity in order to surface the best approach in the situation. Further, the teaching supervisor needs to be conscious of his/her underpinning theology and the ways in which this informs and impacts the choices she/he makes in self-disclosing sexual orientation to students.

Keywords: authenticity; hermeneutic phenomenology; pastoral education; pastoral supervision; self-disclosure; sexual orientation; teaching supervision.

Dedication

It is appropriate that a dissertation exploring storytelling start with a personal story. It occurred at the time of my father's funeral in early 2000. As is often the case, funerals bring together extended family that may not have gathered for many years—this being the case with my father's death. Growing up we had been quite close as an extended family and celebrated a number of events throughout the year, but as we moved into our adult years our responsibilities and interests took us away from each other.

At my father's funeral, one of my cousins expressed her sadness that the only time we were getting together was for family funerals, and her desire that we connect more regularly. The desire to be more connected fueled my response, that if we were to get together more often, they needed to know who Nereo was in my life—they had previously met him but without defining our relationship.

The acceptance we received to this self-disclosure I have always maintained was the experience that launched my intentional integration and external acknowledgement of my sexual orientation— eventually culminating in this dissertation. For this reason, I credit my cousins, Anita Carey, Donna Gilbart, Mary Anne Godfrey, and Lawrene Larche, for providing the emotional and psychological foundation to pursue and write such a personal dissertation.

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And finally, to my now husband, Nereo Bonomo: his constant affirmation and encouragement kept me going during some of the long periods of researching and writing a dissertation. It is one thing to support and encourage something you understand and are interested in; it is an expression of love and faith to provide that support and encouragement based on the desire to see the other succeed and celebrate that accomplishment with them.

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Abbreviations

CASC	Canadian Association for Spiritual Care
CPE	Clinical Pastoral Education
DMin	Doctor of Ministry
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer

Introduction

> "We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time"[1].

My journey of authenticity led me to the point of researching and writing this dissertation on exploring and examining the significance of disclosing my sexual orientation. My research question was "What is the meaning in my lived experience of disclosing my sexual orientation as part of the story telling process, during the beginning phase of the Clinical Pastoral Education Unit (CPE) supervisory relationship?" The research design was a single-study (i.e. exploring my own experience), and the methodology was hermeneutic phenomenology. I chose hermeneutic phenomenology because it attempts to uncover the understanding or meaning the experience possesses. Hermeneutic phenomenology does not only explain an experience, but in the telling of the story, "explores what this phenomenon can mean by offering possible interpretations" (Van Manen, 1997, p. 364). The goal of hermeneutic phenomenology is "to move beyond what the participant (or text) says of experience to what is implicitly revealed about the pre-reflective experiential realm in the telling" (Finlay, 2014, p. 125). A hermeneutic exploration does not only describe a lived experience, but it interprets the "texts of lived experience in an attempt to determine the meaning embodied in them" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 38).

Context for Research Question

I have been a teaching supervisor with the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC) for over 15 years. CASC is a national multifaith organization committed to

[1] T.S. Elliott, "Little Gidding", 1942.

the professional education, certification, and professional practice of people involved in spiritual care and counselling. CASC provides educational courses for people preparing to become professional providers of spiritual care and psycho-spiritual therapists. Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is a reflective practice model of education, in which the supervisor working with a small group of students (three-eight) introduces students to a particular modality of spiritual care giving. A foundational principle is the safe and effective use of self in the spiritual care relationship. Students therefore spend a significant amount of time in self-reflection, integrating their religious beliefs, worldviews, personal values, family of origin values, along with societal and cultural values. The supervisory alliance that is built between the supervisor and student is foundational for the learning and growth that occurs within a CPE course.

From the very beginning of my career, as a provisional teaching supervisor (1998) with CASC, I have struggled with the process of storytelling at the beginning of the CPE unit. The common process is to ask students to "tell their story". This is meant to be more than a mere resume or a retelling of historical facts. While it contains the latter, there is some encouragement, if not expectation (unspoken or otherwise), that the story includes more personal, interpersonal, or intrapersonal aspects of the student's self-understanding and awareness. The custom is for the supervisor to share his/her story first in order to model an approach to the exercise. As a gay man, I have been conflicted about how much of my story to tell and often feel disadvantaged in comparison to my heterosexual colleagues. There is a presumption of heterosexuality that people carry which assumes that someone is straight unless they tell us differently. Given this presumption, a heterosexual teaching supervisor does not need to state their sexual

orientation because it is assumed that they are heterosexual. Heterosexual colleagues claim that they do not necessarily state their sexual orientation, and can find it difficult to appreciate how significant this particular self-disclosure is for me. This illustrates one of my fundamental premises: a straight supervisor does not have to state that they are heterosexual because it is assumed that they are. When a straight supervisor speaks about a wife or husband, this confirms the assumption of heterosexuality and there is no further processing needed. Students are not going to find this disclosure challenging, socially deviant, ethically questionable, or morally reprehensible; it is the expected norm. Further, when a heterosexual teaching supervisor does not disclose their sexual orientation this does not entail the withholding of an essential aspect of their personhood because the assumption is that they are straight.

It is a very different experience for the gay or lesbian teaching supervisor. The presumption of heterosexuality means that if, like most heterosexual supervisors, I say nothing about my sexual orientation, students assume (unless they personally know differently) that I am straight. This assumption carries a different interpretation for the gay or lesbian supervisor than it does for the straight supervisor. To disclose that I have a same sex partner is not the same 'neutral' self-disclosure. It might be accepted, affirmed, and even preferred (depending on the student and their life story), but there remains the possibility that this self-disclosure, in particular at the beginning of a CPE unit, will be met with negativity, hesitancy, suspicion, or even dismissal. A straight supervisor normally would not face such scrutiny, based solely on their sexual orientation, other than possibly, in the situation where they were in the minority as a straight person.

This vocation to authenticity with a responsibility for my experience was not only a personal vocation; it contributes to the professional and scholarly aspects of my research and dissertation and to the practical and scholarly development of my profession. For example, Evans-Tameron (2012) indicates that alienation affects professional functioning. When we cannot go to the painful places and acknowledge our own experiences and hurt, we cannot fully "go there" with patients and students. Watts-Jones (2010) suggests that some self-disclosure is more challenging than others: "sexual orientation, parental status and religion have emerged as creating more of a dilemma at times than other identities" (p. 405). In speaking about "covert subjugated identities" which Watts-Jones defines as those that are not necessarily visible or are more private, she argues that the therapist "need[s] to be in charge of whether to name or forego naming these identities with clients" (p. 415).

To make the choice not to disclose my sexual orientation withholds an essential aspect of my personhood. If I choose not to disclose the fact that I am gay, I am withholding a significant experience of self—the way in which I live in the world, experience the world, and view the world. While Canadian society and culture have come a long way in recent years in the acceptance of gay and lesbian culture, it is still not without stigma and judgment, if not moral value. As much as my husband and I enjoy an open and accepting life—we live in an area with accepting and supporting neighbours, we have supportive work environments and colleagues, and are accepted as a couple—we are aware of the limitations and boundaries that exist. For instance, we do not have to travel far outside the Greater Toronto Area (or other urban areas) before we have a different experience because of our sexual orientation. Even within the larger Greater

Toronto Area, there are neighbourhoods where we would feel more tolerated than accepted. We have experienced discrimination on summer vacations within Ontario with statements that made us feel unsafe and unwelcome. Further, in preparing for retirement, there are cities and towns that cannot be considered given their attitudes toward gay couples. Similarly, when it comes to planning vacations, there are certain countries that we would not feel safe travelling. While the reception might be polite, there is an undertone of judgmental tolerance which interferes with our intent to relax and have fun. This is not an experience heterosexual people or couples have to be concerned with.

The nature of sexual orientation, I argue, positions it qualitatively different from other self-disclosures for the teaching supervisor. While there are any number of choices and decisions to be made concerning self-disclosure throughout the supervisory relationship, such as outside interests and activities, none of them are as fundamental as a person's sexual orientation, or for the gay or lesbian person, coming to an acceptance of one's sexual orientation—coming out of the closet, and integrating this awareness of one's sexual orientation into one's overall psychological and theological understanding.

The Ethical Foundation

When I began my Doctor of Ministry (DMin) studies, I presumed I would do a qualitative phenomenological research project that included interviewing some of my former students. I thought of asking the students about their experience of me disclosing my sexual orientation; their experience of me choosing not to disclose my sexual orientation; what they understood to be their experience of our relationship; and how the disclosure or non-disclosure of my sexual orientation impacted and informed our supervisor-student relationship. As I engaged in graduate learning, including the yearly

Integrative Seminar intensive weeks and the independent learning courses, I continued to develop, refine and change my question and methodology. In particular, the Integrative Seminars and the philosophical principles of Levinas (as cited in Morgan 2011) served as a defining moment for my question and methodology.

Levinas speaks of an "a-priori", pre-existing, human drive that places an ethical imperative that the "self" reaches out to the other who is in need. Levinas speaks of an ethical responsibility and obligation toward the other, "the call of the other person to the self incorporates needs and dependency" (Morgan, 2011, p. 13). He captures his theory in the phrase: the face-to-face encounter. From an ethical viewpoint, Levinas' argument requires the self to be in relationship with the other and to respond to the other. His example of a woman in Nazi Germany offering her last piece of bread to the Nazi soldier who had just killed a young woman speaks to the degree to which this ethical responsibility exists and is foundational to what it means to be human. Such a face-to-face encounter reinforces how foundational our interactions are with one another and the corresponding responsibility to respond.

Levinas further elaborates that within the relationship "reciprocity remains the tie between two separate freedoms" (as cited in Morgan, 2011, p. 61); there is a mutual meeting, a being together, a coming alongside another. If, as Levinas purports, there is an ethical responsibility to be in a face-to-face encounter with one another, I would argue that this is likewise true for oneself: being in a face-to-face encounter with my experience, story, and lifeworld. The face-to-face encounter is the invitation to continue to walk into the vocation of deeper and continued authenticity, in particular, the different dimensions of my sexual orientation. There are multiple decisions and choices involved

in disclosing my sexual orientation; a discernment that takes into account a number of factors, considerations and consequences. Through this research, I explored the meaning self-disclosure to students held for the person I am—a combination of different influences, values, beliefs, aspirations, and dreams.

This research has value for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) professional community, as it can facilitate reflection on their decision to self-disclose and provide the opportunity to articulate and integrate, in a profound way, their own experiences. These experiences may include: being closeted; discrimination; exploitation; fear of reprisal; loss of job and financial uncertainty, along with the celebration of acceptance, community, and the face to face encounter with one self. This research has the potential to challenge society, academic institutions, and faith groups. It speaks to the importance of the learning covenant, the supervisory alliance, and the relationship within all helping professions. Further, it could present a challenge to academic institutions in a post-modern world, if the claim of Estadt, Compton, Blanchette (1987) that the supervisor and student are changed as a result of the relationship, potentially inviting a different pedagogy that considered knowledge and learning to be a shared experience, constructed between teacher and student.

This research is one piece in a larger, emerging narrative that contributes to the literature concerning supervisor self-disclosure of sexual orientation and how this impacts the supervisor/student relationship. Further research by other LGBT teaching supervisors within CASC would demonstrate the degree to which the conclusions of my research are transferable. Consideration of the particular socio-political-theological

contexts is essential and crucial; given the significance they hold in the lives of this population.

Preview of Remaining Chapters

Chapter 1 presents the constellation of factors and experiences in my life that contributed to my decision to engage in this research and write this dissertation. They include the early years of my life and the discovery of turning inwards to discover a sense of safety and security; my experience of faith and theological education; and my roles as a teaching supervisor and in CASC concerning disclosing my sexual identity. The chapter concludes with personal reflections and questions regarding self-disclosing my sexual orientation; and the questions that eventually led me to writing this phenomenological research.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature pertinent to the research question. The theoretical foundations of narrative, feminist, and identity theory are examined followed by an exploration of a number of relational theories of supervision. These theories ensured a solid foundation for proceeding with the research. Finally, the literature related to self-disclosure in the supervisory relationship and self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the teacher/student relationship is examined in order to further my understanding of how the intrapsychic and interpersonal dynamics may be impacted by the self-disclosure of the supervisor.

Chapter 3 details the methodology used in this research project. The research design was a single-study (i.e. exploring my own experience) and the methodology was hermeneutic phenomenology. This chapter details this research design and specifies how it was carried out, including: self-interviews; external interviews with experts; data

analysis; and the application of the hermeneutic circle. The role of the researcher is also described, as well as how I assured qualitative research rigor.

Chapter 4 delineates the identification of meaning units and themes. This chapter does not include my interpretations, reactions, responses, or conclusions. In keeping with the phenomenological approach, I have attempted to capture the essence of the lived experience so that the reader may connect emotionally to this essence, as opposed to an intellectual assent or understanding.

Chapter 5 tells the story that emerged from identifying themes within the research. The importance and centrality of theological and cultural and social contextualization are discussed, as well as considerations concerning self-disclosure of sexual orientation. Further, the opportunities associated with this research are highlighted. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the learnings and insights that surfaced for me through this research.

Chapter 6 re-engages the literature and how it informed the findings of this research. The chapter also discusses my insights from employing hermeneutic phenomenology in this research. The chapter concludes with my learnings, contributions to professional practice, and opportunities for further exploration, as a result of this research.

Chapter 1: Context for Research

This chapter presents the constellation of factors and experiences in my life that contributed to my decision to engage in this research and write this dissertation. They include the early years of my life and the discovery of turning inwards to discover a sense of safety and security; my experience of faith and theological education; my experience as a CASC teaching supervisor, and my experience of sexual orientation in CASC. The chapter concludes with personal reflections and questions regarding self-disclosing my sexual orientation; and the questions that eventually led me to writing this phenomenological research.

The Early Years – Going Inside to be able to Move Outside

As a very young boy (three-five years), I had a speech impediment that made it difficult for people to understand what I was saying. The only people who could understand me were those who were around me every day, all day long. This was limited to my mother, grandmother, and sister. Neighbours, cousins, aunts, uncles—not even my father were able to understand what I was saying. This led me to feeling very uncertain, hesitant, and shy, outside of what was a small, safe world. The one exception was a plastic doll my mother bought for me, as having an allergy to wool stuffed animals was not an option. I named him Tommy. Tommy went everywhere with me, as photos of this period of my life attest. I constantly talked to Tommy, told him everything and most significantly—Tommy understood me. He was my companion and my confident. I felt safe with him and I would even go so far as to say loved by him.

Winnicott (1953) first introduced the concept of transitional objects to address the role of certain objects in a child's development. Winnicott (1953) described the

transitional object as a blanket, cloth, or a corner of material, that becomes significant to an infant when feeling anxious, stressful, lonely, or fearful—especially when going to sleep. As an example of a transitional object, Winnicott (1953) presented the case of Y, who when he "was a little boy it was always certain that if anyone gave him his 'Baa'[2] he would immediately suck it and lose anxiety, and in fact he would go to sleep within a few minutes if the time for sleep were at all near" (p. 96).

The characteristics of transitional objects include the following: external to the mother and child; discovered or invented by the child who through it is symbolizing a reunion with the mother from whom they have experienced separation; discovered or invented at an age when the child's capacity for imagination has begun to develop; and has the unique and exclusive capacity of consoling the child in situations of distress or fear (Gaddini & Gaddini, 1970). My speech impediment and not being understood created stress and anxiety in me when separated from those who understood me (i.e. mother, grandmother, sister), and so, Tommy became that transitional object for me. In my case, creating the sense of twinship[3]—being understood literally and psychologically—provided security which allowed me to venture beyond home to play with the other children and play alone. I felt that there was someone who understood what I was saying and intrapsychically understood me.

It was Tommy, functioning as a transitional object that allowed me to relate with the world around me and at the same time in a very internal way. I was able to engage the world around me by sharing it internally through this transitional object. Tommy

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[2] The name of the child's stuff animal.

[3] According to Lee and Martin (1991), "the twinship transference is the 'third chance' for a cohesive nuclear self, because in it the experience of sameness or likeness serves the function of acquiring skills" (p.153).

provided the safety and security I needed to form relationships which were crucial given my desire to develop relationships and, at the same time, balance and challenge my fear of rejection.

Faith Development and Theological Training

As a young person growing up, I often felt lonely, isolated, and out of step with my friends. The models and structures of society, faith, religion, and family that I was taught did not align with a growing consciousness within me. When it came to the areas of morality and sexuality, whether the discovery of my sexuality at every stage of development, my thoughts, my sexual desires and fantasies, all of this left me feeling an eternal fight to overcome one pull and replace it with what my family, faith, and societal morays taught and expected. If I was to characterize my growing up years, it would be filled with words such as sin, fear, judgment, hell, and damnation; there wasn't a lot of grace, acceptance, forgiveness, affirmation, and belonging. My increasing awareness of my sexual orientation drew me within to make some decisions and choices regarding my life. After all, there were no role models for me or openness and acceptance to speak about issues of sexual orientation.

I started to accept my sexual orientation, in my late twenties, when I changed my focus from trying to understand it, or the cause of it, to accepting it. This included giving myself permission to begin to explore my sexuality and what being gay looked like for me. I also worked with a spiritual director and trusted him with this aspect of my story. Further, I began to share my story with others which led to meeting and connecting with other gay people, and in turn, helped me to accept myself.

As I reflect back on my life, the pursuit of ordained ministry was in many ways, on an unconscious level, an escape, a running from, what was true for me. I was faced with the seemingly opposing choices of accepting my sexuality and living a moral life as a gay Roman Catholic man. The answer was celibacy; reconciliation of sexuality with the moral, sexual teaching of the church. It was years later, as I began to accept and incorporate my sexuality within my personhood and could visualize a different way to live my life; there was a dawning realization that I had never 'chosen' celibacy. After 12 years of ordination I had to make the decision whether or not I wanted to live my life as a celibate.

I have come to understand that all of my life experience, including my acceptance of my sexual orientation has been a spiritual exercise. I am engaged in a spiritual exercise of discovering an understanding for my life which includes constructing new language and knowledge, and meaning and purpose. This is a deeply internal process that generates a "self-reflective existence as opposed to an unexamined life" (Sheldrake, 2012, p. 101). If anything, I have often believed the opposite to be true—that my life story was distancing me from God and was in fact an abomination in God's eyes.

My Experience of Clinical Pastoral Teaching and Supervision

Kelcourse (2010) maintains that the primary challenge of supervision is to provide supervisees with the opportunity to examine, possibly adjust, and integrate their worldview within a supportive environment. This reflects my experience of CPE and what I desire to offer to students—the experience of transformation and resulting freedom of students. This is both a psychological and theological transformation and sense of freedom. It often entails coming to a different articulation and understanding of

fundamental theological beliefs—redemption, soteriology, sin, and providence. This is not accomplished without a change in theological paradigm, soul searching, and heart wrenching re-evaluating of held beliefs and interpretation of experiences. I recall one student who decided to leave the course because her experience challenged her previously held beliefs concerning God's work and intervention in the lives of people diagnosed with cancer. Her previous experience with her mother's cancer diagnosis made it impossible for her to continue. I invite students into the freedom of being unbound from interpretations and understandings of life experiences that no longer hold up in the face of present experiences.

The purpose of CPE is to introduce and educate the student into a model of practice, and so unlike a therapeutic relationship, it is not solely about the supervisee and their growth and development, but is about developing a particular standard of professional practice. This necessitates that the supervisor develop a way of being and a way of understanding that not only informs the relationship but creates an environment within which the student is open and receptive to learning and adapting the particular philosophy of care within the discipline of CPE. CPE supervision, therefore, is not solely for the sake of the student, but includes the patient, family member, or client receiving care. The student is learning how to provide spiritual care within a particular professional practice. McKinney (2000) speaks about this as the supervisory triad and argues that "a relational perspective offers new opportunities for supervisees to voice their reactions, opinions, fears, and hopes about the triad" (p. 565). This latter is critical to keep in mind and creates the distinction between CPE and a strictly therapeutic relationship.

Sexual Orientation in My Experience of Clinical Pastoral Education.

When supervision emphasizes relational approaches there is a shift from interpretation to understanding and exploring the dynamics within the supervisory relationship. I am evolving within a continuum of purely rational to relational approaches to supervision which enables a way of being with students and understanding them in relationship with me. This emphasis on centrality of the relationship made my research question more crucial. For instance, choosing to self-disclose my sexual orientation could create a rupture in the relationship and impact their learning. Further, choosing not to self-disclose could negatively impact the relationship and therefore their education.

I have worked with students who are at different places in coming to acceptance of their sexual orientation and their experience of "coming out". Although I have not worked with a transgender or transsexual student in a CPE course, I have worked with openly gay and lesbian students, who found it helpful and supportive to work with a gay supervisor. The relationship could develop without fear or negativity related to their sexuality. There was a sense of freedom for them to discuss their experiences as a gay or lesbian person. In some cases, it did not appear to make any significant difference that I was a gay supervisor and they were gay. I recall in one group having three gay male students who previously knew one another. Interestingly, the topic of sexuality never came up nor did they discuss much related to their sexual orientation. Alternatively, I have taught lesbian women who have been more willing and comfortable to talk about their sexuality with their peer group. I do not know whether this is the difference between gay men and lesbian women or whether it was a function of the particular

people. I have worked with students who were struggling with accepting their sexual orientation and have had different experiences. In one case, the student found it helpful to work with a gay supervisor. I was able to model acceptance and a sense of belonging, as often the experience of coming out is feeling alone, isolated, and unsure about who to share the information with. Alternatively, and years later, a student shared that he was glad that I did not disclose my sexual orientation because he was fearful he would have questioned my objectivity and interventions. In this case, the student would not have been receptive to myself-disclosure.

In the material for an Associate Supervisor's certification process with CASC, the candidate wrote about her own experience of disclosing her sexual orientation to her students in two different units. One student indicated that working with a gay supervisor had broadened their perspective and felt it had helped them grow personally and professionally. The second student wrote that she never got over the fact that this supervisor was gay and felt it negatively impacted her relationship with the supervisor. The supervisor for this candidate expressed confusion and concern about continuing to disclose her sexual orientation to students. She expressed sadness that her self-disclosure had such a negative impact on the relationship with the student, although she was uncertain about the degree to which this was her transference and need rather than the student's. She was also conflicted because she understood her sexual orientation to be foundational to her self-understanding and found it difficult to contemplate denying her orientation. Furthermore, she expressed fear of regressing to a shame-based place related to her orientation, one which she had lived with for years and had devoted much energy and work to overcome.

Sexual Orientation in My Experience of CASC.

Self-disclosure in the therapist/client relationship is sometimes referred to as the "location of self". This occurs when a therapist self-discloses to a client something "about the similarities and differences between them, such as race, ethnicity, gender, social class, sexual orientation, and how any of these factors might impact the therapeutic relationship" (Watts-Jones, 2010, p. 405). In speaking about the location of self within the therapeutic relationship, Watts-Jones asserts that "research into this practice remains at an early stage. There are risks and benefits and care needs to be taken in choosing what and how to disclose" (p. 408).

The social dimension of this research project deals with the self-disclosure of sexual orientation within a profession, specifically gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender teaching supervisors within the CASC. Moreover, it includes the characteristic of being an invisible as opposed to a visible minority. I am conscious of the fact that I present as a middle-class, middle-aged, white, Anglo-Saxon male. For all intents and purposes, I appear a mainstream male fitting within the dominant social, ethnic and cultural context. My sexual orientation creates the experience of being an invisible minority within what constitutes a majority social and cultural context. To some extent this can be more isolating then being as visible minority, as it creates a further sense of isolation and estrangement from the major cultural and societal norm.

In reflecting on the experience of first accepting, integrating, and disclosing my sexual orientation to others, I realized that as I accepted the theory of social identity,[4] the easier it was to incorporate my sexual orientation (Korostelina, 2007). Holding more

[4] Butler, Novotny, and Young (as cited in Korostelina, 2007) contend, "Conceptions of the person should be expanded to acknowledge that identity is socially determined and in an evolving state of flux" (p.153).

salience[5] about faith, family and the public made it more challenging to accept the experiences in self and incorporate them into my narrative. When I allowed for and incorporated the concept of a constructed social identity, I was able to write other aspects into my narrative, with my sexual orientation being a major one. Moving away from a salient social identity enabled a growing trust in my experience of God in my life, rather than my life experiences being somehow in contradiction with God. The journey enabled me to face the painful, ostracized, alienated, unwanted, "or otherwise disowned aspects of [myself] and cultivat[e] as much intimacy as possible with them" (Masters, 2010, p. 13).

For purposes of this research, the socio-political context can be considered from a professional perspective. CASC is the professional, governing body through which a candidate is certified as a practitioner and teaching supervisor. The Association maintains professional practice standards, competencies, scopes of practice, and ethical standards for the profession of spiritual care that work in a variety of institutional and community settings such as health care, corrections, education and private practice. I have been a member of this Association for over 20 years and have experienced a development in the Association's understanding and approach to sexual orientation. The Association's ethical principles include "respect[ing] the diversity of cultural, ethnic, gender, racial, sexual-orientation, spiritual, religious, and disability experiences that people have and strive to eliminate discrimination."[6] However, this Code does not necessarily ensure that people feel safe or comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation

[5] Salience can vary on a continuum from strong to weak: each identity can be very salient or non-salient. "One's salient identity characterizes one's core position within other identities and does not depend on the situations of intergroup relations. It influences one's thinking and behaviour even in situations lacking an opposing category or identity" (Korostelina, 2007, p.20).

[6] CASC/ACSS Policy and Procedure Manual (2017, Chapter 5, p.1) available at www.spiritualcare.ca/education/manual-2/

for fear of being ostracized, experiencing repercussions from religious authorities, or other forms of covert harassment.

When I was first a member of the Association, I recall attending national conferences where there was a "lesbian/gay caucus" meeting held in the evening and often in a room that was away from the main thoroughfare of the hotel. The positive aspect to this was the recognition of the existence of LGBT persons within the Association. Looking back, I experience a sense of sadness that there was a perceived or understood need for privacy and secrecy. The Association has continued to grow and progress since that time. For instance, I recall the first gay man who was elected President and the centrality and importance placed on his sexual orientation. As a past President of the Association (2014-2016), I did not experience my sexual orientation as having any significance or impact on my role and position. I argue these experiences reflect changing attitudes by the public and, perhaps more importantly, my coming to terms with self.

A further socio-political consideration is that every member of the professional Association depends on their chosen religious denomination or spiritual tradition for continued sanction and approval in order to continue to maintain their certification and ability to work. Depending on the particular religious denomination or spiritual tradition, this can place tremendous pressure to conform and a high degree of fear in declaring a position that is contrary to the dogma or tradition of the denomination or tradition. I have had colleagues share with me that they were held suspect by their religious denomination because of their acceptance and support of LGBT persons.

Responsibility to my experience and remain authentic is not only a personal vocation but contributes to the professional and scholarly aspects of my research and the development of my profession. According to Evans-Tameron (2012), alienation—being disconnected or distant from the other—affects professional functioning. As CPE teaching supervisors, when we cannot go to the painful places in our lives and acknowledge within ourselves our own experiences and hurt, we cannot fully "go there" with patients and students (Evans-Tameron, 2012). One of our professional competencies is the safe and effective use of self. A major goal and objective of our basic CPE courses is growth in self-awareness, integration, and increased awareness of our intrapsychic and interpersonal dynamics—including the ways in which these inform our professional practice. My willingness to explore and write about my journey to live an authentic life invites other professionals—within and beyond my profession—to reflect about their journey of authenticity and the impact on their professional practice. Each of us, as professional spiritual care providers and educators, experience our own realities, expectations, and pressures regarding the socio-political-theological contexts, personally and professionally. I am cognizant that my experience of disclosing my sexual orientation and my experience of the socio-political-theological context may not be the same for others, even within the LGBT community, my profession, or association.

Reflections and Questions Regarding Self-Disclosure

Fundamental to understanding and experiencing my lived experience is through my sexual orientation. Even though externally I may present as a middle class, middle age, Caucasian male, with the accompanying power and privileges, there is also an unseen minority, fringe, and marginalized experience I carry. I have experienced what it

feels like to be excluded from society, church, and family. I have experienced deep shame related to my sexual orientation and growing up Catholic. I have experienced the freedom from transformation in developing a different theological paradigm; one more supportive of the person I know myself to be. All of this is part of who I am when I enter into a supervisory relationship.

I asked a number of questions of myself at the beginning of this research. For example, in not disclosing, do I establish a false way of being and way of understanding; a false relationship with students? If I choose not to disclose my sexual orientation, what am I modeling? To what degree am I compromising authenticity? In disclosing my sexual orientation to a student who has very traditional or fundamentalist beliefs about homosexuality, what impact does that have on the future development of our relationship? Is this student able to develop a trusting relationship with me, be open to learning with and from me? If this becomes a barrier for a student, how do they develop a secure, non-anxious relationship with me? Does withholding this information about me until later in the relationship deny the student the potential of working through significant attachment issues? Farber (2006) argues that, if a gay patient assumes the therapist is straight, fears and assumptions about possible homophobic attitudes or of the ability of the therapist to understand and empathize with a gay patient may be compounded by nondisclosure. This possibly is true for the student in relationship with me. By choosing not to disclose my sexual orientation, I may inadvertently be creating unnecessary anxiety and fear related to my reactions and beliefs concerning sexual orientation and sexuality in general.

Transformative education, according to Jack Merizow, seeks to provide "different meaning making perspectives that offer new ways of responding to a situation, and negation or transformation of inadequate, false, distorted, or limited meaning perspectives" (as cited in DeLong, 2010, p. 52). Learning occurs when the experience or situation the student is presented with challenges the previously held "meaning perspective" of the student, and she/he begins to explore a new perspective that can sufficiently inform and support her/his new experience. It is not uncommon for this experience to create a crisis and anxiety for a student, especially if this is the first time their meaning perspective has been challenged.

The aforementioned questions changed when I determined that the focus was on me rather than the student. The course on methodology facilitated clarifying and defining my research question and determining the best qualitative methodology to undertake this research.

Living the Question Enables Writing the Question

I have been asked a number of times by colleagues, teachers, and fellow doctoral students about my willingness and comfort in being vulnerable in such a public forum. This has challenged me to reflect personally and professionally. I acknowledge the timing of this research project within my professional career contributes a certain amount of freedom, as I am established and recognized as a competent and highly respected supervisor, respected by peers, and recognized as a leader within my profession. I acknowledge that I would have been less prepared to do this research a number of years ago. Van Manen (1990) says that phenomenological research "require(s) that we not simply raise a question and possibly drop it again, but rather that we 'live' this

question that we 'become' this question" (p. 43). This unequivocally depicts my experience when it comes to this aspect of "telling my story" with CPE students. I have lived with the question for all my professional life and have "become the question".

Summary

I began this dissertation with the quote from T.S. Elliott, "We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time." This statement reflects my experience with the DMin courses, the research, and writing the dissertation. Several occasions have occurred throughout the readings, discussions, reflections, and writing in which insights, awareness and appreciation have surfaced that are both familiar and new. My experience has been one of bringing forth a deeper level of knowing each time. There is an exhilaration and excitement in this experience, as I came to a thicker and more profound understanding of my narrative. Perhaps it is captured in the words of Florida Scott-Maxwell: "When you truly possess all you have been and done . . . you are fierce with reality" (Palmer, 1998, p. 29).

The next chapter offers an overview of the literature that was explored for this research.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Assumptions

This chapter explores the literature that I engaged, as I clarified my research question. The first section, Theoretical Foundations, discusses how the concepts of narrative theology, feminist spirituality, identity construction, and emergence theory provide the context and foundation for my research question and situate it within the larger body of theological and spiritual literature. The second section, Theories of Supervision, resents various postmodern theories of supervision and how these relational models, with their emphasis on the relationship between the supervisor and student, confirm the importance of the supervisor being aware and intentional. These relational theories emphasize the supervisor establishing a compassionate, understanding, secure, and mutual relationship with the student in the early stage of the relationship. In essence, it is the quality of the relationship that is a significant determinate for learning and growth. The third section, explores the topic of supervisor self-disclosure generally and specific to sexual orientation.

While the general literature is supportive of self-disclosure on the part of the supervisor, the supervisor is cautioned when disclosing to be aware of what he/she is revealing and how much he/she reveals. The literature further suggests that self-disclosure, on the part of the supervisor, is done for supervisory reasons (i.e., modeling for the student, when a student is struggling) and therefore not necessarily deeply personal or intimate in nature. Finally, the literature remains silent regarding disclosure concerning sexual orientation within the supervisor/supervisee relationship.

Theoretical Foundations

Knowing I wanted to explore the experience of telling my story, as I began the DMin studies, I was drawn to the theories of narrative and feminist theology. The theories of identity construction (social, cultural, familial influences), and emergence also became foundational theory for my research. These theories deepened my personal reflection and insights as well as giving me new perspectives on students' learning and growth.

Narrative Theology.

Narrative theology is centered on telling, evaluating and retelling stories as opposed to propositional theologies that concentrate on presenting true propositions, along with defending and monitoring adherence to them. Narrative theology does not center on the development of a set of propositions or doctrines of Christianity, but on the stories that form the tradition (Wisse, 2005). Our narratives are sacred stories because our sense of self and world is created through them (Crites, 1997). It is through our stories that we articulate and clarify and make sense of our world. Narrative theology is more focused on discovery, exploring, transformation, creativity, than on proving, justifying, or explaining.

Additionally, narratives fulfill the role of resolving epistemological crisis by providing a means by which a particular understanding or belief can be incorporated into a larger narrative, taking into consideration new experiences and a broader understanding. According to MacIntrye (1997), a new narrative is constructed which enables a person to understand "both how they could intelligibly have held their original beliefs and how they could have been so dramatically misled by them" (p. 140). Thus,

MacIntrye is suggesting that epistemological crises are occasions that invite the construction of more adequate and supportive narratives that inform and provide meaning for life's experiences. With such an understanding of narrative, one's story presents a person with a different worldview within which to understand and interpret the experiences of their life. One's narrative does not have to be evaluated against some external template or formula; rather, we begin to understand that our lived experiences have constructed a meaningful narrative which includes the Sacred within. The events of one's life that are not within the expected social, familial, and cultural norms and mores are not to be ignored or pushed away, but are explored for meaning and constructing a narrative that makes sense of the lived experiences.

Myth and parable offer a means to make sense of one's lived experience. The next section discusses each in turn.

Myth and parable.

According to Crossan (1988), the concepts of myth and parable are fundamental components to how one understands and tells their story. He maintains that myths "order the world in which we live by turning randomness into pattern, by reconciling the frustrations produced by contradictory experiences in some higher unity" (p. xi). The purpose of a myth is to establish that reconciliation is possible. Myth, according to this definition, is not an untrue story, or a make believe story, or a story that is about God. The role myth fulfills is to establish the possibility that reconciliation, solution, resolution of opposites or opposing realities exists. For instance, Crossan asserts that "myth attempts to reconcile seemingly unrelated and incongruent things: the reconciliation of

contradiction and the creation of belief in the permanent possibility of reconciliation" (p. 40).

In contrast, a parable is a story that subverts myths and upsets the world created by myth. "Parable undercuts world: it does so by challenging the expectations raised in humankind by myth" (Crossan, 1988, p. xi). Parables hope to "create contradiction within our complacent securities and to challenge the principle of reconciliation by making us aware of the fact that we made up the reconciliation" (Crossan, 1988, p. 40). Parables challenge the world as we know it, while myth attempts to explain what we see and offer no real alternatives. Myths aim to make a person feel settled whereas parables aim to upset and provoke change by challenging the foundations and structures that make up a person's thoughts, values and identity.

This understanding of myth and parable provided a new lens through which to understand my sexual orientation. As I reflect upon my life, the myth—the reconciliation of opposing forces—was how to live a gay lifestyle and at the same time a spiritual life. Sheldrake (2012) contends that integration is the realization of exploring and discovering meaning and purpose in our life and that spirituality "gives shape to what may otherwise be a fragmented approach to life" (p. 117). He identifies characteristics associated with spirituality, including: a search for the Sacred; a desire for meaning in life; discovering purpose in life; and an "understanding of human identity, purpose, and thriving" (p. 23). Telling my story, therefore, is more than recalling events, accomplishments, struggles, gains, loses; it is the attempt and desire to explore and discover the Sacred in the experiences and events in my life. This is the function of parable—to make sense out of and connect seemingly disconnected events and experiences in our lives. As we do so,

we create or collectively weave a spiritually integrated narrative for ourselves; a story that makes sense given the experience in our life. In doing this, we continue to contribute to the knowledge, truth and reality of the world we live in. This is in stark contrast to continuing to live a myth which attempts to reconcile what appears and is experienced by one as irreconcilable.

Crossan (1998) states that the parables of Jesus are not historical allegories telling us how God acts, nor are they moral "example-stories" telling us how to act before God and towards one another:

> they are stories which shatter the deep structure of our accepted world and thereby render clear and evident to us the relativity of story itself. It is only in such experiences that God can touch us, and only in such moments does the kingdom of God arrive. The Kingdom of God is the power of God expressed in deeds. It is not a place or a community ruled by God. It is quite concretely the activity of God as king; the act wherein and whereby God's sovereignty is made manifest. (p. 99)

It is empowering to realize that in my life parables, which certainly shatter the deep structures of my accepted world (i.e., personal, professional, religious, familial), God is reaching out and I am coming into contact with the transcendent. If anything, I have often believed the opposite to be true—that my life story was distancing me from God and was in fact an abomination in God's eyes. I have always thought of the kingdom of God, allowing for the royalist and colonization language, to be more of a community of living. To understand the kingdom of God as an 'in-breaking' of God into my world through the parables of my life is much more active, dynamic, and present than

the traditional understanding. The kingdom of God is therefore not future oriented or some place; rather, it is the awareness of God in the events and unfolding of my life.

This exploration and exposure to the concepts of narrative theology—that the experiences of my life are not only significant, they are expressive of the spiritual—led me to explore feminist theology. The section that follows discusses the theology and how it reinforced by exposure to narrative theology.

Feminist Theology.

According to Rakoczy (2011), it is the lived experience of women and their "trust in their experience of God and themselves" (p. 32) that is the foundation of feminist theology. The starting point, according to Rakoczy, is for women to trust their experience and their interpretation of their experience of God. This "approach . . . seeks and finds God in all the circumstances of life, affirms life and growth in others, and works with others to bring a greater fullness to life" (p. 33). As cited by Rakoczy (2011), Rosemary Radford Ruether asserts that experience includes: "experience of the divine, experience of oneself, and experience of the community and the world, in an interacting dialectic" (p. 34).

Rakoczy (2011) asserts that a feminist perspective rejects claims of universality of experience, as "it makes a great deal of difference where one 'stands' and what one sees from that vantage point" (p. 35). This understanding of feminist spirituality shifts one's perspective from reliance on external authorities to claiming one's internal authority. This shift from external authority to internal authority is characteristic of our postmodern world and contemporary spirituality in which, according to Sheldrake (2012), "the

spiritual quest has moved away from outer-directed authority to inner-directed experience which is seen as more reliable" (p. 6).

Kristine Culp (2006) presents a postmodern understanding of the experience of God which entails an interpretation and reconstruction of our experience "both evaluating memories of what was undergone and fashioning a recognizable whole from them," (p. 55). Culp argues that there is a sense of responsibility that comes with our experiences. This responsibility moves beyond speaking about the experiences to discovering meaning out of those experiences and being accountable to others and ourselves for using the knowledge gained. Her notion of responsibility suggests empowering ourselves to create meaning and understanding out of our experiences. She contends that "If we do not struggle with our experience, some political regime, some cultural flow, some dogmatism, some marketing strategy will step in to tell us what we have undergone, to tell us what to do with it" (Culp, 2006, p. 61).

As I became more familiar with feminist theology and feminist spirituality and the foundational principle of trusting experience as the presence of God in my life, I was reassured that my experience, even when meeting institutional opposition or marginalization and oppression as a gay man, was all part of God's presence in my life. Within this paradigm, every aspect, stage, and moment of experience is a component of that creation. This calls me to trust my experience about God in my life, rather than my life experiences being somehow in contradiction with God. This is a tremendous challenge for numerous LGBT people who desire to integrate their faith and spirituality with their sexual orientation. For countless years, I struggled with and confronted the seeming incongruity between my sexual orientation and everything I had been taught and

believed regarding God, the Christian scriptures, Jesus, and my denomination. Most definitely this became a journey of facing the disowned aspects of myself and growing in acceptance and intimacy with my sexual orientation.

The feminist theological paradigm has supported me in coming to an understanding of spirituality as providing a shape—painting a picture—of what otherwise could be seen as loose, disconnected, or meshed threads. An analogy might be helpful. My grandmother was an accomplished quilter and made each of her grandchildren a wedding quilt. The quilts were made of little scraps of material that she collected from larger articles or remnants of material. On the front side the quilt was a beautiful pattern of colours and shapes repeated in a pattern across the expanse of the quilt. However, when you turned it over, there was no overall pattern, rhythm or reason. Threads ran every which way, criss-crossed over one another and from one side to the other or one end to the other. It was difficult to see any pattern, let alone a repeated pattern, and it was certainly far from a work of art. Rather than remaining with the back side of the quilt, my spiritual journey has created the front side of my life quilt; an accumulation of events, circumstances, beliefs, values, social and cultural influences, without any apparent connection or weaving into a whole.

Identity Theory.

According to Korostelina (2007), the theory of social identity stresses that "together with personal identity, an individual has a social identity that is reflected in his or her membership in different groups" (p. 23). One's ethnic, racial, cultural, and religious background and heritage are contributing factors to one's social identity and inform and impact one's personal identity. Korostelina's research demonstrated the

impact salient identity has upon narrative construction[7]. In her research, she discovered that people with a high level of salient ethnic identity were characterized by "high similarity, generalizations and negative attitudes, whereas stories of people with nonsalient ethnic identity were more diverse, positive, and had individual character" (p. 111). This leads to people with salient ethnic identities perceiving "the other" as strange, significantly different, and keeping interaction outside of their group to a minimum. A salient identity increases the challenges involved in accepting what is outside the norm. On the other hand, people with nonsalient ethnic identities "described other ethnic groups as neighbours in society" (p. 111). Yakushko, Davidson, Meghan, Williams & Nutt (2009) argue that the salience of a particular aspect of one's identity is dynamic and can change depending on the context, setting, circumstances, and time (p. 186).

From Korostelina's research, salient identity would find difference, diversity, and irregularity difficult and potentially personally threatening to deal with. In reflecting on first accepting and then incorporating my sexual orientation within my identity and revealing that to others, the more I shifted from a salient to a nonsalient identity the easier it was to live into my identity. As I continued to grow into and incorporate the nonsalient identity, the more comfortable, accepting and affirming I became of my sexual orientation.

Jones (2009) argues that an understanding of identity development in the postmodern world must take into account multiple and intersecting identities and the social and cultural contexts in which these identities are constructed. According to Jones, intersectionality research is characterized by an emphasis on the lived experience of

[7] Salient social identity "strengthens the perception of similarities with the other members of the ingroup and of differences from the members of outgroups and decreases personal differentiation from other people". (Korostelina, 2007, p.25).

individuals and is meant to invite the reader into a story in order to promote a more just society. She presents a model of multiple dimensions of development, a framework she posits is rooted in feminist theory, situating identity as "multiple and layered" (p. 289). Jones states: "we cannot separate ourselves from the contexts in which we grew up, as these were the very experiences that influence what stands out to us today" (p. 294). The social/cultural context has great influence on our identity development, including managing "how we think others view us and how we view ourselves" (p. 298).

Research exploring lesbian identity by Abes, Jones, and McEwan (2007), in a study of lesbian identity development "applied the model of multiple dimensions of identity in conjunction with constructivist-development theory" (p. 1). The authors found that meaning making facilitated the ease with which sexual orientation was integrated with other dimensions of identity development (p. 6). In an autoethnographic study using intersectional analysis to examine the lived experience of multiple identities, Jones, Kim, and Skendall (2012) found that self-identity and development was an ongoing process of making meaning "of colliding social identities, of social identities in relation to sense of self, and of how identity and context mutually influence each other" (p. 715).

Drawing upon the above identity theories, I argue that a person with stronger salience finds difference, diversity, and irregularity difficult and potentially threatening. This has been supported by my experience in supervision with students. Students from theological colleges often possess or have cloaked themselves with a strong sense of salience—by personal choice, social pressure to conform, or religious requirements—as pre-requisites for ordination. It is also my experience that students are not always aware of or sensitized to how their social identity, particularly concerning faith and religious

denomination, contributes to a sense of salience that informs their worldview. It is not uncommon for the CASC teaching supervisor, having established a strong supervisory alliance with students during the CPE unit, to invite them to explore their own salience and the ways in which this has impacted and informed their respective personal narratives.

Emergence Theory.

A contributing factor to trusting my experience was emergence theory with the characteristics of complexity, spontaneity, novelty, and surprise. In speaking about emergence, Wheatley (2012) argues that emergence demands a different relationship with life "where we're curious, open, [and] alert. The only thing we can predict is that life will surprise us. We can't see what is coming until it arrives, and once something has emerged, we have to work with what is" (p. 33). Cook (2013) identifies crucial features of emergence as "causal autonomy, holistic nature, novelty, irreducibility, and unpredictability" (p. 234). Emergence theory provides another lens—a hermeneutic—to understand and interpret the experiences of my life.

Lichtenstein and Plowman (2009) identified three behaviours as amplifying actions that support emergence: allowing experiments, encouraging rich interactions, and supporting collective action. As I look back on my life, I am aware that my desire and willingness to engage in exploration (gay community and gay culture), experimentation (going to gay vacation destinations, joining gay social and sport groups) and the development and acceptance of relationships outside my worldview (developing network of gay friendships, joining a gay men's chorus), were active, amplifying actions for integrating my emerging self-understanding and self-identity as a gay man. This was

quite experimental for me because it took me into cultural and societal environments that I had not previously encountered. These amplifying actions expanded my worldview by challenging my theological paradigm and consequently my theology of redemption.

This theory and the conditions necessary for emergence in complex systems are applicable to the experience of personal growth, integration, and transformation. The human person is certainly a complex system, physiologically, psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Summary of Theoretical Foundations.

Narrative and feminist theology, identity construction and emergence provided me with different perspectives with which to explore, interpret, and understand my life experiences. They expanded, if not introduced, different worldviews which facilitated a more integrated and authentic understanding, consistent with my experience.

With a fuller and deeper foundation and understanding of how the experiences of my life contribute to and build a particular worldview and provide meaning to my story, I turned to exploring the theories of supervision that inform my practice and the potential impact the decision to self-disclose or not to self-disclose my sexual orientation has on the supervisory relationship. I draw upon four theories of supervision: relational; intersubjective; transformative; and attachment. Each is discussed in turn.

Relational Theories of Supervision

Estadt, et al., (1987) argues for the primacy of the quality of the relationship that the supervisor and the supervisee are able to establish. The authors claim that a skilled practitioner, who offers and models a relationship with their student, enables the student to experience how to develop such a connection with their client. The supervisor's way

of expressing empathy and respect not only communicates the supervisor's values and beliefs, but additionally models for the student what those values and beliefs look like in action. The student and supervisor are engaged in mutual exploration and are impacted, changed, or transformed in a way that they would not have been on their own.

This is a postmodern or constructivist paradigm which acknowledges that we build our reality from interpreting meaning and developing understanding jointly, as supervisor-supervisee through the experience of the relationship. While skills, techniques, psychoanalytic approach, psychodynamic theory, experience, setting, and safety are all vital aspects of the supervisory encounter, they are less essential than the quality of the relationship that the supervisor and student are able to mutually forge. Without the establishment of such a relationship, "the exercise of the skills and techniques of therapy can be experienced as manipulative and thus can be counter-therapeutic" (Estadt, et al., 1987, p. 252).

Frances Ward (2005) employs the metaphor of 'space' to describe and speak about the significance of the relationship between the supervisor and the student. She says "what is provided is time and space where both supervisor and reflective practitioner can experience safety and challenge so that growth and learning occurs" (p. 88). Supervision becomes a space where mutual conversation, exploration, and discovery occur through the interaction and dialogue. In writing about the beginning phase of field education, Carrie Doehring (2010) speaks about the importance of establishing a trustworthy relationship which becomes a relational container. She contends, "the process . . . takes place in the opening weeks of field education and one of the earliest tasks that occur[s] within this relational container is negotiating the learning covenant"

(p. 31). Cheston (2000) argues that developing a relationship of trust, in the supervisory relationship, "is facilitated by an attitude of basic acceptance and by demonstrating empathy and genuineness" (p. 21). Patton (2010) emphasizes the central role of the relationship in supervision in asserting that the "supervisee needs not only what the supervisor knows, but he or she also needs the significant relationship that the supervisor may offer" (p. 27).

The importance of building the relationship in the initial stage of supervision is further reflected in Hill's (2001) six-stage model of supervision[8] in which he describes the first stage as hesitation. Hesitation occurs when the new supervisee is: uncertain about his/her role; unable to clearly define the skill set he/she needs to learn; unclear about the process and goals of the group; and seeking directions and instructions (p. 78). I recognize these characteristics at the beginning of the CPE course when students are anxious and do not understand their role and are uncertain about the nature of the group (i.e., the function and role of the group in relation to the educational model). When the supervisor is aware of this and responds accordingly, this can provide reassurance and create an atmosphere that is conducive to the supervisee being able to enter into the exploration of their anxiety and start to draw upon their experience for further and deeper reflection and growth in self-awareness. According to Hill, the goal of the supervisor at this stage is to become "the secure base via warmth, responsiveness, sensitivity, comfort, consistency, and above all autonomy promotion" (p. 77).

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[8] The six stages of the supervision model are: hesitation, irritation, consolidation, collaboration, integration, and termination. For more information, see A collaborative pastoral care and counseling supervisory model by W. E. Hill (2001) in the *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counselling*, *55*(1), 69-80.

Intersubjective Theory.

Intersubjective theory is aligned with the postmodern paradigm, with a "focus upon the subjectivity of an individual and her or his ability to discern truth" (DeLong, 2010, p. 83). This theory incorporates the insights of self-psychology[9] and object relations in understanding the therapeutic process (DeLong, 2010, p. 90). Delong identifies a shift from object to subject in characterizing how the postmodern era has impacted and informed supervisory work. DeLong references the work and perspective of Sandor Ferenczi (d. 1933), whose developing theory led him to a different insight than his mentor (Freud), in claiming "that it is not interpretation that leads to healing but the quality of the relationship between the therapist and the patient" (as cited in DeLong, 2010, p. 85). Supervision, in the postmodern era, is an 'engaged' and reflective process of exploring with the student his/her meaning perspectives, and invites students into an experience of mutual exploration and co-creativity—"supervision is an engaged process of naming, confronting, generating and co-creating" (Thorstenson, 2010, p. 79).

Transformative Theory.

Felicity Kelcourse states that the primary challenge of supervision is "to offer supervisees the possibility of changing their way of seeing the world and to encourage this transformation in an environment conducive to gradual and substantive reintegration" (DeLong, 2010, p. 251). Jack Merizow defines this process of exploring their worldviews as 'meaning perspectives'—the "principles and perspectives to which we

[9] According to Lee and Martin (1991), self-psychology consists of three constructs: mirroring (the experience of being loved), idealization (the need for safety and strength), and twinship (the experience of belonging). These constructs act as 'narcissistic transferences'—each narcissistic transference being conceived as developing from archaic to mature forms. The mature forms are considered necessary in order for a person to function in healthy ways. Self-psychology alters the idea of transference as distortion (as understood from the Freudian perspective) to an understanding of transference as an organizing activity. In order to progress from the archaic to mature form of narcissistic transferences, a person needs to experience or develop positive 'self-object' relationships (p.169).

turn in order to make meaning of our world" (as cited in DeLong, 2010, p. 93). These concepts capture my experience of CPE supervision, as my reward occurs when students experience "transformation".

Prior to transformation, students are confronted with their meaning perspectives—notably familial, cultural and spiritual—and the invitation to explore these and possibly alter or change them. In order to fully enter into this experience or spiritual journey, a relationship of trust and mutuality, based on openness and respect is necessary; one that "seeks for both supervisor and student to be known within the supervisory encounter" (DeLong, 2010, p. 93). According to Kelcourse as a relationship of trust and mutuality develops, the supervisor and supervisee build a relationship based on their present experience, and "a positive sense of connection develops in which neither party fears being judged and both are open to learning from and about the other" (as cited in DeLong, 2010, p. 251).

Attachment Theory.

The importance and essential nature of the supervisory relationship is further reflected in the attachment model of theory and supervision. According to attachment theory, it is within the relationship—established between supervisor and supervisee—that healing occurs as therapist and supervisor "alike foster healing attachments which ultimately promote autonomy and individuation" (Hill, 2001, p. 72). What is essential is for the supervisor to create, as much as possible, a non-anxious environment, a space in which the supervisee feels 'safe enough' to name and explore her/his intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics (p. 75). Attachment theory further provides a compelling argument for the importance of the establishment of a positive relationship within

supervision. Supervisees who experience a sense of security and connection with their supervisor "find it much less threatening to approach anxiety, while anxious, resistant, ambivalent, and avoidant attached individuals are more likely to avoid, bind, escalate, or absorb anxiety" (p. 76).

Summary on Theories of Supervision.

This literature which explored the relationship between the supervisor and student suggests that not only is the relationship significant and necessary to consider—the relationship is foundational, fundamental, and crucial, to the learning and transformation that are possible in a CPE course. While my teaching supervision education placed emphasis on knowledge (e.g., understanding of human development, family of origin, cultural and racial contexts, transference, counter transference, projection, group development, and the importance of developing one's personal psychodynamic theory that informed one's supervisory understanding and style), the relational models of supervision bring an added and deeper dimension to the understanding and appreciation of the relationship between the supervisor and student.

According to these theories, it is not merely the teaching and education that is significant, nor the mere creation of a relationship, it is the quality of the relationship. A quality relationship requires the supervisor to enter into a student/supervisor relationship that is more holistic while attending to professional boundaries. This type of relationship requires more of the supervisor, as they need to be willing to give more of themselves—academically, intellectually, psychologically, and personally and emotionally. CPE has traditionally drawn upon adult learning theory which speaks to the importance of the relationship between the supervisor and student, given the power

imbalance. While the adult learning approach suggests that the student should similarly interview and choose the supervisor, the relational theories call upon the supervisor to consciously and intentionally place more emphasis on the relationship.

Self-Disclosure in the CPE Supervisory and Teaching Relationship

Having established the centrality of the relationship between the supervisor and student, I explored the issue of self-disclosure in the context of CPE supervisory relationships (e.g., pastoral counseling, pastoral education, counselor education, and clinical training). The literature was silent involving the fields of Clinical Pastoral Education and self-disclosure and sexual orientation. For instance, a search of the relevant journals (i.e., *Journal of Pastoral Theology, Journal of Pastoral Care and Counselling, Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health*, and *Pastoral Psychology Journal*) were replete of published articles in this area. In preparing a paper for the annual meeting of the Society for Pastoral Theology, Marshall (2009) observed that there are periodic articles in the *Journal of Pastoral Theology* that address sexual diversity but pastoral theology "is not as rich as would be helpful for deepening of our dialogues" (p. 31).

One article emerged that was written specifically about CPE education. Anderson (2012) targeted the issue of the revelation and exploration of personal narrative, including the cultural, spiritual, and religious dimensions, within a diverse cultural setting. In this context, Anderson states that diversity education in CPE is best developed "in an interactive group context, guided by methods and approaches promoting mutual disclosure that includes the leader" (p. 1). Anderson does not specifically address the self-disclosure of sexual orientation, although he does speak to the mutuality that is

endemic to the CPE supervisor/student relationship. If Anderson believes that CPE allows for if not demands mutuality, including the self-disclosure of the supervisor, then I contend that the awareness of the apprehension and uncertainty of students concerning self-disclosure exist for the supervisor, and that the same considerations given to the student need to be extended to the supervisor.

Having discovered the dearth of literature specific to the field of CPE or pastoral education, I explored the literature related to self-disclosure in clinical supervision and self-disclosure specific to sexual orientation.

Self-disclosure in Clinical Supervision.

Although the counselling literature has examined self-disclosure within the supervisory relationship (Knox, Hess, Petersen, & Hill, 1997; Knox & Hill, 2003) and supervisory style has been found to be related to the supervisor's use of nondisclosure (Ladany, Walker, & Melincoff, 2001), the experience of self-disclosure between supervisors and students has not been widely examined (Ladany et al., 1999). Ladany and Lehrman-Waterman (1999) defined supervisor self-disclosure as personal statements that the supervisor makes about herself or himself to the student that

> reflect favourable or unfavourable aspects of the supervisor, for example, counselling successes or failures; mirror similar or dissimilar concerns the trainee brings to supervision; pertain to the supervisor's past or present experiences; be highly intimate or non-intimate; or be self-involving statements, which can be seen as in-the-moment process comments reflecting the supervisor's experience of the trainee in supervision. (p. 144)

In a study of 105 supervisors and trainees, Ladany and Lehrman-Waterman (1999) hypothesized that a greater frequency of supervisor self-disclosure would positively impact the supervisory working alliance. They found support for this hypothesis, but cautioned that "although it may be intuitively appealing to consider that more is better; supervisors should consider the point at which self-disclosure becomes excessive and begins to detract from the supervisory relationship" (p. 151).

Knox et al. (2008), in interviewing 16 supervisors regarding their experience of self-disclosure, concluded that the prevalent incentive for supervisor self-disclosure was the supervisor's sense that the supervisee was struggling clinically (p. 554). Furthermore, their study identified that supervisors used self-disclosure to normalize, strengthen or model the supervisory relationship (p. 548). They typically disclosed information regarding their own personal or professional background and therapy experiences that were similar to those of the supervisee (p. 548).

Ladany and Walker (2003) categorize self-disclosure within five categories: 1) personal material—frequently involving information unrelated to the supervisory work; 2) therapy experiences—revelations about a supervisor's therapy that can be used to model for the supervisee; 3) professional experiences or accounts of nontherapeutic events (administrative roles); 4) reactions to the supervisee's clients or supervisor self-disclosing their ideas to working with the supervisee's client; and 5) supervision experiences—self-disclosing the experience of being a supervisor.

Self-Disclosure of Sexual Orientation in the Teacher-Student Relationship.

According to Gatmon et al. (2001), the discussion of cultural variables in the supervisory relationship "when done in the context of a course committed to training

culturally sensitive and skilled counselors, may serve to enhance the supervisory relationship, and strengthen the supervisory working alliance," (p. 102). Their study which involved 289 pre-doctoral psychology interns asked participants whether discussions of ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation occurred in the supervisory relationship and who initiated them. Supervisees who raised the issue of sexual orientation with their supervisors (not necessarily self-disclosure) reported higher levels of satisfaction with supervision (Gatmon & et al., 2001). A lack of initiation of discussions regarding sexual orientation, on the part of the supervisors, was noted with 55% of these discussions being initiated by the supervisee (Gatmon & et al., 2001, p. 106).

Russ, Simmonds, Cheri & Hunt (2002), in a study of 154 first year undergraduate students (60 males and 94 females), at a large United States Midwestern university, discovered that 70% of participants indicated that they would have a negative reaction to a gay or lesbian teacher self-disclosing their sexual orientation. In addition, "many students implied that the disclosure of a teacher's gay orientation would greatly interrupt their ability to learn" (p. 320). Alternatively, in a study with 156 undergraduate students, of the impact of a gay instructor's coming out to his students enrolled in an introductory psychology course, at a large Midwestern research university, Waldo and Kemp (1997) concluded that there was a positive impact on students' attitudes towards gays and lesbians.

According to Orlov and Allen (2014), the literature regarding teacher self-disclosure of sexual orientation supports, for the purposes of student learning, the teacher self-disclosing. In a qualitative phenomenological study of 13 LGBQ faculty members

exploring their experience of self-disclosing their sexual orientation to students, participants felt their teaching performance was enhanced by being out in the classroom, "stemming largely from what can be encapsulated in one term: *freedom"* (Orlov & Allen, 2014, p. 1033). Connected to this sense of enhanced teaching was the importance placed on displaying an authentic self, and thereby being a role model—"modeling how a student can be the totality of who he or she is in terms of not hiding aspects of him or herself" (Orlov & Allen, 2014, p. 1043). Nealy (2011) furthers the importance of authentic self in seeing coming out as essential to the health and authenticity of the clinical supervisor and clients.

Khayatt (1997), describing her own struggles with whether or not to come out to her students, concludes that the decision must remain with the individual teacher: "I often argue against the notion of coming out in a declarative way ('I am a lesbian') because I believe that there are significant pedagogical reasons why a teacher may choose not to declare her sexual orientation" (p. 141). In speaking about her coming out in the classroom, Susan Wolfe (2009) believes she owes it, not only to herself, but to her students to come out in every class, "for my own actualization is the foundation for teaching that empowers students" (p. 184). In reflecting on her own experience of coming out to her students, Shara Sand (2007) identified the degree of shame and anxiety she felt about coming out. She goes on to say that the fear and shame she felt, "is connected to the trauma of identity and the very real fear of being hated and aggressed against, of experiencing one's self as a hated subject" (p. 24).

Summary Concerning Self-Disclosure.

In summary, it would appear that the practice of the supervisor sharing her/his story and self-disclosing any degree of personal information is a unique practice within CPE in a clinical setting. Additionally, from the literature, self-disclosure is done with the intention of assisting the student clinically, not for the purpose of building the relationship. Even within these parameters, when it comes to discussions regarding sexual orientation, there was a higher rate of supervisee initiation as opposed to supervisor initiated.

Further, the literature seems divided regarding the students' response and experience regarding the self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the teacher/student relationship. Some of the literature indicates that self-disclosure by the teacher has been positive and integrative, while other literature suggests the opposite. The prevailing opinion seems to indicate that the decision is a personal one.

This sets the stage for my research and the potential it has to add to the literature regarding supervisor self-disclosure. The next chapter discusses the research methodology utilized in this research.

Chapter 3: Research Method and Design

This chapter reiterates the research question and discusses the hermeneutic phenomenology methodology employed in this research project, including the original design within that method as it emerged in process. The second section presents the theological paradigm that underpins the research and methodology—thereby grounding it within the realm of spirituality as opposed to other schools. This is followed by the methods and procedures to implement this qualitative study, including: the dialogues in self; the interviews with the external resources; the role of the researcher; the role of Tommy; the hermeneutic circle; and the identification and coding of meaning units. The chapter concludes with a discussion of qualitative rigor and the limitations of this study.

Hermeneutic Phenomenology and the Single Subject Study

As previously mentioned, my research question is "What is the meaning in my lived experience of disclosing my sexual orientation as part of the story telling process, during the beginning phase of the supervisory relationship?" The research design is a single-subject study and the methodology is hermeneutic phenomenology. This research project was focused on my experience, as a CPE teaching supervisor of self-disclosing my sexual orientation to a group of students, during the formational phase of the supervisory relationship.

Before offering a detailed description of this qualitative methodology, I would like to provide the background and foundation that resulted in the particular selection of the methodology. According to Heidegger, we exist in the world authentically, inauthentically, or in an undifferentiated way (Conroy, 2003). Authenticity, or as I have come to speak of it—being responsible to my experience—has always been a principal

value throughout my life. This value and sense of authenticity have continually led me to make difficult choices, including leaving the Roman Catholic priesthood, geographically relocating as a result, leaving behind relationships and building new ones, accepting my sexual orientation, coming out to my family, leaving the Roman Catholic Church, and seeking ordination in the United Church of Canada.

I have come to appreciate that growth, knowledge, learning, and academic achievement are on-going processes and experiences. I have discovered that deepening authenticity requires the same on-going process and experience. It is a choice and a call. At various times in my life I have been invited into and engaged in a deeper experience of authenticity—one to which if the invitation had come earlier, I would not have been able to respond. Each time I responded to this invitation and accepted responsibility for my experience, a deeper awareness of authenticity emerged. This dynamic led to this research. It is another stage or period in my life experience, in which I was called into another expression of authenticity.

This awareness created a particular vessel or container for exploring the research question. This was not only about the question, the research, the degree, the professional development, or the potential for professional opportunities—fundamentally, it is my vocation: to deepen and continually live into my authenticity. Further, the more I can be in authentic relationship with self, the more that is true for my relationship with God. If I am created in the image and likeness of God, as I grow in authentic relationship with myself I am becoming more and more a reflection of God—my relationship with self will reveal to me something about God!

A goal of phenomenology is to gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of an everyday experience. According to Finlay (2013), "phenomenology is a way of seeing how things appear to us through experience" (p. 173). Phenomenology requires an inquisitive, exploring, curious, attitude: "one that examines taken-for-granted human situations as they are experiences in everyday life but which go typically unquestioned" (p. 173). Phenomenological descriptions aim at being compelling and insightful; the description "reawakens or shows us the lived quality and significance of the experience in a fuller or deeper manner" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 10). The goal of phenomenology is to move beyond what the text or participant says of the experience to "what is revealed in the telling" (Finlay, 2013, p. 180). "This special way of 'seeing with fresh eyes' is the core element distinguishing phenomenology from other research approaches focused on exploring experience and subjectivity" (p. 176).

While phenomenology describes how one understands a particular experience, "hermeneutics describes how one interprets the 'texts' of life" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 4). Hermeneutic phenomenology attempts to uncover the understanding or meaning the experience possesses. This means that hermeneutic phenomenology not only explains an experience; "it also explores what this phenomenon can mean by offering possible interpretations" (Van Manen, 1997, p. 364). Hermeneutic phenomenology is therefore not only a description—it is an interpretive process in which the text mediates "between interpreted meanings and the thing toward which the interpretation points" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 24). A hermeneutic exploration describes a lived experience, and it interprets the "texts of lived experience in an attempt to determine the meaning embodied in them" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 38).

In this methodology the researcher endeavours to be as present as possible to the phenomenon and to what is being described. "This stance involves being empathic and genuinely curious while also being reflective" (Finlay, 2014, p. 124). There is a distinction between reflecting on or reiterating an experience and phenomenology; the latter moves beyond "subjectivity and into the broader realm of lifeworld experience" (Finlay, 2013, p. 172). Lifeworld refers to our "embodied sense of self" (p. 180) or how one interprets, makes meaning and sense of a particular experience reflected against their understanding of the self. Lived experience is the starting and end point of phenomenological study. The goal is to "transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 35).

Van Manen (1990), in speaking about the phenomenological description, identifies what he calls a "validating circle of inquiry" (p. 27); the description is validated by lived experience and it validates lived experience. He speaks more of an art or craft when it comes to writing a phenomenological study. The art in the hermeneutic interview is to keep the question of the meaning of the phenomenon open and to continue to ask questions in an attempt to reveal a deeper meaning, which up until now, may have gone unrecognized even by the person recounting the experience (p. 98). Van Manen describes the craft of writing as being similar to creating an object of art. He says, "as we try to capture the meaning of some lived experience in written text, the text in turn assumes a life of its own." (p. 128). The goal of this study was to describe the experience and explore and articulate the meaning this had for me, including how I interpreted this in my lifeworld. Thus, this was a hermeneutic phenomenological study.

The Originality of the Methodology

It is important to note that this movement of speaking forth embodied but possibly previously unnamed parts of self; having these parts witnessed by a professional other (Colleen MacDougall, as instructor of my methodology course and pilot project); sensing, weaving and crafting together deeper meanings as they emerged through the speaking-listening process, was unique in that the design then became responsive to the research question. As I worked with Colleen we engaged in a process that was itself an expression of hermeneutic phenomenology. There was also openness to how other methodologies (e.g., narrative, appreciative inquiry) "integrated themselves" through the process and became useful in getting to the deeper levels of what was being asked and revealed. I was encouraged to think broadly, expanding and widening my perceptions by examining philosophies and approaches from various academic fields. This appreciative inquiry required me to engage a postmodern approach and to be attentive to my inclination to fall back into a reductionist perspective. Through this creative process the design emerged as the research question was refined. This process allowed the centrality of the question to be revealed—for me not only to share my experience, but also to explore the meaning in my lived experience. With Colleen I explored the nature of knowledge and self and what emerged was a self-study in which I would interview different experiences in self. Further, I tested this method through a pilot interview with the provisional supervisor. The result confirmed using this self-study method and surfaced the remaining two experiences of self. That is, the Roman Catholic man and the mature supervisor spoke from recognizably distinct experiences that needed their own voice in the self dialogues.

The uniqueness of this emergent design, within hermeneutic phenomenological methodology, and even within a single study subject, is an original contribution to qualitative research. This design expands the boundaries of how meaning and interpretation are deepened through relationship, how self-dialogue is multi-dimensional and multi-layered—that the self is spoken through various voices. Assumptions, beliefs, and values are questioned, challenged, and broadened. Rather than be restricted by the traditional methodology, the question is held loosely while still honouring rigorous process.

There have been many levels of moving through this methodology and it has been very beneficial to have Colleen as a member of my dissertation committee. The discussions with my committee originated during the preparation, writing, and approval of the project design. The principles of discovery, exploration and transformation, as opposed to examining, dissecting, defending, were characteristic of our conversations and are foundational to a Constructivist theological perspective. "Post modernists see language as an active agent in the creation of meaning. As we talk to each other, we are constructing the world we see and think about, and as we change how we talk we are changing that world" (Bushe, 2001). Fundamental to the constructivist approach is the understanding of knowledge as being created and revealed through and in conversation. Knowledge is not somehow pre-determined, "knowledge is not a matter of accurately reflecting the world but it is a relationally embedded activity" (Cooperrider, Barrett, & Srivastra, 1995).

I experienced our conversations and discussions as an experience of the constructivist paradigm—coming to a deeper understanding and knowledge of the

proposed methodology. It was particularly enlightening to be part of the conversations, in which through exploration, and a sense of appreciative inquiry the committee members came to a deeper understanding of the experiences in self and how they were identified through the pilot project and again identified in the project design. Colleen and I spent time exploring this methodology— inviting the committee members into our experience and engaging with us in this postmodern, emergent application of the hermeneutic phenomenological methodology. I am grateful that the committee was willing to walk into this new territory and, with a curious and appreciative mentality, push the boundaries of this qualitative methodology.

Singe Subject Study Design.

As previously mentioned, the research design is a single subject study. In the methodology course, I explored my understanding and experience in "self". "Self" is used to acknowledge and identify the internal, pre-reflective, intuitive, spiritual voice of my personhood. This voice speaks in relation to the external persona and conscious person I present in everyday life. Through a historical and narrative exercise, I looked back at what created and formed the foundation for my understanding of self and relation. I identified that from an early age the sense of safety—being able to share everything with a confidant—was vital to me. This exercise enabled me to understand that safety was essential concerning relationships with others.

The single subject study (i.e. exploring my own experience) allowed for a deep exploration of my experiences in self, including: consideration of the socio-political-theological contexts through my experiences; and reflections on three particular experiences in self (the provisional supervisor, the Roman Catholic man, and the mature

teaching supervisor), including an awareness and appreciation for the salient and nonsalient characteristics and how these contribute to the creativity of me. Further, the "single subject study" approach enabled me to: describe my experience of choosing whether or not to disclose my sexual orientation to CPE students during the beginning phase of our relationship; describe meaning in the experiences of the decision process (phenomenology); and explore the possible interpretations of those themes or meanings and how that meaning informs how I approach the choice to disclose or not disclose my sexual orientation to students (hermeneutic).

Theological Paradigm

The theological paradigm that underpinned this research is a constructivist paradigm. In this paradigm, persons are active agents in creating their worlds—knowledge is not 'pre-determined'—with the goal to incorporate this body of knowledge and then communicate that. From a constructivist perspective, what we know and how we know are viewed as ongoing and continuous.

The constructivist paradigm was central to the understanding of the concept of self. In this paradigm self is not a static reality, nor defined by reference to external demarcations or parameters. This paradigm understands that the nature of identity is continuously being shaped by one's spiritual, cultural, and social realities and how one incorporates these into one's experience and personal comprehension of self. As I journeyed through the course work and research, I experienced the self being revealed to me through all the latter, accompanied by continual reflection. In particular keeping a journal became a means of tracking how the self continued to be revealed to me in ever deepening ways. It was a deeply layered experience of coming to understand my "self"

and interpreting these deeper meanings. This conceptualization of self is fundamental to the particular hermeneutic methodology employed in this research and contributes to the uniqueness of this research.

In the constructivist paradigm the Sacred is not so much experienced outside of oneself—distant—but one in which the emphasis is on the personal and intrapersonal dialogue, as contributing factors to truth and one's worldview. Foundational to this study was the importance and centrality of: the relationship between supervisor and student; an exploration of the factors that contributed to the establishment of a secure relationship that facilitated learning and the integration of theological, social, familial, and ethnic foundations, accompanied with the learning of a particular spiritual care practice. The uniqueness of this research was that it involved the self-disclosure of a gay supervisor to a group of CPE students and how this affected the supervisory relationship. The research therefore included the area of sexual orientation, the experiences in self of the writer, and the cultural, social, familial, and religious attitudes and beliefs associated with sexual orientation.

Dialogues and Application of the Hermeneutic Circle

Three main dialogues comprised the data for this research project. A preliminary dialogue began in my methodology course. This dialogue was a preliminary interview in self, which included identifying possible interpretations of experiences (e.g. fear, shame, feeling forced to disclose) that I believed were imperative to explore. This original interview uncovered the influence in my life of my Roman Catholic faith and how this has contributed to my worldview—a worldview through which sexual orientation and disclosing sexual orientation has been understood and interpreted—characterized by fear

of rejection, and being "found out". Having the experiences of the younger teacher, it became apparent that the experience of the mature supervisor who had grappled with the question for several years—having some times made the decision to self-disclose and at other times not to self-disclose—would offer a vital contribution to the research project.

The Self Dialogues.

The result of this process was the development of three dialogues with three participants to include:

1. The provisional supervisor - this is the neophyte, who gave voice to my experiences from 1998 to 1999. During this period of time, I received direct supervision from a qualified CASC supervisor in order to develop my skills as a teaching supervisor. This educational stage can last from one to three years.
2. The Roman Catholic Man - this dialogue concerned the central role the Roman Catholic faith played throughout my life, even though I am an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada. I was raised and active in the Catholic faith and was an ordained priest.
3. The Mature Supervisor - The third dialogue was with the mature supervisor[10], the professional I am now.

External Resources.

The goal of hermeneutic phenomenology is "to move beyond what the participant (or text) says of experience to what is implicitly revealed about the pre-reflective experiential realm in the telling" (Finlay, 2014, p. 125). Hermeneutic phenomenology is not only a description, but it is also an interpretive process in which, through the

[10] To keep the clarity of roles I have chosen to write in the third person as opposed to writing in the first person

interpretation of the researcher, the text mediates. "It mediates between interpreted meanings and the thing toward which the interpretation points" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 24). A hermeneutic exploration does not only describe a lived experience, but it interprets the "texts of lived experience in an attempt to determine the meaning embodied in them" (p. 38). In this research, the hermeneutic circle was expanded upon by employing three external resources who functioned as interpreters and contributors for the interviews with the experiences in self. For each experience in self, I identified a corresponding external resource and conducted two interviews with them utilizing the transcripts of the interviews with the experiences in self. The three external resources were:

1. The external resource for the provisional supervisor – This individual was a recently certified CPE teaching supervisor and colleague who is gay. The following characteristics were key to the selection of this individual:
    a. Has integrated and lives his sexual orientation through a different lens (e.g., is more open, socially or politically more involved in the gay culture);
    b. Has experience with a different religious tradition and theological paradigm. I assumed that the different theological paradigm allowed for a different theological interpretation of his sexual orientation.
2. The external resource for the Roman Catholic man – The external resource for this dialogue was a Roman Catholic priest. The choice of this individual was based on the following criteria:
    a. A faculty member at a major Canadian theological university;

b. A person who is intelligent, purposefully thoughtful, curious, and explorative;

c. Possesses a different understanding of the role of the official church and a different theological paradigm than the young Roman Catholic man. I believed this could lead to a different theological interpretation and understanding, moral understanding, and pastoral response to the topic of sexual orientation than the young Roman Catholic man's understanding, experience, and interpretation.

3. The external resource for the mature supervisor – The third dialogue occurred with another mature CPE Teaching Supervisor. The qualities, characteristics, and personal narrative this supervisor possessed were:

   a. A seasoned CPE teaching supervisor;

   b. An understanding and appreciation for how their narrative is impacted and informed by social identity, theological backgrounds, and family of origin;

   c. An understanding of their salient and nonsalient identity in their narrative;

   d. Experience, knowledge, wisdom, and therapeutic awareness to offer an interpretation, insights, and perspectives into what I uncovered concerning my experiences.

In preparation for this research, I made application to St. Stephen's Ethics Review Committee and received approval on November 9, 2016. In accordance with the ethical principle of 'Respect for Free and Informed Consent', I discussed the research project

with the participants and presented them with the informed consent form (See Appendix A, B, C). I allowed adequate time for them to ask their questions, express any concerns, and ask clarifying questions. This included a description and explanation of the research project, the expected duration of the project, their role as external resources, and a description of the phenomenological hermeneutic methodology.

The ethical principal of 'Respect for Privacy and Confidentiality' required that I protect the dissemination of their personal information. I informed the participants that they would not be named in the dissertation or future publications from the research. The dissertation and future publications would only include characteristics and descriptions of the participants in line with their respective informed consent.

Consideration of the principle of non-maleficence required sensitivity to the participants' potential stress or discomfort at any point in the interviews, for any reason, and an obligation, on my part, to respond in such a way that reduces these effects. I spoke about the possible harms and benefits that may arise from participating in this research, and informed them that at any time throughout their participation they could decide not to continue. This may be for reasons of stress, personal discomfort in responding to questions or participating in the conversation, or for any other emotional or psychological reaction. Only after they were satisfied that they were able to consent, did I ask them to sign the consent to participate in this research.

I have dual relationships with all of the external resources. The two CPE teaching supervisors that served as external resources are colleagues, however, we do not have an on-going working relationship. Further, there is no power differential between us which mitigates potential coercion. The Roman Catholic priest has been a spiritual companion

with me in the past. While this creates a dual relationship and may mean a particular closeness and intimacy, this allowed him to have deeper insight into the Roman Catholic man portrayed in the transcript. For all three external resources, it was imperative for me to be cognizant of my role as researcher[11] and stay in this role in order to remain inquisitive, explorative, and probing while being aware of the potential for transference, countertransference, and projection. I felt confident that my professional skills as a psychotherapist and CPE teaching supervisor enabled me to me be aware of stepping out of the researcher role. In the interview with the mature supervisor, I recognized that we were moving more into a theological discussion, named it as such, and both of us agreed to have the conversation at another time. The external resources did not receive any financial remuneration or gift for their participation.

Interview Process.

The researcher purposefully interviewed the experience in self of the provisional supervisor first because this was where my research question originated—being asked to tell my story as part of the introduction process in CPE of getting to know one another and creating and building a group. The second interview was with the experience in self of the Roman Catholic man, and the third interview was conducted with the experience in self of the mature supervisor. The provisional supervisor was the first to experience the challenge in telling his story, and this story brought to light the importance that the Roman Catholic faith and belief played in the researcher's life. The mature supervisor continues to live with the question each time he teaches a new group of students.

[11] To keep the clarity of roles I have chosen to write in the third person "researcher" as opposed to writing in the first person

The interviews of the experiences in self and with the external resources were conducted face-to-face, audio taped, and transcribed by an independent transcriptionist. I intentionally chose to audio tape rather than video tape the interviews for a number of reasons. For example, the initial three interviews were with me about my experiences in self which meant I fulfilled two roles; that of researcher and interviewee. I believed it would be confusing to watch a video in which I navigated the different roles. The audio tape allowed me to transcribe the spoken words, as well as any interpretation offered at the time, and eliminated any added interpretations offered in my role as researcher. The interviews with the external resources were also audio taped to enable the interview in a location of their choice and assure their comfort with the interview process.

The audio tapes were kept in a locked cupboard in my office in the hospital. The transcripts of the interviews were electronically stored on the network drive at the hospital where I work. The hospital has strong fire walls and privacy regulations. Keeping it on a network drive provided additional security, as the network is password protected and is mapped to a particular computer. My computer is also password protected and the password is changed every three months. At the completion of the DMin program, all audio tapes and transcriptions will be destroyed, and, at no time, will they be made public or used for other purposes.

The Role of the Researcher

Since I conducted interviews with three different experiences in self, it was vital that I clarified my roles as researcher and interviewee. The questions for the interviews were secondary to the ability to continue to invite, encourage, and empathize in order to draw the story out. The question of whether to self-disclose my sexual orientation is

known by all three participants—what was needed was the encouragement and support to speak and reveal the experience of being confronted by this choice.

As the researcher, I listened to each interview in self and assumed an observer role. This enabled me to gather and synthesize information from multiple sources (interviews and external hermeneutic circle references). While the researcher requires similar characteristics as an interviewer (e.g., curiosity; openness to discovery and learning; inquisitiveness; desire to expand, explore, and discover new insights; understandings and meanings), the researcher requires connecting, integrating, and bringing deeper clarity to the different experiences in self.

Through journaling, I was able to review my transcript, explore the words and experiences, stand back and assess the roles of researcher and interviewee and interpret meaning of the whole. This process was used for each transcript. Journaling allowed me to capture all the experiences of being gay throughout the research. All of these experiences, whether personal or experienced through media, became additional data for the social, cultural context of my dissertation. Additionally, this provided trustworthiness to a qualitative study which Guba and Lincoln refer to as a decision trail; "leaving a decision trail entails discussing explicitly decisions taken about the theoretical, methodological, and analytic choices throughout the study" (as cited in Koch, 2006, p. 92).

The Role of Tommy

As the reader may recall, Tommy was introduced in Chapter 1 and functioned in my life as a transitional object, providing a sense of safety and security as I experienced

and made sense of my life. It was Tommy's function to create and hold a place that allowed the experiences in self to feel safe and comfortable to tell their stories.

This intimate, confidant and friend who is capable and mature enabled me to remain safe and secure while I surfaced all the emotions and reactions to each interview. Tommy, who is inviting, supporting and encouraging of the provisional supervisor, is correspondingly able to be respectful of the Roman Catholic man and the mature supervisor. Tommy was the intermediator between the researcher and the interviewees. The interviewees were confident that their story would be heard and respected, without judgement or ridicule and were comfortable allowing Tommy to monitor consent to continue or stop. Tommy does not have an audible voice, rather he operates at a more profound and deeper level—a felt sense—at the soul level. He was the holder of the stories and as such became the witness to each story—a sacred experience.

The Hermeneutic Circle

As previously mentioned, Van Manen (1990) identifies what he calls a "validating circle of inquiry" (p. 27) in speaking about the phenomenological description; the description is validated by lived experience and it validates lived experience. The art in the hermeneutic interview is to keep the question of the meaning of the phenomenon open and to continue to ask questions in an attempt to reveal a deeper meaning, which up until now, may have gone unrecognized even by the person recounting the experience. (p. 98).

This validating circle of inquiry or hermeneutic circle was the continuous dance between data analysis and evolving themes and meanings that surfaced from the conversations in self and external resources. Deepening and thickening my

understanding and interpretation of the data also involved conducting an additional research of the literature from the conversation with the Roman Catholic resource. This additional literature facilitated new and deeper interpretations of the meanings from the conversation with the Roman Catholic man. This means that I engaged in various ways and a number of times with the data, themes, and meanings that surfaced from the interviews in self, the conversations with the external resources, and the professional literature. This process continued until I was satisfied that I had interpreted the meaning in response to the research question.

Data were gathered through conducting three interviews with each experience in self. Credibility of the data occurred through a few steps:

1. An initial reading of each transcript to ensure accuracy of the transcript and begin the initial pre-reflective process.
2. Re-reading the transcript and initiate the data analysis to intentionally identify meaning units, repeated expressions, physical, emotional or psychosocial responses and reactions, and possible themes that might be emerging.
3. Return to the transcript a third time, a few days later, and re-read the transcript and listen to the tape. The purpose of this step was to listen for particular nuances of each voice in the dialogues and to determine whether the previous identified themes remained congruent with the data.

Following the initial interview with each experience in self, I subsequently spent time with each transcript of the experience in self, focusing on my participation, as researcher, in the internal dialogues. Finlay (2014) defines meaning units as "phrases or passages of text, including nonverbal communication, which express a particular point or

meaning" (p. 127). This afforded me, in each experience in self, added time to check for consistency and dependability of meaning units identified. The goal was to gain deeper insights into the meanings emerging from all the conversations, internal and external. The validity is in the deeper saturation of identified meaning units which were determined to be as complete as they can be at this time. Finlay (2014) refers to this part of the hermeneutic-phenomenological process as dwelling: "the process by which phenomenology makes room for the phenomenon to reveal itself and speak its story into our understanding" (p. 126).

I sent the original transcript of the three experiences in self with my notes containing insights, questions, and wonderings, with the preliminary identification of meaning units to the appropriate external resource. This allowed them time to review the transcript and my preliminary identification of meaning units. The purpose of the interview with each of the external resource was to glean additional and deeper insight and understanding of potential meaning units and contribute to my identification of themes.

Each external resource was asked five questions to facilitate the conversation and draw out further meaning and possible themes:

1. At first glance or reflection, does anything in particular stand out to you about what the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor is saying?
2. Drawing upon your experience and expertise what do you hear as being critical, significant, painful, wounded, etc., for the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor?

3. Can you say more about that?
4. Can you identify any common themes, threads, or connections in what the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor is saying?
5. Do you have any reflections that you wish to offer concerning what the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor is saying?

Between the questions and in response to what the participant said, I invited and encouraged further exploration and explanation of what the participant stated, in order to explore and create deeper and richer interpretations and understandings. Continued reflection and journaling accompanied each of these steps allowing for confirmation of content and meaning.

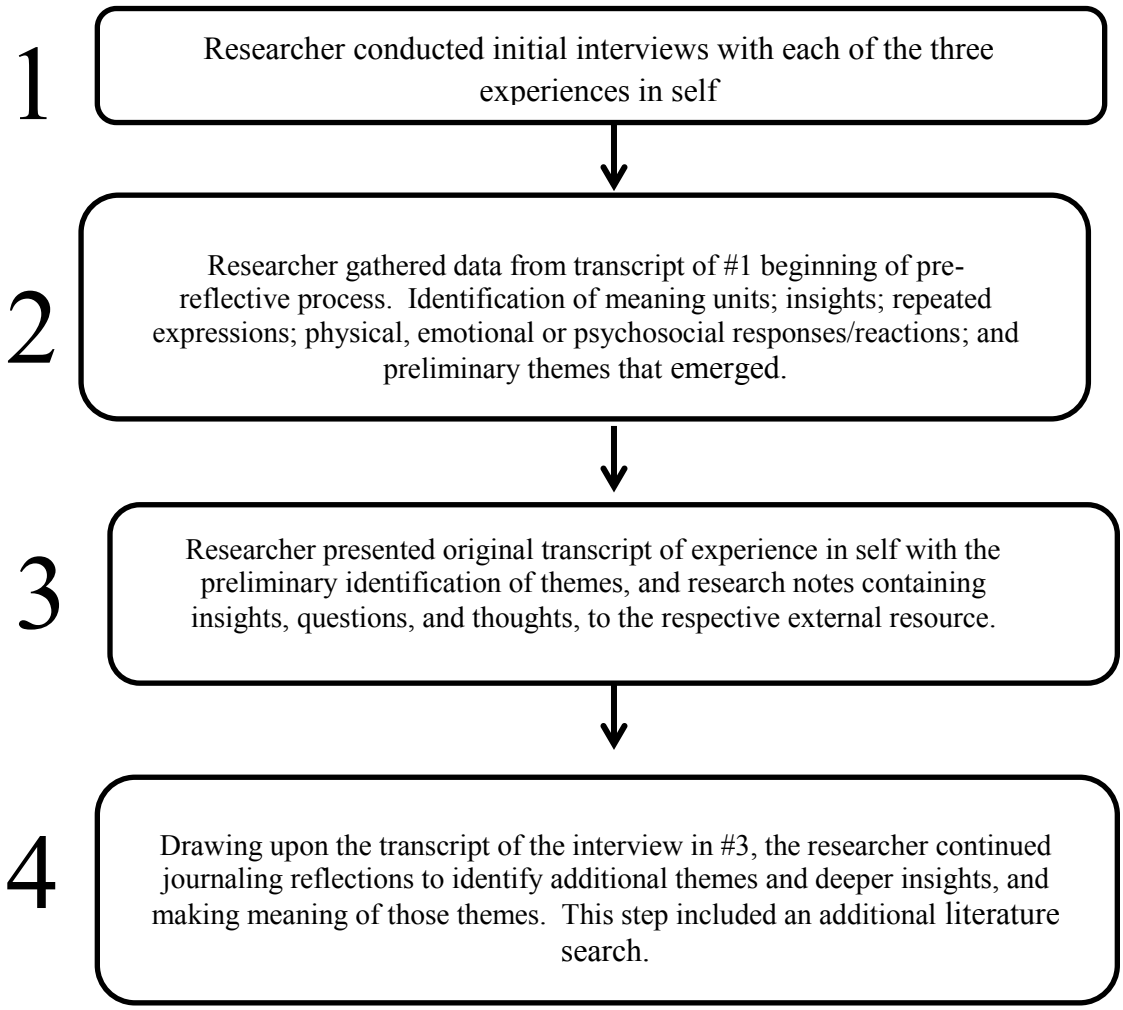
I returned to each external resource a second time to verify accuracy of the transcript in order to establish validity and build trustworthiness of the data. This second interview allowed for further reflection and insights. Further, I shared preliminary themes with up to four examples of meaning units. I asked each external resource whether these themes resonated with them and if they saw other themes. This second interview was to deepen and thicken the interpretative meanings of the experiences in self. This step enabled me to ensure dependability of the themes and meanings that surfaced. These steps within the hermeneutic circle contribute to the qualitative rigor of the research.

The second interview with each external resource included the following questions:

1. Any initial thoughts, reactions, etc., from the transcript?

2. I have identified what I thought you were saying in the first interview regarding what the experience in self was saying. Have I captured your thoughts, comments, reflections?
3. I have begun to identify some common threads, themes, meaning units; do these make sense to you from what the experience in self talked about, given your particular expertise?
4. What are your thoughts about____? (I would name a particular theme, meaning unit, or knowledge from an additional literature review)?

Figure 1 depicts the process for interviews with self and with the external resources.



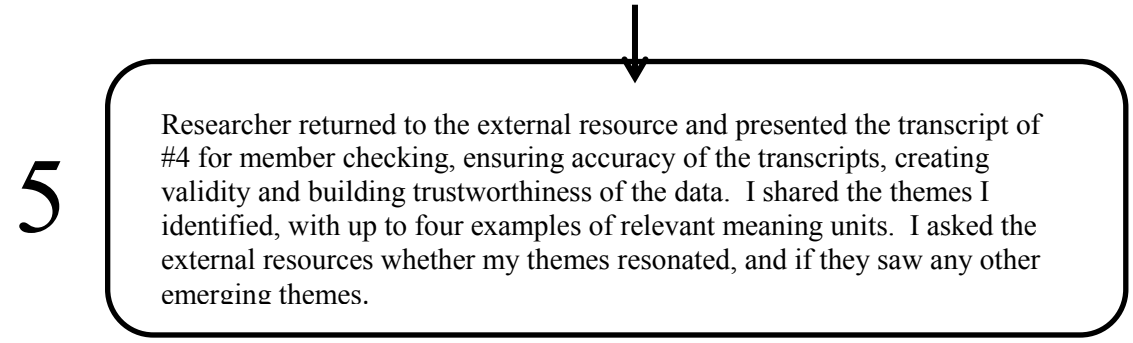


Figure 1. Interview process for interviews with self and with the external resources.

Identification and Coding of Meaning Units and Themes

Throughout the research and data coding, I recorded in my journal responses, reactions and reflections on my role as researcher. This process included recording my perceptions, intuitions, and awareness that resulted from the interview process with the self and external resources. Further, this approach included reviewing and critiquing my internal dialogues where my response and/or question facilitated, remained neutral, or discouraged further exploration and revelation of meaning. The following questions guided this critique.

1. Was I authentically inquisitive and interested in discovering new meaning about the experience of whether or not to include my sexual orientation in the first experience of telling my story?
2. As a researcher, did I maintain an empathetic yet neutral stance as I explored the interviews?
3. Was I aware of my preconceived notions and judgments that could influence my ability to surface and interpret meaning?
4. How did I support myself surfacing new insights and meanings concerning the experiences in self and relationship?
5. How did I encourage the experiences in self of becoming more aware of the pre-reflective meaning ascribed to the experience?

Qualitative Rigor

Standards for quality in qualitative research require careful documentation of how the research was conducted, the data analysis and interpretation processes, as well as the thinking process of the researcher. Tina Koch (2006) submits that a study is credible

not when a reader holds the same interpretation, but when the reader can follow how the author came to interpretations they chose (p. 92). Nancy Moules (2002) claims that "a good interpretation takes the reader to a place that is recognizable, having either been there before, or in simply believing that it is possible" (p. 34). Credibility involved engagement with the topic and material being researched over a prolonged period of time, and consulting participants and asking for validation of the interpretation.

An understanding of the epistemology of knowledge contributes to the credibility of this research. Postmodernism understands knowledge as active and not static, pre-conceived or pre-constructed. This means that knowledge is actively created and is generative. By extension, the knowledge that results from an interview is "not collected, but produced between interviewer and interviewee" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 302). A vital consideration which impacts the creation of knowledge is the relation between the interviewer and interviewee: "different constellations of interviewers and interviewees will result in different knowledge products" (p. 302).

Transferability was demonstrated through thick description, with the aim of the reader being able to see how the interpretations of the researcher can be applicable to other contexts beyond the present research. The intent is that this research project will invite others to reflect on their experience which may or may not be similar to mine. Further, others may come to different conclusions regarding self-disclosure through their experiences.

Transferability also occurred through the core human experience and value of deep self-awareness and being known. Future research by other LGBT teaching supervisors within CASC could demonstrate the degree of transferability of this research.

Consideration of the socio-political-theological contexts will be essential given the significance these contexts hold in the lived experience of this population.

Unique Qualities of Research

There are some unique qualities associated with hermeneutic phenomenological studies. For instance, I am aware that my experiences of disclosing my sexual orientation may not be the same for other LGBT teaching supervisors. The person may have a different experience of how his/her sexual orientation influenced their lived experiences, and how those experiences have been understood and integrated in his/her life.

This research did not address self-disclosure in a general sense; rather, it is limited to the self-disclosure of sexual orientation within a specific role and in a specific educational environment. Further, the research does not address self-disclosure in a secular setting: my professional association has religious and spiritual roots. This is unique and may not be relevant to a non-secular field.

This research makes a distinction between self-disclosure and self-revelation. Self-revelation refers to the non-deliberate ways in which communication about oneself occurs with others, including the language used, and values and views expressed about topics and issues outside of what would be considered the normal conversation within the therapeutic or supervisory relationship. Self-revelation can also occur as a result of dress, appearance, photos, and personal items in one's office. Alternatively, self-disclosure refers to the deliberate disclosing of personal information. Self-disclosure refers to what the supervisor consciously chooses to reveal about their personal life, personal preferences, beliefs, values, and self-revelations. This research addresses the intentional

self-disclosure of my sexual orientation as well as not to self-disclose in the group context, and does not involve how my sexual orientation may be revealed in other ways (e.g., personal items in my office, dress, appearance, photos, 'word on the street', reputation).

Summary

With a fuller understanding of the methodology and the interviews in the research the next chapter discusses coding process and the identification of meaning units and themes for each of the interviews.

Chapter 4: Exploring and Identifying Themes

This chapter presents the coding process and the identification of meaning units and themes that emerged from the interviews. The chapter also includes my decision to only present the meaning units and themes in this chapter. In essence, I have remained diligent, as the researcher, in not adding any interpretation, reaction, response, or conclusion to the information presented. This will occur in the next chapter. In keeping with the phenomenological approach, the researcher has attempted to capture the essence of the lived experience, so that the reader may emotionally and intuitively connect to this essence.

The data for this research was collected following the methodology outlined in Chapter Three, through a series of interviews involving three experiences in self, and three external resources for each experience in self. The coding process explored each of these interviews in turn.

Coding Process

The coding began with the researcher doing an initial reading of the transcripts from the interviews of the three experiences in self, checking for accuracy of transcription and beginning the initial reflective process. Following upon this, the researcher re-read the transcription to more intentionally identify any meaning units, repeated expressions, physical, emotional or psychosocial responses, and reactions that might be emerging. The researcher returned to the transcript a third time, a few days later, re-reading the transcript while again listening to the tape. This time, the focus was to hear the particular nuances of each voice in the dialogues and to see if the meaning units originally identified were consistent. These steps or stages were accompanied with

continued time allotted for reflection, allowing for confirmation of content and the flow of that content. At this point the researcher felt confident that there was a good grasp of the meaning units—that there was enough strength in them to take them to the external resources, but to remain open to additional insights, meaning units, interpretation of the external resources.

The researcher used a system of colour highlighting to begin to identify words, phrases, and expressions that possibly might become meaning units, in each of the interviews of the experiences in self: (i.e. fear/power over: green, Roman Catholic faith: purple). The researcher sent the original transcript of the each experience in self, with the coloured highlights and a legend, identifying the preliminary identification of meaning units, to the appropriate external resource ahead of the interview arranged with them. The purpose of this interview with the external resource was to have a conversation about the identified meaning units and groupings; explore their thoughts, reactions and ideas; and gather other meaning units that they identified from reading the transcript. All of this material contributed to additional and deeper insights and understandings that would further contribute to the researcher's identification of themes.

After the initial interview with each external resource the researcher had the conversation transcribed and again, using a system of colour highlighting, identified initial meaning units. This document, with the identified meaning units, was given to each experience in self. The researcher gave each of the experiences in self two weeks to sit with the transcript and reflect on the conversation; further discerning and exploring previous meaning units and identifying new ones. The goal was to gain deeper insights into the meanings emerging from all the conversations, internal and external. During this

time there were conversations between the researcher and experience in self often occurring spontaneously, at quiet reflective times, at unexpected times or as a result of an external stimuli or events. The researcher kept a journal of notes, reactions, responses, and new insights of the experiences in self. This enabled tracking deepening and layered insights and identifying other emerging themes. This is the beginning of the hermeneutic circle at work; moving from the external resource, between the researcher and the experience in self. During this phase, the researcher was in conversation with the experience in self, and with the content of the interview from the external resources. In response to the interview with the Roman Catholic external resource, the researcher further explored the literature to enhance knowledge and understanding.

Initial themes began to emerge from the conversations with the experiences in self, the external resources, and the researcher. The researcher then went through the transcripts of the experience in self and external resources, and began to identify emerging themes from the highlighted meaning units. The subtitles in this chapter identify the themes. Each theme is supported by data from the interviews and journal notes. Keeping in mind that each of the meaning units were colour coded, it was interesting that there were different colours under each theme. In essence, even though the meaning units were originally identified under one particular theme, through reflection and the deepening and thickening process, the themes and meaning units came together in a different constellation. This is consistent with the interpretative process of the hermeneutic circle.

The researcher subsequently returned to the external resources for a follow-up interview. Prior to this follow-up interview, the researcher sent them the transcript of the

original interview—a form of member checking—ensuring accuracy of the transcripts, creating validity, and building trustworthiness of the data. The researcher also sent the external resources a second document that identified the developing themes and meaning units. The meaning units were colour coded so that the external resource could see the meaning units were initially connected to particular themes.

These follow-up interviews were transcribed, and the researcher read the transcripts checking for accuracy, and continued identifying the meaning units and themes. A system of colour coding was used to identify these units and themes. The researcher then took the coded meaning units and identified where they aligned with the themes. One final time, the researcher engaged the experiences in self to reflect upon the emerging themes and supporting meaning units. This reflects the hermeneutic circle at work—the experiences in self and with the external resources helped me to move between the varied data and weave, through deepening and thickening, an interpretation of themes.

The themes that surfaced for each experience in self are presented in the following section. The categories were created to invite the reader more deeply into my lived experience, as is consistent with the phenomenological methodology.

The Provisional Supervisor

Five themes surfaced from the experiences of the provisional supervisor. Each is discussed in turn.

Holding His Secret: The Fear of Being Judged by The Roman Catholic Church.

The provisional supervisor spoke about his need for authorization from the Roman Catholic Church in order to work as a spiritual care practitioner. He was acutely aware of the over-arching influence the Catholic Church had during this period of his life. He said:

> I was new at St. Michael's, being a Catholic institution and very aware that I've been hired, even though I was a former priest . . . and I think that added to the secrecy too because, as I think about that, always wondering if the administration knew that I was a former priest. Did the Archdiocese, in particular the Cardinal, know I was a former Roman Catholic priest and if they did know, what would that information do to my position? So I lived under this kind of umbrella of a combination of secrecy, a feeling I had to hold, even that former priest part as somewhat secret, or the fear and anxiety if that got out, what would that mean for my position. I realize that's not about sexual orientation, but it is about living with a certain amount of fear and anxiety. (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 2)[12]

The provisional supervisor indicated he was in transition in his life. He was moving from living as a Catholic priest, with the accompanying organizational hierarchy and structure, to living as a private individual. It had been five years since he left the priesthood, and so the provisional supervisor posits:

> I'm probably not as comfortable talking about this (sic: his sexual orientation) at this point, it's new for me, and I'm still incorporating that external expression of

[12] The name and page number refers to the particular interview and the page number of the transcript.

> being gay—being in Toronto, still finding my own way. I'm probably feeling more self-judgment even as I'm talking about it, because maybe I haven't come to the same acceptance that I needed to; that I was still growing in that acceptance of my sexuality and living out of it. (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 8)

The external resource wondered how this context influenced his decision regarding the self-disclosure of his sexual orientation, because of the sense of secrecy he was living with at this time in his life. "I was thinking about you as being under the umbrella of the Catholic Church and how personally threatening that might have been" (first interview with external resource for the provisional supervisor, p. 2). He went on to reflect on the potential fear and anxiety that was set up for the provisional supervisor, given the organization holds strong viewpoints regarding sexuality and sexual orientation.

Related to the influence of the Roman Catholic Church, the provisional supervisor identified a defining context for his life and his life partner, which was their dependency on the authorization of the Roman Catholic Church for their employment. As a result, he reflected upon the stress this placed on them to keep being gay private and separate from their work lives.

> My partner at the time was working with the Catholic school board and so he needed an endorsement from the Catholic Church to be able to teach. So, very much, our livelihoods were tied up in the Catholic Church and lived under the umbrella of that. And so I think that created an overlay of fear, anxiety, and

certainly secrecy in our relationship. (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 4)

I guess as I'm talking, I'm aware that through those years, there was a certain amount of secrecy, fear, and anxiety about what would happen if the Catholic Church found out, because it would affect our livelihood: affect our ability to work. (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 4)

how much we were living with during those years when we were first together, both working under the auspices of the Catholic Church (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 5).

how much unconsciously that created an unconscious level of fear or of a needing to be secret and the impact that had. And to what degree that influenced or impacted my ability to self-disclose (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 5).

The external resource identified the potential stress being under the auspices of the Catholic Church would have on the supervisor's life and his partner's: "I guess you were both in a similar kind of situation, that might have created a strong alliance between the two of you, but at the same time, maybe it created some complexities in your relationship" (first interview with external resource for the provisional supervisor, p. 13). In reflecting upon the role of the Roman Catholic Church in the provisional supervisor's life and his partner, the external resource had this to say in the follow-up interview:

So there's an interesting parallel there. You both (referring to my husband) had to leave the umbrella of the Catholic Church in order to go beyond. So it's sort of like you needed the Catholic Church for a while. You're both kind of . . . I think

> in your faith, were devoted to the Catholic Church . . . for a while . . . maybe there is some allegiance to the Catholic Church because, you know, you got your education and your jobs . . . you became a Priest and that sort of thing. And then at some point, that umbrella which might have been protective became oppressive. (follow-up interview with external resource for the provisional supervisor, p. 24)

As the experience in self of the provisional supervisor reflected on this statement through the hermeneutic circle, he found it helpful and supportive of his experience. The statement by the external resource had normalized, if not legitimized, his experience of moving away from the Church which early in his life played a prominent and central role. (journal note, March 24, 2017) Reflecting on this statement, the provisional supervisor concluded that this explained why he had to leave the Roman Catholic Church to continue to grow, develop, and integrate his sexuality in his life. This was a moment of grace and reconciliation—a healing of some of the sorrow and regret about having to move on from the Roman Catholic Church in order to have a fuller and more authentic life.

Disclosing Sexual Orientation Leaves Him Feeling Very Vulnerable.

The provisional supervisor spoke about his fear regarding how the knowledge of his gay orientation would impact and affect his relationship with students*:*

> Would they still be open to receiving feedback from me? Would we be able to develop a good relationship and what literature now speaks about as a supervisory alliance so that we could work well together, and that the growth for the student

> that is so integral to CPE would occur? (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 4)
>
> as if it was the gay person speaking, so that everything would be seen through a gay lens, rather than "This is my feedback, these are my insights for you. And it has nothing to do with my sexuality; it is just what I'm seeing. This is my profession, this is my expertise and that's what I'm sharing with you, regardless of orientation. I'd be saying the same thing or a heterosexual supervisor would say the same thing to you." But the fear would be for me, is it heard the same way? Or, again, am I just challenged and dismissed? (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 3)

He identified a sense of power he felt that the self-disclosure of his sexual orientation could give a student:

> It's revealing something very intimate, but an aspect of me that still, even in this day and age, still polarizes or can polarize people (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 3).
>
> If it got out at the university, or got out amongst students? And, very concretely, if I ended up in a conflictual relationship with a student in which we weren't working well together (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 4).
>
> out of their anger, to go out and reveal that information about me, which at that point would have jeopardized my job because, again, being endorsed by the Catholic church (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 4).

> I was putting a whole lot of myself way out there on the line with no guarantee as to how that would be received, how it would be respected, how it would be handled, cared for, honoured, yeah respected, just –it could just go anywhere. (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 7)

While the external resource could empathize with the provisional supervisor and experienced some of the same trepidation, the source of his feeling was different—it was the result of making the decision to self-disclose to students who were from a fundamental or evangelical tradition, rather than whether to disclose or not. The external resource for the provisional supervisor said he was not bothered by a student's homophobia, "it doesn't bother me at all anymore. Mostly because I know they can't do anything with it. And they're probably more scared to reveal their homophobia in this climate than I am to reveal my sexual orientation" (follow-up interview with external resource for the provisional supervisor, p. 28).

Through the hermeneutic circle, the provisional supervisor identified that his concern was related to his self-image and his experience with the Roman Catholic Church. This left him feeling that he was somewhat "less than", defective, or even sinful, because of his orientation and that he would be judged by others with the same standard (journal note, March 17, 2017). This experience of his sexual orientation, as lacking and defective, created a burden to live with and cast a cloud over his entire life. According to his transcript, this experience had a profound effect on accepting his sexual orientation. He experienced it as a demon he fought from his first inkling regarding his sexual orientation until he met a spiritual director who walked with him and provided the space for a new understanding of his sexual orientation.

In the follow-up interview, the external resource connected with the experience of the provisional supervisor regarding the power that this information potentially gave the student when he spoke about his experience in self-disclosing his sexual orientation to his children:

> the analogy that comes to mind is coming out to my children. One of the awareness's of coming out to your children is that you're no longer in control of who knows, because kids could go blah, blah, blah. So I'm taking them to baseball games and swimming lessons and all that sort of stuff and I wonder if they tell their friends or they tell their teacher. That's what you're talking about here, isn't it? Like that idea of once you disclose to a student, it's out there and they can kind of . . . you don't have the power to stop them. (follow-up interview with external resource for the provisional supervisor, p. 31)

The researcher found this reflection significant because it demonstrates the transferability of this qualitative research. The external resource is drawing upon the experience of the provisional supervisor in self to access his own experience and bring a new lens to reflect on his experience.

The Pressure He Experienced to Conform and Respond to Expectation.

The provisional supervisor spoke of his experience telling people about his sexual orientation. He indicated this generally occurred during a one-to-one conversation after he had developed a sense of trust and safety with a person. This was not one of the first things he shared about himself.

When the provisional supervisor began to speak specifically about the expectation of his teaching supervisor to reveal his gay orientation in the first week of a CPE course,

as part of the story telling, he spoke about how different this was from his customary way of disclosing his sexuality.

> sense of not choosing to tell it, but it being expected, demanded of me. The image I have around that is kind of like being forced out of the closet, rather than choosing to come out of the closet (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 6).

> a kind of a personal violation. It wasn't a choice I was making, it wasn't an individual choice, it was a choice to five people (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 7).

> I guess naked before people. Not a very—for me, not a good feeling, very threatening, very insecure and I think all that got stirred up in that (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 7).

In contrast to the provisional supervisor's experience in self-disclosure in CPE, the external resource found disclosing his sexuality to be a very powerful part of supervision. He identified that he discloses other personal aspects (i.e., depression, sexual abuse), and so he postulated that sexual orientation might not stand out as much or be "normalized" given his other personal experiences. In speaking about his experience, he said:

> what most students have said is that it sets a tone for the unit, that it gives them permission to share things that they probably wouldn't have shared beforehand. And I've had several students say, especially LGBT students say, well I wasn't sure I was going to disclose about my sexuality, but since you have I feel

> comfortable doing that. (follow-up interview with external resource for the provisional supervisor, p. 11)

The Desire to Integrate His Personal Life: A Way to Self-Disclose.

The provisional supervisor talked about how he would introduce and include his life partner during this time in his life. He indicated that when attending work parties or celebrations:

> N would come with me, but we wouldn't define it. We wouldn't say what our relationship was; I didn't introduce him as my partner. He was just there and he knew the staff, so we were always welcomed and there was no real need to introduce him as such and I think that that was the process for a number of years. (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 9)

The external resource found this surprising, given the fact that the provisional supervisor had to be vigilant when it came to revealing his sexual orientation given the Roman Catholic Church:

> I don't think I could have done that. I would've liked to and I kind of admire you for doing that because you are sort of standing up to, you know, without giving voice to it. You're bringing your life as an example and you talk a little bit about feeling increasingly uncomfortable with the teachings of the Catholic Church and I can see that this one way you are sort of thumbing your nose at the Church, your boss right: which is again, it's kind of daring. If my boss was against same-sex marriage, there would be no way I'd bring a partner to a staff event. There would just be no way. (interview with external resource for the provisional supervisor, p. 9)

To bring his partner to social gatherings was an indicator of how critical it was for him to be authentic and incorporate his gay identity into his personhood. The external resource hypothesized how this vital value to integrate his sexual orientation influenced the decisions and choices the provisional supervisor made:

> I think that you really wanted to be out and you wanted people to know about you—who you were. Like that was very important to you. And even though you couldn't vocalize it, you tried to do it in other ways . . . to let people know, to let people in on who you were because having people know who you are is part of you being accepted. As your sexuality becomes more integral to your identity you want to be accepted in your entirety: so bringing N to like a staff gathering is a way sort of tease out that acceptance a bit. I mean, some people would say it's a little dangerous. (interview with external resource for the provisional supervisor, p. 6)

Utilizing the hermeneutic circle, the provisional supervisor found himself intrigued and challenged by the perspective of the external resource. The provisional supervisor had never considered that bringing his partner to social gatherings could be dangerous or out of the ordinary. In fact, it seemed quite comfortable and reasonable for him rather than pushing the boundaries, as the external resource suggested.

> While the provisional supervisor might not have felt the freedom to completely self-disclose, he did concur that bringing his partner to social events was a way to reveal[13] his sexual orientation and thereby maintain

[13] Reveal, in this context, is understood as an indirect way that tells something about the person (e.g., photos in one's office, what one says about the way they spent their weekend, whether one speaks about children or a spouse).

> authenticity and integrity while creating opportunities for continued growth. (journal note, January 13, 2017)

These reflections point to a desire to be more 'real' and relational in his life. As he was increasingly accepting his sexual orientation and living with his partner, there was a desire to "be known" and to have authentic relationships—to know the other and be known by the other. As long as he is not "known" it leaves the nagging question—would he be accepted, would he be in relationship, if the other knew he was gay?

His Experience of Feeling Completely Vulnerable and Exposed.

In 2004, within six months of having started to work at a new hospital in downtown Toronto, an anonymous letter purportedly written by a former student made accusations of sexual abuse, including that they discovered that the supervisor was in a same-sex relationship. This letter was sent to the Vice President of the hospital and to the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto. The experience in self of the provisional supervisor spoke about his fear and his professional and personal life being threatened:

> I was still endorsed by the Catholic Church and all those fears came tumbling down: fear of losing my job, what would they do with this information and again, even though there are laws, or guidelines, policies that protect you around sexual orientation, we all know and I know that there are other ways an organization can get rid of you if they want. This letter was copied to the Archdiocese, so it really brought home to me the threat of living under the auspices of the Catholic Church. I felt very threatened—I felt that my own personal life was attacked. I felt my home was in jeopardy and my home has always been a sense of security

> and safety for me. (interview with experience in self of provisional supervisor, p. 10)

The external resource for the provisional supervisor had the following to say about the letter:

> I think about that—like that letter. That would have just scared the bejeebers out of me. I would've just been like . . . even if you know it's not true, I would just be like . . . that could ruin your career. (interview with external resource for the provisional supervisor , pg. 3)

This experience of the letter came up in all three interviews with the experiences in self. In this interview, it came up towards the end of the interview when the researcher asked the provisional supervisor if there was anything else he wanted to add to the conversation. The provisional supervisor drew upon this experience as an example of the fear he had concerning the potential harm a student could cause. More will be said about this incident under the mature supervisor within this chapter, and in the final chapter.

The Roman Catholic Man

Sexuality, Sexual Expression, Being Gay all Lead to Condemnation.

In coding the transcript, the researcher recognized fear, guilt, or shame related to sexuality, sexual experimentation and sexual activity experienced by the Roman Catholic man. The Roman Catholic man drew a connection between his faith and sexuality, especially during his teenage and young adult years. He said:

> teenage years, anything to do with sexuality, sexual expression, was met with a fair amount of fear and guilt. I remember feeling quite guilty and ashamed

around anything to do with sexuality in my life (interview with experience in self of Roman Catholic man, p. 2).

> experimentation on my part, whether that was with girls or later with guys was always done with a sense of secrecy and guilt, a fear of, not necessarily getting someone pregnant, I guess a little bit, but more just fear of being condemned by God. (interview with experience in self of Roman Catholic man, p. 2)

> I remember going regularly to confession at that time and all through my teenage years and a lot of what I was confessing were sins related to sexuality (interview with experience in self of Roman Catholic man, p. 5).

> I think as a young teenager I had this sense that I had to live a certain way or God would condemn me and I might be going to hell for my sexual sins (interview with experience in self of Roman Catholic man, p. 2).

Similar to the theme of fear and shame related to sexuality in general, the Roman Catholic man had a similar experience when he was first beginning to acknowledge his sexual orientation to accept it and live into it. There was a struggle between the Roman Catholic man's desire to accept his sexual orientation, his perception and understanding of God, and his relationship with God.

> So that was the beginning of over the next few years with him as my spiritual director and going there for retreats, really beginning to accept my gay orientation and to begin to see that God could love me like this . . . as a gay person and that it wasn't contrary to God's love for me being gay. (interview with experience in self of Roman Catholic man, p. 3)

> I came to accept myself and my gay orientation and in that context, said 'well if I can accept myself and love me, then God must love me'. I tried for many years going, 'well if God loves everything, God loves everybody, therefore God loves me. I should be able to love me'. That didn't work for me. I would second guess myself, but working from the other way, kind of from the ground up to come to an acceptance and love of myself, said 'well if I could love me as a gay person, then God can love me as a gay person as well'. (interview with experience in self of Roman Catholic man, p. 7)

> because it was like finally coming home [accepting his sexual orientation], but at the same time fear—fear of being found out, fear of being, you know, condemned and judged. It took me a long time to overcome that (interview with experience in self of Roman Catholic man, p. 8).

The external resource confirmed these themes but asked the question whether or not today—as opposed to at a past time in the Roman Catholic man's life—would he name it as shame, or with his understanding and insight today, would he name it something else. The external resource offered the interpretation that rather than shame, it was immaturity related to the Roman Catholic man's understanding and definition of sin. He offered the definition that this immaturity is the 'original sin'; *"*the desire to be too adult; the sin of haste*"* (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 9).

In hearing the Roman Catholic man's experience concerning his sexual orientation and faith, the external resource spoke about the Roman Catholic man's understanding of personal redemption and whether or not he felt redeemed or saved: "I

would say that you don't think that homosexuality, because of your upbringing, is redeemable*"* (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 12). The external resource believed that the Roman Catholic man had compartmentalized these aspects. In other words, parts of him are redeemed, but his sexuality is not. The external resource identified this disconnect particularly in the years when the Roman Catholic man was an active priest, and that this disconnect caused the fear, shame, and guilt for the Roman Catholic man.

The Roman Catholic man identified a change in his theology of redemption throughout the course of his life. He was able to identify this by the change in how he experienced himself and came to accept himself (journal note, December 12, 2017). As the external resource identified, his starting point was to believe that he was not redeemable because he was gay. As the Roman Catholic man identified in the original interview, it was being challenged by a colleague to treat himself with the same compassion and understanding as he did others, which began the journey of coming to a deeper and fuller acceptance of himself (interview with experience in self of Roman Catholic man, p. 5). The researcher was beginning to glimpse a strong correlation between the question of whether to self-disclose sexual orientation and the impact his theological worldview had on this decision.

High Expectations as Priest Increases His Sense of Shame and Failure.

The researcher noticed when the Roman Catholic man spoke about leaving the priesthood, there was a clear expectation that he, as a Roman Catholic priest, was to be above reproach—held to a different moral standard than others. The Roman Catholic man spoke of his sense of failure in making the decision to leave the priesthood. He said:

> being a former priest, that adds certainly a huge degree of shame. It's not like any other prof—or at least within the Catholic Church, it's not like any other profession, where okay, you did this for a while and it didn't work out, so you're moving on. There's a strong sense —a strong, strong sense, at least traditionally and certainly in my family and friends, of failure.
>
> so there was a strong sense of failure in my decision to leave the priesthood. And I wonder if some of that wasn't a sense of failure—feeling a failure because of my gay orientation and so it was double the sense of failure. And again, all related to the Catholic Church and my interpretation and experience of the Catholic Church. (interview with experience in self of Roman Catholic man, p. 6)

The external resource was aware of the way in which the Roman Catholic man spoke about his experience of the Church and leaving the priesthood. The external resource believed that the socialization (e.g., the catechetical system, the parental model), of the Roman Catholic man within the church contributed to his feelings of guilt and shame. The external resource said: "now you all know—now I'm guilty and shameful because you know that I have this sin*"* (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 22).

In keeping with the hermeneutic circle, the researcher gave the insights of the external resource back to the Roman Catholic man, who spent a couple of weeks reviewing and reflecting on the transcript. The Roman Catholic man concurred that there was a direct connection between his interpretations of Roman Catholic teachings; his experience of the priesthood; his expectations of himself as a priest; and his

understanding and acceptance of his sexual orientation. He identified a similar experience of shame and failure in leaving the priesthood and accepting his sexual orientation (journal note, December 15, 2016).

His Yearning to be Known and Understood in Relationship.

The external resource identified the importance of relationship for the Roman Catholic man. When the researcher asked the external resource to speak more about this he offered the following reflections concerning the Roman Catholic man's understanding of ministry.

> So I guess that would inform your own approach to ministry as sort of a relational enterprise . . . that's why you probably like and continue in ministry is because . . . even though you're in management now, it's still about relationships with people and their sort of vulnerable moments. (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 14)

> So I wonder that if, in your earlier ministry and active ministry in the Roman Catholic Church . . . if in fact you were sort of operating a little bit ahead of your time. Do you know what I mean? Like that—that box of the definition of ministry… probably didn't work and yet the irony is that's going to be—it's . . . more [the] norm now. (follow-up interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 7)

The external resource spoke about his understanding of the connection between the ministry and relationship by drawing upon the doctrine of the 'trinity' in Christian theology: "fundamentally, theologically, ministry is built around relationality because of who we say God is" (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p.

15). According to the external resource, "healthy relationships model and participate in God's inner life" (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 15). He believes that ministry "draws people into that mystery" (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 15). The external resource spoke about the Trinity—three persons in One God: "even our whole idea of God isn't a solitary God, but it's a God who is actually constituted in a way more radically than any human person by relationships" (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 15).

He recommended that the researcher read: *Ministries: A Relational Approach* (Hahnenberg, 2003). Hahnenberg's reflections are on the documents of Vatican II (1962-1965) in the Roman Catholic Church and draw on a theology of the Trinity. According to Hahnenberg (2003), "Vatican II [1962-1965] was a council of and about the church. It's most important contributions touched on the Roman Catholic Church's self-understanding, its view of its own nature and mission" (p. 30). In keeping with the hermeneutic circle, Hahnenberg's theology of the Trinity provided a theological premise for a relational ministry. In defining the Trinity, Hahnenberg said:

> In simplest terms, the doctrine of the Trinity states that God enters into relationship with us. It is the church's limited way of talking about the mystery of a God who breaks forth into history in the person of Jesus, a God who was and is present to people. The life of Jesus and the ongoing activity of the Spirit suggest that God is interested in us, that God reaches out of Godself and engages us. The language of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit strains to describe a communion of persons that opens out toward human beings in order to draw us all into divine life. (p. 39)

The Roman Catholic man sat with the information from the external resource for the Roman Catholic man and the literature—to clarify, thicken, and deepen his understanding. He recognized that he was operating at a deeper level when contemplating whether to self-disclose his sexual orientation or not. It was not merely about the information being shared, but more fundamentally about authentic relationship (journal note, January 9, 2017). This insight led him to the following questions:

> Can an authentic relationship be created when something is withheld? Can the relationship be authentic when something is withheld because it is private and it is not considered crucial to this particular relationship? What does it mean to be in authentic relationship, and where does revealing his sexual orientation fall on the spectrum between inauthentic relationship and authentic relationship? (journal note, January 9, 2017)

The external resource expressed it in these words when he said:

> in terms of your research question, what does it mean to be in right relationship with my students now? But maybe in some contexts, I do this and the next year, I'd do different because I can sense the relationship that we have and discern how I'm going to relate to that. (follow-up interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 19)

The external resource perceived a shift in the Roman Catholic man about self-disclosing his sexual orientation within the transcript. He posited that the fear at the beginning of the narrative was a self-imposed sense of sin and that disclosure revealed that the person was sinful by nature. By the end of the narrative, however, the question

became if there is no self-disclosure, how can the Roman Catholic man be in ministry and relationship? He spoke about self-discovery from a false sense of self:

> the sum of the secret around sexuality to being the sum of this network of relationships. And then at the end of the narrative, I feel like if you ask, say well what about self-disclosure, well . . . if they reject me for who I am—the complexity of who I am—I won't be able to exercise the same kind of ministerial leadership that I am called to, and that's so important to my self-understanding, because now you're defined by your relationships not by your sexuality. And so because you're sort of defined by your relationships . . . suddenly if there's a block to exercise in ministerial-relational leadership, what does that say about me as a minister? Like I'm not able to exercise what I'm called to exercise . . . that's how I see the question as different. (follow-up interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 23)

This emphasis on relationship seemed to ring true for the Roman Catholic man, although it was not consciously articulated. The value placed on relationships has been a priority throughout his life and in ministry—sometimes the very thing that cost so much (journal note, February 24, 2017).

The external resource enabled the Roman Catholic man to reframe the question from one of secrecy about sexuality to relationships in ministry. The Roman Catholic man experienced a sense of healing—a sense of freedom and an identification of growth and integration. "Self-disclosure shifted from being about something hidden, sinful and fearful to being true to oneself and authentic in the relationship that will be formed in the experience of supervisor and student" (journal note, February 24, 2017). This is an

example of working within the hermeneutic circle which moved from the external resource to the experience in self and the researcher in order to come to a deeper insight and understanding. The researcher experienced an emotional response to the reaction to the writings of the Roman Catholic man (journal note, February 27, 2017). This new insight added a dimension to the research question which considered the authentic relationship in the decision to self-disclose. Relationship could be acting as an integrative element with self-disclosure becoming an aspect of authentic relationship.

Where He Experienced Acceptance and Affirmation—Hospitals.

The Roman Catholic man spoke about his experience of openness and acceptance within the hospital community. He said:

> certainly working in a hospital with any number of gay people and healthcare professions and caring professions to see that their straight colleagues didn't have an issue with this, that they were quite supportive and accepting of their gay colleagues, allowed me to come to a different acceptance of my sexual orientation. (interview with experience in self of Roman Catholic man, p. 7)

> people's reactions to N. and me getting married last month and as people at work are finding that out. The week before running into one of the Vice President's and her yelling down the hallway: "Oh you're getting—I hear you're—this is your big weekend coming up. I'm so happy for you!" and came over and gave me a big hug. I met with her today and she asked me how married life was going and we talked. Running into a couple of nurse managers last week in the hallway and one congratulating me and the other one said "Oh what happened?" and she told the other one about getting married, that I'd gotten

> married, and she was so excited for me and they—I mean she knew it was with a man and just the acceptance and the true celebration. (interview with experience in self of Roman Catholic man, p. 9)

The external resource wondered if there was something particular about a hospital environment that created this acceptance. He drew a connection with the hospital being a place of healing.

> I wonder if there's something particular around a hospital because it's sort of a place of healing, where healing . . . is its business in a way. I thought 'oh right' like affirming communities and it helped me to understand that deep meaning of what an affirming community is . . . so there's this movement then to affirmation. (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 3)

The external resource also indicated that being in a hospital and not a parish was likely crucial to acceptance.

> something I found and it's my own personal disappointment is that I don't think you would've found the healing in a parish community. So I don't think you would've been able to make the journey you made within the Roman Catholic Parish community. Like it was a blessing you were outside of it and in a place where there was multiple opinions and other ways of seeing things. (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 7)

In keeping with the hermeneutic circle the researcher took this conversation and insights regarding the hospital community back to the experience in self. As the Roman Catholic man reflected on the insights of the external resource, he acknowledged experiencing freedom in the hospital environment that he had not experienced in a parish.

He had not experienced the archetype and projection as strong as he had in a parish. He felt that there were "greater expectations placed on the parish priest in terms of time, availability, and how he acted and spoke" (journal note, December 12, 2016). This contrasted with his previous experience working in congregational ministry, and wondered if this had been a major contributing factor to his decision to remain in hospital ministry (journal note, December 14, 2016). He felt that the hospital community was more accepting of him as a person; did not have unrealistic expectations; and related more easily once they got to know him (journal notes, December 14, 2016).

The researcher found that these insights were consistent and supportive of his previous hypothesis regarding the role and importance of relationship in terms of the research question of self-disclosure. It appears that the Roman Catholic man responds positively to an environment that emphasizes open and free relationships such as the hospital environment. The Roman Catholic man experienced the development of natural and evolving relationships rather than relationships which were determined and influenced by his particular role.

Life Story as 'Layering'.

The external resource noted that at no point did the Roman Catholic man deny or reject his previous experience, or conclude that it was a waste of time, but that it was a healthy sense of layering that brings the Roman Catholic man to where he is today (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 17). The external resource described the narrative of the Roman Catholic man as drawing a painting and rather than moving from one colour to another, there was a sense of layering a colour on

top of another—one colour seeping through into the other which created a new colour and texture.

> colours seep through, it changes, it's not like you take that colour from the palette, you put it on, you'll layer it on . . . but it's not the same colour because all the colours underneath it and some parts are thicker than others and so it gives you the sense of texture. (follow-up interview with external resource for Roman Catholic man, p. 22)

He spoke of this layering as a skill with the likelihood that this research was another layer of the painting. He identified other personal skills that the Roman Catholic man possessed that facilitated his journey through the experiences of life, particularly leaving the priesthood and creating a new life.

> you had something to draw on in this, I mean part of where I could say were your relationships with people, which are always important to you—help you along the way, but I thought there's something missing because you're drawing from somewhere . . . your own inner strength, your own reading, contemplation. (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 6)

> Self-awareness and self-understanding is like… a triumph. Because I think most people don't reach that, and I use the word 'triumph' because at some points, I think you feel like, or at the time you felt you were defeated in a way. Or you were letting people down or you were letting yourself down. So that's why I used the word 'triumph'. (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 7)

His Experience of Feeling Completely Vulnerable and Exposed

As previously discussed, the Roman Catholic man spoke about the anonymous letter purportedly written by a former student making accusations of sexual abuse. In speaking about this experience, the Roman Catholic man identified a sense of embarrassment:

> As much as I knew that the hospital wouldn't go near me or go near the fact of my sexual orientation just on that basis, I still felt a huge degree of shame at that point—embarrassment that they would know that I was gay, like I had to acknowledge and people would know that I was gay, feeling embarrassed about that. And I do believe that goes back to my Roman Catholic faith and how I understood it. Being raised for so long feeling guilty about this, feeling that this was bad, inordinate, like there was something wrong with you to be gay: essentially evil. (interview of experience in self of Roman Catholic man, p. 7)

This experience surfaced in this interview as the Roman Catholic man reflected on his experience of his sexual orientation being revealed at the hospital where he was newly employed. The Roman Catholic man found this experience, at the time, to be threatening and provoked significant anxiety. On one hand, he felt some protection and security concerning his job, because of the inclusive policies of the hospital and provincial legislation, but on the other hand, he felt extremely vulnerable and personally violated. The accusation impacted him and likewise his partner.

The Mature Supervisor

External Affirmation Still Leaves Him Feeling Vulnerable.

The mature supervisor spoke about a number of experiences that were affirming for him throughout his career, in particular his working environment—a large tertiary care, academic health care institution in downtown Toronto, the Canadian culture, and the local societal culture:

> in Canada, over this period of time, there's been great advancements around gay/lesbian rights—big one being, obviously the equality of marriage, more acceptance of sexuality. We don't talk about anymore, whether its nature or nurture (interview of experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 5).

> we live in a neighbourhood in which we're very much accepted. We don't have to hide as a couple. So the social world/network we live in supported that. It became more and more acceptable, more and more the norm (interview of experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 5).

> and I'm aware of feeling less and less like it's, you know, it's an anomaly or something beyond outside of the norm—that it's, you know, not healthy, that type of thing. The valued judgments are slowly dissipating (interview of experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 5).

> the other would be Gay Pride in which, you saw it move from kind of being an alternative celebration to being very mainline in Toronto. And this year, we had the mayor, the Premier, and the Prime Minister walk in the parade, so it's the first time a Prime Minister has walked in the parade. (interview of experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 6)

> So I think I very much work in a culture that is freeing that way and even beyond freeing, just like yeah it's the norm, it doesn't matter. So in that sense, I found myself becoming more and more comfortable in my gay orientation and in disclosing it. (interview of experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 7)
>
> And so to see that, to see that integration of this—the gay orientation world into mainline culture in Canada is a whole social milieu and development that was never there before (interview of experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 6).
>
> it's not even a topic anymore, whether one's gay or straight, it just—it just is. It's just there. Both exist, that's all there is to it [referring to the hospital] (interview of experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 5).
>
> it [i.e. being gay] isn't thought less of because I am the Spiritual Care person and happen to be gay—there's no reflection back and forth there, one on the other. And two incidents I can speak to that demonstrate that for me. One was a few years ago being asked by a Nurse Manager if I would marry him and his partner—celebrate their wedding, and N. was invited and we went as a couple and it was very much a work party. So there were other leaders there and yeah I was aware that I felt comfortable having N. with me, it was nice having him with me, and in one way it was kind of our first public outing that we'd ever gone to as a couple related to the hospital. (interview of experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 8)

At the same time the mature supervisor felt a sense of vulnerability and fear in regards to his sexual orientation and disclosing his orientation:

> I think that speaks to probably still a value I hold around gay orientation maybe it's still speaks to that feeling less than and therefore that is information that can be used (interview of experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 3).
>
> I think that's very much my foundation, that's very much my philo, that it is less than and somehow, deficit (interview of experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 3).
>
> there's some fear still. Some hesitation around, I think, judgment, feeling is this student going to judge me from a theological point of view (interview of experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 8).
>
> In my memory, in my awareness, it always has felt vulnerable, or often felt vulnerable, to reveal—to disclose my sexual orientation to a group of students, most especially at the beginning of a course. And so I think that's why when I think of twelve weeks [referring to a CPE course], I think it's not worth it—it's not germane, it's not important, it's not worth the risk. I don't feel the need, the commitment, the depth of relationship, to become that known and that intimate, whereas on the other side of that coin, if I was looking at a residency and I'm with these same group of people for a full year, you know, that relationship deepens throughout the course of the year and you become closer and deeper and share more. (interview of experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 3)

The external resource spoke about what she identified as a movement between external affirmation regarding the mature supervisor's sexual orientation and an internal longing—questioning and seeking affirmation when it came to his sexual orientation.

> So one of the big one's that I had noticed was this sort of external/internal and you identify that in a few different ones, so external acceptance and the whole piece around, the different levels and layers, whether it's hospital and staff, whether it's CPE students, levels of acceptance that's external and then the internal—how to move with how okay that felt and so a number of places throughout, sometimes there would be points where you would be externally feeling 'Oh, that's—total acceptance,' but then finding some resistance in yourself or kind of fear. (interview with external resource for mature supervisor, p. 1)

His Burden of Living to Others' Expectations.

The mature supervisor spoke about the expectation he placed on himself because he was an ordained minister:

> it's that sense of being the Minister—that you have to be above, holier, beyond reproach, and I acknowledge that all those terms have values in it, but I still sometimes, or for a long time, felt that the expectation on me would be greater than anybody else. So it was okay for everybody else to be gay, but not for me; not because I'm Marc, but because I'm the minister, I'm the chaplain. There would be a different expectation from people. (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 7)

Responding to this sense of personal expectation, the external resource spoke about what she identified as a "higher" theology of ordination that the Mature Supervisor held, and posited this was from his Roman Catholic faith.

> the theology of ordination in the Catholic Church. . . there's that sense of being—that it's your whole being that . . . is somehow . . . like it's a different theology of ordination than in Protestant Churches that are more functional and you know, you screw up and duh-duh-duh, there's a higher theology. (interview with external resource for the mature supervisor, p. 6)
>
> could you live into the—like the holy—there was a very elevated sense of priest and struggling a bit with the expectations put upon you (interview with external resource for the mature supervisor, p. 8).

In keeping with the hermeneutic circle, the researcher took these insights around theology of ordination back to the mature supervisor, and through reflection and internal dialogue, he recognized the way in which his sacramental theology was impacting and informing his experience in self-disclosing, in ways that he has, up to now, not been fully aware. If his theology of ordination is that of "being set apart, above reproach, to be a model—the archetype of the holy person"—this could definitely impact his ability to self-disclose anything that is more human, vulnerable, or outside of the norm, however one defines normative (journal note, January 23, 2017).

The researcher resonated with this insight and understands that this being set apart, above reproach has potentially affected more than just the decision for self-disclosing sexual orientation, but on a broader level, self-expression in various forms, including: opinions; verbal expressions and choices about education, friends, music; and recreational time and activities.

The Difference Marriage Makes for Him.

A new insight for the mature supervisor, one that held some excitement and energy for him, concerned his recent marriage and reflections on this new reality for disclosing his sexual orientation to a new group of students. He articulated a different understanding and responsibility related to marriage, including an obligation to name the fact that he had a husband as opposed to a partner:

> It will be interesting because I haven't done this yet, taught a unit, a course of CPE since I got married, so am I going to introduce myself as a married person? Or that I am married? See that's very different—that's a concrete definition. I wouldn't necessarily say at the beginning of unit as I introduce myself, that I have a partner. My way of disclosing it was just to talk about him, but it feels different – and there's a difference for me—it feels different not to state that I'm married is different than not to state that I have a partner. It feels dishonest to N as well not to introduce myself as being married. It's like I'm ashamed of him, hiding him, where I didn't feel that in saying "partner"—if I didn't say I had a partner, it didn't feel like I was negating him or dishonouring him. But not to say I'm married certainly feels that way. (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 9).

> but it would be—feel strange not to reveal that I was married at the beginning and the impact that would have on a student if you didn't say that—and then it came out three or four weeks later, how they would feel about that. (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 10)

> So all of a sudden, I'm very aware that getting married changes a lot for me around disclosing my gay orientation. I haven't thought of this before, yeah, it changes a lot for me and maybe that has something to do with the construct of marriage, that I feel on firmer foundation not about our relationship, but just socially and culturally and therefore, more empowered to claim that and to proclaim that regardless of what the student is responding to. (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 10).

The comments of the external resource concerning marriage were centered on the mature supervisor's sacramental theology and how this impacted his understanding of marriage:

> because you understand it as a sacrament and all of the ways you've lived into that reality in leadership, you've thought through, you've talked with couples about it, you know like much more so than those of the Protestant traditions for whom its—yes, they do it, but there isn't the theology the same way. Like it's not robust, it's not at that kind of level. (interview with external resource for the mature supervisor, p. 18)

This understanding of marriage as related to sacramental theology was explored further in the follow-up interview with the external resource. The external resource identified that marriage for the mature supervisor was an external disclosure—sharing something that had been internal. The external resource made a connection between the mature supervisor's theology of ordination and what she perceived to be his theology of marriage, and said "it feels like it has the same weightiness that ordination did. There's something in your soul that needs to be rightly ordered and sacramental ways of thinking

about how we move through life" (follow-up interview with external resource for the mature supervisor, p. 11). The external resource indicated her understanding of marriage was different from the mature supervisor: "so my need to get married was to be in the good books with the church—we'll do it the right way. It was a duty thing." (follow-up interview with external resource for the mature supervisor, p. 10)

As the mature supervisor reflected on the conversation between the researcher and the external resource, he concurred that he held a Catholic sacramental theology—a sacrament being an external sign of an internal reality. In thinking about marriage, how much of the desire to get married was to make external what was internal—to publicly proclaim his relationship and maintain an authentic relationship with his friends and colleagues.

The researcher found this insight intriguing because it led to the question of how much the mature supervisor's sacramental theology was operative in his question whether to self-disclose his sexual orientation—making what is known internally an external reality. Did this research question surface from his theological foundations with the desire for integration and wholeness; a spiritual value related to the sacrament?

The Vulnerability that He Experiences in Self-Disclosure.

The mature supervisor spoke about how self-disclosure of his gay orientation could be used to harm him. He said:

> If I fail a student, if it didn't go well, often –shouldn't say "often," certainly frequently enough that happened, especially—you know, not a good relationship with a student, very challenging relationship, and if you fail a student or ask the student to leave the course, obviously they're going to be angry and where might

> that anger go? What would they do with the information they had on me? So that felt very vulnerable. (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 4)
>
> I think for a twelve-week course, there's still some of that fear there for me of, less so as the years go on, but fear of, again, what are they going to do with that information? How are they going to – can they hurt me? Even I guess—partly I have to say it's around my reputation. (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 3)
>
> And that was a big thing for me, even as a Mature Supervisor, realizing that the student really had a power over me with this information (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 4).

The external resource, in responding to the mature supervisor and his sense of vulnerability, fear and risk, offered her experience of telling her students about her divorce. The external resource indicated she felt she gained a deeper appreciation for the experience of the mature supervisor, as a result of her own experience.

> I tend to share that as part of my teaching here and the question about—talking about being divorced or not. So that's an internal kind of, the feeling of judgment that I'm anticipating could come. And so my safety around saying I'm divorced and realizing the vulnerability and saying it, so I tend to preempt it and say, you might experience judgment, you might experience all this stuff, pay attention to that, whatever . . . and I'm feeling very vulnerable right now because I've just disclosed something, that I could imagine you might have judgment. Because I feel judgment and there's something and so what you've written sort of started to make me . . . look at that more closely. And then I know there are others in the

> group, in the class, whenever I do that—a sense of relief, ok I'm good, I'm allowed to be divorced or whatever. So that helped me get inside that moment – that disclosure piece. (interview with external resource for the mature supervisor, p. 21)

The mature supervisor reflected on this statement, within the hermeneutic circle, and found it helpful, supportive, and reassuring. There was a connection and identification with his experience and story which normalized his experience. "The particularity of his self-disclosure that creates vulnerability and fear is related to his sexual orientation, but all of us have aspects of our self-disclosure that raises similar emotional responses" (journal note, January 9, 2017). The researcher saw a connection between the external resources for the mature supervisor and the provisional supervisor regarding self-disclosure. They highlighted that self-disclosure by the teaching supervisor provided a container of safety for those students who shared stories or experiences. The teaching supervisor's self-disclosure modeled boundaries and appropriate responses when it came to other self-disclosures.

Relationship Builds Safety for Him to Self-Disclose.

The mature supervisor spoke about his experience in self-disclosing his gay orientation to students. He said:

> a common practice or a commonality there for me has been that, if it's a single course, like a summer course, I normally do not disclose my gay orientation whereas if it's a full year residency, I tend to disclose it. (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 4)

I think it's not worth it, it's not germane, it's not important, it's not worth the risk in a twelve-week course. I don't feel the need, the commitment, the depth of relationship, to become that known and that intimate. (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 4)

I've always said it's more generative—parts of our stories come out and even with inviting students to tell their stories, I've always said, you know, I don't expect them at the beginning to tell everything. As the relationship builds and as we feel comfortable with each other, the more we'll reveal. (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 4)

In contrast, when speaking about a year-long residency the mature supervisor said:

> the relationship deepens throughout the course of the year and you become closer and deeper and share more. It almost feels inauthentic not to disclose my gay orientation, where it doesn't feel inauthentic in a twelve-week course. But I start to feel, with a residency, more that I am holding something back, hiding something. (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 3)

I get to know them a lot more, a lot more intimately; deeper depth and maybe it might be that sense as I'm saying this, a sense of call to mutuality (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 3).

A residency calls forth more for me as well to go to those deeper places within me in building the relationship, where I don't feel that sense of commitment in a twelve week course because they're going to be gone, I won't see them again,

> don't get to know them, it isn't the same bonds. (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 3)

His Experience of Feeling Completely Vulnerable and Exposed.

Once again, in the interview with the mature supervisor, the experience of the anonymous letter came up. The researcher was surprised how this surfaced in each interview and considered this significant and worth reflection. For each experience in self, the response had been different. In this case, while at first feeling threatened, the mature supervisor experienced a positive sense of affirmation because of the response of the administrators at the hospital.

> it was very threatening for me and while I knew that there is Human Rights and that the organization on paper has policies around this and says they don't discriminate, I still wondered whether they live that. And what I discovered was that they lived that. My boss came to me and said: "most of this letter around sexual orientation and being in a same sex relationship is none of our business." When she took it to legal counsel in the hospital, she told me the legal counsel said "well none of this is any of our business at all. We only need to focus on his professional practice and is there any legitimacy in this claim that you have seen in his work." They really did demonstrate to me that it didn't matter that I was gay, that it had nothing to do with it. And so, that was a freeing moment. So, I found myself becoming more and more comfortable in my sexual orientation and in disclosing it. (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 7)

In discussing the letter, the external resource spoke about it as encapsulating several themes identified from the initial interview with the mature supervisor. It became

a pivotal experience in his life: “but then it’s walked through. It doesn’t become dangerous. It’s almost like it gets exorcised, the demon gets released, because you get the external support” (follow-up interview with external resource for the mature supervisor, p. 14). The external resource empathized with the fear and uncertainty that the letter would have created for the mature supervisor, “especially what it would mean in those first months when you’re in a new space and all that and then all of the triggers for you from the past and the sort of being, pushed out, visible there” (follow-up interview with external resource for the mature supervisor, p. 14).

External Resources Reflect on the Research Methodology

In the interviews with the external resource for the Roman Catholic Man and the mature supervisor, they offered their thoughts and reflections on the research methodology which the researcher found insightful and affirming. They said:

> I think it’s a very powerful narrative in terms of self-discovery (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 1).
>
> I think that’s the first thing that I would say there’s a power in the way that the narrative is described (interview with external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 1).
>
> I thought what was really interesting to me was how reading the transcript sort of gives meat to the idea of theology as conversation. And that in the methodology, in our conversation, especially because you’ve highlighted parts of it, you can really see sort of how theology develops in that conversation—how meaning is ascribed to events in your life in, I think, pretty profound ways

through this conversation. (follow-up interview external resource for the Roman Catholic man, p. 1)

looking at what you've exposed here and your—the vulnerability, risk, fear, and then putting it out on paper and sharing it with others is . . . it's like working on all of that, like this whole process is very interesting because of the vulnerability, shame, fear, and hiding. Hiding comes up a couple times about three times I circled, yet this process itself is doing the opposite of that. So it really . . . I kept being struck by that. (interview with external resource for the mature supervisor, p. 1)

as part of claiming that it really is true, I can rest with it, you're digging at any possible bits in your soul that can come out to . . . that have resistance to, you know, that have inner struggle to bring it out. (interview with external resource for the mature supervisor, p. 4)

that move to deeper like—you're moving inside some things more deeply. The researcher will invite you to move inside, and it's such a very interesting method that you're using because it, again, speaks to that . . . trying to bring up all these different sides of the self to talk to each other, without fear . . . acknowledging where fear is but it's . . . it's safe enough now, you can trust the researcher. (interview with external resource for the mature supervisor, p. 27)

My Decision for Presenting this Chapter as Written

In the introduction to this chapter, I said I would not include reactions, responses, insights, interpretations, or conclusions. I consciously choose to do this because one of the challenges of this methodology is clarity and consistency of roles, particularly where I

am the same person stepping in and out of different roles. I found it helpful to keep the roles separate and distinct, as I conducted the interviews and worked through the data. Further, the hermeneutic circle required me to be clear regarding the different roles I stepped into at different times. In keeping with this, I chose to save discussion of themes that emerged for the next chapter, in which, keeping with phenomenology, I will have more license to be creative in my writing and presentation.

As themes began to emerge, I[14] identified patterns and more expansive and encompassing insights and understandings that would answer my research question. One major pattern/insight is the overarching significance culture played in my life, in various forms and expressions, and its influence on the choice to self-disclose or not. For instance, the culture of the Roman Catholic Church certainly had an impact on my searing experience concerning the anonymous letter written by a former student which surfaced in all three interviews. Also, I continue to be amazed at how the Roman Catholic faith, particularly theology, impacts and informs my decisions, how I interpret and understand events and experiences, and how I make sense of the world. Additionally, I am part of a gay culture, which impacts how I define and understand myself in relationship to that culture. There is also a culture within the hospital organization that influences my decision to self-disclose. Finally, there are different societal cultures that can impact my sense of safety and security.

Another major pattern/insight concerned the importance of relationships to me and how relational I am in my life. I have come to appreciate this more in later years, and I now see that it was deeply seeded in me from the time I was a child. This insight

[14] In this section, I return to writing in the first person.

gives me a greater understanding of my experience of living with a speech impediment and not being understood; to be isolated.

I suspect some readers will find this chapter frustrating because you did not hear more about my responses and reactions, as the researcher, to what I was learning and discovering. My intention in the next chapter is to integrate the different roles and speak about my insights, learnings, and conclusions from this research.

Chapter 5: Learning From the Legend

> As you grow up, you learn different things from the legends at different stages. It stays with you all the rest of your life. You learn something out of each story each time it is retold because if you are growing as a person, you are ready for new truth each time. You learn something new from a legend each time, just as you learn something from a painting each time[15].

This chapter expands upon the themes in the previous chapter with the intent to take the reader into a deeper "felt experience" (i.e. phenomenology). I begin this chapter by re-telling, remembering back in, the experience in my life that created the impetus for several of the choices I made and which subsequently led to this research. The detail provides the context as well as my personal psychological and spiritual responses. In the second section of this chapter, I present particular theological foundations that I posit are crucial for me to consider in making the choice to self-disclose my sexual orientation, and how my understanding of these have changed and shifted. Similarly, the third section discusses the importance of the cultural, social and political contexts in my decision to self-disclose sexual orientation. The fourth section presents a solution that allows me to navigate the decision whether or not to self-disclose my sexual orientation, rather than it being arbitrary or on a 'case by case' basis.

The particular methodology chosen for this research has been creative; facilitating the revelation of deeper and meaningful understandings and learnings. I have functioned as the researcher of my own lived experience. At times it has been challenging to separate out clearly who was speaking, exploring, discovering, and uncovering. I have been deliberate and careful not to confuse the voices. In this chapter, I bring the researcher, provisional supervisor, Roman Catholic man, and mature supervisor, back

[15] Leland Bell, as cited in Southcott, Anishnaabe of Manitoulin Island http://www.museedelhistoire.ca/cmc/exhibitions/aborig/fp/fpz2f03e.shtml

into one voice, and present my learnings and continuing questions. I learn something new each time I tell my story.

His Experience of Feeling Completely Vulnerable and Exposed

The story begins with the experience of receiving an anonymous letter, purportedly written by a former student who made an accusation of sexual abuse. This student also wrote that they discovered I was in a same-sex relationship. For me, this was a searing, traumatic, and life changing experience. The letter was sent to the hospital where I worked, and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese, whose endorsement I depended upon for my certification and work as a spiritual care practitioner and educator. I was a fully qualified teaching supervisor who had taught for five years, but had only been with the hospital for six months. The short length of employment left me feeling tremendous fear and trepidation that my job would be in jeopardy. I recall my manager calling me on the phone and saying she had something to talk to me about and asked if she could come to my office. She walked into my office, sat down and said: "there's no easy way to get into this other than give you this to read", at which point she passed me the letter. As I read the letter, I had an overwhelming sinking feeling in my stomach and the depths of my heart. I could feel a sense of panic come over me. I was filled with fear and embarrassment.

I was embarrassed because I had not self-disclosed my sexual orientation to my manager or to colleagues in this new setting, and here she was reading this about me in a letter. I was fearful because I felt my job could be threatened. How would the hospital respond to the accusations in the letter? How would the hospital react to the fact that I was gay? I felt uncertainty because I felt unknown within this organization. I had not

established good relationships and networks that knew and supported me. My manager informed me that she would have to take the letter to her Vice President and that legal counsel for the hospital would need to be involved. She indicated at the time that the sexual orientation portion was not an issue for the hospital, and in fact, none of their business. So I lived with fear, embarrassment, and vulnerability for a week or more and attempted to continue to teach and provide spiritual care to patients and families. Subsequently, a meeting occurred with legal counsel for the hospital. They concluded that my sexual orientation was of no consequence; the letter was anonymous and therefore not creditable; and since it was confirmed that my manager had no cause to suspect I was sexually abusing students, the matter was closed.

I breathed a sigh of relief, but did not let my guard down and remained fearful for another month or so. I had not yet established trust with my supervisor or other members of the organization. I wondered how they might use their power, regardless of their policies. I have had experiences with large organizations publicly making statements, and subsequently responding otherwise. I walked around the next few weeks half expecting the other shoe to fall—they would find a reason to let me go. Over time when this did not happen, I slowly let my guard down. This became a freeing and normalizing experience for me. I experienced a hospital in which sexual orientation was of no consequence. Over the next few years, I learned that there were gay, lesbian and transgender people throughout all levels of the organization. In some cases, senior leaders referred to their husband or wife as their partner. I experienced this as a sign of their inclusion.

At the same time, I experienced an overwhelming fear and vulnerability related to the Roman Catholic Archdiocese receiving the letter and how they would respond. I was an inactive Roman Catholic priest at the time, which meant that I had left active ministry within the Church but not laicized.[16] I had not wanted to initiate a laicization process with the Roman Catholic Church. This process, for me, would deny twelve years of my life and meaningful ministry with people, and the meaningful and profound relationships, encounters, and situations I experienced as a priest. I found it easier to live in this 'no-person's' world—not being ordained and not being a lay person either—then to deny that I had ever been a priest. For me, my ordination was a significant internal reality, and most likely a prevailing reason for seeking recognition of my ordination in another denomination.

Certainly the need for endorsement from a faith group for my position in spiritual care escalated my fear and vulnerability because it made me dependent upon the Archdiocese for my employment. If they removed their endorsement my job would be in jeopardy. This fear was further influenced by my husband and I having financially committed to a new mortgage. I could see the stress and strain this could put on our relationship with the potential of me being unemployed and us losing our home. This fear surfaced prior uncertainty from my childhood—the safety and security being at home brought. As I reflected on the vulnerability I was experiencing, I came to a new

[16] Boudinhon, A. (1910), in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* indicates that laicization or "The term laity signifies the aggregation of those Christians who do not form part of the clergy. Consequently, the word 'lay' does not strictly connote any idea of hostility towards the clergy or the Church much less towards religion. Laicization, therefore, considered etymologically, simply means the reducing of persons or things having an ecclesiastical character to a lay condition". Available at http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08744a.htm

appreciation of why my home was vital for me: it is the place I feel safe and secure; and I can be myself—understood and accepted. This was endangered because of the letter.

This letter and my reaction to it, particularly the personal vulnerability I experienced, led me to seek the endorsement of another religious denomination and leave the Roman Catholic Church. My solution was to prevent experiencing this vulnerability again concerning my sexual orientation. I sought the endorsement of a religious body that supports and affirms gay people. This removed the power a student could have over my career and life and allowed me to be more open and transparent regarding my relationship with my partner.

This is the key experience that fueled my decision to explore the question of the self-disclosure of my sexual orientation. I had made momentous life decisions and choices because of this experience, and yet had not come to peace with the issue and question.

My Journey Through Theology: From Condemnation to Acceptance

This research uncovered the central role the Roman Catholic theology continues to play in my life. For instance, even though I had left the priesthood, I wanted to maintain the endorsement of the Roman Catholic Church because my decision to leave concerned the organization of the Church and not the theology or ministry. The decision to seek another ministry and leave the Roman Catholic Church was not an easy one for me. Through this research project, I have become aware of how significant my theology and theological beliefs are for me, and how they continue to inform my thinking and choices.

In the interviews with the experience in self and the external sources of the Roman Catholic man and the mature supervisor, there were dominant themes concerning theological concepts, understandings, and foundations. While this was not a surprise for it to surface in interview in self of the Roman Catholic man, it was a surprise that it surfaced as a dominant theme in the interview in self of the mature supervisor. Several of the insights, deeper meanings, and themes that emerged through the hermeneutic circle came out of these theological conversations and revelations. For me, there was a sense of affirmation and reassurance.

My reflections concluded that this is illustrative of my attachment to God, as expressed through the Roman Catholic Church. This attachment was originally external and meant following the tenants and practices of the faith, believing maintaining these meant being in right relationship with God. I experienced a sense of belonging in relationship to an understanding of church as an organization, ritual, and being in right relationship with God. In later years, this attachment to God has been realized through relationships with others that I find life affirming. This is a developed sense of church, which will be discussed further later in this chapter. As the quote at the beginning of the chapter stated; "You learn something out of each story each time it is retold because if you are growing as a person, you are ready for new truth each time".[17] As I explored my story in this research, one of the new learnings has been the safe and secure container provided by my relationship with my theology and church. This does not necessarily mean the official Church; rather it is where I have found "church" in the people of God. In the Second Vatican Council's document Lumen Gentium, the Dogmatic Constitution

[17] Leland Bell, as cited in Southcott, Anishnaabe of Manitoulin Island http://www.museedelhistoire.ca/cmc/exhibitions/aborig/fp/fpz2f03e.shtml

on the Church, Chapter Two is entitled "The People of God".[18] The document was revolutionary because it stated that while the church is made up of the hierarchy, the clergy, and the religious, it also includes the whole community of the baptized. In fact, the document started with the "People of God" and then continued on to speak about the hierarchy and organization.

Regardless of the changes and choices I made in my life and despite how I felt I failed or disappointed people and myself, including wondering if I was compromising my salvation because of the reaction I received from the official church, I had this secure foundation of my theology to sustain, support, and comfort me through the transitions.

Some of the theological/spiritual foundations and philosophical themes that emerged through this research included: redemption, relationship, ordination, and marriage. Each is discussed in turn.

The Freedom to No Longer Save Me from Me.

The interviews with the external resource for the Roman Catholic man invited deep reflection concerning the theology of redemption and how this theology has changed, deepened and matured over the years, including impacting whether or not to disclose my sexual orientation. For instance, I would say that to a certain extent, on an unconscious level, the choice to enter the Roman Catholic priesthood was likely motivated by my theology of redemption; a desire to save myself from my sexuality. My operative theology was the sense of needing to be redeemed "from" my sinfulness, sexuality, and failure. This understanding has evolved to be more about understanding redemption in terms of being in right relationship with self and others. When I am in

[18] See http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html

right relationship with self and others, I am in right relationship with God. I hear echoes of the principles of attachment here and am more conscious of recognizing the presence of the Sacred in my friendships. This understanding influences decisions I make every day. For instance, I may choose to spend time with friends over involvement in church activities, as I may experience additional meaning and spiritual wellbeing with those particular friends.

This sense of being in right relationship with self has been the driving force for addressing my sexuality. I would now identify this as an experience of emergence (Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009). As a young person growing up I often felt lonely, isolated, and out of step with my friends. The models and structures of society, faith, religion, and family that I was taught did not align with the growing consciousness within me. When it came to morality and sexuality, the discovery of my sexuality at every stage of development—thoughts, desires, and fantasies—all left me experiencing an eternal fight to overcome my sexuality and replace it with what my family, faith, and society taught and expected. If I was to characterize growing up, it was filled with words such as sin, fear, judgment, hell and damnation. Generally speaking, there was not a great deal of grace, acceptance, forgiveness, affirmation and belonging.

Moving from an understanding of needing to earn redemption through good and righteous living, to an understanding of redemption as being about right relationship with self and others, the question of self-disclosing becomes more personally critical because it brings me face to face with what does it mean to be in authentic relationship. What does authentic relationship look like? Is it different or varied depending on the context?

Where does revealing my sexual orientation fall on the spectrum between inauthentic relationship and authentic relationship?

The Core of the Question: Being in Authentic Relationship.

As previously mentioned, I have come to understand that supportive and life-affirming relationships are vital to me, and this value has been reinforced through this research. The question therefore, of whether or not to reveal my sexual orientation at the beginning of a CPE course is not just about the information shared, but the larger question of how to be in authentic relationship with my students. Given this consideration, it is not a simple question, or a one-time answer. Authentic relationship will vary depending on a number of factors (e.g., personal, internal, external) operative at any given time. How do I navigate right relationship within my personal life and with the multiple cultural contexts that weave the fabric of my life? As previously mentioned this led to the following questions:

- Is there still an authentic relationship being created when something is withheld from students?
- Can a relationship be authentic if something is withheld because it is private and not crucial to this particular relationship?

Perhaps it is possible, if not desirable, that a balance is created, or even a tension allowed, in the supervisor/student relationship that respects authenticity and appropriate boundaries.

The answers to these questions emerged in the conversations with the external resource for the mature supervisor. The depth of relationship, and the consequent expectation of a deepening relationship, generates a different impetus to self-disclose. In

other words, there is a different degree of intimacy due to the time and nature of what is shared over the course of the year. Life intervenes for students as well as me, and there's a lot more shared, supported, experienced, and lived through. So, the length of time that I will be in relationship with this particular student (i.e. 12 weeks, a year, etc.) becomes a consideration. The quality of the relationship is not necessarily correlated to the length of relationship that we are together in—I am aware of particular situations, even in a 12 week program, where the relationship developed and deepened to an extent that I felt it was appropriate, and I actually desired to self-disclose.

I recall the year that my partner's father died. He had been diagnosed with lung cancer a few months previous and lived in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The morning he died a colleague of mine in Halifax phoned me at work to tell me, because the family wanted me to inform my partner. I was upset by the news, knowing how he would feel when I told him. Fortunately, I had self-disclosed to the students that I was gay and had a partner, and I came to appreciate over the next few weeks that I needed their support and understanding for the grief we were experiencing.

There has been a paradigm shift for me, a modification to my worldview, because the question is not solely about self-disclosing information about me, but how to be in authentic relationship with a group of students at this time. This means each time I consider disclosing my sexual orientation to a new group of students, I first stop and reflect on the context for this particular relationship; what is my understanding and expectation of the relationship; and how might this relationship develop given the length of time? The focus of my discernment has shifted from the student to me. I am less concerned about the students' reaction to the self-disclosure and the decision is more

weighted by my desire to be in authentic relationship with the student. This can change according to length of time, situations that arise, and the nature of the sharing with students. To some degree, I have used this approach with students because of my practice of self-disclosing, over the course of time, with students I am going to work with for a year, as opposed to students I am going to work with for 12 weeks. This research has made this more conscious, and provided a discernment process to engage as the question of self-disclosing to students arises.

According to Kelcourse, as a mutual and trusting relationship develops between a supervisor and student, the relationship is built on the present experience and not so much on expectations and reputations (as cited in DeLong, 2010). My experience confirms Kelcourse's insight. As the relationship develops and deepens, and students become more acquainted with me (e.g., my approach, pedagogy, humour), they begin to relate to me as a person and not merely a role. It is at this stage that my self-disclosure of my sexual orientation is more often received as a "matter of fact", part of my personhood, and not the overarching or encompassing defining characteristic.

Giving consideration to the type and quality of the relationship is supported by the relational models of supervision, particularly the intersubjective model. This postmodern model places greater emphasis on the quality of the relationship between the supervisor and student, in contrast to the modern or pre-modern models of supervision which emphasize interventions, suggestions, and recommendations made by the supervisor (DeLong, 2010).

Moving from Being Set Apart to Being With – Journeying Together.

I began to integrate my sexuality after my ordination to the priesthood. This was difficult, as I experienced some shame and failure. With this judgement and condemnation of self, disclosing my sexuality created anxiety, fear, and uncertainty. To acknowledge I was gay was acknowledging that I would not be living up to the expectation or standard influenced by my theology. The guidance and support of a spiritual director helped me examine my theology of ordination and redemption. This examination resulted in a shift in my theological paradigm and revising of numerous theological beliefs. I credit this person with really 'saving' me: my personhood, my happiness, and my fulfillment. I was on a path that undoubtedly would have led to a very lonely, sad, and unfilled life. As I experienced acceptance of my sexuality, I was able to reflect more deeply on what being in relationship with self entailed for me as well as right relationship with others and God. This reflection eventually led me to leave active ministry in the Roman Catholic Church.

My operative sacramental theology[19] is that sacraments are external manifestations of an internal reality. They contain words and symbols that make real and visible an internal reality. They contain a characteristic that makes an indelible mark and substantively changes the persons involved in the sacrament. It was my understanding of the sacrament of ordination that created such angst and turmoil for me in contemplating leaving the Roman Catholic priesthood. As recorded and discussed in the interviews with the external resource for the mature supervisor, this sacramental understanding created unrealistic expectations of myself and led to a feeling of failure and shame when making

[19] Kennedy, D. (1912) indicates that Sacramental theology, as defined by the Roman Catholic Church, is "An outward sign of inward grace, a sacred and mysterious sign or ceremony, ordained by Christ, by which grace is conveyed to our souls". See http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13295a.htm

the decision to leave the priesthood (interview with external resource for mature supervisor, p. 7).

This sense of shame and failure was founded on the commonly held theology in Roman Catholicism, that ordination is a lifetime commitment and involves a commitment to celibacy. Celibacy was being set apart for the sake of Christ and the commitment to God. This theology of holding oneself to a standard 'beyond reproach' created a double bind, as I attempted to accept my sexuality while living up to this higher standard and expectation.

My theology of sexuality and my theology of ordination compounded my feelings of guilt, shame, and condemnation. They created a huge weight—a gavel with which to bring judgement upon myself and undermine my sense of self-worth and self-esteem. A significant part of my struggle for acceptance of my sexuality was the fear of losing what provided an experience of meaning through attachment: my theology. I experienced this as a 'no-win' situation, as to accept my sexuality meant I experienced failure as a priest, and potentially the loss of God's embrace. Further, since I was not beyond reproach, I felt rejected because of my sexuality.

My theology of ordination has shifted since leaving the Roman Catholic priesthood. I no longer understand ordination as 'a setting apart'. I credit this change to the many ordained people I have met, from other denominations who related first and foremost as a person, and not as a minister. My expectations as an ordained minister have decreased and are more realistic. These new expectations have allowed me to let 'people in' and experience authentic relationships. I do not feel separated out or set apart, and delight in the spontaneous relationships and wholehearted acceptance.

Marriage: Celebrating Externally What Was Internal.

Marriage surfaced as a major theme in the interviews with the Roman Catholic man and the mature supervisor and their respective external resources. I discussed, in Chapter 4, the positive affirmations I received regarding my marriage from colleagues and hospital administrators. Furthermore, I spoke about how my marriage has made a difference for me concerning self-disclosing my sexual orientation (interview with experience in self of mature supervisor, p. 10). All of this has led to deeper reflection on my part and coming to the conclusion, that once again, my theology—particularly my sacramental theology— informs and undergirds the decision-making process about whether or not to disclose my sexual orientation. In speaking of my sacramental theology, I am referring to the deeply rooted Roman Catholic theology that influences me. Other theological or spiritual traditions would not necessarily hold the same theology and would draw different conclusions regarding marriage.

My sacramental understanding informs my understanding of marriage. As I reflect on our wedding celebration, the characteristic of making external an internal reality was manifested. My partner and I had been together for 20 years and, while we had a commitment ceremony at that time, the decision to marry was our way of celebrating this milestone in our lives. We realized on our wedding day that all of our guests had known us over the course of the 20 years. They were all "our" friends who came to celebrate with us. This made for a real celebration!

This insight surfaced later, as I reflected on our wedding day. It was a unique celebration. Our friends indicated it was the best wedding they have ever attended. While the ceremony was not particularly different or unique, their comments made me

pause to reflect on what made the difference. The conclusion I came to was that they were integrally involved in making external what had been internal for 20 years! For our married friends, this was no doubt even more poignant because they were celebrating and sharing with us something they lived. I wonder if there were not aspects of reconciliation occurring, a healing for all of us, a bringing together of what for years could not occur until the law changed and allowed marriage to same sex couples. I would also argue that while it was a celebration of our intimate relationship, it was also a celebration of the multiple relationships we shared; a further experience of attachment in our lives, ours and theirs.

This sacramental understanding of marriage impacts my decision regarding self-disclosure. There is a need for me to be consistent and authentic, to "sacrament", including the intimate sacrament of marriage. I am drawn, if not personally compelled, to make external what is internal for me to my students when it comes to sharing the fact that I am married to a man. To do less is to deny my reality, and more pointedly to deny my husband and who he is in my life. I experience, as I have continued to teach throughout this research, a different need, desire, or urge to disclose that I am married and that my spouse is a man. I wonder if there is a different sense of legitimization to the social construct of marriage as opposed to life-partner. There is certainly a felt difference, deep within my soul, that has a different response to introducing him as my husband. There is a different sense of relationship, attachment, trust, confidence for me when I speak of him as my husband. As with my understanding of ordination, I have realized a shift, from external and objectified attachment to a more experiential and relational understanding.

Cultural and Social Contextualization – A Reflection on the Theology of Community

Affirming Community: Experience of Hospitals.

I was struck by the comments of the external resource for the Roman Catholic man concerning the hospital community and the support I experienced there. From the beginning of my career in health care at Hotel Dieu in 1988, I experienced more freedom to be myself, and less expectation to act, respond, behave, or speak, in certain ways. As was shared in Chapter 4, I experienced a higher degree of projection and transference working in congregational settings than in hospital organizations. Working in congregations, I experienced more pressure to live within the archetype of the minister, priest, holy person, shaman, than I did working in hospitals. This meant a higher expectation to act and behave in ways that I felt placed limitations on my humour and spontaneity. I always searched and found families where I felt accepted, and not because I was the parish priest. I was drawn to and spent time with these families as friends. These relationships were life affirming to me and I believe life affirming to them as well. These relationships were built on mutuality.

Expression and acceptance of my true self rather than my sexual orientation was the starting place. This authentic self was the person I knew existed even though this self was hidden. Acceptance of my authentic self meant being more spontaneous and not worrying as much about the reaction of people. I allowed my sense of humour to flourish, and I was more genuine about expressing my feelings. I spent my free time engaged in activities that I enjoyed rather than feeling an expectation to do other things. This led to developing significant relationships. It was the experience of a face-to-face

encounter with the other. My initial face-to-face encounter was with me. Experiencing an internal source of attachment, rather than depending on external sources, I also experienced a desire on the part of others to enter into a mutually intimate relationship. What remains unclear is how much this was because of the different cultural contexts and/or how much of this was a consequence of a generational change with more emphasis on relationship and less upon organization and hierarchy. This cultural context provided a balm as I accepted my sexual orientation in the face of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church regarding homosexuality and same sex relationships.

There is potential here for some of this freedom to be the consequence of me becoming more comfortable within myself, as I moved from congregational ministry into health care. However, the argument could be made that it was the personal freedom and space I enjoyed working in health care, as compared to the same transferences and projections I experienced in congregational ministry which supported and encouraged greater acceptance of my sexual orientation. I was particularly struck by the comments of the external resource for the Roman Catholic man regarding the potential role that the hospital environment fulfilled in my life. He spoke of a personal sadness he felt when reflecting upon the average Roman Catholic parish, and not feeling that they would be able to support and celebrate my gay orientation (interview of external resource Roman Catholic man, p. 4).

The external resource reflected on his understanding and theology of a hospital and posited whether or not it was because of the mission of a hospital to heal, that made it a place of openness and healing. There is certainly truth in this reflection, as hospitals provide care to people regardless of their backgrounds, lifestyle, and previous choices.

All deserve to be cared for when sick and ill. After all the origin of the word hospital is hospice.[20]

So, there could be a fundamental sense of hospitality that enables hospitals to be welcoming and accepting places. This has certainly been my experience. An experience from my time at Hotel Dieu Hospital (1988-1993) illustrates. One morning I was walking through the lobby of the hospital, dressed in a clerical collar[21] and a patient I had been visiting was being readmitted to the hospital. This patient, a nephew of a priest who was a friend, was diagnosed with AIDS and receiving active treatment. When he saw me, he yelled across the lobby: "Hey, Father Marc, how the f**ck are you"! The staff looked a little shocked at first because of who he was speaking to. I recall experiencing joy and happiness because of the freedom and comfort the patient felt in calling out to me in this way. I recall thinking at the time that this would never occur in a congregational setting.

Experience of Conflicted Community: Roman Catholic Church.

When I contrast my experience of the hospital culture with that of my experience of the culture of the Roman Catholic Church, there are striking and stark contrasts. One of the major findings and revelations of this research was the influence that the culture and the theology of the Roman Catholic Church played and continues to plays in my life. Even though I am no longer a member of the Roman Catholic Church and express my spirituality outside the Roman Catholic Church, I am still influenced and informed by the teaching and culture. As has been said, "once a cradle Catholic, always a cradle

[20] Latin: (*hospitium*, a guest house). According to the Ott (1910), "During the early centuries of Christianity the hospice was a shelter for the sick, the poor, the orphans, the old, the travelers, and the needy of every kind. It dates back to reign of Constantine" (para 1).
[21] A clerical collar is a black short sleeved dress shirt with a small white plastic insert in the front portion of the collar.

Catholic." I do not interpret this negatively because it is the theology of the Roman Catholic Church that has provided me with such a rich and robust understanding of redemption, relationships, ordination, and marriage.

The Roman Catholic Church holds homosexuality in a negative light, saying it is contrary to the natural order, contrary to how God created man and women, and based on the premise that the sexual act cannot be open to procreation. However, at the same time, the Roman Catholic Church holds a strong social justice theology, in which all persons are to be respected and loved because of being created in the image and likeness of God. The Roman Catholic Church teaches acceptance and love towards a homosexual person and supports the gay person in accepting their sexual orientation. The Roman Catholic Church holds the tenant to love all, so the homosexual person is deserving of love. It is when the homosexual person enters into a sexual relationship that the Roman Catholic Church becomes condemnatory.[22] I experience this as a dichotomy which blocked my acceptance of my sexual orientation for many years. It was very difficult for me to accept that I was gay, let alone the idea of being in a sexually active relationship, when what I had attached to and given power to in my life spoke so vehemently against something held deep within me. As I previously mentioned, I have often wondered if part of my attraction to the priesthood, even though I was not aware of my sexual orientation at the time, was a way for me not to have to face my sexuality because of the

[22] According to F. Seper, (1975), "At the present time there are those who, basing themselves on observations in the psychological order, have begun to judge indulgently, and even to excuse completely, homosexual relations between certain people. This they do in opposition to the constant teaching of the Magisterium and to the moral sense of the Christian people. But no pastoral method can be employed which would give moral justification to these acts on the grounds that they would be consonant with the condition of such people. For according to the objective moral order, homosexual relations are acts which lack an essential and indispensable finality" (VIII). Available at http://www.newadvent.org/library/docs_df75se.htm

requirement of celibacy. I am aware that sexuality and sexual expression are not the same, but on some unconscious level I might have believed that celibacy would protect me from having to deal with sexuality in general and mine in particular.

I found the culture of priesthood related to sexual orientation rather confusing. There was a subculture in the priesthood of a number of gay priests which on one level provided some support and acceptance. For instance, the subculture of the priesthood provided a degree of comfort and normalization or community. However, as I began to accept my sexuality, it was confusing because of what I perceived to be the inconsistency of integration of sexual orientation and expression of sexuality.

Let me share a story to illustrate. When I decided to ask for a leave of absence from the priesthood to discern whether or not to leave the priesthood, I met with the bishop. The bishop's response was: "I hope you are not leaving because you are gay. I could not run my diocese without my gay priests; they are running the biggest parishes in the diocese." At first his response surprised me. Furthermore, as I reflected on our conversation, there was a level of acceptance of my, and others' sexual orientation by the bishop, which I did not expect and which I experienced as affirming. He, a representative of the official church and holder of the teaching of the church, was able to acknowledge the reality of gay priests without judgment. In my friendships with other priests and with the bishop, I was experiencing an acceptance of my sexual orientation.

Theologically, I could have lived within the Roman Catholic Church; however, the endorsement for my work in spiritual care still hung over my head. The Roman Catholic Church would not endorse an openly gay man living with another gay man. It

was this stance that eventually propelled me to seek the endorsement of a faith group in which sexual orientation or same sex partners was not an issue.

Social Context Creates Fluctuation

This dissertation would not be complete if I did not include personal reflections on the social, cultural, political contexts and considerations when exploring the issue of sexual orientation. It is impossible to examine and discuss this topic without taking into consideration these contexts, as they colour, create fabric, and add texture to the experience of my self-disclosure of sexual orientation each and every time. This section describes a deeper experience of my 'lived experience' as a gay man and the question regarding self-disclosure. I have chosen to record these incidents in chronological order, rather than grouped by theme or personal response, in my desire for the reader to experience the ebb and flow, the 'ups and downs', that are part of living as a gay man, and how I never take the acceptance and affirmation of community for granted.

There have been a number of cultural and social incidents which have occurred while I was engaged in this research. Some have affirmed my study of sexual orientation, and some have challenged and surfaced old fears about this topic. On May 5, 2015, Luxemburg Prime Minister, Xavier Bettel married his partner. He was the first European Union leader to enter a gay marriage, and only the second world leader to marry a same sex partner. I contend that this made international news not because of his political profile, but because it was a same-sex marriage. I was excited about this news, because an elected government official publicly proclaimed his sexuality and same sex marriage. An event like this provides hope for me that society is changing. He is a visionary whose political career is not going to be ruined because of his personal life. It

is affirming and reassuring that the same is true for me in my life—that my career, my reputation, the respect I hold, will not be destroyed when I tell students that I am married to a man.

In July 2016, my partner and I went to our veterinarian to purchase cat food. We have been going to this animal hospital for over 14 years and knew the staff quite well. We mentioned to the receptionist that we were going to be married in September and our news was met with enthusiasm and excitement. The veterinarian entered the conversation and, she in turn, congratulated us with sincerity and enthusiasm. When another veterinarian appeared, they called him over and told him the news. Again, he immediately responded positively. The entire conversation that took place in the reception area of the Animal hospital was such a positive, affirming and spontaneous expression!

In August 2016, I was coming out of the Vice-President's office and one of the clinical directors was standing talking with her administrative assistant. This is a clinical director I had gone to a Catholic high school with. We reconnected during the past two years when our respective organizations amalgamated. The clinical director quickly turned to me and excitedly told me that she had been talking to her administrative assistant about my upcoming marriage. I relished in the affirmation and acceptance, although I was aware of a little hesitation because I had not told the clinical director about my upcoming marriage. Apparently, the Vice-President had been talking about it to others, in a positive light.

These experiences provided a positive sense of community for me, symbolic of a changing community where there is more acceptance of same sex marriage; something to

be celebrated as anyone else's marriage would be met with congratulations and celebration. I contrast this experience to when my partner and I had our commitment ceremony in 1996 when same sex marriage was not legal in Canada. We were both dependent upon the Roman Catholic Church for our employment, and so we only had 6 people at our ceremony, and the minister officiating ensured she collected all the programs so that there was nothing in print that could fall into the wrong hands. Later that evening, we celebrated with our friends in the condominium party room. Although, we did not publicly declare what we were celebrating, a couple of our friends asked us privately. We felt it was safer if we did not say anything publicly. Twenty years later when we were planning our wedding, people were excited for us. I feel less an anomaly, odd, a minority, when I experience the unsolicited support and affirmation of others.

In an article that appeared on November 29, 2016, an Indiana man was denied the opportunity to sing at the church funeral service for his grandmother. He was told that because of his gay lifestyle, he would not be allowed to sing. The priest had previously seen a photo of the man and his friends at a gay Pride parade, and would not let him sing because he was openly advocating gay rights. The priest concluded that by attending the gay Pride parade the man was openly opposing the Catholic Church's teaching on homosexuality. I read this article with sadness and increasing anger. I shared it on Facebook and retweeted on Twitter. I do both infrequently and only when I feel passionate about the content. I felt sad and angry for the grandson who only wanted to pay tribute to his deceased grandmother. I felt sad because of the disenfranchisement he experienced and how this might potentially impact his grieving. I felt angry that a minister would take such a stand, and above all else, I felt sad and angry that I could

potentially experience the same. A heterosexual person would not be denied singing at their grandmother's funeral because of the fact that they were heterosexual. I again experienced a sense of persecution because of my sexual orientation.

In January, 2017 my husband and I met with my physician, during which he spent 90 minutes discussing test results and treatment options, at which point he asked the two female nurses to leave because he wanted to do a physical exam. Once they left he explained to me that he did want to conduct a physical exam, but he wanted to talk to me about some of the potential side effects of the treatment options, particularly for a gay couple. I was completely taken aback by his sensitivity, openness, and comfort in discussing intimate sexual details. As the patient, I found it incredibly reassuring and comforting knowing I was being cared for by someone who was so sensitive and comfortable with his sexuality and mine. We often talk about patient centered care in health care, and this exemplified it. I am part of a hospital committee that is exploring the determinants for accessing health care in downtown Toronto and sexual orientation is certainly one of the categories, because of the way in which gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people are treated. The experience with this man stood in stark contrast. I left the appointment feeling safe and exceedingly cared for. Whatever lay ahead for us, I felt certain that we were in the hands of a very caring person and would not experience what I have read about and heard at the committee meeting.

In the spring of 2017, Cable News Network (CNN) reported a story about men all over the world standing up against homophobia by "joining hands". This action was in response to a couple in the Netherlands who were attacked for being gay. Politicians, actors, sportsmen, policemen and business men around the world responded and walked

hand in hand over the course of a week, including the Deputy Prime Minister of the Netherlands walking hand in hand with another politician. Tears came to my eyes as I looked at photos of the Deputy Prime Minister walking down the street with a colleague, and both were straight! What a demonstration of solidarity. I was also buoyed by the response of social media with the "likes" and "shares" on Facebook and the "re-tweets" of Twitter. I experienced the positive response as a personal affirmation.

On April 15, 2017, the local Toronto news reported an incident of someone spray painting homophobic graffiti on the garage of a gay couple's home in little Italy. It read: "Toronto hates queers." This occurred not too far from the hospital where I work and I felt that old and familiar vulnerability, fear, and lack of safety. I was reminded, again, how fragile acceptance, support, and affirmation is for a gay man. Even within a short radius of this caring community, this place where I have experienced such a degree of acceptance and celebration, there is another reality lurking. While feeling this vulnerability, fear, and anger, another news report emerged of neighbours coming together and painting over the graffiti on the couple's garage door. It can be exhausting, living with such contrasts and juxtapositions of emotions; moving from fear and anger to a profound sense of joy regarding human nature and humanity's response to the same reality.

In May 2017, there were news reports around the world of the persecution of gay people in Chechnya. Victims of the gay purge spoke of how they were stripped naked, beaten with pipes and electrocuted. There were reports of more than 100 men being abducted, tortured and in some cases killed because they were gay. Such reports are a harsh reminder that there are still many gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people

around the world who do not enjoy what I take for granted every day. The challenge is to live with the depth of sadness and anger, without becoming tainted, negative, discouraged, or without hope, when I hear of these atrocities. It is also a reminder of what I already know—that not all places are safe to visit or travel, because of my sexual orientation.

As recently as November 29, 2017, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made a public apology to the LGBTQ+ community. In the House of Commons, he issued a formal apology to those who had been fired from their jobs or military during the Cold War. He spoke of Canada's role in the systemic oppression of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, and two spirited people, and proposed a new bill that would let courts erase the records of people charged with crimes due to their sexuality. To hear a Prime Minister of Canada make such an acknowledgement of the violence that had been perpetrated upon people solely because of their sexual orientation left me feeling vulnerable, scared, and excited. Hesitant because of the reality that occurred for some people as well as the fear of the potential for society to forget, and excited about the potential for society to change in ways that will ensure younger LGBTQ+ persons do not have the same experience as I have.

As late as the past two weeks (February 2018), Toronto police arrested and charged a suspect with first-degree murder related to five men who have gone missing from the city's gay village. The bodies were dismembered and left in different garbage containers throughout the laneways and alleyways of the area. These are the streets that my husband and I walk along when we do our weekly grocery shopping; we meet friends

for dinner in the restaurants in the village; and walk through the area as we frequent this general area of the city.

These events paint a backdrop to this research, and serve as a stark reminder of the limits of acceptance of gay, lesbian, and transgender people; such events make visible a cultural context that lives very near to the surface for every gay, lesbian, and transgender people. In exploring my question regarding the self-disclosure of sexual orientation, the social and political environment is a major contributor and factor in the decision. Moreover, this makes the disclosure of sexual orientation different than other self-disclosures, as it is unlikely that other self-disclosures would be potentially life harming or threatening. The local, national and world environment is not static and so the safety and comfort regarding self-disclosure of sexual orientation ebbs and flows accordingly.

A Way Forward: Respecting Authenticity and Integrity

Within the Roman Catholic Church there is what is referred to as ecclesiastical jurisdiction which defines what the Church has authority over. This is further divided into the external and internal jurisdiction, more commonly referred to as "forum". The internal forum[23] is often used when there is a conflict between the external and internal forum, and so the internal forum is invoked for pastoral reasons or for the sake of the faith of the individuals involved. The internal forum is sometimes used in cases of

[23] "The jurisdiction of the internal forum deals with questions concerning the welfare of individual Christians and with their relation to God. Hence it is called the forum of conscience (Forum conscientiae). The internal forum is subdivided into the sacramental or penitential. Causes concerning the private and secret needs of the faithful can often be expedited outside the sacramental confession. Thus, vows may be dispensed, and occult impediments of matrimony may be dispensed outside of the tribunal of penance. The internal forum deals therefore directly with the spiritual welfare of the individual faithful". For information see http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06153b.htm

marriage where the marriage will be declared null and void in the internal forum, even though it remains a legal marriage. When the internal forum is utilized there is no documentation. The internal forum has been used historically during times of war when the pope named Cardinals to the College of Cardinals for their protection against prosecution by a particular state.

As a priest, I recall using the internal forum once after consultation with the moral theologian of the diocese. I had an elderly patient who was dying. His wife confided in me that they were in fact not legally married, even though they had been together for over 20 years. Both parties had been previously married within the Roman Catholic Church, but had never had their first marriage annulled and therefore had never been able to marry each other in the Roman Catholic Church, yet had remained active in their faith. She expressed how meaningful it would be for them to be married before he died. She was not concerned about having a marriage license and this request did not concern the disbursement of the estate. After consulting with a moral theologian, I celebrated their marriage in his hospital room and he died within days. There were no forms, no paperwork, no requirement of witnesses, and no record. This brought peace to both of them which she spoke about with me after he passed.

Since the influences of my theological foundations have been such a significant revelation in this research, a solution emerged for discerning whether to self-disclose my sexual orientation. The solution is to invoke the internal forum in circumstances where it feels particularly threatening or unsafe. While there is a desire on my part to self-disclose in order to remain an authentic (personally and theologically) role-model and build

relationships, for external reasons it is important that I hold this internal forum to surface awareness about the course of action.

This internal forum is not merely a way of expressing a cleverly disguised decision not to self-disclose; rather it is a sound approach given my theological foundation. For instance, if I unilaterally choose not to disclose, I deny or ignore something within myself. That something remains hidden from the students and within me. When I invoke the internal forum, I acknowledge my sexual orientation and my marriage with my husband carrying both with me in an authentic manner regardless of whether I choose to disclose or not. This does not mean that if the cultural, societal, or political contexts shift during my relationship with students I would not externalize what had been held internally. This is in fact consistent with my sacramental theology; making external what is known internally.

At the heart of this concept of the internal forum is authenticity; feeling one is being true to oneself and to the other to build a trusting relationship. Jones et al. (2012) define authenticity as "the day-to-day, moment-to-moment negotiations and decisions about managing who we are, given the current context" (p. 712). Being authentic involves choices about what dimensions of our identities we chose to share based on a particular context. In an autoethnographic study, Jones et al. (2012) found that making choices about revealing certain parts of one's identity based on the context might not compromise authenticity, "but attempts to live out authenticity were complicated and could be costly" (p. 715). The authors also proposed that the notion of authenticity as a constant amid changing situations and contexts is not supported by lived experience.

Authenticity involves fluidity as a person negotiates multiple identities, depending on the time and place and the influence of power and privilege (p. 715).

This understanding and definition of authenticity aligns with my use of the internal forum. I can remain authentic and at the same time make the decision not to self-disclose my sexual orientation. There is an allowance for making a decision not to disclose certain parts of my identity in a particular context, at this particular time. On one level, this seems to be a rather obvious conclusion. However, the internal and external pressure I have experienced, at times, to self-disclose my sexual orientation, makes it far from a straight forward or simplistic conclusion. The internal forum and the definition of authenticity by Jones et al. (2012) are consistent with my deeply held values and, thus, the approach provides a practical way to make decisions about self-disclosure.

The application of the internal forum can offer a valuable approach to the discipline and professional practice of CPE teaching supervisors and supervisors in similar professions. This internal forum provides a framework, a template, which allows a supervisor to make an informed and reflective decision regarding self-disclosure. Additionally, it supports and allows for the creation of an appropriate supervisor/student relationship that honours authenticity which is fluid in the midst of multiple identities. Within the CASC Teaching Supervisor Competencies, it strengthens the practice of personal reflection and safe and effective use of self. CPE teaching supervisors have always drawn upon their personal self-awareness in making decisions regarding self-disclosure. The internal forum acknowledges and provides a space for what is not shared, and it is honoured, acknowledged, and respected as part of the teaching supervisor's story and experience.

The final chapter of this dissertation will highlight the particular learnings and insights from my research, along with the opportunities for further exploration and inquiry that present themselves as a result of this research.

Chapter 6: Reflections and Enduring Questions

In this chapter, I re-engage the literature and how it continues to inform or not, the interpretation of findings. The chapter discusses the particular research methodology; the insights and opportunities presented through employing this methodology and the unique characteristics of this methodology and research. The chapter concludes with my learnings regarding truth, self, and relationship; my changing understanding of church; and the spiritual practice of on-going self-awareness.

Re-engaging the Literature From a Different View Point

My research contributes to the literature concerning supervisor self-disclosure, and in particular, the self-disclosure of sexual orientation. Ladany and Lehrman-Waterman (1999) concluded that supervisor self-disclosure has not been extensively examined and was limited to supervisor self-disclosure of personal statements (i.e., educational background, professional history). There was only one article within the field of CPE. In this article, Anderson (2012) explored diversity education in the CPE context and concluded that diversity in CPE is best developed when there is mutual disclosure between the supervisor and students. However, the self-disclosure he speaks about is cultural and social diversity, (e.g., the genogram, sharing of one's religious and spiritual identity). I would argue that these are common self-disclosures within the CPE context, and do not reflect the degree of self-disclosure that sexual orientation involves.

The study conducted by Russ et al. (2002), found that many students of a gay teacher perceive that they learn considerably less than students of a straight teacher (more than 70%). While this is a significant percentage, the study was conducted in 2002, and I would contend that without cultural and social considerations, the results lack these

fundamental considerations significantly impacting the self-disclosure of sexual orientation. As an example, the increasing cultural and social support and acceptance of gay and lesbian people would have a direct impact on students' reaction to the self-disclosure of sexual orientation. I would also posit that our understanding of the origins of homosexuality and sexuality, in general, has developed and progressed since 2002, leading to significant acceptance of sexual orientation. This greater acceptance would likely yield different results if this study were conducted today.

While Cheston (2000), Doehring (2010), Estadt, et al, (1987), Ward (2005), and Hill (2001), all speak to the primacy of the quality of the relationship that the supervisor and the supervisee establish and the significance of the relationship between the supervisor and the student, none of them deal specifically with self-disclosure or the implications of self-disclosure. This research affirms the centrality of relationship and links it directly to the decision to self-disclose sexual orientation. Navigating this relationship with the added element of determining whether to self-disclose sexual orientation will be discussed further in the next section.

Satterly (2006) asserts that self-disclosure, in the therapeutic alliance, is one of the most complicated "relationship variables, especially when the self-disclosure involves one's sexual orientation" (p. 240). In a study of 26 self-identified male therapists (e.g., social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, counsellors, marriage and family therapists), interviewees stated that one of the factors taken into consideration when they considered whether or not to self-disclose, was "the presumed effect on business endeavours" (p. 243). Interviewees also reported that being gay and a therapist "necessitate[d] a self-analysis of how to exist in the professional world" (p. 243). This study supported the

necessity of taking into account the social, cultural, and political environments when considering self-disclosure of sexual orientation. This study reinforces the necessity of being cognizant of the policies and directives of organizations prior to self-disclosing sexual orientation (Satterly, 2006). It is incumbent to reflect on the potential impact the self-disclosure may have at any given time. This is one of the fundamental conclusions of my research, and one I contend always needs to be taken into consideration when deciding whether to self-disclose; the political and social environment of the organization in which one is working.

This research raises the importance of taking into consideration the personal cultural, social, and political factors or the intersectionality of identities to the discussion of self-disclosure. Further study needs to occur to confirm whether these considerations are limited to the self-disclosure of sexual orientation or whether there are other types of supervisor self-disclosure that need to be taken into consideration. Research regarding self-disclosure of other information could demonstrate the transferability for considering the cultural, social and political contexts when deciding whether or not to self-disclose.

We are what they grow beyond. That is the burden of all masters.[24]

I have often told my students that I do not want them to imitate me, but to learn from me. I see my role as more of a mentor or model than producing or 'cloning' newly minted spiritual care practitioners. This was my experience of the teaching supervisors I had throughout my professional career, and a quality I desired to emulate in my teaching. As much as this is my desire, it is also the burden of being a teaching supervisor. This is why the previous statement by Yoda to Luke, both Jedi masters, struck me when hearing it. I am at the stage in my career where I experience previous students having grown,

[24]Yoda speaking to Luke – Star Wars, December 2017.

developed, and professionally matured far beyond our relationship as supervisor and student. I find it gratifying and humbling, and am a little envious, to be honest: the burden of all masters, to experience students developing as spiritual care practitioners and registered psychotherapists (in Ontario) to degrees that I sometimes find myself grappling to understand their insights. I take comfort in the words of a significant mentor in my life, one of my masters who was able to celebrate my growth in the statement: "I think I'm a pretty good teaching supervisor (and he was well respected in our profession), but you're going to be a much better supervisor than I ever have been".

The literature spoke about the self-disclosure of the supervisor in terms of being 'for the benefit of the student'. Knox et al. (2008) recommended that supervisors' or teachers' self-disclosure "is to model for the student or to normalize and strengthen the supervisory relationship" (p. 548). Regarding the particular self-disclosure of sexual orientation, Orlov and Allen (2014) supported self-disclosure for the purposes of student learning or as a role model for students.

The external resources for the provisional supervisor and the mature supervisor spoke about their experience of self-disclosing to their CPE students. In the case of the provisional supervisor, it was his sexual orientation (follow-up interview with external resource, p. 29), and in the case of the mature supervisor, it was her divorce (interview with external resource, p. 21) that were the specific self-disclosures. The external resource for the provisional supervisor reported very positive experiences and considered his self-disclosure to be a form of modeling and creating an environment in which the students felt more comfortable and were given permission to disclose more personal and intimate information, not necessarily limited to sexual orientation. When talking about

disclosing her divorce to students, the external resource for the mature supervisor talked about a negative response from students, presumably from those students who come from more conservative religious backgrounds. At the same time, she experienced a sense of relief from other students; a freedom or giving permission that it was okay for them to be themselves regardless of what that meant for each of them.

While the motivation for the external resources for the provisional supervisor and the mature supervisor in their self-disclosure was not known to me, it certainly was their experience that their self-disclosure enhanced the students' learning. The intimate nature of some self-disclosures (e.g. sexual orientation or marriage) suggest that personal and intimate self-disclosure does model something pivotal since it can provide the permission students need to be more forthcoming, open and authentic in their own way. Further, a significant learning that emerged from my research was the importance, working from a relational supervisory model, of taking into consideration the relationship between the supervisor and student in regards to any personal self-disclosure—the burden of the master and the desire for students to grow beyond us.

From a relational, intersubjective perspective, I concur that the decision concerning self-disclosure of sexual orientation needs to consider the relationship expectations of the student, as well as the supervisor. In this instance, authenticity informs the choice to self-disclose or not. It is not merely a choice concerning self-disclosure, but a decision about how to be in authentic relationship with a student. This is not an easy, one-time choice; it is more of a delicate balance to be navigated each time I contemplate the decision to self-disclose in group. At the start of this research I expected to resolve my question once and for all. I now understand that the essence of my

question is not about sexual orientation, but rather: What does being in authentic relationship look like with this group of students, given the particularities of each, as well as the current cultural, social, and political environment? This is definitely what is at the crux of the question.

Revelations From My Research

A major discovery from my research was the centrality of my theological foundations and how these foundations informed and impacted the self-disclosure of my sexual orientation. There is the opportunity for similar research projects by other CPE teaching supervisors, both straight and LGBTQ+, in which their particular theological foundations would be explored in the context of storytelling and self-disclosure. I would invite other teaching supervisors to think about framing their storytelling around the theological foundations and principles that are fundamental to their spirituality.

The attachment to theology revealed in this research presents another opportunity for further research. For instance, exploring our ultimate attachments and what is the "unsurrendable" in us? This could include an exploration and revelation of the internal nature of self, the ways in which our theology influences our worldviews, and what is ultimately so essential to us that to give it up would be to lose self.

Likewise, to demonstrate transferability, CPE teaching supervisors could reflect upon their respective operative theology and how it informs his/her story, or ask the question: "How is my story reflective and consistent with the foundational tenants of my theology?" In telling this story, the teacher could model for students the goal of safe and effective use of self or the second CASC competency (2017, Competencies, Chapter 3

Section II), and personal and spiritual development, the third competency (2017, Competencies, Chapter 3 Section II).

Personal and Spiritual Integration is one of the competencies for CPE teaching supervisors. This competency identifies congruence, meaning "consistency between the positions presented in written materials and the presentation of self in the moment" (2017, Competencies, Chapter 3 Section II). Another component includes demonstrating awareness of the connections among "theology and/or spiritual/religious theories and spiritual care or pastoral counselling identity" (2017, Competencies, Chapter 3 Section II). The practice of articulating the connection between the teaching supervisor's theological/religious/spiritual theories and their life story could be a demonstration of this CASC competency.

While the hermeneutic phenomenological self-study methodology presented unique opportunities, I acknowledge the skill and professional practice of self-reflection and self-awareness gained through my professional development and psychotherapeutic journey. This equipped me for engaging in the deep reflection that this methodology requires, and to bring to this methodology a honed skill. The methodology required sufficient reflective time for each interview, allowing each experience in self to sit with the interview of the external resources, thus safeguarding that I was not confusing which role I assumed at any given time.

The hermeneutic circle added an intricacy to the research methodology and necessitated constant discipline and at times a struggle, regarding which role I assumed at which time, and awareness of when I was moving from one role to the other. This discipline was needed during the interview stage, the identification of meaning units and

themes, and in writing the dissertation, and necessitated that I regularly check in with myself to ensure I was clear on what role I was in at any given time. This regular check-in often allowed for self-correction, and resulted in greater clarity. This was the most challenging aspect of this research methodology, and one in which I had to pause at times to clarify in order to ensure that the interviews, data analysis and conclusions were accurate and validated. I would highly recommend that researchers embarking on this process allow significant time and reflection to engage the hermeneutic circle and attend to the different roles.

Self-reflection and attending to my various roles also created the richness of the revelations through the methodology. The depth and thickness of the meanings and conclusions were as a result of this type of self-reflection. The surprises were the centrality of my theological foundations and the essence of authentic relationship; virtually a personal motto. These were more profound because they surfaced through the process of constructing new knowledge and insights through the hermeneutic circle. This interweaving of knowledge also included my experience of the Dissertation Committee, which will be discussed later. The hermeneutic circle brought the richness to my research for which I was searching: a narrative approach would not have satisfied my questions and my yearning for a deeper understanding and meaning of self-disclosing my sexual orientation. This would have been lacking without the hermeneutic dimension. The insights and depth resulted from taking the external resources insights and reflections back to the experiences in self and allowing the experiences of self to sit with them, ruminate over them, and allow for the clarity that came through this sifting process.

This research involved unique characteristics. For instance, it explored my self-disclosure of sexual orientation, as a teaching supervisor to a group of CPE students as part of the storytelling process at the beginning of a CPE course. The self-disclosure explored is that of sexual orientation; other self-disclosures were not considered or explored. The CPE student group is unique, as they all have academic degrees in religion or spirituality, giving rise to the importance concerning faith, morals, and values. In this situation, self-disclosing in a one-to-one situation could hold different considerations and outcomes than the experience of self-disclosing to a group; the understanding and meaning of such could potentially be quite different. Further, self-disclosure during the forming stages of a group might carry unique meanings and experiences (Hill, 2001) that potentially the same self-disclosure at a later point in the relationship would not. This research did not address these potentialities or possibilities.

A further unique characteristic is that every gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, (and heterosexual) person brings a particular and personal worldview as to how they live their sexual orientation in their lives. How a person lives out their gay or lesbian sexual orientation varies because of any number of personal, familial, social factors and values. Some of the factors that contribute to this are: how "out" a person is in their personal and professional life; the degree to which they are an activist for the LGBQT+ community; how central the gay community is to their personal identity; whether or not they have children and the circumstances surrounding the birth of children; and the social, familial, cultural, and religious factors that the person holds. This research is based on how I live out, and into, my sexual orientation. The foundation is how I have constructed my social and cultural considerations, and an understanding of what it is for me to be a gay man,

and how I live as a gay man. It is possible that another gay or lesbian CPE teaching supervisor would come to different conclusions because they have constructed the integration of their sexual orientation differently.

There is little research from a LGBTQ+ point of view and nothing within the context of CPE education. Further, research is needed by other LGBTQ+ teaching supervisors to reveal the richness of conclusions and meanings resulting from the different constellations of how LGBTQ+ people understand and integrate their sexuality and live into their sexuality. As an example, a bisexual teaching supervisor would have a different personal construct that would inform this research in vastly different ways than my own.

The Developing Nature of Truth, Self, and Relationship

I believe my story, including the self-disclosure of my sexual orientation, will be a different story each time I share it to a group of students. Through this research, I have come to a deeper awareness and appreciation of the nature of truth: that it is not static or external to me and that with deep and personal reflection truth lies within—at least my truth. This is consistent with a constructivist paradigm which understands knowledge as ongoing and continuous, and with my personal value of going to the internal for understanding and meaning. Drawing upon the insights from feminist spirituality, our relationships are reflections of our relationship with God, the Sacred. Thus it is reasonable to conclude that the relationship I have with 'self' is also an expression of the Sacred; of God. This awareness has deepened, as a result of this research and resonates with my life experiences. I have always held authenticity as a fundamental value, and this value was one of the major motivations for this research. The deeper learning has

been the importance of being in authentic relationship with self, as well as others. Discernment to self-disclose of my sexual orientation encompasses the question of how to be in authentic relationship with myself, with my God, and others. In the last chapter, I proposed the internal forum as a means for discernment. As a result, I would use different and more specific language in describing authentic relationship. It involves recognizing that truth is developmental and therefore changes, given deeper insights, changing paradigms, and cultural, social and political considerations. The definition of authenticity proposed by Jones et al (2012) suggests that authenticity is not constant but involves certain fluidity as we negotiate multiple identities resonates with me because it is not something that is static or obtained once and for all. This makes the authentic relationship sacred, and an experience of the Sacred.

Throughout the writing of this dissertation, I was invited to live into and incorporate what I was learning. As stated above, I have come to appreciate that truth, self, and relationship are constructed; they are not obtained, they are not static, they develop and are mutually constructed. There were times throughout the writing of this dissertation when I reverted to an ingrained understanding of intellectual knowledge and struggled with integrating this learning. I was vulnerable to fall prey to a reductionist stance in my thinking when I spoke about themes in my analysis, thus losing the 'phenomena' for me. The other lived experience of truth was constructed through the role and my experience of the dissertation committee. In this respect, I had to be aware of not reverting to another well engrained understanding of truth as something that was presented to me and was conscious of challenging an almost automatic relinquishing my own thoughts and insights in favour of the feedback. I came to understand that the

dissertation committee added another layer to the hermeneutic circle. They would offer their insights and interpretations of my writing and upon reflection their comments would confirm what I had written or raise more questions for me. We would meet and discuss them, continuing to construct together my understanding and knowledge. I have a greater appreciation and deeper experience of the role and purpose of a dissertation committee: not as an external entity, but that we construct new knowledge in relationship. This is one of the core findings of this research: the importance of authentic relationship.

The Changing Nature of My Experience of Church

The themes of authenticity and relationship inform my understanding and experience of church. As mentioned in the previous chapter, for many years my understanding of church was primarily external in nature. It was relating to the organization, rituals, rules, hierarchy; if I was in 'right relationship' with these then I was in 'right relationship' with God. Looking back, I would now say that this understanding of church is precisely what made it difficult to grow into a deeper authenticity with myself, as well as others, because while it was a struggle, I was not willing to give it up or walk away. Authenticity included integrating and incorporating the various components and aspects of my life, not negating or dismissing those that were uncomfortable or presented challenges. Authenticity included the integration of external and internal authority.

I experience a freedom in this, because for most of my life I have related to 'church' in a subservient, submissive role. I can now give myself permission to experience profound spiritual experiences with family and friends. I am left grappling with the role of church in my life, and in North American society in general. I feel a loss

when I think of how central church life was to family and society a generation or two ago, and how our educational and health care systems were built by very dedicated religious men and women. There is a rich history, some of which I have experienced in my lifetime. I believe there is a role for the church in this day and age, but I also believe it is not what the church presently models or perpetuates. I have experienced, at different times in my life, a different reality of church, but that has often been in small communities, groupings of friends, likeminded people, who have gathered together to worship and support each other in our life journey and experience. It has not been about rules, regulations, and expectations, but about celebrating together, regardless of beliefs.

Safe and Effective use of Self (SEUS) as a Spiritual Exercise

Another insight has been how my professional skill and practice as a reflective practitioner has equipped me in life in ways I had not previously appreciated. The external resource for the Roman Catholic man spoke about the image of "layering" when he reflected on my life experiences and how I had responded to them. Nothing that I experienced, that occurred in my life, was ignored, rejected, or discarded (interview with external resource Roman Catholic man, p. 17). He drew on the image of layering—like an artist painting; one coat of paint is added to the next. It creates colour and texture. This is a wonderful image for the experience of this research, uncovering the layers that have created my life experience.

The hermeneutic phenomenological self-study methodology demanded self-reflection and with it the willingness to surface self-awareness. The depths of exploring and revelation were enabled as the result of years of practice in self-reflection and the safe and effective use of self—the skill to be able to gently scratch away one layer to look

at the layer underneath. As CASC certified members, our skill and aptitude in self-awareness and self-reflection is something we need to be keenly aware of, rather than take for granted, or assume or conclude that it is a broadly possessed skill. It is a skill and a strength that we possess, that contributes to our professional aptitude and practice. This research has reminded me of the importance of continued and on-going self-reflection and the deep insights this practice can bring. I have often thought of the practice of self-reflection as being a professional practice—one that supported and informed my professional assessment, interventions and plan. I now appreciate how it is also a deeply spiritual practice. This type of deep self-reflection influences how I understand the unfolding of my life events, which undoubtedly leads to a deepening authenticity and integrity; values I hold dearly and have deep spiritual roots for me.

I now understand that the fundamental premise informing my research question as how do I negotiate authentic relationship with students. When I first engaged my question I thought of interviewing former students and exploring their response to my self-disclosure, but knew within me that this did not address the restlessness I felt and experienced within. This research has revealed that the restlessness, the question I experience with a new group of students, is how to be in authentic relationship with them as a teaching supervisor.

Final Thoughts and Considerations

I return to the quote at the beginning of this dissertation: "We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time". My aspiration was to discover an answer to my question that I could draw upon when the question of self-disclosure of my sexual orientation to

students arose. I come to this place now, not with so much an answer, but with knowing what needs to be taken into consideration and how to better navigate this territory of authentic relationship—the desire to be known, and the need of the student.

This research and dissertation, particularly because of the hermeneutic phenomenological self-study, has been a deep and thick exploration of my own story—one that I felt I was familiar with, but as I stand where I do today I continue to face my sexual orientation and the continued decision whether to self-disclose or not, and I know it differently than I ever have. I am at this place for the first time. I also know, for the first time, that because of my new knowledge of truth, self, and authenticity, I will continue to explore my story and experience it again and again for the first time.

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Appendix A

St. Stephen's College Informed Consent Letter External Resource

Marc Doucet, Researcher (DMin Student at St. Stephen's College, University of Alberta, Edmonton, xx@uhn.ca)
Rev. Dr. Neil Elford, Academic Advisor (xx@gmail.com)

Introductory paragraph
Purpose

This research project is focused on my experience as a CPE teaching supervisor of self-disclosing my sexual orientation to a group of students, during the formation phase of the supervisory relationship. It involves disclosing to a group, but I am aware that there are varied individual reactions and responses to this self-disclosure. It is a self-study utilizing the hermeneutic phenomenological methodology. The single subject study will allow for a deep exploration of particular experiences of self—taking into consideration of socio-political-theological contexts as I experienced each, and how these contribute to the creativity of me.

I have identified "experiences of self" for this research project. The three experiences are:

1) The provisional supervisor: This is the neophyte supervisor who gives voice to my experience from 1998 to 2003. It is also an educational stage within CASC. At this stage in development the person is learning the craft and skill of a teaching supervisor and is under direct supervision with a qualified teaching supervisor. This phase lasts anywhere from one to three years.

2) The Roman Catholic man: Through my DMin courses and the pilot project, I identified the central role my Roman Catholic faith has played throughout my life, even though now I am an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada. I was raised in the Catholic faith, was active in my faith, and was ordained as a priest. The preliminary dialogue conducted within the context of my methodology course and a follow-up dialogue conducted within the pilot project highlighted the significance the Roman Catholic participant has played in my life, thereby influencing and impacting my personal, socio-political-theological understandings.

3) The mature supervisor: It will be important to hear the experience of the mature supervisor, the professional I now am. My lifeworld has changed significantly from the time I was a provisional supervisor. In the interval, I have entered a long term relationship, moved from being a priest in the Roman Catholic church to being an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada, established a successful and respected career in the largest health care institution in Canada (University Health Network, Toronto), managing one of the largest Departments of Spiritual Care, and served a two year term as the national President of my professional association, the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care.

Carries out as stated and there is no deception involved

I have an invested interest in completing this study. I will not use this interest to influence or in any way coerce participants to participate in this study. This study is not sponsored by any external agency. Participants should not feel pressured to join this study.

For degree/grant (personal benefit disclosure)

This research is being done as part of my dissertation for my Doctor of Ministry Degree at St. Stephen's College, Edmonton.

Method

You are being asked to participate in this research as an external resource for the provisional supervisor interview. You will be asked to read the transcript and offer your interpretation, comments, insights, etc. The purpose is to glean insights into my experience as a provisional supervisor from your experience, perspective, or expertise. I have chosen you because:

a. You are younger in your career as a CASC CPE Teaching Supervisor, and therefore closer to the stage I was at when I was a provisional supervisor.
b. You are gay
c. You have integrated and live your sexual orientation through a different lens than me (i.e. more open, socially or politically, more involved in the gay culture).
d. You come from a different religious tradition and theological paradigm than me. I would assume that the different theological paradigm will allow for a different theological interpretation of your sexual orientation, than me.

Gathering Data
# of interviews, length of time, format, length, survey/conditions for return of document/
# of observations, length conditions of observation(s) use of audio/video recording equipment

I will send you the original transcript of the experience of self of the provisional supervisor, along with my notes containing insights, questions, and wonderings, along with the preliminary identification of themes. The purpose of the interviews with you is to glean additional and deeper insight and understanding of potential meaning units and themes, as such contribute to my own preliminary identification of such themes.

After the initial interview with you I will have the conversation transcribed and will continue the pre-reflective stage, with the goal of further identification of themes, deeper insights, both meaning and potential interpretation of themes or meaning from the conversation. I will have another interview with you and ask for further reflections, comments, insights, etc., regarding any emerging themes, possible meaning units, threads, possibly additional literature reviews, etc., to continue to reveal, deepen and thicken the meaning of the experiences of self. This means there may be three or four

interviews with you as I continue to identify themes and possible interpretations of the themes and meaning units. This process is the hermeneutic spiral

The interviews will be between 45-60 minutes, conducted face to face, audio taped and transcribed. There is no remuneration involved or gifts. The audio tapes will be kept in a locked cupboard in my office in the hospital. The transcripts of the interviews will be electronically stored on the network drive at the University Health Centre, Toronto, Ontario, where I work. The hospital has strong fire walls and privacy regulations, is password protected and the password is changed every three months. At the completion of the DMin program, all audio tapes and transcriptions will be destroyed and at no time will they be made public.

Verification/Review

Returning transcripts?
Returning synopses?
Checking observations?

The audio tapes of each interview will be transcribed by an independent transcriptionist. The audio tapes will be kept in a locked cupboard in my office in the hospital. The transcriptions will be kept electronically and filed on the hospital network drive, which is behind hospital firewalls. At the completion of the DMin program, all audio tapes and transcriptions will be destroyed.

After each interview with you I will have the conversation transcribed and will return to you to ask for you to confirm the accuracy of the transcript, ensuring that I have recorded our conversation accurately and you feel confident that I have heard you and recorded our conversation accurately. This process provides member checking and also builds trustworthiness of the data—demonstrating validity of this qualitative research.

Rights

To confidentiality
To opt out without penalty and data destroyed/returned and not included in the study
To copy of report?

If you agree to participate no identifying characteristics will be used, other than the descriptors given of the external resource in this letter above. You may withdraw or request to stop a particular interview at any time. If you choose to withdraw any transcripts or data pertaining to your participation will be destroyed. You may choose to reschedule any interview for another time.

At your request I will provide you with the pertinent sections of my final dissertation where I have drawn upon our conversations to inform, explore, and further elucidate my research question.

Other Uses

Articles/Presentations
Request must specify intended secondary research use
State the data will be handles under the same ethical provisions

Excerpts from the final dissertation may be used to write articles for professional publications, presentations at conferences, seminars, or workshops, and possible publication in book format. The data will be handled under the same ethical provisions as outlined for the writing of the dissertation.

Informed Consent

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact my academic advisor, Rev. Dr. Neil Elford, xxx@gmail.com or the Chair of St. Stephen's College Ethics Committee, via Nicole Beal, Executive Assistant to the Principal and Dean, xx@ualberta.ca

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

I allow myself to be audio-recorded (according to the guidelines stated above, and mandatory for participation in the study) YES___ NO___

I allow myself to be quoted (according to the confidentiality guidelines stated above) YES___ NO____

Participant's signature_____
Date _____

Researcher's signature_____
Date _____

This is an example of the questions I will use with the external resources to facilitate the conversation and draw out further meaning and possible themes:

1. *At first glance or reflection, anything particular stand out to you about what the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor is saying?*
2. *Drawing upon your experience and expertise what do you hear as being critical, significant, painful, wounded, etc., for the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor?*
3. *Can you say more about that?*
4. *Can you identify any common themes, threads, or connections in what the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor is saying?*
5. *Any reflections that you wish to offer concerning what the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor is saying?*

Subsequent interview questions:

1. *Any initial thoughts, reactions, etc., from the transcript?*
2. *I have identified what I thought you were saying in the first interview regarding what the experience of self was saying. Have I captured your thoughts, comments, reflections?*
3. *I have begun to identify some common threads, themes, meaning units; do these make sense to you from what the experience of self talked about, given your particular expertise?*
4. *What are your thoughts about _____ (here I would name a particular theme, meaning unit, or knowledge from an additional literature review)?*

Appendix B

St. Stephen's College Informed Consent Letter External Resource

Marc Doucet, Researcher (DMin Student at St. Stephen's College, University of Alberta, Edmonton, xxx@uhn.ca)
Rev. Dr. Neil Elford, Academic Advisor (xxx@gmail.com)

Introductory paragraph

Purpose

This research project is focused on my experience as a CPE teaching supervisor of self-disclosing my sexual orientation to a group of students, during the formation phase of the supervisory relationship. It involves disclosing to a group, but I am aware that there are varied individual reactions and responses to this self-disclosure. It is a self-study utilizing the hermeneutic phenomenological methodology. The single subject study will allow for a deep exploration of particular experiences of self—taking into consideration of socio-political-theological contexts as I experienced each, and how these contribute to the creativity of me.

I have identified "experiences of self" for this research project. The three experiences are:

1) The provisional supervisor: This is the neophyte supervisor who gives voice to my experience from 1998 to 2003. It is also an educational stage within CASC. At this stage in development the person is learning the craft and skill of a teaching supervisor and is under direct supervision with a qualified teaching supervisor. This phase lasts anywhere from one to three years.

2) The Roman Catholic man: Through my DMin courses and the pilot project, I identified the central role my Roman Catholic faith has played throughout my life, even though now I am an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada. I was raised in the Catholic faith, was active in my faith, and was ordained as a priest. The preliminary dialogue conducted within the context of my methodology course and a follow-up dialogue conducted within the pilot project highlighted the significance the Roman Catholic participant has played in my life, thereby influencing and impacting my personal, socio-political-theological understandings.

3) The mature supervisor: It will be important to hear the experience of the mature supervisor, the professional I now am. My lifeworld has changed significantly from the time I was a provisional supervisor. In the interval, I have entered a long term relationship, moved from being a priest in the Roman Catholic church to being an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada, established a successful and respected career in the largest health care institution in Canada (University Health Network, Toronto), managing one of the largest Departments of Spiritual Care, and served a two year term as the national President of my professional association, the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care.

Carries out as stated and there is no deception involved

I have an interested interest in completing this study. My interest should not influence participant's decision to participate in this study. This study is not sponsored by any external agency. Participants should not feel pressured to join this study.

For degree/grant (personal benefit disclosure)

This research is being done as part of my dissertation for my Doctor of Ministry Degree at St. Stephen's College, Edmonton.

Method

You are being asked to participate in this research as an external resource for the provisional supervisor interview. You will be asked to read the transcript and offer your interpretation, comments, insights, etc. The purpose is to glean insights into my experience as a provisional supervisor from your experience, perspective, or expertise. I have chosen you because:

a. You are a faculty member at a major Canadian theological university
b. You are a person who is intelligent, purposefully thoughtful, curious, and explorative.
c. You possess a different understanding of the role of the official church and a different theological paradigm than the young Roman Catholic man. This could possibly lead to a different theological interpretation and understanding, moral understanding, and pastoral response, to the topic of sexual orientation than the young Roman Catholic man's understanding, experience, and interpretation.

Gathering Data

# of interviews, length of time, format, length, survey/conditions for return of document/
# of observations, length conditions of observation(s) use of audio/video recording equipment

I will send you the original transcript of the experience of self of the provisional supervisor, along with my notes containing insights, questions, and wonderings, along with the preliminary identification of themes. The purpose of the interviews with you is to glean additional and deeper insight and understanding of potential meaning units and themes, as such contribute to my own preliminary identification of such themes.

After the initial interview with you I will have the conversation transcribed and will continue the pre-reflective stage, with the goal of further identification of themes, deeper insights, both meaning and potential interpretation of themes or meaning from the conversation. I will have another interview with you and ask for further reflections, comments, insights, etc., regarding any emerging themes, possible meaning units, threads, possibly additional literature reviews, etc., to continue to reveal, deepen and thicken the meaning of the experiences of self. This means there may be three or four

interviews with you as I continue to identify themes and possible interpretations of the themes and meaning units. This process is the hermeneutic spiral

The interviews will be between 45-60 minutes, conducted face to face, audio taped and transcribed. There is no remuneration involved or gifts. The audio tapes will be kept in a locked cupboard in my office in the hospital. The transcripts of the interviews will be electronically stored on the network drive at the University Health Centre, Toronto, Ontario, where I work. The hospital has strong fire walls and privacy regulations, is password protected and the password is changed every three months. At the completion of the DMin program, all audio tapes and transcriptions will be destroyed and at no time will they be made public.

Verification/Review

Returning transcripts?
Returning synopses?
Checking observations?

The audio tapes of each interview will be transcribed by an independent transcriptionist. The audio tapes will be kept in a locked cupboard in my office in the hospital. The transcriptions will be kept electronically and filed on the hospital network drive, which is behind hospital firewalls. At the completion of the DMin program, all audio tapes and transcriptions will be destroyed.

After each interview with you I will have the conversation transcribed and will return to you to ask for you to confirm the accuracy of the transcript, ensuring that I have recorded our conversation accurately and you feel confident that I have heard you and recorded our conversation accurately. This process provides member checking and also builds trustworthiness of the data—demonstrating validity of this qualitative research.

Rights

To confidentiality
To opt out without penalty and data destroyed/returned and not included in the study
To copy of report?

If you agree to participate no identifying characteristics will be used, other than the descriptors given of the external resource in this letter above. You may withdraw or request to stop a particular interview at any time. If you choose to withdraw any transcripts or data pertaining to your participation will be destroyed. You may choose to reschedule any interview for another time.

At your request I will provide you with the pertinent sections of my final dissertation where I have drawn upon our conversations to inform, explore, and further elucidate my research question.

Other Uses

Articles/Presentations
Request must specify intended secondary research use
State the data will be handles under the same ethical provisions

Excerpts from the final dissertation may be used to write articles for professional publications, presentations at conferences, seminars, or workshops, and possible publication in book format. The data will be handled under the same ethical provisions as outlined for the writing of the dissertation.

Informed Consent

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact my academic advisor, Rev. Dr. Neil Elford, xxx@gmail.com or the Chair of St. Stephen's College Ethics Committee, via Nicole Beal, Executive Assistant to the Principal and Dean, xxx@ualberta.ca

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

I allow myself to be audio-recorded (according to the guidelines stated above, and mandatory for participation in the study) YES___ NO___

I allow myself to be quoted (according to the confidentiality guidelines stated above) YES___ NO____

Participant's signature_____
Date _____

Researcher's signature_____
Date _____

This is an example of the questions I will use with the external resources to facilitate the conversation and draw out further meaning and possible themes:

1. *At first glance or reflection, anything particular stand out to you about what the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor is saying?*
2. *Drawing upon your experience and expertise what do you hear as being critical, significant, painful, wounded, etc., for the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor?*
3. *Can you say more about that?*
4. *Can you identify any common themes, threads, or connections in what the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor is saying?*
5. *Any reflections that you wish to offer concerning what the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor is saying?*

Subsequent interview questions:

1. *Any initial thoughts, reactions, etc., from the transcript?*
2. *I have identified what I thought you were saying in the first interview regarding what the experience of self was saying. Have I captured your thoughts, comments, reflections?*
3. *I have begun to identify some common threads, themes, meaning units; do these make sense to you from what the experience of self talked about, given your particular expertise?*
4. *What are your thoughts about _____ (here I would name a particular theme, meaning unit, or knowledge from an additional literature review)?*

Appendix C

St. Stephen's College Informed Consent Letter External Resource

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Rev. Dr. Neil Elford, Academic Advisor (xxx@gmail.com)

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I have identified "experiences of self" for this research project. The three experiences are:

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For degree/grant (personal benefit disclosure)

This research is being done as part of my dissertation for my Doctor of Ministry Degree at St. Stephen's College, Edmonton.

Method

You are being asked to participate in this research as an external resource for the provisional supervisor interview. You will be asked to read the transcript and offer your interpretation, comments, insights, etc. The purpose is to glean insights into my experience as a provisional supervisor from your experience, perspective, or expertise. I have chosen you because:

a. Are a seasoned CPE teaching supervisor,
b. Have an understanding and appreciation for how your narrative is impacted and informed by social identity, theological backgrounds, and family of origin.
c. Possess the experience, knowledge, wisdom, and therapeutic awareness, to be able to offer an interpretation, insights, perspectives, etc., into what I uncover concerning my experience.

Gathering Data

# of interviews, length of time, format, length, survey/conditions for return of document/
# of observations, length conditions of observation(s) use of audio/video recording equipment

I will send you the original transcript of the experience of self of the provisional supervisor, along with my notes containing insights, questions, and wonderings, along with the preliminary identification of themes. The purpose of the interviews with you is to glean additional and deeper insight and understanding of potential meaning units and themes, as such contribute to my own preliminary identification of such themes.

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The interviews will be between 45-60 minutes, conducted face to face, audio taped and transcribed. There is no remuneration involved or gifts. The audio tapes will be kept in a locked cupboard in my office in the hospital. The transcripts of the interviews will be electronically stored on the network drive at the University Health Centre, Toronto, Ontario, where I work. The hospital has strong fire walls and privacy regulations, is password protected and the password is changed every three months. At the completion of the DMin program, all audio tapes and transcriptions will be destroyed and at no time will they be made public.

Verification/Review

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Other Uses

Articles/Presentations

Request must specify intended secondary research use
State the data will be handles under the same ethical provisions

Excerpts of the final dissertation may be used to write articles for professional publications, presentations at conferences, seminars, or workshops, and possible publication in book format. The data will be handled under the same ethical provisions as outlined for the writing of the dissertation.

Informed Consent

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact my academic advisor, Rev. Dr. Neil Elford, xxx@gmail.com or the Chair of St. Stephen's College Ethics Committee, via Nicole Beal, Executive Assistant to the Principal and Dean, xxx@ualberta.ca

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

I allow myself to be audio-recorded (according to the guidelines stated above, and mandatory for participation in the study) YES___ NO___

I allow myself to be quoted (according to the confidentiality guidelines stated above) YES___ NO____

Participant's signature_____
Date _____

Researcher's signature_____
Date _____

This is an example of the questions I will use with the external resources to facilitate the conversation and draw out further meaning and possible themes:

1. *At first glance or reflection, anything particular stand out to you about what the provisional supervisor/Roman Catholic man/mature supervisor is saying?*
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