

The lived experiences of spiritual identity development amongst adolescents

By

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This thesis is submitted in accordance with the requirements for the partial fulfilment of the degree Philosophiae Doctor in Child Psychology

In the

Department of Psychology

Faculty of the Humanities

At the

University of the Free State

Bloemfontein

Promoter: Professor Luzelle Naudé

February 2017

DECLARATION

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To whom it may concern

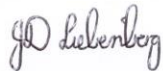
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**The lived experiences of spiritual identity development amongst
adolescents**

of

Tracy-Ann Smith,

for the partial fulfilment of the degree PhD in Child Psychology at the University of
the Free State



JD Liebenberg

2017-02-13

EDITORIAL STYLE

This thesis employs the editorial style of the American Psychological Association (APA) as detailed in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition). The thesis uses British English spelling, except for when direct quotes are used which may use South African and/or American English spelling.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My *sincere thanks* and gratitude is extended to the following in the completion of this research process:

- The 12 research participants included in this study as you made this process possible.
- My research promoter, Professor Luzelle Naudé, for her ongoing encouragement, guidance and patience.
- My course coordinator, Dr Ronel van der Watt, for her ongoing support and interest.
- The Department of Psychology at the University of the Free State for providing me with the opportunity to complete the PhD in Child Psychology.

- My colleagues and friends, Mrs Celeste Richards and Ms Sharon Aitken, for their assistance in the sampling process as well as their ongoing encouragement.

- My fiancé, Clint, for his ongoing encouragement and patience.
- My parents, Lily and Peter, for their ongoing support throughout the years.
- My brother, Michael, for his interest throughout the years.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to explore the lived experiences with regard to the spiritual identity development of a sample of South African adolescents. These lived experiences were explored considering how the adolescent participants perceived and experienced their spirituality, as well as how these meaning-making experiences contributed to their identity development.

Spiritual identity includes a stable and persistent sense of the self that addresses ultimate questions raised in the context of spirituality, namely on the nature, purpose and meaning of life. The existing theories of spiritual identity development propose contrasting ideas. Stage model theorists suggest that spiritual identity development is a process that parallels other developmental processes, including a process of meaning-making that increases in complexity as cognitive capacity increases. Other theorists suggest that spiritual identity development is a far more fluid process that evolves and grows in our connections and relationships with others, including relational and contextual factors. Further exploration into the development of spiritual identity is therefore indicated.

A qualitative phenomenological study was undertaken as it allowed for the preservation of the complexity of the data and the exploration of developmental processes. The sampling procedures included both purposive and snowball sampling. A total of 12 participants were included in this research. The sample comprised of male and female adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18 years. Participants from each of the year grades were selected due to developmental considerations. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews in the first phase of data collection and reflective writing exercises in the second phase of data collection. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was utilised and contributed to the identification of themes in the data set.

Themes emerging from the data set produced a narrative that described some of the developmental triggers associated with spiritual identity development. It also facilitated the illumination of factors and people that contributed to the spiritual identity development of the participants. The exploration and participation engaged in by the participants through the process of modelling contributed to commitments and sacrifices. The values of participants,

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associated with their spirituality, were also highlighted. A sense of purpose related to spirituality and spiritual identity was perceived and experienced by all of the participants.

The results obtained during the course of this research displayed consistencies with existing theories within this field. It was concluded that the participants included in this research demonstrated an elevated complexity in thinking with the increase in age and experience. Furthermore, the older and/or more cognitively advanced participants provided richer accounts of their experiences and were more focused on their spiritual identity development than the younger participants. It was concluded that no single theory can adequately conceptualise the spiritual development and spiritual identity development of adolescents due to the complex interplay between several factors and influences. This research study provides support for the discontinuous nature of spiritual identity development and indicates that it displays significant variability amongst a sample of South African participants.

KEYWORDS:

Spiritual identity development, South African adolescents, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

OPSOMMING

Die doel van die studie was om die lewende (beleefde) ervarings van 'n steekproef van Suid-Afrikaanse adolossente rakende die ontwikkeling van hul spirituele identiteit te ondersoek. Hierdie lewende ervarings is ondersoek deur die persepsies en ervarings van die proefpersone rondom spiritualiteit in aanmerking te neem. Daar is ook gekyk na hoe hierdie sin-skeppende ervarings tot identiteitsontwikkeling bygedra het.

Geestelike identiteit sluit 'n stabiele en aanhoudende gevoel van die self wat spreek uiteindelijke vrae geopper in die konteks van spiritualiteit, naamlik op die aard, doel en betekenis van die lewe. Die bestaande teorieë van spirituele identiteitsontwikkeling staan kontrasterende idees voor. Fase model teoretici suggereer dat spirituele identiteitsontwikkeling 'n proses is wat parallel tot ander ontwikkelingsprosesse loop. Dit sluit ook 'n proses van sin-skeppende ervarings in wat in kompleksiteit saam met kognitiewe kapasiteit toeneem. Sekere teoretici suggereer dat spirituele identiteit 'n meer vloeiende vormingsproses impliseer wat ontwikkel en groei binne ons konneksies en verhoudings met ander. Die proses sluit ook relasionele en kontekstuele faktore in. Verdere ondersoek na die ontwikkeling van spirituele identiteit word dus voorgehou.

'n Kwalitatiewe, fenomenologiese studie is onderneem omdat dit die preserving van die kompleksiteit van die data, tesame met die ondersoek van die ontwikkelingsproses, toelaat. Die steekproef procedure sluit doelbewuste en sneeubal steekproef-metodiek in. Altesaam 12 proefpersone is in die navorsing ingesluit. Die steekproef het uit manlike en vroulike adolossente tussen die ouderdomme van 14 en 18 jaar bestaan. Proefpersone is vanuit elke opvoedkundige graad geselekteer, gebaseer op ontwikkelings-oorwegings. Data is deur middel van semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude gedurende die eerste fase van die data-insameling bymekaargemaak. Tydens die tweede fase van die data-insameling is daar van reflektiewe skryf-oefeninge gebruik gemaak. Interpretatiewe fenomenologiese analise (IFA) is gebruik en het bygedra tot die identifisering van die temas in die datastel.

Temas wat uit die datastel na vore gekom het, het 'n narratiewe gebringe wat van die ontwikkelingsvrae, wat met spirituele identiteitsontwikkeling te doen het, beskryf het. Dit het ook die faktore en mense, wat tot die spirituele identiteitsontwikkeling by proefpersone gelei het, duidelik na vore laat tree. Die ondersoek (refleksie) en deelname van die

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proefpersone by wyse van die proses van modellering het bygedra tot hul verbintnisse en opofferings. Die waardes van proefpersone, wat met spiritualiteit geassosieer word, is ook belang in die navorsing. Al die deelnemers het na spiritualiteit en spirituele identiteit gestreef en dit ook so ervaar.

Die resultate wat gedurende die navorsing verkry is, spreek konsekwent tot die bestaande teorieë in hierdie veld. Daar is tot die gevolgtrekking gekom dat proefpersone in hierdie navorsing 'n verhoogde kompleksiteit in hulle denke ten toon gestel het wat met ouderdom en ervaring tesame verhoog. Ouer en/of meer kognitief gevorderde proefpersone het 'n ryker weergawe van hulle ervarings gegee en was meer gefokus op hul spirituele identiteitsontwikkeling as die jonger proefpersone. Die gevolgtrekking word gemaak dat geen enkel teorie spirituele ontwikkeling en spirituele identiteitsontwikkeling van adolossente kan konseptualiseer nie, as gevolg van die komplekse samespel tussen verskeie faktore en invloede. Die navorsing ondersteun die onderbroke aard van spirituele identiteitsontwikkeling en wys op die aansienlike variasie in die steekproef van Suid-Afrikaanse adolossente.

SLEUTELTERME:

Spirituele identiteitsontwikkeling, Suid-Afrikaanse adolossente, Interpretatiewe Fenomenologiese Analise

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Chapter 1: Context of the Study

*We are not human beings having a spiritual experience,
We are spiritual beings having a human experience*
(Teilhard de Chardin, 1993, p.138)

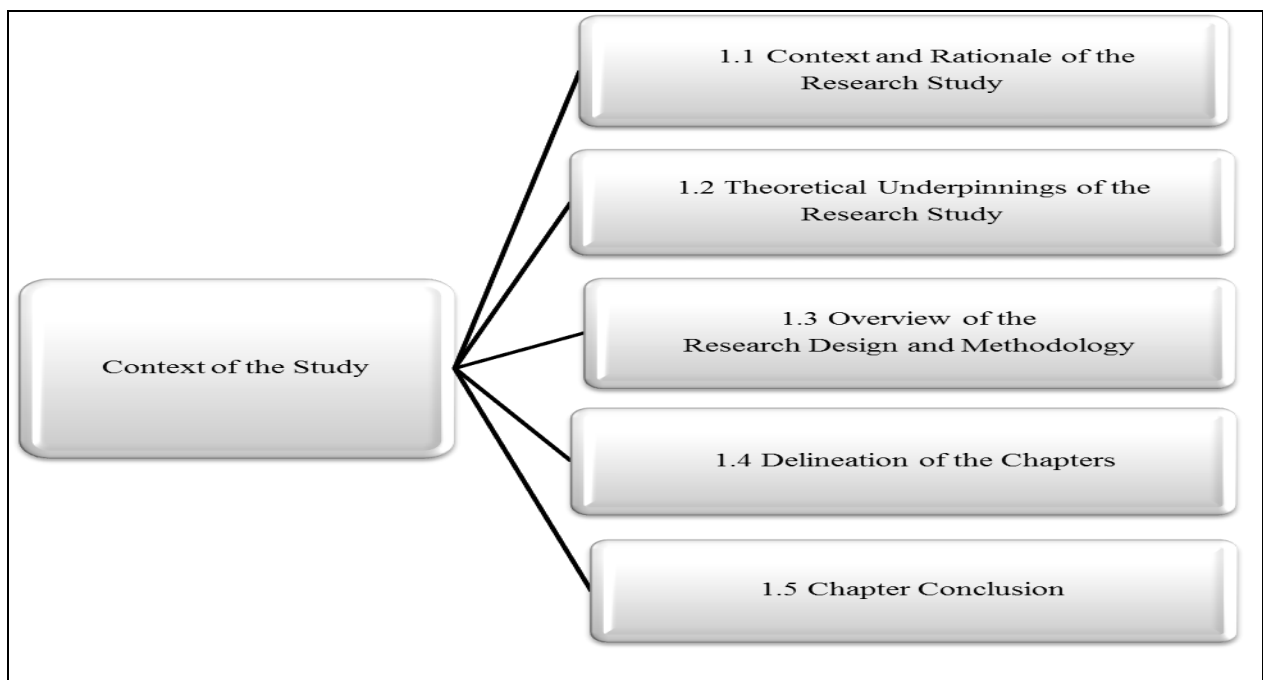


Figure 1 Visual outline of chapter 1: Context of the study

The chapter that follows provides a general orientation to this research study and an overview of what may be expected in subsequent chapters. The context and rationale of the research study are firstly provided. Thereafter, the theoretical underpinnings of the research study are outlined. It draws from the Lifespan Developmental Perspective and Identity Theory, with emphasis on spiritual identity development. An overview of the research design and methodology follows. Lastly, the chapters included in this research study are delineated.

1.1 Context and rationale of the research study

Adolescence is a developmental period during the human lifespan. It starts when an individual reaches puberty and ends when the individual attains physical, emotional and social maturity and enters into early adulthood (Arnett, 2010; Gentry & Campbell, 2002;

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Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003). This period is characterised by dramatic and accelerated changes in both the body and mind (Geidd, Keshaven, & Paus, 2008; Gentry & Campbell, 2002).

What is of particular interest of this developmental period is that individuals are reaching adolescence much earlier than a century or even a decade ago, contributing to the developmental period becoming longer. This has induced a need for prolonged research within this field (Arnett, 2010; Gentry & Campbell, 2002; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003). The study of adolescence has therefore received extensive attention in the literature and specific aspects associated with this developmental period, are becoming more familiar.

Identity development is one of the phenomena extensively researched (Arnett, 2010; Cooper et al., 2003; Louw & Louw, 2014; Ray & Mcfadden, 2001). Individuals search for, and explore, various elements of identity. This leads to the establishment of a potentially tenacious commitment to a subset of the identity alternatives (Erikson, 1968, 1974; King, 2003; Luyckx, Goossens, & Soenens, 2006; Marcia, 1980). Subsets of identity include, but are not limited to, ethnicity, gender and spirituality. According to prominent theorists, such as Erik Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) and James Marcia (1966, 1980), identity exploration and commitment is typically initiated during the adolescent years and extends into adulthood.

Spiritual identity development during adolescent years has also been investigated (Erikson, 1956, 1959, 1968, 1974; Granqvist & Dickie, 2005; Marcia, 1966, 1980; Poll & Smith, 2003). Spiritual identity is defined as a stable and persistent sense of the self that addresses ultimate questions raised in the context of spirituality, namely on the nature, purpose and meaning of life (Fisherman, 2004; Kiesling et al., 2006; Love & Talbot, 1999; Poll & Smith, 2003). Spiritual identity is intricately intertwined with religiousness, which includes the manifestations of spirituality such as engagement in rituals and religious traditions. Considerable overlap therefore exists between the concepts associated with spirituality, spiritual identity, religiousness and religious identity.

The present theories on spiritual identity development appear to differ from past spiritual identity development theories (Good & Willoughby, 2006). However, research demonstrated that adolescence is particularly sensitive for the development of spiritual identity. This is due

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to the significant development taking place within the physical, cognitive, moral and psycho-social domains of development (Benson, 2004; Good & Willoughby, 2008; Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2013). The development of cognitive capacity during adolescence and the impact on identity and spiritual development has been the topic of significant enquiry (Cartwright, 2001; Steinberg, 2005). Research consistently demonstrated that a positive correlation exists between spiritual identity and increased well-being, resilience and coping (King & Furrow, 2008; Moore & Lippman, 2005). Research also demonstrated that adolescents with a more integrated spiritual identity are less likely to engage in some of the risk-taking and impulsive behaviours that often accompany adolescence (Cooper et al., 2003; Molock, Puri, Matlin, & Barksdale, 2006). Spiritual identity has therefore been conceptualised as being a developmental asset (Lerner & Alberts, 2005).

The exploration of how a sample of adolescent participants conceptualise and integrate their spiritual identities may contribute to an understanding of spiritual identity development during the adolescent years. This study therefore aims to explore certain experiences of a sample of South African adolescents in relation to spiritual identity development during these years. The lived experiences with regards to how adolescent participants perceive and experience their spirituality will be central. The manner in which spirituality will be positioned in developmental theory with adolescent participants will be explored. Furthermore, specific attention will be given to how the adolescent participants construct meaning from experiences regarding their spiritual identity and how these experiences contribute to identity development during the adolescent years. Finally, the nuances across age may be documented and explored.

1.2 Theoretical perspectives underpinning the research study

The theoretical perspectives underpinning this research study which form the theoretical framework include the Lifespan Development Perspective and Identity Theory.

The Lifespan Development Perspective explores the patterns of growth, stability in behaviour and the changes in behaviour that occur throughout the entire life span (Baltes, 1987; Baltes, Staudinger & Lindenberger, 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). It postulates that the lifecycle of the individual is central. The focus falls on the sequential mastery of skills, tasks and abilities. Various functional, theoretical and

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methodological principles on the nature of development are combined by this perspective to view behavioural development as a life-long process. The Lifespan Developmental Perspective is therefore not confined to a single theory, but rather provides a theoretical perspective.

Adolescence pertains to one developmental period. Development in the physical, cognitive and psycho-social domains is explored with the aim to obtain knowledge about the general principles involved in adolescent development, the inter-individual similarities and differences observed in development, as well as the degree and conditions associated with the variability observed in development (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). The significance of these general principles in adolescent development is embedded in the patterns that emerge rather than in apparent individual aspects.

The relative stability experienced in childhood is disrupted as individuals enter puberty, indicating the beginning of early adolescence (11 to 14 years), which is followed by mid-adolescence (15 to 18 years) and late adolescence (18 to 24 years) (Louw & Louw, 2014). Adolescence is characterised by the heightening of emotions and fluctuations in mood, the introduction of formal operational thinking and the prominence of the peer group. The developmental tasks associated with adolescence reflect values and beliefs assumed during childhood, which lead to a more stable sense of identity during these years (Louw & Louw, 2014).

According to Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974), the concept of a mature ego identity is also central in the Lifespan Developmental Perspective. Ego identity involves a complex sense of the self that includes aspects of individual personality and societally defined roles. The psycho-social crisis, pertaining to identity, that characterises adolescence is considered normative. It is associated with negotiating issues of sameness and historical continuity, resulting in the link between the individual and the larger society. While Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) initially used the term *identity diffusion*, he later used the term *identity confusion* to refer to this psycho-social crisis. *Identity confusion* therefore describes the mild confusion that characterises adolescence during the process of identity development.

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Following from the work of Erikson, Marcia (1966, 1980) explored identity development and further developed the concept of identity confusion. Marcia (1966, 1980) stated that identity confusion occurs if adolescents do not experience a psycho-social crisis involving identity. The former may be due to the lack of commitment to occupational and/or ideological goals, and tend not to be concerned about the situation. Marcia (1966, 1980) also understood identity as involving an ongoing developmental process and suggested that identity development includes two processes, namely exploration and commitment. Marcia (1966, 1980) postulated that the varying degrees of exploration and commitment present may determine the status of identity development. He therefore elaborated on and further refined Erikson's work by describing the key identity concepts of exploration and commitment as interrelating processes in all domains of identity development.

Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) and Marcia (1966, 1980) both recognised spirituality as an important dimension of identity development. As lifespan developmental identity theorists, both postulated that spiritual identity forms one of several components included in an individual's ego identity. They described spirituality as providing structure to the self and explained that spirituality promotes outcomes consistent with the other dimensions of identity (Kiesling & Sorell, 2009).

From the examination of the literature, it became apparent that Erikson's (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) Lifespan Psycho-Social Theory and Marcia's (1966, 1980) Model of Identity Statuses serve as dominant theoretical and conceptual frameworks when studying identity and spirituality. These theories include the primary catalysts for extensive research and theoretical work on identity development in general. Consequently, both theories are valuable for illuminating the role of spirituality in identity development. Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) and Marcia (1966, 1980) offer a status perspective to understanding spiritual identity development. A key component to healthy identity development according to a status perspective includes a process of exploration and commitment. These processes are characterised by thought about, and reflection on, experiences and options in life.

Narrative theories of identity development therefore also become central, because identity includes a life-story (McLean & Pratt, 2006). Experiences and perceptions of the self tend to be captured and understood in stories to provide a meaningful narrative that is accepted in one's culture and society. The narrative perspective is particularly well suited to the study of

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spiritual identity development as individuals possess a narrative mode of thought (McLean & Pratt, 2006).

Identity theorists suggest that spiritual identity is one of the many components of an individual's ego identity. Spirituality provides structure to the self and also promotes outcomes consistent with the other domains of identity (Kiesling & Sorell, 2009). Consequently, spiritual identity remains a unique domain of identity development. As with the other domains of development, spirituality forms an important source of unique differences that are established across development (King & Roeser, 2009).

1.3 Overview of the research design and methods

This study aimed to explore the experiences of a sample of South African adolescents in relation to their spiritual identity. A qualitative, phenomenological approach was followed as it allowed for the preservation of the complexity of the data and the exploration of developmental processes. Qualitative research is characterised by openness and flexibility; thereby allowing for adaption as the research process unfolds (Parker, 2004; Struwig & Stead, 2001; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) is focused on the exploration of the phenomenon under investigation. It aims to gain understanding into both individual and contextual factors; thereby understanding the meaning associated with the phenomenon (Hein & Austin, 2001; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008).

The sampling procedures included both purposive sampling and snowball sampling. These sampling procedures assisted the researcher in selecting participants with consideration to sample criteria based on age, gender, school grade and English language proficiency. A total of 12 participants were included in this research study and included male and female adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18 years. Participants from each of the year grades were selected based on developmental considerations.

The data were collected using two data collection methods, namely semi-structured interviews and reflective writing exercises. Semi-structured interviews are frequently used within IPA studies, because they allow participants and researchers to engage in active dialogue about the phenomenon under investigation (Gibson & Brown, 2009; Potter &

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Hepburn, 2005; Rabionet, 2011). The semi-structured interviews were used in the first phase of data collection. It was hypothesised that it would sensitise the participants to the research study and would allow the researcher to gain a rich understanding of the unique contexts associated with each of the participants and their spiritual identities. Reflection suggests that participants are required to examine the manner in which they may respond in a given situation. It may also challenge the participant to become increasingly aware of their own attitudes and assumptions with regard to the specific topic (Boud, 2001; Ruland & Ahern, 2007). Reflective writing exercises were therefore used in the second phase of data collection, which took place 3 months after the semi-structured interviews. The reflective writing exercises provided a second channel through which the participants could express themselves and was used to increase the depth in this study.

The data was analysed and interpreted through the process of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). The phenomenological component associated with IPA extensively describes the participant's central concerns and ideas in the form of experiences reported to the researcher. The interpretative component associated with IPA provides context to these experiences while considering their cultural and physical environments. In this process there is the endeavour to making sense of the constitutive relationship between the participant and their world from within a psychological framework (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006; Laverly, 2003).

The analysis of the qualitative data collected in this study is based on interpretation. The credibility and truthfulness of the interpretation was therefore central (Morrow, 2005; Stiles, 1993; Walsh & Downe, 2006). As this study was qualitative, the criteria associated with trustworthiness were applied. It includes credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Denzin, Lincoln, & Giardina, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Furthermore, ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research, its design and the subsequent data collection and analysis process. The ethical guidelines proposed by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2010) and the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA, 2008) were adhered to in this study.

1.4 Delineation of the chapters

The current chapter provides a general orientation to the research study. The context and rationale associated with this study are provided within this chapter. The theoretical underpinnings that were used to theoretically ground this study is visually portrayed in the framework used for this study. An overview of the research design and the methods used is also provided to orientate the reader.

The literature review was divided into three chapters. Chapter 2 aimed to contextualise adolescence. The Lifespan Developmental Perspective was further explored, because it contributes to an understanding of the development that takes place during adolescence. Adolescence was defined to provide a working definition associated with this developmental period. This chapter also highlighted the developmental tasks associated with adolescence. The development taking place within the physical, cognitive and moral, as well as the psycho-social domains of development was reviewed. Identity development was then discussed in more depth to establish a working definition and some of the dimensions associated with identity were considered. Identity development was explored thereafter according to both the status and narrative perspectives.

Chapter 3 explored spiritual development in greater detail. Definitions on religiousness, spirituality and spiritual development were provided. Spiritual development was described using different psychological lenses, including psycho-analytic, developmental stage and the developmental systems theories. The architecture of spiritual development considers the commonalities amongst ideas included in each of the theories reviewed.

Chapter 4 explored spiritual identity in more depth. Spiritual identity was firstly defined. Spiritual identity was then discussed in association with adolescence, because this is a particularly sensitive period for the development of a spiritual identity. Spiritual identity development was discussed within the Lifespan Developmental Theory and as a distinct domain of identity development. Marcia's (1966, 1980) Status Model was used to describe the characteristics associated with an achieved spiritual identity. A more integrative model of spiritual identity development was provided. Therein the basic foundations that characterise a spiritual identity were reflected on.

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Research methodology was described in greater detail in Chapter 5. The research rationale, aim and purpose were provided. The research design, methodology and approach were described thereafter. Sampling procedures and participants included in this study were discussed next. Data collection was consequently reflected upon, based on semi-structured interviews and reflective writing exercises. The data analysis and the use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was then reflected upon. The trustworthiness associated with this study was discussed thereafter. Finally, ethical considerations adhered to during the study were reflected upon.

The results obtained during this research were presented in Chapter 6. A narrative of the research results was provided. The themes and sub-themes that emerged during the study were firstly captured in a table and presented and illustrated thereafter by means of direct quotes from the research participants.

Chapter 7 included the discussion of the results. The discussion returned to the research aim and purpose with the results deliberated upon in relation to the relevant theory.

The final chapter was the conclusion in Chapter 8. This chapter captured the essence of this research. Limitations associated with this study were considered. Recommendations regarding future research were also provided.

1.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter aimed at providing a general orientation to the research study. The context and rationale of the research were provided and the aims thereof stated. The theoretical framework included in this research draws from the Lifespan Developmental Perspective and Identity Theory. Prominent identity theorists, such as Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) and Marcia (1966, 1980) from the status perspective, and McLean and Pratt (2006) from the narrative perspective, were included in the theoretical framework. Ideas expressed in these perspectives assisted in understanding and further interpreting the research results. The research design and methodology included a qualitative interpretative phenomenological analysis, which utilised purposive and snowball sampling to obtain a sample of 12 adolescent participants. The data collection methods, which included semi-structured interviews and reflective writing exercises, produced rich and extensive descriptions of the phenomenon

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under investigation. The delineation of the chapters introduced the chapters that follow in subsequent sections. The following chapter reviews the nature of adolescence.

Chapter 2: The Nature of Adolescence

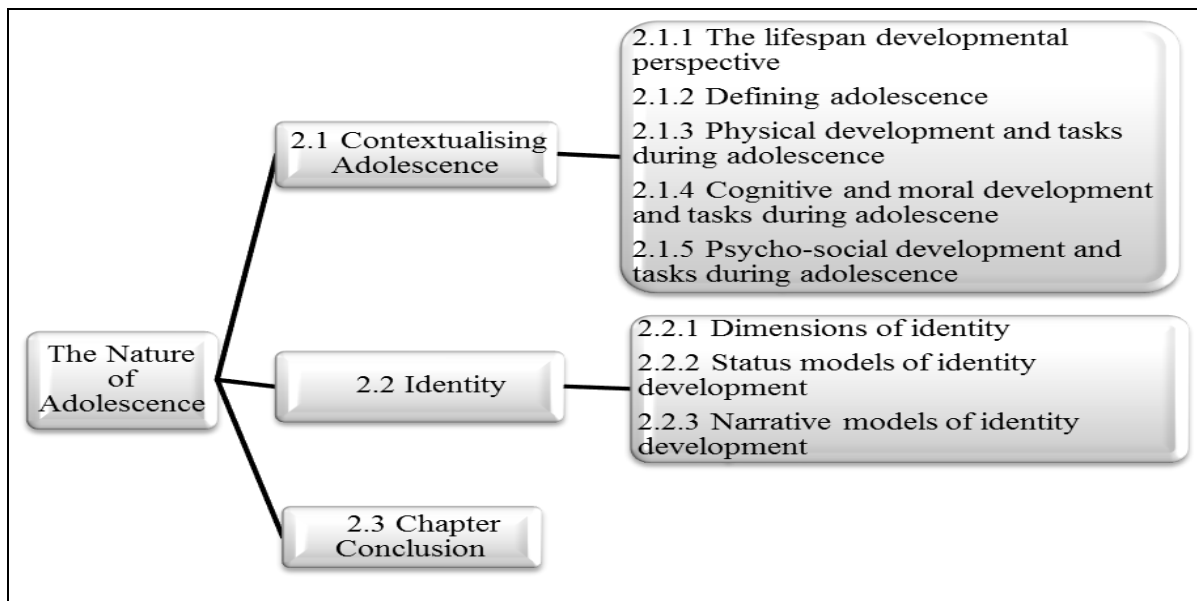


Figure 2 Visual outline of chapter 2: The nature of adolescence

The context of the study, provided in the previous chapter, introduced the general orientation to this research. The chapter that follows focuses more specifically on adolescence and identity development. The chapter aims to introduce the Lifespan Developmental Perspective with a description and definition of some of the essential concepts located within adolescent development. Adolescence is then defined. It is followed by a review of the significant developments and tasks associated with the physical, cognitive and moral, as well as psycho-social dimensions during adolescence. Identity is thereafter defined together with a review of some of the dimensions associated with identity. Identity development is considered in relation to status and narrative models. This chapter therefore aims to contextualise the nature of adolescence and identity development. It thereby provides a foundation upon which the subsequent chapters are built.

2.1 Contextualising adolescence

Adolescents living within the South African context encounter some unique challenges due to the transformation and instability that characterises the country (Alberts, Mbalo &

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Ackerman, 2003). Poverty, HIV/AIDS, violent crime, parental unemployment, and a general lack of resources affect the adolescent population across all racial boundaries. South African adolescents therefore find themselves in a precarious situation as they are required to adapt to the changing social circumstances that confront them while still negotiating their own identities. While the impact of the aforementioned challenges remains constant, the contextualisation of adolescence here, will be focused on the development that takes place within the physical, cognitive and psycho-social domains.

2.1.1 The lifespan developmental perspective. The Lifespan Developmental Perspective explores developmental patterns, changes and consistencies of growth throughout the lifespan (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Kiesling & Sorell, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). This perspective is particularly useful with the conceptualisation of a developmental period, namely adolescence, which is characterised by dramatic and accelerated changes in both body and mind. The Lifespan Developmental Perspective includes a number of propositions, which are represented below in Figure 3.

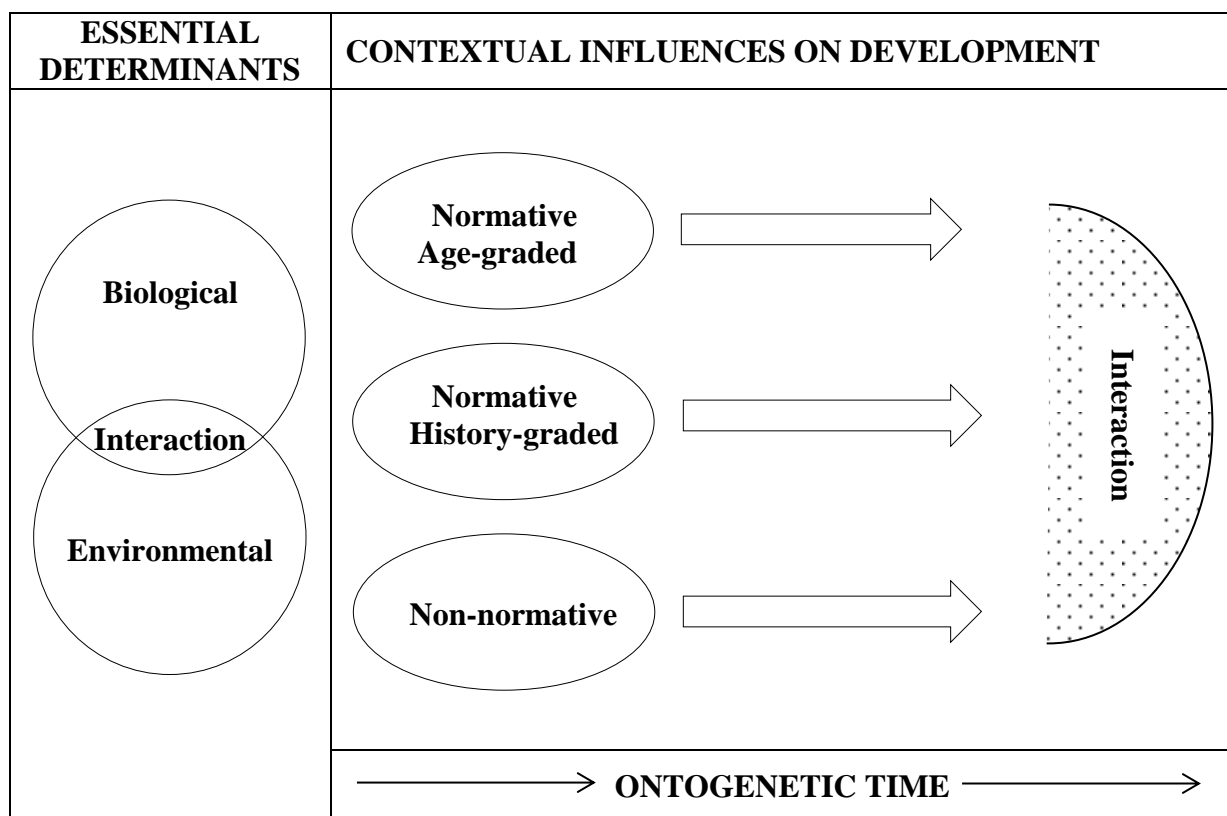


Figure 3 Lifespan development: Essential determinants and contextual influences

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Ontogenesis is a central concept in life-span development and describes the chronological unfolding of human development. The latter includes both changes in size and complexity, as well as the differentiation of function (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). Ontogenetic development is a life-long process as both continuous and discontinuous proceedings are present. Stages associated with the Lifespan Developmental Perspective are all considered equally significant in the progression of development. No specific developmental stage is therefore considered to be more important than another.

Lifespan development is characterised by processes of change with significant variability (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). Development within the same domain, and/or within the same developmental period, may be characterised by i) increases, ii) gain and growth and decreases, iii) loss and iv) decline in levels of functioning (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). Development is therefore not a simple movement towards higher ability. Furthermore, developmental patterns may differ with regard to timing, direction and order. Multi-directionality is also associated with multi-dimensionality, because systems of abilities are considered in combination. The dynamic interplay between various sub-systems is thus gauged.

Development is also characterised by intra-individual variability (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). Individual life experiences, events and circumstances may result in various developmental trajectories. Lifespan development may vary significantly, based on individual historical-cultural circumstances (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). Developmental trajectories are significantly influenced by the socio-cultural environment that is present during a specific historical period, together with how historical periods change over time. The concept, historical embeddedness, thus considers the relationship between individual and evolutionary development. Individual development results from the interaction amongst three influences that are at work throughout the life-span. They are causal to the variability observed in development (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). These influences are age-graded, history-graded and non-normative influences.

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Age-graded influences entail biological and environmental determinants. These influences are fairly predictable, because they are closely associated with chronological age. Age-graded influences are similar in their direction for most individuals and they explain the developmental similarities observed between individuals. History-graded influences consist of biological and environmental determinants that are associated with historical time. They describe development in conjunction with larger evolutionary, bio-cultural contexts. Non-normative influences include biological and environmental determinants that typically do not follow a predictable course. They are therefore not relevant to all individuals. These former influences describe idiosyncratic development.

Lifespan development includes various stages of development and/or developmental periods. Adolescence is one such stage and forms the focus in this research. Adolescence is defined according to the Lifespan Developmental Perspective in section 2.1.2.

2.1.2 Defining adolescence. Adolescence is a complex stage of human development, characterised by some common features, but also involving numerous individual differences (Arnett, 1999, 2000, 2010; Meeus, Iedema, Helsen, & Vollebergh, 1999; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003). The term “adolescence” itself, which was derived from Latin, may be translated directly into “grow to adulthood”. It is described as the stage of development that occurs between childhood and adulthood (Arnett, 2010; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003).

Adolescence usually begins at between 11 and 13 years of age and ends between the ages of 17 and 21 years (Gentry & Campbell, 2002; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003). Due to the multitude of transitions prevalent within the adolescent period, this period is divided into early adolescence (11 to 14 years), middle adolescence (14 to 18 years) and late adolescence (18 to 21 years) (Louw & Louw, 2014). The onset of adolescence is characterised by the beginning of puberty when sexual maturation begins. However, the ending of adolescence has far less obvious physical characteristics. It is typically marked by the emergence of more clearly defined social roles and a more stable and consistent sense of identity. The laws of a particular country may also demarcate the ending of adolescence. Furthermore, socio-cultural norms may vary for different groups of individuals, also impacting on when it may be said that adolescence has come to an end. Adolescence may thus be defined in terms of specific physical and psychological

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characteristics as well as socio-cultural norms; rather than by only chronological age (Arnett, 2010; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003).

Adolescence is generally accepted as a time of transition in which both internal and external pressures propel the adolescent from childhood to maturity. Although a vast body of literature exists regarding adolescence, two classical approaches in the field of psychology provide an explanation for the transitional process that characterises adolescence. These include the psychoanalytical and the sociological approaches (Arnett, 1999, 2000, 2010; Coleman, 2011; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003).

The psychoanalytical approach focuses primarily on the psycho-sexual development of the individual during adolescence. It concentrates on the process occurring in the adolescent when moving away from childhood behaviour as well as emotional involvement (Lerner & Steinberg, 2009; Steinberg, 2001; Tummala-Narra, 2009). In contrast, the sociological approach focuses primarily on the role of the social setting of the adolescent in the transition during adolescence (Lerner & Steinberg, 2009; Steinberg, 2001; Tummala-Narra, 2009). This approach focuses on the roles and role conflict, the pressures experienced as a result of social expectations and the influence of different agents of socialisation.

Irrespective of the approach adopted to explain the transition from childhood to maturity, it is widely accepted that this stage of human development has specific developmental tasks. The developmental tasks associated with adolescence include the achievement of biological and sexual maturation, the development of personal identity, the establishment of independence and autonomy within the context of the sociocultural environment and the development of intimate relationships with appropriate peers (Arnett, 1999, 2000, 2010; Coleman, 2011; Lerner & Steinberg, 2009; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003).

2.1.3 Physical development and tasks during adolescence. The physical development associated with adolescence is sparked by puberty and is characterised by a growth spurt and sexual maturation (Gentry & Campbell, 2002; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003). While the physical tasks that take place are largely predictable, there is considerable variability in the age of onset of puberty and the pace at which tasks take place. Several factors affect the onset and progression of puberty, including genetic and biological influences, stressful life

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events, socio-economic status, nutrition and diet, the percentage of body fat present and the general health of the adolescent (Gentry & Campbell, 2002). Irrespective of the timing of the physical changes, this is a period in which physical appearance is of paramount importance. Table 1 summarises the physical development that takes place during adolescence (Gentry & Campbell, 2002; Louw & Louw, 2014; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003):

Table 1

Physical Development during Adolescence

Stage	Males	Females
Early adolescence	Testicular enlargement	Breast development starts
	Genital growth starts	Pubic hair development
		Growth spurt starts
Middle adolescence	Spermarche	Menarche starts
	Nocturnal emissions	Female body shape develops
	Voice breaks	Growth spurt ends for some
	Growth spurt starts	
Late adolescence	End of puberty	End of puberty
	Muscle bulk increases	Growth spurt ends for others
	Hair growth continues	

Brain development during adolescence is significant and is characterised by the fundamental reorganisation of the brain (Konrad, Firk, & Uhlhaas, 2013; Steinberg, 2005; Sternberg, 2003). During adolescence, there is an elimination of many synapses, an increase in white matter and changes in the neurotransmitter systems. The cortical areas, associated with sensory and memory tasks, mature earlier than brain areas such as the pre-frontal cortex. The pre-frontal cortex is responsible for higher cognitive functions such as

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planning, behavioural control and the assessment of risk. An imbalance between the more mature sub-cortical areas and the less mature pre-frontal areas therefore occurs. This imbalance contributes to the heightened activity in limbic areas in emotional situations. It also increases the tendency to engage in risk-taking behaviours which is characteristic of adolescence (Konrad, et al., 2013; Steinberg, 2005; Sternberg, 2003).

The reorganisation of the cortical circuits during adolescence is reflected in the changes in cognitive functioning and affect regulation that characterise adolescence. It implies that the frontal brain regions have a more pronounced influence on cognitive and affective processes (Konrad et al., 2013; Steinberg, 2005; Sternberg, 2003). However, structural neurobiological maturation is not the sole determinant of the development in cognitive and affective neural circuits. A strong interaction presents between genetic factors and environmental demands. A new phase of plasticity occurs during adolescence during which environmental factors may have significant effects on the cortical circuitry. The enduring changes during adolescence at a biological and a psychological level therefore exert a mighty influence on cerebral structure and functioning. The physical tasks and significant brain development taking place during adolescence are also closely associated with the cognitive and psychological development in this phase.

2.1.4 Cognitive and moral development and tasks during adolescence. The development taking place in the adolescent's cognition may sometimes be even more dramatic than the physical development that occurs (Gentry & Campbell, 2002). Although variability also exists here, the new cognitive capacities emerging during adolescence allow them to engage in the kind of introspection and mature decision-making that was previously beyond their cognitive capacity. The core of adolescent cognitive development includes the attainment of a more fully conscious, self-directed and self-regulatory mind (Konrad et al., 2013; Steinberg, 2005; Sternberg, 2003).

Cognitive development during adolescence was described extensively in the work of Jean Piaget. He proposed a model of cognitive development to explain the mechanisms and processes through which an individual is able to reason and hypothesise (Louw & Louw, 2014). Piaget described cognitive development as a progressive reorganisation of mental processes due to biological maturation and the environmental experiences with an individual's move from infancy to adulthood (Louw & Louw, 2014). Piaget explained that

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children initially construct an understanding of the world around them based on the abilities available at that time. Due to maturation and experience, discrepancies between what is known and new discoveries, become apparent. This instigates further development.

Piaget proposed four stages in cognitive development. He explained that through adaptation, the individual is able to move successfully through these stages (Steinberg, 2005). The stages include the sensori-motor stage (newborn to 2 years), the pre-operational stage (2 to 7 years), the concrete operational stage (7 to 11 years) and finally, the formal operational stage (11 years onwards). Table 2 summaries the four stages proposed by Piaget as well as the characteristics associated with each of these stages (Louw & Louw, 2014; Salkind, 2004):

Table 2

Summary of Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

Stage	Characteristics
Sensori-motor Newborn to 2 years	Learning through action Sensory experiences most prominent Primitive understanding of cause-and-effect Object permanence by 9 months
Pre-operational 2 to 7 years	Language and symbols are used Egocentrism present Conservation begins
Concrete operational 7 to 11 years	Conservation continues Understanding of reversibility and serial ordering Mature understanding of cause-and-effect Thinking is concrete
Formal operational 11 years onwards	Abstract thought Metacognition Problem-solving Hypothetic-deductive reasoning

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While each stage of development is characterised by specific cognitive abilities, the formal operational stage is prominent during the adolescent period (Steinberg, 2005). This stage is characterised by the ability to manipulate ideas, to manage contradiction as well as to manage the logic associated with combinations and alternatives. Adolescent thinking is also characterised by sensitivity towards others. The sensitivity to social-affective stimuli and the flexibility with goal priorities, optimally position the adolescent for the psychosocial development necessary to enter into adulthood.

Cognitive development during adolescence is characterised by the ability to think about abstract thoughts. Consequently, possible outcomes are considered as well as the consequences of actions and behaviours (Cartwright, 2001; Geidd et al., 2008; Luyckx et al., 2006). Meta-cognition also becomes possible and allows individuals to reflect on their thoughts (Cartwright, 2001; Geidd et al., 2008; Luyckx et al., 2006). This ability makes it possible for individuals to consider their thought processes and monitor these accordingly. Such changes allow adolescents to generate and consider hypotheses about unfamiliar ideas and/or situations.

A future orientation develops in adolescents which enables them to consider themselves in different roles, debate with peers about moral issues and consider problems which may be affecting the world at a broader scale. As their ability for abstract thought continues to develop, so too does their ability to consider complex questions, such as aspects of spirituality (Cartwright, 2001; Visser-Vogel et al., 2012).

Adolescents' ability to reason deductively increases, resulting in a heightened ability to systematically test their hypotheses about complex issues. It also enables them to form conclusions resulting from the outcomes observed and/or experienced (Good & Willoughby, 2006). Due to the development of the adolescents' metacognitive orientation, they are able to reflect on, and evaluate, their own ideas as well as those presented to them by others. The capacity to consider multiple perspectives thus develops during adolescence. Multiple perspectives may be contextualised in terms of the source of the information received (Volling, Mahoney & Rauer, 2009).

In sum, cognitive development during adolescence is characterised by an increased capacity to engage in abstract thought, a heightened capacity for metacognition, an

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expanded capacity for problem-solving and the ability to engage in hypothetic-deductive reasoning.

Neo-Piagetian theorists have used Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development as a foundation and proposed that a fifth stage of cognitive development emerges beyond the formal operational stage (Sternberg, 2003). This fifth stage, referred to as the post-formal stage of cognitive development, may influence cognitive developmental changes in adulthood (Cartwright, 2001; Poll & Smith, 2003). Theorists, such as Patricia Arlin (1975) and Diedre Kramer (1983), characterised the post-formal stage with problem-finding and dialectical thinking. Post-formal thinking includes the ability to mentally manipulate the inconsistencies recognised in everyday situations; thereby allowing individuals to consider and choose alternatives (Sternberg, 2003). Alternatives may also be considered in terms of the socio-cultural context in which decisions are made.

The swiftly developing capacity for higher level thinking that characterises adolescence also lays the foundation for moral development (Gentry & Campbell, 2002). Moral development includes the development of a personal value system and processes such as moral reasoning, honesty and prosocial behaviour. The work of Lawrence Kohlberg (1969, 1981) is significant in understanding moral development during adolescence.

According to Kohlberg, moral reasoning and judgment develop along three levels, relating to Piaget's stages of cognitive development (Steinberg, 2005). While the moral development levels may only be attained when the individual has reached specific stages of cognitive development, the presence of specific cognitive abilities does not always assure that specific levels of moral development will be achieved. Kohlberg (1969, 1981) also proposed that levels could not be bypassed. If they are attained, it would be successively. According to Kohlberg and Hersh (1977), moral development represents the transformations that occur in the individual's form or structure of thought. Moral development does not necessarily include an increase in the content of thinking. It rather refers to the qualitative transformation in the form of the adolescent's thinking and/or behaviour.

Moral development levels proposed by Kohlberg (1969, 1981) include the pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional level. Table 3 includes the

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aforementioned levels of moral development as well as their corresponding stages and characteristics (Steinberg, 2005):

Table 3

Summary of Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development

Level	Stage	Characteristics
Pre-conventional level	Stage 1: Heteronomous morality	Characteristic of middle childhood Conform with rules to avoid punishment and receive rewards
	Stage 2: Individualistic morality	
Conventional level	Stage 3: Morality of interpersonal expectations, relationships and conformity	Possible during adolescence Conform to social order Conform to expectations of others Moral standards controlled externally
	Stage 4: Morality of social systems and conscience	Loyal to social order Moral duty to uphold social norms Judgements according to motive
Post-conventional level	Stage 5: Morality of social contract, usefulness and individual rights	Highest level of moral development Defines and internalises values and principles Personal moral code
	Stage 6: Morality of universal ethical principles	Moral principles considered abstractly

Moral development during adolescence is typically characterised by conventional morality (Kohlberg, 1969, 1981; Steinberg, 2005). The moral standards of role models are often internalised. Group norms and a sense of belonging are paramount. Moral reasoning is centred on these group norms and is motivated by the possibility of approval from others. As the peer group becomes increasingly important and exposure to various contexts broadens, the adolescent's experience and awareness of social order and law increases, in this process, it is attributed greater significance (Kohlberg, 1969, 1981; Steinberg, 2005).

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2.1.5 Psycho-social development and tasks during adolescence. Development during the adolescent years is intricately intertwined, with physical, cognitive, psychological and social levels having a bi-directional impact (Arnett, 1999, 2000, 2010; Gentry & Campbell, 2002; Louw & Louw, 2014; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003). Table 4 summarises the tasks taking place at a psychological and social level. It also distinguishes between the development taking place during early, middle and late adolescence (Arnett, 1999, 2000, 2010; Gentry & Campbell, 2002; Louw & Louw, 2014; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003):

Table 4

Psycho-social Development during Adolescence

Stage	Psychological Tasks	Social Tasks
Early adolescence	Concrete thinking is apparent Early moral concepts exist Progression of sexual identity development Progression of sexual orientation Reassessment of body image	Emotional separation from parents and start of strong peer group identification Exploratory behaviours start
Middle adolescence	Abstract thinking develops Verbal abilities increase Identification of law and morality Specific ideologies exist	Continued peer group identification Risk-taking behaviours emerge Romantic interest in others Early vocational plans
Late adolescence	Complex abstract thinking develops Identification of difference between law and morality exists Impulse control increases Personal identity is further developed Religious and political ideology is further developed Changes in physical appearance tend to be accepted	Social autonomy develops Intimate relationships are prominent Vocational capacity develops Financial independence is a goal

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The psycho-social development during adolescence is extensive and tasks taking place are numerous as illustrated in Table 4. This development, in combination with the biological and cognitive development, contributes to the growing need for autonomy and independence (Louw & Louw, 2014). Cognitive autonomy is portrayed by the adolescent wanting to make their own decisions and in most instances, also needing to assume responsibility for the decisions that were made. Behavioural autonomy is closely associated with cognitive autonomy and is often seen in the adolescent exercising their decisions in their friendship choices and their selection of leisure activities. Emotional autonomy is demonstrated by the adolescent's ability to exercise self-control and self-reliance and the desire to be independent from parents and other caregivers. Autonomy is also seen in the adolescent's will to form their own value system that will serve as a guideline for current and future behaviour. This growing need for autonomy propels adolescents into awareness of themselves as independent and unique individuals. It consequently facilitates the development of personal identity.

2.2 Identity

Identity development during adolescence is a crucial component of intrapersonal development (Erikson, 1968, 1974; King, 2003; Marcia, 1980). The discovery of the self, as a phenomenon of the adolescent years, has received extensive attention within the field of psychology. This research specifically focused on the discovery of the self (Arnett, 1999, 2000, 2010; Bertram-Troost, de Roos, & Miedema, 2007; Fisherman, 2004; Meeus et al., 1999; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003; Waterman, 1999). Although it is widely accepted that identity development continues beyond the adolescent years, adolescence marks the first time when individuals have the cognitive capacity to consciously sort through who they are and what contributes to their uniqueness.

Identity is a multi-dimensional and intricate construct. It comprises of the traits and qualities, as well as the social relations, roles and social group memberships that define the self (who one is) (Leary & Tangney, 2012). Identity also provides orientation, because it may be focused on the past (and what used to be true of the self), on the present (and what is currently true), or the future (and what one expects or desires to become). Identity therefore contributes to the meaning-making process, in which attention focuses on the self and the context (Leary & Tangney, 2012).

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Identity includes what makes individuals both similar as well as distinct from others (Adams, 2014). Identity therefore encompasses aspects that are predetermined and stable, such as biological gender and race, as well as aspects that are more fluid in nature, such as occupation, recreational activities and spirituality. Fluent aspects typically facilitate uniqueness and provide choices in the selection of social categories, considered as meaningful. According to Adams (2014), identity therefore provides the social mechanism for awareness of the various aspects of “who and what we are” relative to social constructs.

Erik Erikson’s foundational work on ego identity (1956, 1968, 1974) was not only ground-breaking in his time, but is mostly referenced in primary resources on identity development. According to Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974), identity may be defined as an integration of childhood identities and the experiences and socialisations that develop from inborn abilities. Erikson described an interplay amongst individual biology, psychology, social recognition and responses within an individual’s historical context. He placed equal emphasis on each of these elements. Consolidation of identity is therefore understood as a process, connected to interaction with society. Erikson’s definition of identity (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) includes both individual uniqueness, which is experienced consciously, as well as the unconscious striving for continuity of experience. Identity therefore entails a mastery of childhood difficulties and a true preparedness for the challenges of further stages of human development.

2.2.1 Dimensions of identity. Various dimensions associated with Erikson’s definition of identity (1968, 1974) exist. In essence, identity is described as development along three levels, namely the ego, the personal and the social identity.

Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) defined ego identity as the fundamental beliefs individuals may possess about themselves. These beliefs are consistent, as well as resistant to change. This level was perceived by Erikson to be of the most fundamental, because it is determined by ego synthesis and forms in continuity with personal character.

Personal identity is described by Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) as a set of goals, values and beliefs that are typically accessible for others to see. It may also include goals associated with careers and potential partners. This level converges in an intersection between the self and the context. It allows individuals to differentiate themselves from others.

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The third level, referred to as social identity, is the most contextually-oriented level. It resembles inner solidarity with a group's ideals. Thus, it implies the consolidation of elements that have been integrated from groups to which one belongs into one's senses of the self (Cote & Schwartz, 2002; Schwartz, 2001). Elements, such as native language, country of origin and racial background are included.

Social identity has also been extensively researched within the field of social psychology and various theories from this perspective, regarding social identity, exist (Jenkins, 2008). According to the Social Identity Theory, identity is extracted from group and/or category membership. Here, identity refers to the similarities between individuals, included in a particular group, as well as the differences between these individuals and those included in other groups (Jenkins, 2008). Social identity is defined as the dimension of an individual's self-concept which is associated with the knowledge retrieved from the involvement in a particular group and/or groups. This dimension is influenced by the combination of the value and emotional investment in this involvement (Jenkins, 2008). Social identity is therefore derived from the cognitive understanding and knowledge of being included in a group, as well as the sense of worth and significance experienced as a result of being included in a group. Social identity includes, but is not limited to, other identity dimensions such as ethnicity, gender and religion.

Social identity is closely associated with ethnic identity (Erikson, 1956, 1959, 1968, 1974). A significant part of the research on ethnic identity derives from social identity research. Definitions for ethnic identity tend to centre on the ethnic elements of social identity (Phinney & Ong, 2007). However, ethnic identity is a complex construct, with no single, all-encompassing definition. But awareness of, and commitment to, a particular ethnic group is central as well as the value associated with belonging to that particular ethnic group.

Gender identity is also closely associated with Erikson's (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) viewpoint on social identity, because elements of gender tend to have their roots in society. Gender identity is influenced by an individual's knowledge of gender categories and the commitment to identify with the stereotypes and societal demands associated with the chosen gender category (Egan & Perry, 2001). Membership to one of the gender categories consequently contributes to a sense of worth and approval.

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Just as ethnic identity and gender identity involve the cognitive understanding and knowledge of being included in a group, so too does religious identity. Religious identity evolves from integrating beliefs, values and religious practices as well as traditions that facilitate decision-making (Adams, 2014). When individual values align with membership in and commitment to a particular religious group, a sense of belonging and worth may also emerge.

2.2.2 Status models of identity development. Erikson's Psychosocial Theory (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) proposes that eight phases of development may be distinguished. Each phase includes both a conflict and developmental task. According to Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974), it is the manner in which the conflict is negotiated that determines whether or not the developmental task will be successfully achieved. If positive, further development is facilitated. The developmental task involving identity development is located in the fifth stage of Erikson's theory and is appropriately named Identity vs Identity confusion.

The fifth stage of Erikson's (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) theory represents identity as a single, bipolar dimension. Identity synthesis and identity confusion are situated on the opposite ends of the continuum. Identity synthesis involves the remodelling of childhood and coexistent identifications into a larger set of principles (Schwartz, 2001). However, identity confusion implicates an inability to develop a practical set of principles on which to base adult identity (Schwartz, 2001). According to Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974), the developmental task associated with identity development begins during adolescence and may be accomplished when the adolescent has been integrated into society. It further needs to be coupled with psycho-social bonds in the form of commitments.

James Marcia's (1966, 1980) Identity Status Model builds upon the work of Erikson's Psychosocial Theory (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974). Rather than developmental stages, Marcia (1966, 1980) emphasised the outcomes of psycho-social processes during adolescence and referred to these as identity statuses. Marcia (1966, 1980) suggests the importance of two primary components, namely exploration and commitment. While exploration includes problem-solving behaviour aimed at eliciting information about oneself or one's environment to make a decision about an important life choice, commitment incorporates the adherence to a specific set of goals, values and beliefs (Marcia, 1966, 1980). The depth of exploration or commitment contributes to four clearly, differentiated stages associated

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with identity development. These character types, referred to by Marcia (1966, 1980) as identity statuses, include identity diffusion, identity foreclosure, identity moratorium and identity achievement. Table 5 summarises the four identity statuses (Marcia, 1966, 1980):

Table 5

Summary of Marcia's Identity Status Model

Identity diffusion	No commitment has yet been made and various alternatives may still be explored Low levels of commitment and low levels of exploration exist
Identity foreclosure	A commitment has been made in the absence of exploration High levels of commitment and low levels of exploration exist
Identity moratorium	Active exploration is taking place and no commitments have been made High levels of exploration and low levels of commitment exist
Identity achievement	Active exploration has been completed and a commitment has been made High levels of exploration and high levels of commitment exist

Marcia (1966, 1980) proposes that an epigenetic sequence, associated with the mentioned statuses, takes place. He does not offer a developmental theory as such, but rather a description regarding the transitions in identity statuses. He accentuates that identity development does not have an end point, nor is it unidirectional. However, the identity achievement status is considered the most mature, because it is characterised by effective decision-making, meaningful interpersonal relationships and a balanced thinking style (Cote & Schwartz, 2002; Schwartz, 2001). Identity achievement suggests that the individual underwent the searching associated with exploration and selected aspects to form a commitment (Marcia, 1966, 1980). Consequently, individuals in this status are considered to have progressed the most in terms of identity work than individuals in all the other statuses.

2.2.3 Narrative models of identity development. Narrative theorists propose that individuals form a narrative identity as evolving life-stories are internalised. The

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reconstructed past and the imagined future are thus integrated (McAdams & McLean, 2013). Narrative identity provides unity, meaning and purpose in life. It enables individuals to convey to themselves and others who they are, where they come from and where they hope to go. The individual's life-story, through the process of autobiographical reasoning, becomes integrated and thereby provides a sense of identity (McLean & Pratt, 2006).

Building on Erikson's (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) foundational work, Dan McAdams (2001) proposed that narrative identity emerges during late adolescence and early adulthood due to the maturation of formal operational thinking and the expectations within society. According to McAdams (2001), it is not until adolescence that the individual is able to reflect on, and construct stories about their lives that include both causal and thematic coherence. Causal coherence involves an account of how early experiences cause later experiences, while thematic coherence involves the ability to organise the themes associated with the life story. Following Erikson's (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) original propositions, narrative theorists have also proposed that the sophistication of identity development advances with age. Narrative identity becomes apparent in middle adolescence when meaning-making skills increase and facilitate the management of paradox and contradiction in personal stories (McAdams & McLean, 2013). Erikson's (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) propositions, associated with crisis and vulnerability, are also considered significant in the narrative models. This is because narratives, that involve significant meaning, are more likely to be associated with experiences characterised by conflict and/or tension.

As cognitive capacity increases, individuals initially learn how to share their stories within formal and informal social contexts, as well as inside specific cultural parameters (McAdams & McLean, 2013). The foundations for the development of a narrative identity are therefore set within early parent-child relationships as a result of children that learn how to make meaning of personal experiences through conversation. The development of meaning-making skills allows the individual to go beyond the content of a story to reflect on what the story may say about who they are. Individuals may therefore tell stories that are associated with specific personality traits, tendencies, goals, skills, problems, and/or patterns in their own lives. Meaning-making therefore allows the story-teller to draw a

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semantic conclusion about the self from the episodic information the story conveys (McLean & Pratt, 2006).

McLean, Pasupathi and Pals (2007) researched the development of a narrative identity and proposed that it develops gradually over time as individuals share their stories about their experiences with others. Repeated interactions, involving story-telling with others, contributes to the formation of personal experiences. It stems from stories that are edited, reinterpreted, retold and subjected to a range of social influences. The story-teller therefore develops a more integrated narrative identity in which selves create stories which in turn create selves (McAdams et al., 2007).

The search for an identity during adolescence may therefore both assist adolescents in challenging what it is they have been taught and precipitate the adoption of firm identity commitments. A key component of identity development and another dimension may include a set of spiritual beliefs which assists the adolescent in making identity commitments (Fisherman, 2004; Good & Willoughby, 2008; Poll & Smith, 2003; Ray & McFadden, 2001). A set of spiritual beliefs and/or a belief system often include the adoption of a worldview and a set of ideologies involving life, death, love and work.

Thus, in conclusion, various theorists in the field of identity development created a platform for considering spiritual identity development. For example, Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) demonstrated a profound interest in spirituality and maintained that healthy individuals nurture their spiritual tendencies. Marcia (1966, 1980) also stimulated early research in the area of spirituality as he explicitly included an ideological domain in identity development which encompasses religious and political orientations. It is this aspect of identity development, namely spiritual identity, which will be central in the chapter that follows.

2.3 Chapter conclusion

Adolescence is a multifaceted and interesting period of development, characterised by both common developmental trajectories and numerous individual differences. The physical, cognitive and psycho-social development taking place during adolescence is intricately intertwined. The advancement in all these dimensions facilitates the progress in

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the developmental tasks that need to be achieved during this period. Identity development is one such task and is in itself a complex phenomenon with numerous dimensions. Spirituality and spiritual identity are included in identity development. Relevant definitions and a discussion of spiritual development are provided in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Spiritual Development

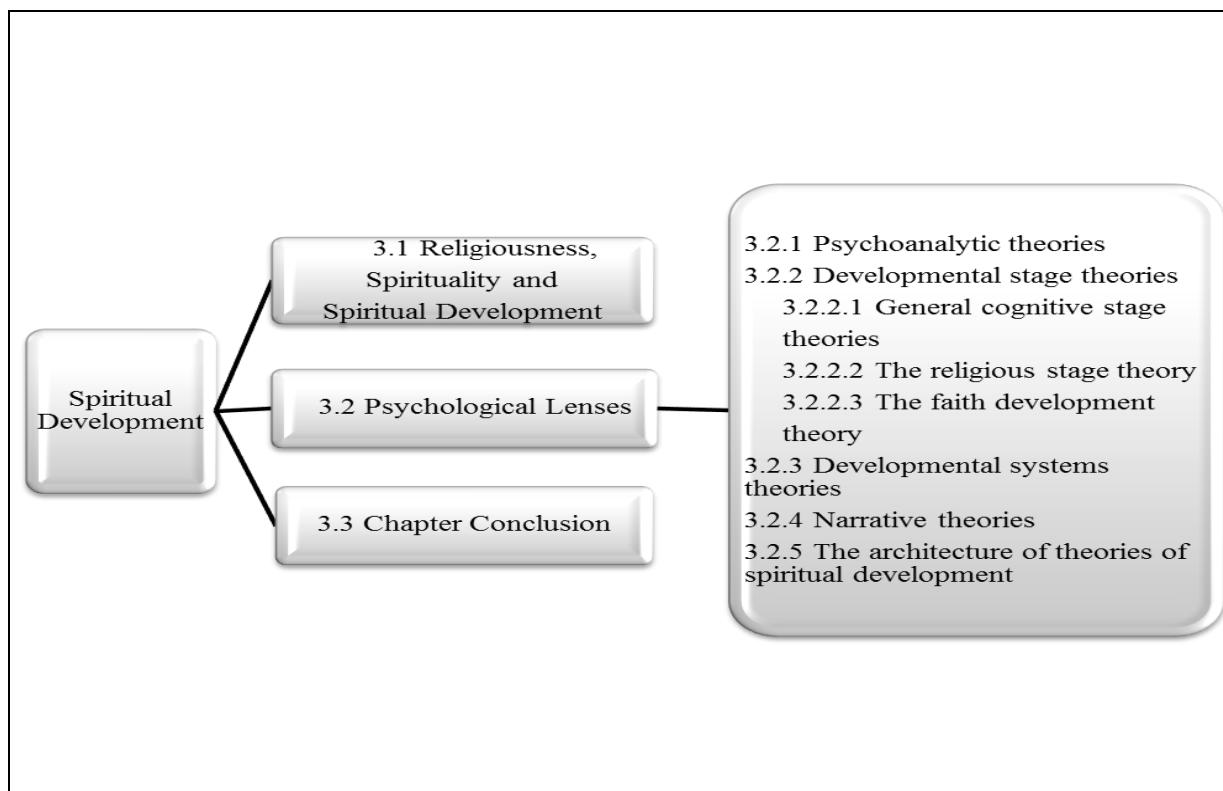


Figure 4 Visual outline of chapter 3: Spiritual development

The nature of adolescence was explored in the previous chapter, together with the changes taking place within the physical, cognitive and psycho-social dimensions. As identity development is a central developmental task associated with adolescence, this process was also introduced in the previous chapter. Several dimensions associated with identity developmental exist and include that of spirituality. The chapter that follows explores this dimension in greater depth. The relevant definitions lay the foundation for the chapter. The psychological theories that provide an understanding of spiritual development are then briefly reviewed. Psychoanalytic theories, developmental stage theories, developmental systems theories and narrative theories are scrutinised. Finally, the common processes of spiritual development within the psychological theories are highlighted.

3.1 Religiousness, spirituality and spiritual development

Religiousness is typically referred to as the relationship individuals may have with a specific institutionalised doctrine concerning ultimate reality (Kiesling, Montgomery, Sorell, & Colwell, 2006; Moore & Lippman, 2005). This relationship develops, and is engaged in, through affiliation with an organised religion and participation in the religion's prescribed traditions and/or rituals. Religion may therefore be defined as "an organised system of beliefs, practices, rituals and symbols designed to facilitate closeness to the sacred or transcendent and to foster an understanding of one's relationship and responsibility to others living together in community" (Koenig, McCullough & Larson, 2001, p.18).

Spirituality is not necessarily dependent on religion, although it may be expressed within a religious context (Good & Willoughby, 2006). Spirituality may be understood as i) being associated with an individual's search for what is sacred, ii) the individual's concept of God and iii) other areas of life which may be associated with the divine or have significance due to its relationship with the divine (Poll & Smith, 2003). Spirituality is considered synonymous with the search for meaning, a sense of belonging, belief and transcendence. An eloquent and comprehensive definition of spirituality includes:

"Spirituality can be understood as that experience of human existence which relates to structures of significance that give meaning and direction to a person's life and helps them deal with the vicissitudes of existence. It is associated with the human quest for meaning, purpose, self-transcending knowledge, meaningful relationships, love and a sense of the holy. It may, or may not, be associated with a specific religious system" (Swinton & Pattison, 2010, p. 227).

Despite the differences in definition, religiousness and spirituality tend to be highly correlated and both involve positive adjustment (Barret, 2000; Good & Willoughby, 2006; King, 2003). The polarisation between religiousness and spirituality is therefore avoided, because it would undermine the richness of both of these concepts. It is therefore presented here that there is a significant overlap between religiousness and spirituality. Nevertheless, there are dimensions of both religious and spiritual development that fall beyond the domain of the other (Benson, Roehlkepartain & Rude, 2003).

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Benson et al. (2003) acknowledge the overlap between religiousness and spirituality. They explain that spirituality and spiritual development encompass a wide diversity of experiences and beliefs across numerous religions with regard to traditions, cultures and worldviews. However, support will be provided for the emphasis on spiritual development in this research. It is also suggested that the focus on spiritual development has the potential to generate less discord and active engagement in this area. Furthermore, Benson et al. (2003) suggest that scientists tend to be more open to the investigation of spirituality than religiousness. There has been large-scale investigation into religiousness in the past. The current challenge therefore exists to shift this focus to the investigation of spirituality and spiritual development. Consequently, spirituality and spiritual development will be the focus of this research.

Spirituality involves various processes (Love & Talbot, 1999). Firstly, spiritual development is understood as including an internal process characterised by seeking personal authenticity, genuineness and wholeness. Consistency and congruency emerge as identity development takes place. Spiritual development therefore involves an increased connectedness with the self, but also with others through relationships. It is therefore rooted in unitedness and relationship, frequently only finding its fullest manifestation in the context of a mutually supportive community, such as religion. A sense of community may consequently emerge. Continuous learning and growing occur with the goal of transcendence, thereby allowing the individual to move beyond a focus on the self. Spirituality is characterised by an increasing openness to the influences of powers that exist beyond oneself. The processes involved in spirituality may be summarised as follows:

"Spiritual development is an interrelated process of seeking self-knowledge and centeredness, transcending one's current locus of centrality, being open to and embracing community, recognising an essence or pervasive power beyond human existence and having that sense of spirit pervade one's life" (Love & Talbot, 1999, p.367).

3.2 Psychological lenses on spirituality

Numerous psychological theories have explored the phenomena associated with religion and spirituality, most of which focus on religious and spiritual development. Much of the

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foundational work lies in prominent psychological theories. Religion and spirituality, as expressed in the psychoanalytic, developmental stage, systems-oriented and narrative theories will therefore be reviewed.

3.2.1 Psychoanalytic theories. The earliest reference to religion and spirituality was included in the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud (1961). He described religion as a “universal obsessional neurosis” or an illusion resulting from infantile human wishes. He placed little emphasis on understanding the development of a religious or spiritual identity. However, other prominent psychoanalysts suggested that religion and spirituality play a meaningful and prolific role in the developmental process (Granqvist & Dickie, 2005). Theorists, such as Carl Jung (1938), understood religion and spirituality as a delusion. But it could, nonetheless, provide individuals with the strength and assurance needed to transcend the instinctive stage of the unconsciousness and propel them into the heights of moral and cultural achievements.

Later theorists, such as Ana-Maria Rizzuto (1979) from the object relations tradition, described representations of God as inevitable universal outcomes of the relationships that children have with their parents and other caretakers. She explained that as children develop, they have a growing interest in casual events, which contributes to their representation of God. Images of God serve as illusory, transitional objects that provide individuals with comfort and meaning. God images, from this perspective, develop at every stage of an individual’s life and change as the identity cycle changes (Rizzuto, 1979).

Attachment theorists have contributed significantly to the field of spiritual development and suggested that individuals develop an internal working model of a specific divine attachment figure (Davis, Moriarty & Mauch, 2012; Granqvist, Mikulincer, Gewirtz, & Shaver, 2012). According to Bowlby (1973), internal working models develop through early experiences with caregivers, but it remains flexible through life. It thus, allows for changes to take place as the individual engages with subsequent attachment figures. These internal working models provide the individual with a guide on cognitive, emotional, motivational and behavioural functioning associated with relationships.

Attachment theorists explain that the images and concepts individuals have of God are context-sensitive and affect-laden neural representations mediated by knowledge, memories

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and implicit thoughts (Davis et al., 2012; Granqvist et al., 2012). Attachment theorists pointed out that these images and concepts are learned through implicit, emotional and incidental learning. In this process, they become encoded in both non-verbal symbolic and sub-symbolic representational code (de Roos, Miedema, & Iedema, 2001; de Roos, Iedema, & Miedema, 2004; Sim & Yow, 2011). Attachment theorists explain that the images and concepts an individual has of God guide how the individual will experience the divine attachment figure at a physiological, emotional and implicit level (de Roos et al., 2001; 2004; Sim & Yow, 2011).

This attachment-based framework has developed hypotheses to explain how a relationship with the divine, or God, may develop. The first of these hypotheses is the internal working model correspondence hypothesis (Davis et al., 2012; Granqvist et al., 2012; McDonald, Beck, Allison & Norsworthy, 2005). According to this hypothesis, individuals develop global internal working models which include generalised views of the self, of others and of the self in relation to others (Davis et al., 2012; Granqvist et al., 2012; McDonald et al., 2005). Global internal working models are hypothesised to correspond in terms of the connection to both human attachment figures and divine attachment figures.

A second hypothesis is the emotional compensation hypothesis (Davis et al., 2012; McDonald et al., 2005). Divine attachment figures may serve as substitute attachment figures in cases where caregivers were experienced as unresponsive, unavailable, inconsistent or insensitive. In such instances the attachment relationship formed with the divine, may meet the individual's emotional needs. It thus may minimise the attachment-related distress experienced by the individual (Davis et al., 2012; McDonald et al., 2005). The divine attachment figure may therefore be used as a means to regulate affect and re-establish a sense of security within the individual.

The socialised correspondence hypothesis states that when caregivers are religious and/or spiritual and they are also experienced as available, responsible and sensitive to the needs of their children, a positive internal working model develops for both the self in relationship to others and in relationship with the divine attachment figure (Davis et al., 2012; McDonald et al., 2005). This implies that the attachment relationship with the divine therefore serves as a security-enhancing attachment figure for the individual.

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Finally, the implicit-relational-knowing correspondence hypothesis articulates that the individual's experiences with attachment figures contributes to the development of an internal working model on perceiving and interacting with others (Davis et al., 2012; McDonald et al., 2005). Implicit-relational knowing, associated with knowing how to perceive and interact with others, is developed through experienced relationships with attachment figures. In the same manner, relationships with divine attachment figures have a corresponding implicit-relational knowing. This is reflected in implicit religious and/or spiritual functioning. However, it is not necessarily imitated in explicit religious and/or spiritual functioning. Implicit-relational knowing on how to be in relationship with human attachment figures is therefore transferred onto the relationship with the divine attachment figure (Davis et al., 2012; McDonald et al., 2005).

The psychoanalytic theories appear to focus on the instinctual drives and needs that individuals may have in relation to others. The development of a relationship with God and the consequent development of a spiritual identity, seem to be understood as being a by-product of these needs and drives as well as the relationships formed with others. The psychoanalytic theories, centred on religiousness, spirituality and identity development, laid the foundation for the stage theories.

3.2.2 Developmental stage theories. Several developmental theorists proposed theories on spirituality. Such theories include the work of Erikson (1959, 1968), Jean Piaget (1965) and Marcia (1966, 1980). The common thread amongst all these lifespan developmental approaches converges in the view that development is a progression of increased levels of complexity and maturity. General cognitive stage theories are firstly reviewed, followed by a review of The Theory of the Development of Religious Judgment proposed by Fritz Oser and Paul Gmunder (1991) and The Faith Development Theory of James Fowler (1981, 1995).

3.2.2.1 General cognitive stage theories. Individuals progress through successive stages of cognitive development that are characterised by different modes of thought, according to the cognitive developmental theories (Cartwright, 2001; Poll & Smith, 2003). During each stage, the individual builds upon and transcends the previous stage. This is achieved by integrating additional, more sophisticated ways of understanding the world. The transcendence through these stages of thought also provides an understanding of the formal mechanism through which spiritual development takes place.

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Although individuals progress through stages, which parallel those proposed by Piaget, cognitive developmental theorists specialising in spiritual development also differ substantially from Piaget. They propose that these different modes of spiritual understanding neither emerge at the ages proposed by Piaget, nor are they confined to the ranges of age proposed by Piaget (Cartwright, 2001; Poll & Smith, 2003). Individuals may progress through these stages at any age and/or point in their life, depending on their awareness, experience and motivation. They therefore emphasise contextual and social variables that may promote developmental change (Cartwright, 2001; Poll & Smith, 2003). These theorists propose that subjective experiences encourage transcendence in individuals as they progress through the stages of cognitive development.

The individual in the sensory-motor stage of spiritual development tends not to express an awareness of a spiritual level of reality, because they are bound to the sensory and perceptual experiences within their surrounding environments (Cartwright, 2001; Poll & Smith, 2003). The transcendence of the sensory-motor stage into the pre-operational stage is characterised by thought which is not always directed by the principles of logic (Cartwright, 2001; Poll & Smith, 2003). This stage of spiritual development tends to include an awareness of a higher power, but lacks the reasoning which suffices as explanation for the existence or nature of the higher power.

As the individual transcends the pre-operational stage, logical reasoning dominates. Individuals, herein, search for concrete and tangible ways to understand their relationship with God (Cartwright, 2001; Poll & Smith, 2003). It is in this stage of spiritual development that individuals may behaviourally commit to traditions or customs. Religious traditions may therefore support this spiritual and cognitive development stage, because individuals focus on overt behaviours which contribute to religious and spiritual commitment.

Formal operational reasoning becomes dominant when individuals are capable of thinking logically about abstract ideas (Cartwright, 2001; Poll & Smith, 2003). Spiritual development in the formal operational stage transcends the literal behaviours associated with the previous stages of development. It is focused on the abstract principles which underlie these behaviours. Transcendence beyond the formal operational stage takes place when the individual is able to consider multiple alternate realities, but selects only one reality. The post-formal stage of spiritual and cognitive development is therefore characterised by the

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transcendence of the constraints of social norms which typically govern the relationship with God.

3.2.2.2 *The religious stage theory.* The Religious Stage Theory was proposed by Oser and Gmunder (1991). This theory is unified upon how individuals construct relationships with a higher power. According to Oser and Gmunder (1991), the development of cognitions of a religious and spiritual nature, are independent of other forms of moral development and cognitive development. The focus of their theory, rather, is on the development of religious judgement in relation to a higher power. Religious judgment is described as the answers individuals formulate to reconcile the contradictions noted in religious faith and what appears to happen in reality. It includes a type of reasoning that provides meaning and direction beyond that which is learned.

Oser and Gmunder (1991) propose sequential changes in the structure of an individual's cognitions. Their theory is therefore similar in nature to the Piagetian Cognitive Development Theory, because specific cognitive abilities serve as preconditions to the development of religious judgment (Moore & Lippman, 2005). However, the stages Oser and Gmunder (1991) propose do not parallel those enunciated by Piaget (1965). The stages of religious judgment are envisaged as universal and valid cross-culturally, but the content may vary within the specific stages (Rasanen, 2010). Each of the stages in the development of religious judgement is therefore considered unique inclusive of diverse content (Rasanen, 2010).

Oser and Gmunder (1991) suggest that religious development is unique and specific to the individual (Moore & Lippman, 2005). Not all individuals of the same age will necessarily be in similar stages of religious development. However, the development of religious judgement is linked to age-related increases in cognitive development. A qualitative distinction is therefore visible in the relationship between individuals and God depending on their current developmental stage. Table 6 summarises the stages proposed by Oser and Gmunder (1991):

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Table 6

Summary of Religious Stage Theory of Oser and Gmunder

Stage	Age	Characteristics
Stage 1	Early childhood	Highly concrete and literal God is always present and responsible for everything Laws and rules must be obeyed to avoid punishment Individuals have little influence on God
	Older children and Adolescents	God is perceived in a less punitive light Prayer and positive behaviour may influence God Healthy and happy lives are the result of God's love God's wrath is seen in his decision not to intervene during times of strife
Stage 3	Adolescence	Religious judgment becomes increasingly common God is perceived as more distant Individuals are perceived as being more responsible for own well-being Increased recognition of injustice and human suffering Increased questioning of God Transition from stage 2 to 3 is promoted by personal experience
Stage 4	If present, emerges in older adolescence	God is perceived as the ultimate creator who provides freedom and life God's existence provides meaning to life
Stage 5	If present, emerges in adulthood	Religiousness is universal and unconditional Interaction between transcendence and immanence God is perceived as always present and everywhere Solidarity is experienced with all human beings

The third stage of religious judgement is typically prominent in adolescence (Rasanen, 2012). It is unlikely prior to the development of abstract thinking. Within this stage, individuals become aware that religion cannot adequately explain the complex reality observed in the world.

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3.2.2.3 *The faith development theory.* The Faith Development Theory is a lifespan approach, proposed by Fowler (1981, 1995). He suggested that faith development is a process of meaning-making during which individuals attempt to understand their own lives, as well as the commitments and values which guide them through their life. For Fowler (Andrade, 2014; Parker, 2009), faith development is linked to spiritual development, because it is an all-encompassing term which describes a universal human activity of meaning-making. He explained that faith is a fundamental process that underlies the development of beliefs, values and meanings. It provides coherence and direction to life, facilitates the development of a larger frame of reference that creates a sense of relatedness to shared trusts and loyalties, as well as assists individuals in negotiating the challenges of human life (Andrade, 2014; Parker, 2009).

Fowler (1981, 1995) acknowledges the complex interplay amongst the factors that enlighten the understanding of faith development in his Faith Development Theory. Biological maturation, emotional and cognitive development and the psycho-social experience of individuals are considered. The religio-cultural context is also acknowledged with the inclusion of exposure to symbols, practices and meanings. Spiritual nurturance, individual spiritual aptitude and discipline are also essential. Although the development of faith is perceived as a common feature of human existence, the interplay of factors is used to explain why some individuals may transition more swiftly through the stages of faith than others.

Fowler (1981, 1995) therefore proposed that individuals move through a series of stages which increase in complexity in conjunction with the development of meaning-making and relating. According to Fowler (Andrade, 2014; Parker, 2009), faith stage development follows an identifiable sequential pattern. However, progression through the stages is not inevitable or automatic. Fowler (1981, 1995) asserts that the development of faith is dependent on an individual's understanding of the self in relation to others as well as to shared values and commitments. With each of the successive stages, a series of qualitatively, distinguishable patterns of thought, realisations and behaviours materialises. Each of the stages brings forth new, more complex operations and capacities which are added to those of the preceding stage (Andrade, 2014; Fowler, 1981, 1995; Parker, 2009). Table 7 summarises the six stages proposed by Fowler (Andrade, 2014; Fowler, 1981, 1995; Parker, 2009):

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Table 7

Summary of Fowler's Faith Development Theory

Stage	Age	Characteristics
Pre-stage	First preverbal year of life	Foundation of basic trust or mistrust on which all later faith builds Infant's realisation that they are separate beings
Stage 1: Intuitive-projective	2 years to 6 years	Birth of imagination Images drawn from stories and relationships Cause and effect poorly understood Reality and fantasy poorly differentiated
Stage 2: Mythic-literal	7 years to early adolescence (may remain in adulthood)	Concrete logic Literal interpretations Underdeveloped understanding of others Narrative as a way of understanding
Stage 3: Synthetic-conventional	Adolescence to early adulthood (may remain in adulthood)	Focus on the interpersonal Emergence of empathy Emergence of social judgement Meaning-making through relationships
Stage 4: Individuative-reflective	Early adulthood (may remain in adulthood)	Critical reflection on the self and the world Emergence of the executive ego: Ability to take responsibility for beliefs and lifestyle Questioning of faith conceptions
Stage 5: Conjunctive	If present, emerges midlife	Ability to embrace mystery and paradox Altruism
Stage 6: Universalising faith	If present, emerges end stages of life	Inclusiveness of all beings Commitments to values

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Due to developing language abilities, the intuitive-projective stage is characterised by the ability to draw from stories told by others and the images seen. This propels the formation of basic conceptions of God (Andrade, 2014). Descriptions of God remain vague and magical during the intuitive-projective stage.

The development of concrete operational thinking during middle childhood facilitates the growth of mythic-literal faith. It builds on more stable forms of conscious interpretation. During this stage, the shaping of experience and meanings emerge (Andrade, 2014; Fowler, 1981, 1995; Parker, 2009). Cause-and-effect relationships are more easily understood, because operations of thought can now also be reversed. Furthermore, the individual's own experiences and perspectives can be differentiated from those of others with simple perspective taking that emerges. During this stage of development, the world is experienced with a newly found sense of linearity and predictability. More logical and straightforward modes of thinking dominate. However, in the mythic-literal stage, the individual does not yet have the ability to construct the interiority of the self or that of others. They still reside in the process of learning to recognise, interpret as well as manage strong impulses and feelings.

Similarly, individuals in the mythic-literal stage tend not to conceptualise God in particular, personal terms or attribute highly differentiated internal emotions and interpersonal sensitivities to God (Andrade, 2014; Fowler, 1981, 1995; Parker, 2009). The ultimate environment, or the pattern of God's governance of the universe, rather, is the focus. Concepts associated with fairness and moral reciprocity, typically are central. This stage is often characterised by the belief that goodness is rewarded and badness is punished.

The mythic-literal stage is commonly characterised by the use of narrative as meanings are shaped through stories (Andrade, 2014; Fowler, 1981, 1995; Parker, 2009). Individuals in this developmental stage do not engage in extensive analytical or synthetic reflection. Furthermore, the use of concepts and symbols remains mostly concrete. However, this stage does provide a permanent and sound contribution to the process of meaning-making which, on its turn, initialises reflection on feelings and ideas about faith.

Significant cognitive development takes place during the synthetic-conventional stage (Andrade, 2014; Fowler, 1981, 1995; Parker, 2009). Further progression in the ability to empathise becomes visible, as well as in the ability to use and appreciate abstract concepts.

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Identity and a personal interiority also become central. Stemming from inside this stage, the ultimate environment is integrated into the personal (Andrade, 2014; Fowler, 1981, 1995; Parker, 2009). Representations of God are assigned personal qualities such as accepting love, understanding, loyalty and support. Attachments are developed in conjunction with beliefs, values and specific interpersonal qualities. Identity, beliefs and values are strongly felt. At this stage, ones ideology and worldview is lived and asserted. With time, this will become a matter of critical and reflective articulation.

Individuals may remain in the mythic-literal stage and/or the synthetic-conventional stage throughout adulthood or may progress to the individuative-reflective faith stage. This stage may result in individuals adopting new value systems due to increased exposure to alternative ways of life (Andrade, 2014; Fowler, 1981, 1995; Parker, 2009). The questioning of previous values and beliefs are central during this stage. The individuative-reflective faith stage may be followed by the conjunctive faith stage, in which individuals explore alternative religions and/or beliefs systems. This examination may either strengthen an existing religion or belief system or it may alter the existing religions or belief system (Andrade, 2014; Fowler, 1981, 1995; Parker, 2009). This stage is characterised by the ability to integrate ideas that may previously have been considered as opposing. While individuals in the conjunctive faith stage are able to both recognise and integrate alternative ideas, little commitment is made to challenge the existing order (Andrade, 2014; Fowler, 1981, 1995; Parker, 2009). However, transcendence of the conjunctive faith stage to the universal faith stage encompasses self-sacrifice and commitment to improve the existing order for all. Only a few individuals reach the universal faith stage Fowler (1981, 1995).

Fowler's (1981, 1995) research on faith development incorporates some aspects associated with identity development. According to him, identity development occurs through the early interactions with others, and the individuation from others, that takes place as the individual matures. Fowler (1981, 1995) proposed that individuals need to first establish a secure sense of the self to transcend the self and engage in a relationship with God. Individuals in the third stage of faith development, the synthetic-conventional stage, are therefore described as having a desire to relate to God. This is subsequent to the period in which identity development emerged through interpersonal relationships (Poll & Smith, 2003).

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Fowler's (1981, 1995) Faith Development Theory is therefore understood as including two distinct, but sequential, processes involving identity development. Stages 1 to 4 highlight the process involved in becoming autonomous and individuating, and stages 5 to 6 feature the process involved in transcending the self in order to relate to God.

Fowler's (1981, 1995) research and lifespan developmental theories may therefore be particularly useful in attempting to understand an individual's spiritual journey and identity process, especially in the context of broader cultural life (Kiesling et al., 2006). Individual development is considered as a point of departure to explore and understand spiritual and faith development (Poll & Smith, 2003).

3.2.3 Developmental systems theories. Developmental systems theories shift the focus of spiritual development to an understanding of developmental pathways and trajectories, as well as the role of culture and context involved in spiritual development (King & Roeser, 2009; Yeh & Borrero, 2012). The emphasis is placed on the contact and transactions between individuals and their contexts (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; King, 2003). According to Lerner (2007), spiritual development is located in the continuous reciprocal contact between the individual and their multifaceted contexts. The "goodness of fit" between the individual and these contexts is understood as having a significant impact on spiritual development.

Developmental systems theories therefore consider the impact that the context has on the individual, but also the impact that the individual may have on the context. Consequently, these theories are bidirectional in nature (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Although individuals may have the capacity to develop their spirituality along numerous developmental trajectories, the number of actual developmental trajectories is restricted by both the individual and the contextual factors. Spiritual development is understood as not being located within the individual. It is rather realised in the individual's multiple embedded socio-cultural contexts of development and the significant developmental needs of the adolescent (King & Roeser, 2009; Yeh & Borrero, 2012). Furthermore, spirituality is understood as not being the sole pursuit of the individual, but also a communal experience and phenomenon.

Lerner, von Eye, Lerner and Lewin-Bizan (2009) explained that spirituality includes an awareness of the connection between the self, the other and the universe. Spiritual development in adolescence is characterised by a growing sense of transcendence. It includes

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a sense of connection to something beyond the self, as well as a growing sense of self and/or identity. According to Lerner et al., (2009), this experience of transcendence facilitates a more intense commitment to the welfare of the world beyond the self.

According to developmental systems theorists, parents and other family members play a significant role in the spiritual development of adolescents (King & Roeser, 2009; Yeh & Borrero, 2012). Parents, or primary caregivers, are understood as being the key interpreters of spirituality and religion for adolescents. While parents' own belief systems and practices provide the foundation for adolescents' own spiritual development, the quality of the relationship between parents and adolescents has been highlighted as critical in the spiritual development of adolescents. Parent-adolescent relationships characterised by support, nurturance and warmth, facilitate the spiritual development in adolescents.

Peer influences also impact significantly on the spiritual development of adolescents. According to Smith and Denton (2005), adolescents are more likely to engage with peers who share similar spiritual beliefs. Furthermore, interactions with peers, who engage in discussions surrounding their spirituality and those involving spiritual modelling, appear to contribute to increased spiritual development during adolescence (Schwartz, 2001).

Linked to peer influence, is the impression of the educational environment on spiritual development during adolescence (Yeh & Borrero, 2012). In educational environments that engage both academic content and spirituality simultaneously, the impact of the role of a shared spiritual ideology has been demonstrated to be significant (King & Roeser, 2009). Peer influences, in combination with the focus on spiritual development within the educational environment, appears to foster spiritual development.

Spiritual development, according to developmental systems theorists, is also deeply embedded in culture, ethnicity and diversity (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; King & Roeser, 2009; Yeh & Borrero, 2012). Because adolescent development is particularly sensitive to the mentioned influences, each element is closely considered (Mattis, Ahluwalia, Cowie, & Kirkland-Harris, 2006). Spirituality, and more specifically religiousness, may both originate and manifest in culture, ethnicity and diversity. Consequently, to explore the spiritual development of adolescents in isolation to such factors may have the effect that some of the richness of such an exploration is lost.

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In sum, spiritual development from a developmental systems perspective is understood similarly to other domains of development. It is perceived as deeply embedded within the systems of social relationships and social contexts throughout the lifespan. The developmental systems theories shift the focus from universal and invariant stages of development to an understanding of the development trajectories and the role of context involved in the processes of spiritual development.

3.2.4 Narrative theories. Narrative theories regarding spirituality integrate the central ideas expressed in the psychodynamic, cognitive and systems theories. It thereby provides a holistic conceptualisation of the spiritual self. According to narrative theorists, psychodynamics and system influences may be present in individuals' motivation to find purpose and unity in life (McAdams, 1993, 1996). These influences contribute to the development of self-stories, characterised by self-symbols, self-schemas as well as self-other transcripts. Narrative theorists propose that meaningful and coherent life stories emerge in the lives of individuals who contribute to a sense of continuity in time, relation to others and connection to thoughts and ideas (McAdams, 1993, 1996). Spirituality is conceptualised as including a narrative process which is experienced through life-stories. The spiritual self is therefore considered to include spiritual self-stories with symbols, schemas and scripts.

Just as development in the other domains is prompted by a period of crisis, in which discomfort with a life-story is adapted to produce a more meaningful and coherent narrative to unify experiences, so too is the spiritual life-story adapted to produce a meaningful and coherent spiritual identity (McAdams, 1993, 1996). In this regard, spiritual life-stories are linked to the narrative associated with a spiritual and/or religious community system. Spiritual life-stories are also linked to continuing stories of personal revelations from God (McAdams, 2001). Spiritual narratives may therefore contribute to a sense of continuity through eternal life-stories and connection to, and unity with, God through spiritual story themes.

The spiritual self-story may develop through the interactions with God (Klenke, 2007). Interactions may be both unconscious and symbolic or conscious and schematised. Furthermore, the spiritual self-story may develop through self-awareness, interpersonal relationships, interactions within the environment and membership in spiritual communities (Klenke, 2007). In such a way, the inner spiritual self may be shared with others and

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consequently expose vulnerabilities. It is also shared with a higher power, which acknowledges the presence and importance of spiritual needs. Self-sacrifice may occur in the spiritual self-story if abandonment and/or postponement of personal interests, in the pursuit of spirituality, dominate (Klenke, 2007). Spiritual self-stories may therefore describe the spiritual path taken and/or the spiritual values which the individual considers important. However, spirituality also involves the transcendence of one's usual self-stories. Self-transcendence includes the openness to transcend the human existence and distancing the self from the immediate sense of time and place. In such a way, more holistic perspective and interconnected perspective, is developed (Klenke, 2007).

3.2.5 The architecture of psychological theories of spiritual development. The main theories on spiritual development, which are embedded in corresponding paradigms within the field of psychology, are only a few to the foundational works that exist on spiritual development. While the discussion above reflected on the main theories of spiritual development to contextualise the construct, research has also focused on the common features and/or characteristics associated with spiritual development theories. These features are briefly explored in the paragraphs that follow to enrich the understanding of the phenomenon.

Spiritual development is understood in terms of a universal human process. Although spiritual development itself may take on a variety of forms, the theories of spiritual development tend to agree that it is a universal process and an inherent aspect of human development (Benson et al., 2003). Just as development within the physical, cognitive and psycho-social domains include universal human processes, a vast body of knowledge suggests that spiritual development is just as significant and universal (Johnson & Boyatzis, 2005; Poll & Smith, 2003).

The study of spiritual development has consistently demonstrated that it is a multidimensional phenomenon (King, 2003; Love & Talbot, 2007). Aspects including, but not limited to, cognitive orientation, emotional well-being and a sense of belonging forms part of spiritual development. Numerous well-researched theories of spiritual development therefore exist; each of which have been studied in populations, cultures and traditions that are diverse (Benson et al., 2003; Moore & Lippman, 2005; Ray & McFadden, 2001; Tummala-Narra, 2009). Each developmental element is understood as being intertwined with

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the other aspects of development, suggesting that spiritual development does not take place in isolation. It may even be argued that spiritual development may be the one element associated with development that integrates and connects all other aspects of development. The reason is that it drives individuals to seek meaning and purpose. Due to the broad and idiosyncratic nature of spiritual development, it does not fit neatly into a single domain of social science.

Spiritual development involves a lifespan process. It projects a developmental trajectory, which spans across time (Benson et al., 2003; Love & Talbot, 2007; Scarlett, 2005). The impact of early experiences and opportunities on later development is understood. Transformation, change and maturation are therefore characteristics of spiritual development. It is explained as a continuous, dynamic process with no end point.

A reciprocal interaction exists between the individual and the context (King, 2003). Interpersonal relationships cultivate spiritual development. Personal experiences and opportunities may facilitate or hamper further development. A bidirectional quality therefore exists as individuals and context influence each other (King, 2003; Lerner, 1996). The bidirectional nature of spiritual development also accounts for the uniqueness often encountered in the level and/or stage of development present within the individual.

Spirituality prevails as a life-shaping force. Spirituality may either be helpful or hampering under different circumstances. Significant positive correlations have been demonstrated, such as general well-being, resilience and improved coping. But difficult situations involving the abuse of religious authority were not excluded (King & Furrow, 2008; Lopez, Huynh & Fuligni, 2011). Irrespective of the impact, it needs to be noted that spirituality and religiousness consistently have a powerful impact (Bertram-Troost et al., 2007). Throughout history and in all societies, various forms of spirituality and religiousness have developed and became a central component of human experience. Spirituality and religiousness remain significant dimensions of life, overarching time and culture.

3.3 Chapter conclusion

Religiousness and spirituality are distinct, but often overlapping, concepts. While religion provides a context in which spirituality may be expressed, spirituality involves a journey and

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developmental sequence that may take place independent of religion. A movement towards the study of spirituality therefore exists, because spirituality and spiritual development encompass a wider diversity of experiences and beliefs across numerous religions in terms of traditions, cultures and worldviews. Several theories associated with spiritual development have therefore been developed and include work within all the main paradigms in psychology. However, these theories also appear to include common processes and they need to be integrated to understand spiritual development. The processes involved in spiritual developmental may also include the development of a spiritual identity, which will be considered in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Spiritual Identity

*The value of identity of course,
Is that so often with it comes purpose*

(Grant, 2013, p.88)

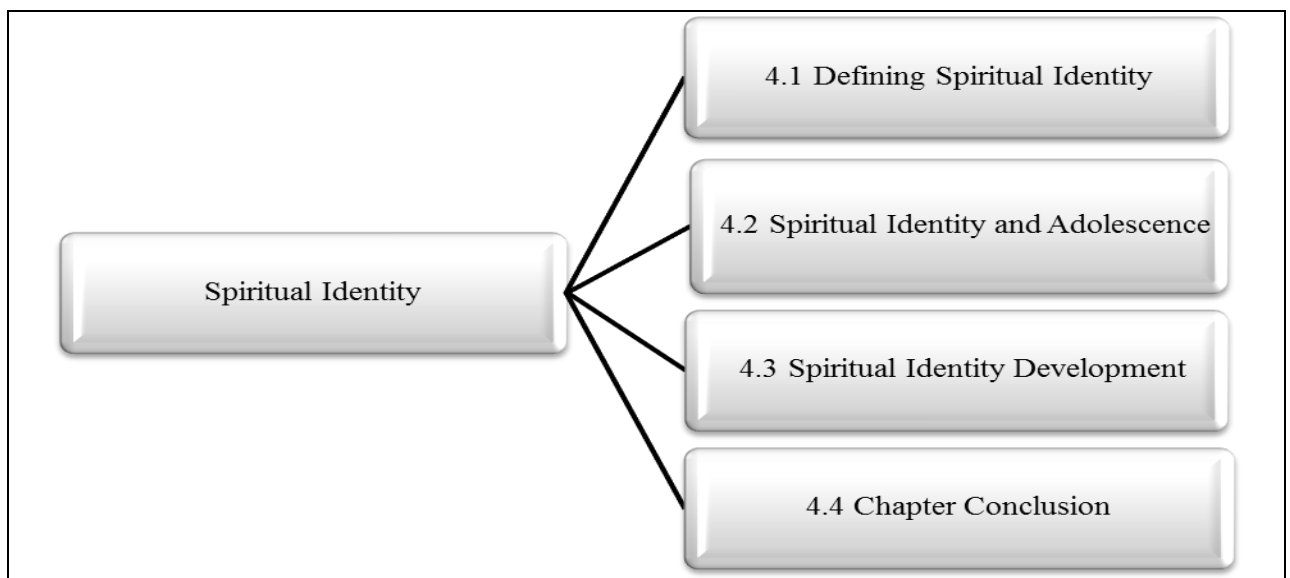


Figure 5 Visual outline of chapter 4: Spiritual identity

The previous chapter explored spiritual development and reviewed the foundational psychological theories that describe how this development unfolds. The chapter that follows has its origins in these foundational theories and reviews spiritual identity development in more depth. This chapter starts by defining spiritual identity. Thereafter, spiritual identity development within adolescence is explored. Spiritual identity development is reviewed thereafter according to the Lifespan Developmental Perspective, by considering the work of Erikson and Marcia. A more integrated framework of spiritual identity development, proposed by Poll and Smith (2003), is consequently provided. Lastly, the characteristics associated with spiritual identity development are highlighted before the chapter is concluded.

4.1 Defining spiritual identity

A definition of spiritual identity cannot ignore the essence of the two intertwined concepts of spirituality and spiritual development. Spirituality involves the personal pursuit to answer the ultimate questions about life, about meaning and the relationship that emerges with God. Spirituality may contribute to, or arise from, the development of religious rituals and the formation of a community (Scarlett, 2005). The contrary may also be true. While this definition describes spirituality and spiritual development, it also describes the process involved in spiritual identity development. It implies that the belief that one is embedded in something greater than oneself is necessary for a spiritual identity to develop.

Spiritual identity is unique in that a sense of continuity develops as a result of the belief that the self is an enduring part of a greater whole. The self is perceived as eternal and being part of a greater, everlasting system. Power, knowledge and ultimate control of life are perceived to reside outside the individual, who is positioned as a small component of a larger system (Faull & Hills, 2006). In addition to this belief, a desire emerges for, and a commitment to, self-transcendence and connection with God. The search for self-transcendence, which may manifest in the pursuit for purpose, meaning and connection, results in the development of a spiritual identity (Templeton & Eccles, 2005).

Spiritual identity may therefore be defined as a stable and persistent sense of the self that addresses ultimate questions raised in the context of spirituality, namely on the nature, purpose and meaning of life (Fisherman, 2004; Kiesling et al., 2006; Love & Talbot, 1999; Poll & Smith, 2003). Spiritual identity includes one's relationship with a God, which then informs relationships with others and the experience of meaning in life. Spiritual identity contributes to behaviours which are consistent with one's core values. The content associated with spiritual identity may therefore be particularly individual. Spiritual identity mirrors individuals' personal reflections about the role of spirituality in their lives (Templeton & Eccles, 2005).

The core of a spiritual identity includes the personal identification of oneself with that which is transcultural and the ability to relate to all of humanity (Schwartz, Luyckx, & Vignoles, 2011). Universal values, ethics and wisdom surrounding the ultimate existential

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questions, the nature of life and death, human identity and the relationship with all that is separate from oneself are central (Schwartz, et al., 2011).

The function of the spiritual identity is to “foster an embodied realisation of identification with that greater whole of being, whether conceived of in terms of an ultimate being, an ultimate state of being, or an ultimate reality that represents the unity behind the apparent diversity of being” (King & Roeser, 2009, p.449). More simply, the function of the spiritual identity is the realisation of a more satisfying existence and being whole. It affords meaning, motivates and regulates behaviour.

Identity theorists suggest that spiritual identity is one of the many components of an individual’s ego identity. The reason is that spirituality provides structure to the self and also promotes outcomes consistent with the other domains of identity (Kiesling & Sorell, 2009). Consequently, spiritual identity remains a unique domain of identity development. As with the other domains of development, spirituality forms an important source of unique differences in the same social-cognitive-affective self-schemas or representations established across development, due to experience (King & Roeser, 2009). Spiritual identity is therefore also characterised by the same processes and structures associated with other identity domains.

The content of this domain of identity is defined by issues of definitive meaning and purpose, which both transcend but yet include the embedded wisdom of any particular cultural-religious tradition (Roeser, Issac, Abo-Zena, Brittan, & Peck, 2008). This domain can evolve out of, co-evolve through, or evolve independently from the other domains of identity. The development of a spiritual identity then, involves the shift from identification with a particular vision of meaning as found in a particular tradition, to a transcultural outlook and identification with humanity as a whole.

4.2 Spiritual identity and adolescence

Adolescence involves a unique, universal, transitional time in which childhood identities are evaluated and shifts are made to new, more mature identities (Good & Willoughby, 2008; Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2013). According to Erikson (1968, 1974), an almost certain probability exists that spiritual identity development may be central during

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adolescence, just as in the case of identity development. The adolescent years are considered to be one of the most sensitive periods for spiritual exploration and development. Identity work during adolescence may therefore lay the foundation for future spiritual identity development.

The neurological, cognitive and psycho-social development that evolves during adolescence evokes it as a very sensitive period (Arnett, 2010; Geidd et al., 2008; Moore & Lippman, 2005; Salkind, 2004). Adolescents are likely to explore spiritual and religious ideals and philosophies, engage in spiritual or religious conversations or commitments and/or make a spiritual or religious pledge over time (Good & Willoughby, 2008; Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2013).

The increased capacity to engage in abstract thought, hypothetic-deductive reasoning and metacognition that characterises adolescence enables them to consider spiritual concepts and ideas. Adolescents also have an increased capability to systematically test their hypotheses about these ideas and formulate their own conclusions. Furthermore, adolescents are able to critically evaluate the sources from which they receive information regarding spiritual matters. The increased complexity of cognitive abilities that characterises adolescence therefore optimally empowers the individual for active exploration in the spiritual identity domain.

An outcome associated with active exploration in the domain of spirituality may include the engagement in a conversion or a commitment. Research suggests that sensitivity to /awareness of opportunities for conversion may increase due to the presence of high intensity emotions, coupled with the absence of some immature cognitive abilities of earlier developmental stages (Arnett, 2010; Geidd et al., 2008; Moore & Lippman, 2005; Salkind, 2004). These experiences during adolescence may be termed as a “behaviour first, then belief” sequence of change. This further precipitates the development of a spiritual identity.

Due to the presence of high intensity emotions, adolescents may also be more likely to participate in other experiences such as group rituals and meditation. This may provoke profound emotions, such as ecstasy, peace and tranquillity (Cooper et al., 2003). The sensitivity to reward usually typical of adolescence may predispose them to seek intense and

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thrilling experiences and activities. The selected activities may contribute to the development of a spiritual identity.

Furthermore, adolescence may be characterised by the perception of increased stress and/or negative perceptions surrounding stressors (Chambers, Taylor & Potenza, 2003; Galvan et al., 2006). The combination of increased stress during adolescence and the cognitive bias towards the perception that events are more stressful also facilitates adolescent sensitivity to spiritual experiences.

Spiritual commitments made during adolescence are more likely to have an enduring nature (Barret, 2000; Davis et al., 2012). Although adolescence is characterised by active exploration, firm commitments to a belief system and personal values typically increase only during late adolescence. Spiritual experiences that result in conversions and commitments may therefore endure into adulthood, because adolescents are searching for ideologies to which they may commit. Spiritual commitments made during adolescence are also prominent due to the combination of high intensity emotions and memory (Cooper et al., 2003). Memories associated with intense emotions are recalled more often. Therefore memories coupled with intense emotions and associated with spiritual experiences during adolescence, are more likely to be recalled.

Evidence indicates that spirituality and religion during adolescence are not only important for an overall sense of identity, but is seemingly also associated with a range of positive outcomes (Juang & Syed, 2010). In this regard, religion has been linked to the creation of social capital and increased social support (King & Furrow, 2008; Volling et al., 2009). Positive affiliation is also apparent amongst religion, the promotion of healthy behaviour, the promotion of prosocial behaviour and purpose and meaning in life (Molock et al., 2006; Plancherel, Bolognini, & Halfon, 1998).

Many religions are of the opinion that physical health is priority and precondition to a healthy spiritual life (Bertram-Troost et al., 2007). Participation in religious institutions may affect parenting, directly or indirectly (Bertram-Troost et al., 2007). Parents involved in religious communities may be more likely than less religious parents to provide their children with a healthy environment. Religious communities may thus serve as strong models for health promoting behaviour. Research also focused on the relation between religiousness and

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measures of personality as well as mental health. Examples of these measures are self-esteem, depression and suicide (Geidd et al., 2008; Molock, et al., 2006).

Church affiliated youth groups may also promote involvement in community service related activities (Bertram-Troost et al., 2007; Fisherman, 2004). The two most frequent means by which adolescents become involved in service activities are through church groups and the school (Bertram-Troost et al., 2007; Fisherman, 2004). The promotion of prosocial behaviour has therefore been found to be a healthy and positive by-product of religious involvement.

Religious doctrine and tradition may also be particularly beneficial to adolescents in their search for institutions and individuals that provide answers to the complex questions they are asking on the ultimate meaning of life (Barret, 2000). It may provide a sense of continuity and belonging to something that is greater than the self. The history, tradition, ties to a higher being and universal principles that religion provide, may also afford positive connections to society. Finally, research explored the relationship between adolescent religiousness and academic achievement (Bertram-Troost et al., 2007; Fisherman, 2004). In addition to being a developmental asset and to promoting general well-being, spiritual and religious identity may also serve as a protective factor and promote resiliency.

Alberts et al. (2003) investigated the perceptions of South African Afrikaans, English and Xhosa speaking adolescents with regard to these identity domains. This study considered the relative importance placed by the adolescent participants on these identity domains. The religious domain was included. Alberts et al. (2003) suggested that the importance located to a specific identity domain may be related to the level of identity formation in that domain. Consequently, identity domains may not necessarily be equally relevant to all adolescents at all times. Elements such as age, developmental stage, gender, socio-cultural factors as well as socio-historical events and developments may significantly impact on identity development.

Alberts et al. (2003) demonstrated that Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking adolescents from the Eastern Cape perceived moral and religious values as particularly relevant and important. Values associated with Christianity were strongly emphasised. According to Alberts et al. (2003), the perceptions held by this group of South African adolescents appeared to be

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closely associated with the moral and religious values emphasised by their educational environments. Their research demonstrated that more than 70% of the participants included in their sample of 1217 adolescents perceive their religious identity as very important. It also indicates that a country conveys great significance to religion.

In conclusion, spiritual identity development during adolescence provides an initial psychosocial structure which extends into adult life. It may also be revised and transformed through ongoing experiences in life, as well as by the shifting of contextual and historical circumstances. Contexts, events and individual circumstances are therefore precipitants to an individual's spiritual identity status (Alberts et al., 2003; King, 2003; Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2013; Marcia, 1966, 1980). Spiritual identity development is, thus, a lifelong process that is not bound to a specific critical period. Spiritual identity development also remains unique, because it does not necessarily unfold in an easily explicable or predictable manner (Good & Willoughby, 2008; Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2013).

4.3 Spiritual identity development

Lifespan developmental theorists suggest that the stages associated with development are both ontogenetic and epigenetic. This means that everyone will pass through all the stages of development if development is normative (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). There is little doubt regarding the relationship between developmental competencies and spiritual identity development. But, theorists investigating spiritual identity development have interrogated whether or not spirituality is characterised i) by more of a discontinuous process than suggested in stage theories, ii) by greater variability, or iii) by the inevitable progress described by developmental theories (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007).

Lifespan developmental theories postulate that spiritual identity development may be less biologically driven than the other developmental competencies associated with stage development (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). Spirituality and spiritual identity development may therefore not necessarily unfold linearly, normatively and epigenetically. Spirituality is more discretionary and idiosyncratic. The process involved in spiritual identity awareness progresses gradually and is far less determined by the societal labelling of the self. Spiritual identity is therefore also

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characterised by greater individual differences when compared to aspects of the self-concept, such as gender.

The mechanisms that promote spiritual identity development appear to be similar to those that promote development in the other dimensions (Cote & Schwartz, 2002; Erikson, 1956, 1959, 1968, 1974; Schwartz, 2001). Therefore, exploration is necessary and tendency to seek information and willingness to probe, identify the presence or absence of competing factors, analyse satisfaction or dissatisfaction within one's current self-concept and scrutinise expectations surrounding the process involved in exploration (Cote & Schwartz, 2002; Schwartz, 2001). Intentional effort is required to develop and foster a spiritual identity. While individuation and separation take place within the other domains of development to foster identity, the spiritual domain includes relatedness and centeredness (Cote & Schwartz, 2002; Schwartz, 2001).

According to Marcia (1966, 1993, 2002), an achieved identity is characterised by both exploration and commitment. The achieved individual has therefore intentionally engaged in the process of exploration and the self-authoring of commitment. Individuals in the achieved status have therefore expanded their identity choices in the pursuit of greater independence and autonomy. By contrast, an achieved spiritual identity is typically characterised by surrender, subordination, mortification and/or denial of the ego needs (Marcia, 1966, 1993, 2002).

The achieved spiritual identity facilitates a greater sense of internal awareness and interiority (Kiesling & Sorell, 2009; Marcia, 1966, 1993, 2002). Individuals in the achieved status are thereby able to consider experiences and beliefs that are different from, and more intentional than, those of their parents and/or other significant individuals. Ascribed or inherited identities have either been relinquished, modified or extended. Individuals in the achieved status exhibit a spiritual identity characterised by choice and effort. Furthermore, they are typically able to reflect on their own process associated with identity change. They also tend to be aware of alternate ways of being and believing, and are conscious of, but not separated from, the authority of the past. Choices are perceived to be ultimately satisfying. God is perceived to be the designer of identity and the ultimate authority figure.

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During adolescence, the foreclosed spiritual identity and diffused spiritual identity are portrayed by unsophisticated decision-making styles (Alberts, 2000; Alberts & Meyer, 1998). Adolescents in the foreclosed status tend to bypass exploration and commit to an ascribed spiritual identity. Diffused adolescents usually experience a sense of being lost and may impulsively try to define themselves according to their circumstances.

Alberts (2000) used Marcia's (1966, 1993, 2002) Identity Status Theory to investigate the nature of identity-related choices made by 102 African individuals in their late adolescence. The religious domain was also included. Alberts (2000) demonstrated that identity foreclosure and identity diffusion was significantly more prominent than identity achievement amongst the adolescent participants. These findings confirm Alberts' (1990) earlier research. Alberts (1990, 2000) ascribed this to the influence of the home environment on the adolescent participants since both samples included participants from religious homes.

While Marcia's (1966, 1993, 2002) model identifies the extent to which an individual may have explored and committed, it does not provide information pertaining to the content and meaning associated with the spiritual identity. The mechanisms associated with developing a spiritual identity are therefore more comprehensive and integrative than exploration and commitment when compared to the other dimensions of identity.

Poll and Smith (2003) approached the development of a spiritual identity integratively. Their Spiritual Identity Development Model drew from Erikson's (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) theory, psychodynamic theories and the cognitive, narrative and systems perspectives. The information in these general theories, associated with identity and spiritual development, may be synthesised and integrated. Integration is necessary, because individuals develop their spiritual identities on the basis of their unique histories and beliefs about the self and others. Poll and Smith (2003) postulated that the primary mechanism towards spiritual identity development consists of the interaction of spiritual experiences with intentional efforts to integrate the experiences into an incorporated sense of the self. Spiritual identity develops in correspondence with what individuals believe God to be (Poll & Smith, 2003).

Spiritual experiences occur throughout the lifespan and in all life-stages of development. Spiritual identity development is not necessarily linear and may occur early in life or only emerge during adulthood. Individuals vary greatly in how they perceive spirituality and

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experience their relationship with God. Consequently, the content associated with spiritual identity is highly idiosyncratic and reliant on religious orientation, personality traits and previous spiritual experiences. The framework proposed by Poll and Smith is summarised in table 8 (MacDonald, 2009; Poll & Smith, 2003):

Table 8

Spiritual Identity Development

Stage	Characteristics
Pre-awareness	Time is spent in a period that is characterised by being unaware of one's self, as distinct from, and connected to others. The self is not experienced in spiritual terms. However, spiritual experiences may have taken place.
Awakening	Another period is entered into in which learning, crisis or conflict takes place, challenging the unawareness of the self as seen in the first period. The individual begins to think of the self in spiritual terms. However, this awareness is inconsistent, fragmented and/or situationally specific.
Recognition	The progressive experiencing and creating of the self in relation to the world and to others is then able to take place. The recollection of earlier spiritual experiences is compared to those emerging in the awakening stage. A more stable spiritual identity develops. The salience and importance of the spiritual identity is still not fully expressed.
Integration	The progressive experiencing and creating of the self in relation to the world, and to others, is then able to take place. Spiritual experiences are fused with the self-concept. Spiritual identity is understood as eternal and occupies a core place in the sense of identity.

Poll and Smith (2003) offered an integrative lifespan model that provides an understanding of the broad and flexible stages individuals may progress through in the development of their spiritual identity. These stages may, or may not, be present during

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adolescence. Psychological identity development is characterised by the selective internalisation or rejection of values and beliefs that correspond to individual experiences and circumstances. Similarly, spiritual identity will either progress or digress according to how closely the God image corresponds with the environment, individual behaviour and personal spiritual experiences. Healthy spiritual identity development during adolescence will therefore be dependent on how well this identity domain corresponds with reality (Poll & Smith, 2003).

While Poll and Smith (2003) explored the mechanisms associated with the development of spiritual identity, other integrative lifespan research has explored the content or substance that contributes to the development of a spiritual identity. The character of spiritual identity is summarised in Table 9 (Roeser et al., 2008; Templeton & Eccles, 2005):

Table 9

Spiritual Identity Characteristics

Characteristics	Self-identification as a spiritual individual
	A spiritual life story
	A spiritual ideal and fundamental life purpose
	Engagement in spiritual practices
	A spiritual worldview

The self-identification as a spiritual individual implies that the development of a spiritual identity is both intentional and reflective in nature (Roeser et al., 2008). As experience is gained, and such experiences are reflected upon, the internalisation and transformation of beliefs - about ultimate concerns - becomes possible. Behaviour corresponding to individual beliefs emerges. Spiritual life stories emerge, giving rise to the integration of a spiritual identity. Spiritual life stories are constructed as individuals reflect on their personal investigations into issues of ultimate concern and the sacred. Spiritual life stories include spiritual experiences encountered along the journey.

Accompanying the self-identification of a spiritual individual, is a belief set, assigned the highest value in life, which includes beliefs about the sacred, the divine, ultimate concerns

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and the relationship with God (Roeser et al., 2008). Spiritual ideals, in turn, facilitate the development of core life values. These values contribute to purpose and when integrated, become part of a spiritual identity. These spiritual ideals and sense of purpose create a consistency of intentional focus, energy investment and behaviour which then extend across subsequent development. Behaviour may include spiritual practices, such as regular activities which are deliberately engaged in to explore and further develop the relationship with God. Spiritual practices enrich and enhance spiritual life.

A spiritual worldview gives rise to a spiritual identity. This identity includes a set of beliefs and assumptions about the world (Koltko-Rivera, 2004). A spiritual worldview defines the known and overt in the world and how these may be achieved. It provides direction to the goals set and the manner in which these goals are pursued. Included in a spiritual worldview are ideas about God, human nature, the creation of the universe and issues surrounding death and life.

4.4 Chapter conclusion

Spiritual identity involves a unique dimension of identity development. It has its foundations in spiritual and identity development, but tends to be more difficult to understand due to the continuous and unpredictable manner in which it unfolds. Due to the always present need to understand human development and the continued need to understand more about the nature of spiritual identity development across the lifespan, this research was commenced. The study explored the content, structural properties and development of spiritual identities in a sample of South African adolescents. The research methodology underlying this exploration forms the focus in the chapter that follows.

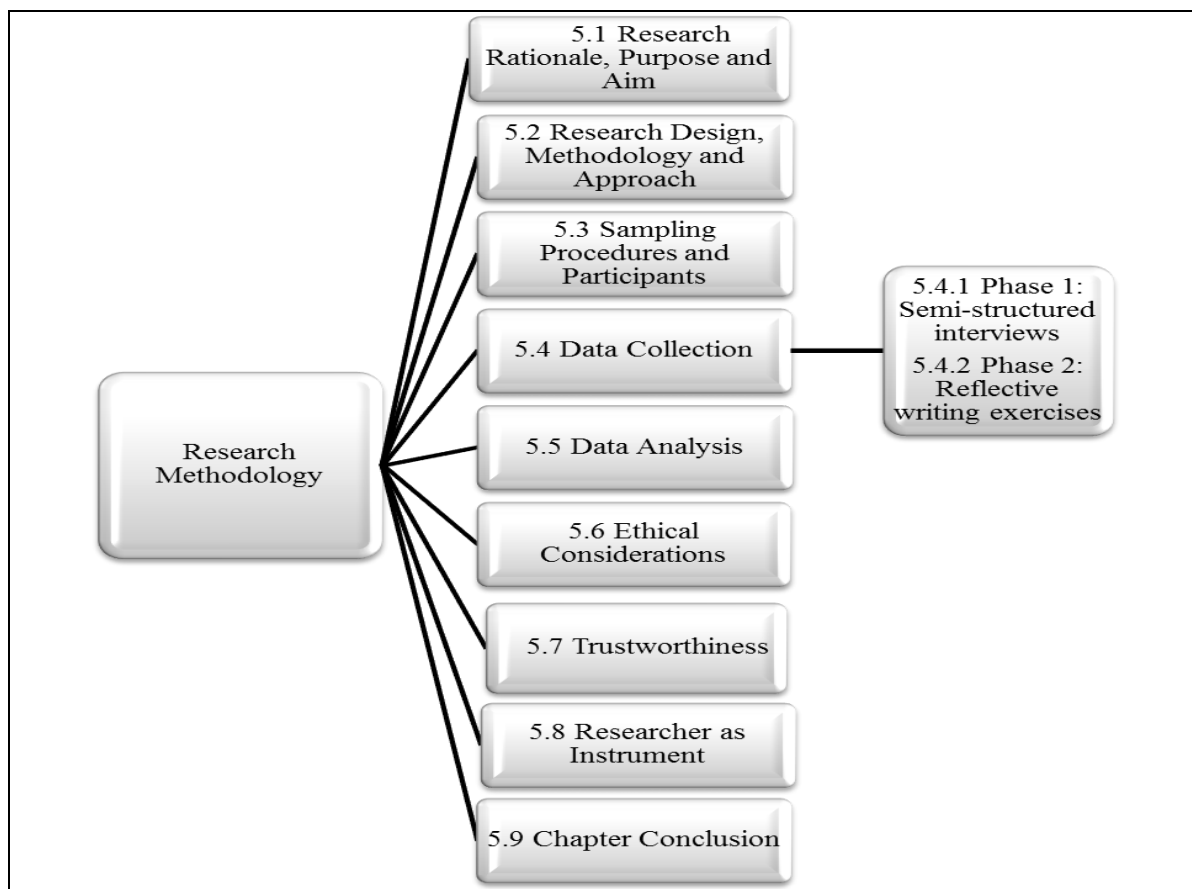
Chapter 5: Research Methodology

Figure 6 Visual outline of chapter 5: Research Methodology

The literature reviewed in the previous chapters explored the development of identity during the adolescent years and focused specifically on the development of spiritual identity during these years. The chapter that follows aims to outline the research methodology that was used to explore this intricate phenomenon. The chapter starts by providing the research rationale, purpose and aim. It then moves into a discussion regarding the research design, method and approach. The sampling procedures that were utilised are indicated thereafter. The participants in this study are then introduced with the explanation of the sampling frame. Furthermore, the data collection methods used will be discussed, as well as the analysis of the data collected. The chapter closes by reflecting on the ethical considerations, trustworthiness and rigour associated with this study.

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5.1 Research rationale, purpose and aim

The physical, cognitive and psycho-social development that occurs during adolescence sensitise them for spiritual development and consequently, the development of a spiritual identity (Arnett, 2010; Geidd et al., 2008; Good & Willoughby, 2008; Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2013; Moore & Lippman, 2005; Salkind, 2004). Development within the spiritual domain is crucial, because it facilitates the search for meaning and purpose (Erikson, 1956, 1959, 1968, 1974; Marcia, 1966, 1980; Poll & Smith, 2003; Roeser et al., 2008). Furthermore, this development in adolescence has been consistently positively associated with general well-being, physical health, educational success, enhanced coping and resiliency, risk reduction surrounding behaviour and positive identity development (Juang & Syed, 2010; King & Furrow, 2008; Volling et al., 2009). Consequently, comprehension of spiritual development and spiritual identity development during adolescence is important.

Although research into spiritual identity development exists, much of this research has focused on the individual pursuit of spirituality. Research has neglected several of the influences on this domain, including the social and interpersonal context associated with spiritual development (Mattis & Jagers, 2001). According to Reker and Chamberlain (2000), the interaction between ecological influences and individual factors facilitate the development of spirituality. Personal, cultural and contextual factors are therefore co-creators in individuals' life stories. Spiritual development in non-westernised contexts has scarcely been investigated (Benson, 2004; Brittian et al., 2013; Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2013).

This research study aimed to explore and capture the lived experiences of a sample of South African adolescents as to how they perceive and experience their spiritual identities. The purpose of this study is to consider the lived experiences of adolescent participants in relation to a relevant developmental theory. The meaning-making process associated with the adolescent participants' spiritual identities is also central.

5.2 Research design, methodology and approach

Qualitative research encapsulates several research methods and is typically concentrated to understand the topic under investigation from the perspective, and the experience, of the

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research participant (Denzin et al., 2006; Flick, Von Kardorff, & Steinke, 2004; Gibson & Brown, 2009; Kiegelmann, 2001; Watts & Stenner, 2005). While subjective perspective and experience are important, the context and the environment in which the participants find themselves are also decisive. In qualitative research, the macro, micro and historical contexts are recognised. This allows for an understanding of how these contexts relate to each other. It further facilitates an understanding of the individual (Devers & Frankel, 2000; Gibson & Brown, 2009).

The nature of qualitative research is one of openness and flexibility (Parker, 2004; Struwig & Stead, 2001; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). It is able to adapt to unexpected events that may emerge during the research process. This research methodology provides the qualitative researcher with meaningful structure during early stages while it remains fluid to allow the research to progress (Devers & Frankel, 2000; Gibson & Brown, 2009; Kiegelmann, 2001).

As a result of the advantages associated with engaging in a qualitative research study, a qualitative method was selected to explore the objectives of this study. A qualitative research design was chosen to explore the spiritual identity development of adolescent participants in depth, in detail and with openness. This would allow for the preservation of the complexity of the data gathered. It allowed for the study of real-world situations and processes of development. It also enabled the researcher to understand the information that emerged within the data in a holistic manner. The researcher was able to immerse in the details and specifics of the data. It allowed for the discovery of important categories, dimensions and interrelatedness within the data.

Phenomenology is a dynamic and evolving method of inquiry (Crist & Tanner, 2003; Moran, 2000). The understanding of lived experiences of individuals who have shared experiences is of primary concern. It assists with a consistent description of the meaning that such experiences hold (Wertz, 2005). It is a research method that pursues the first-person experience and distinctive characteristics of human behaviour (Watts & Stenner, 2005; Wertz, 2005). Phenomenology explores processes and relationships (Moran, 2000). The “lived-through” experiences of the participants are captured and the “lived world” prevails as central theme (Crist & Tanner, 2003, p.202).

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A phenomenological method focuses on central characteristics which may be observed across all variations (Flick et al., 2004; Moran, 2000; Wertz, 2005). This research method is particularly descriptive and explores the relationship between participants and events taking place in their contexts. Phenomenological reductions assist the researcher to reveal the lived experiences inherent in the lives of the participants. Three intertwining steps may therefore be identified. It includes i) observing, ii) the recording of extensive descriptions and iii) the use of phenomenological reductions to explore what is at the core of the topic under investigation (Flick et al., 2004; Moran, 2000; Wertz, 2005).

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was therefore selected for the purposes of this study, because it allowed the researcher to explore the detailed account of the participants' experience of their personal and social worlds. It acknowledged an investigation of something as intricate as the spiritual identity development of adolescent participants. An interpretative process involving two stages, or a double hermeneutic, was involved. A double hermeneutic suggests that while the participant seeks to make sense of their own experiences and their own world, the researcher seeks to make sense of the participant's meaning-making process (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Crist & Tanner; 2003; Hein & Austin, 2001; Smith & Osborn, 2008).

IPA therefore includes both hermeneutics as well as theories of interpretation (Hein & Austin, 2001; Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008). IPA combines empathetic hermeneutics with questioning hermeneutics, because it strives to understand experiences from the participants' perspective while asking critical questions about the transcripts involving the participants' experiences. Both styles of interpretation form a sustained qualitative enquiry, contributing to richer analysis (Laverty, 2003).

IPA also recognises its ties to symbolic interactionism in its quest to understand how meanings are created by individuals within their personal and social worlds (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). A theoretical alliance with the cognitive paradigm in psychology exists, because the focus on the meaning-making process by both participant and researcher indicates that cognition is of central, analytical concern (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Hein & Austin, 2001).

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The research design, methodology and approach selected for this study was evaluated to be a good fit. The reason is that it allowed the researcher to understand how the adolescent participants perceived and experienced their spiritual identities. The researcher and this study had no predetermined hypotheses, because it was not necessary. Rather, a curiosity existed to explore the existing body of knowledge centred on the spiritual identity development of adolescents and consider the manner in which exploration into the lived experiences of spiritual identity development amongst a sample of South African adolescents may contribute to this body of knowledge. This led to the use of this flexible and inclusive method.

5.3 Sampling procedures and participants

Participants were selected for qualitative, phenomenological research, because they possess relevant, lived experience to the focus of the study and because they were motivated to talk about their experience (Finlay, 2009; Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006; Smith et al., 2009). They also tend to be diverse enough to narrate rich and unique data by means of stories of particular experiences (Laverty, 2003).

Sample sizes are typically small within IPA studies, because the goal is to comprehensively document the perceptions and experiences of the participants (Devers & Frankel, 2000; Finlay, 2009). Generalisations are therefore not critical in this type of research. A closely defined group, for whom the research question is significant, was therefore selected through purposive sampling (Devers & Frankel, 2000). Purposive, non-random sampling uses the characteristics of the participants as criteria to select the participants. Purposive sampling therefore requires some advanced knowledge of the population to be investigated (Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Watts & Stenner, 2005).

The sampling technique in this study included purposive, but also snowball sampling. Snowballing is a common method used in qualitative research. The researcher become aware of other participants who may meet the research criteria or specified characteristics by means of participants already included in the study (Gibson & Brown, 2009; Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Watts & Stenner, 2005).

Purposive and snowball sampling were used in this study to select participants according to sample criteria, such as age, gender, school grade and English-language proficiency. Male

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and female participants between the ages of 14 and 18 years were selected. Two participants from each of the year grades were selected to include all developmental considerations. Participants were also selected based on their command of the English language. Participants were evaluated on their ability to express themselves within the context of a semi-structured interview and a reflective writing exercise. Finally, the participants' motivation to engage in this study was considered. Participants, highly motivated to discuss and reflect upon the topic at hand, were selected.

The researcher was able to locate participants who met the inclusion criteria with the help of two colleagues. Both colleagues are trained psychologists and initial participants are located in the personal lives of the aforementioned colleagues. Additional participants were then located through snowballing. The sampling frame is reflected in the Table 10.

Table 10

Biographical information of participants

Participant	Age	Gender	Grade
Jared	14	Male	9
Thato	15	Male	9
Shai	16	Male	10
Tevin	16	Male	9
Tylah	16	Male	11
Angela	15	Female	9
Kaitlin	15	Female	9
Carla	15	Female	9
Veronique	17	Female	11
Olivia	17	Female	12
Aleeya	18	Female	11
Rose	18	Female	12

A pseudonym was used for each of the twelve participants. A total of five male and seven female participants were included in this study. Chronological age was not an indicator of education or grade. While some of the participants started their educational careers prior to

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the typical school-going age of seven years, others were retained in specific grades. A total of six grade 9, one grade 10, three grade 11 and two grade 12 participants were included. Three of the twelve participants are included in educational environments that nurture the Jewish religion and culture. One participant is from a Catholic educational environment that involves participation in Catholicism during the school day. However, this participant does not necessarily identify with the Catholic religion. Ten of the twelve participants attend independent, private schools.

5.4 Data collection

Data collection within the IPA approach usually concentrates on methods which allow for depth and flexibility (Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Larkin et al., 2006). Data collection was undertaken in two phases.

5.4.1 Phase 1: Semi-structured interviews. The first phase of data collection was based upon semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews were hypothesised to have sensitised the participants to the study and allowed the researcher to gain a rich understanding of the participants' unique contexts and spiritual identities. Semi-structured interviews are frequently used in IPA studies, because it allows the researcher and participant to engage in a dialogue (Gibson & Brown, 2009; Potter & Hepburn, 2005; Rabionet, 2011). Initial questions are posed and modified according to the participant's responses to assist the researcher to probe into important ideas shared by the participant.

Unstructured interviews carry the risk of not eliciting the information regarding the topic required for the study. However, semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to cover the desired topics while still providing participants with the space to tell their story (Gibson & Brown, 2009; Potter & Hepburn, 2005; Rabionet, 2011). In a semi-structured interview the ordering of the questions asked, is less important. There is leniency for the researcher to probe further into areas that arise that may be of interest to the study (Smith & Osborn, 2008). The semi-structured interview therefore fits with the flexibility recommended by the IPA.

The semi-structured interview may also be a beneficial method of data collection if the rigour and ethics associated with the study is considered. It may assist the interviewer to

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establish rapport with the participant and clarify certain aspects. These elements refer to the purpose of the study, consent, confidentiality and the research relationship between the participants and the researcher (Gibson & Brown, 2009; Potter & Hepburn, 2005; Rabionet, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2008). The use of semi-structured interviews also allows the researcher to make use of a technique referred to as funnelling (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Funnelling assists the researcher to elicit information regarding the general ideas and thoughts of the participant, as well as their more specific ideas and thoughts regarding the topic under investigation. This technique also promotes the use of probing within the interview situation.

The semi-structured interviews conducted in this study were therefore used to obtain relevant biographical information about the participants to understand their unique contexts. The interview schedule included open-ended questions which guided the dialogue to explore the participants' perception and experience of their spiritual identity (see Appendix A). Literature centred on spiritual identity development and IPA was used in order to formulate the questions (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Crist & Tanner, 2003; Fisherman, 2004; Hein & Austin, 2001; Kiesling et al., 2006; Love & Talbot, 1999; Poll & Smith, 2003; Smith & Osborn, 2008). As recommended in literature (Rabionet, 2011), each of the interviews was audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure that critical questioning about each transcript could take place. This also assisted the researcher to ensure that important nuances were not missed and rapport could be established with each of the participants. The semi-structured interview transcripts are included in Appendix F.

While semi-structured interviews are most frequently used in IPA studies, an IPA analysis is not limited to this method of data gathering. Data may also be obtained by means of other methods, such as reflective writing exercises (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Ruland & Ahern, 2007).

5.4.2 Phase 2: Reflective writing exercises. Reflection suggests that participants are required to examine the manner in which they may respond to a given situation. This may also challenge the participant to become aware of their own attitudes and assumptions with regard to the topic (Boud, 2001; Ruland & Ahern, 2007). One of the primary goals of reflection includes self-awareness. Reflection requires metacognition, which includes self-

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communication with regards to the demands of the task and the cognitive strategies needed to complete the task (Rogers, 2001).

To onset the reflective process, individuals are required to engage in an experience which extends beyond their typical experience (Kennison & Misselwitz, 2002). The reflective process is likely to be more successful when the context for reflection is structured and provides a balance between challenge and support. Multiple methods associated with categorising reflective exercises exist. They may be differentiated into three broad categories, including content, process and premise reflection (Mezirow, 2000). Content reflection includes the thinking associated with actual experience. Process reflection entails the thinking linked to the process involved to handle the experience. Premise reflections comprise of the thinking associated with long-held socially constructed assumptions, values and beliefs about the experience. It typically includes reflections regarding the self, cultural systems, ethical decision-making, feelings and attitudes.

Numerous techniques and exercises may be able to facilitate reflection. Critical amongst these is the use of language and writing as a method to describe observations (Kennison & Misselwitz, 2002). Participant perceptions and experiences may be gathered by means of structured, reflective writing exercises, because they fulfil a guiding role. The second phase of data collection included the use of reflective writing exercises. The reflective writing exercises are included in Appendix B.

The aim of the reflective writing exercises was to increase the depth of the study, as participants were provided with a different medium through which they could express themselves. The reflective writing exercise was developmentally sensitive due to the level of abstraction necessitated by it. It was also beneficial for participants who wanted to express their ideas and thoughts beyond the constraints of an interview situation. In terms of the chronological, sequential progress of the research, the second phase of data collection took place three months following the first phase. The reflective writing exercise transcripts are included in Appendix G.

5.5 Data analysis

The data were analysed and interpreted through the process of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). IPA is distinctive, because it is in essence an approach rather than a specific set of analytical steps (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Brocki & Wearden, 2006; Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008; Wertz, 2005). IPA provides for accessibility, flexibility and applicability (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Larkin et al., 2006). IPA was selected because of its specific characteristics. It allowed the researcher to engage in an in-depth exploration of the process through which the participants make sense of their own experiences. IPA emphasises the participants' accounts of the process through which they progressed and their inclination to engage in self-reflection (Brocki & Wearden, 2006; Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008). IPA was therefore evaluated as a good fit with the aims of this research study.

This study started with a case-by-case analysis. The interview transcript and reflective writing exercise of each participant was considered before moving to the contribution of the next participant. An idiographic approach was used, because particular examples were considered with the intention to work towards a more general categorisation. Each transcript was read a number of times in order for the researcher to become familiar with the data. Initial coding included information from the participants, which was considered relevant, significant and/or interesting. Through this process, the identification of themes in the data was possible. The themes included patterns, which appeared in the data, capturing the essential quality of what was found in the texts.

At this stage of analysis, the researcher considered the link between the emerging themes and their patterns with the relevant theory. The next stage of the analysis included the connecting of the themes. Here, the researcher attempted to make sense of the themes that were emerging and clustered them together. Participant phrases that supported the themes were also noted during this stage. A table was then created that assisted the researcher to order the themes coherently. Superordinate and subordinate themes could therefore be identified. The organisation of the data into a structure could take place at this stage. The analytical process that served as a framework in this research study is summarised in Figure 7 (Smith & Osborn, 2008):

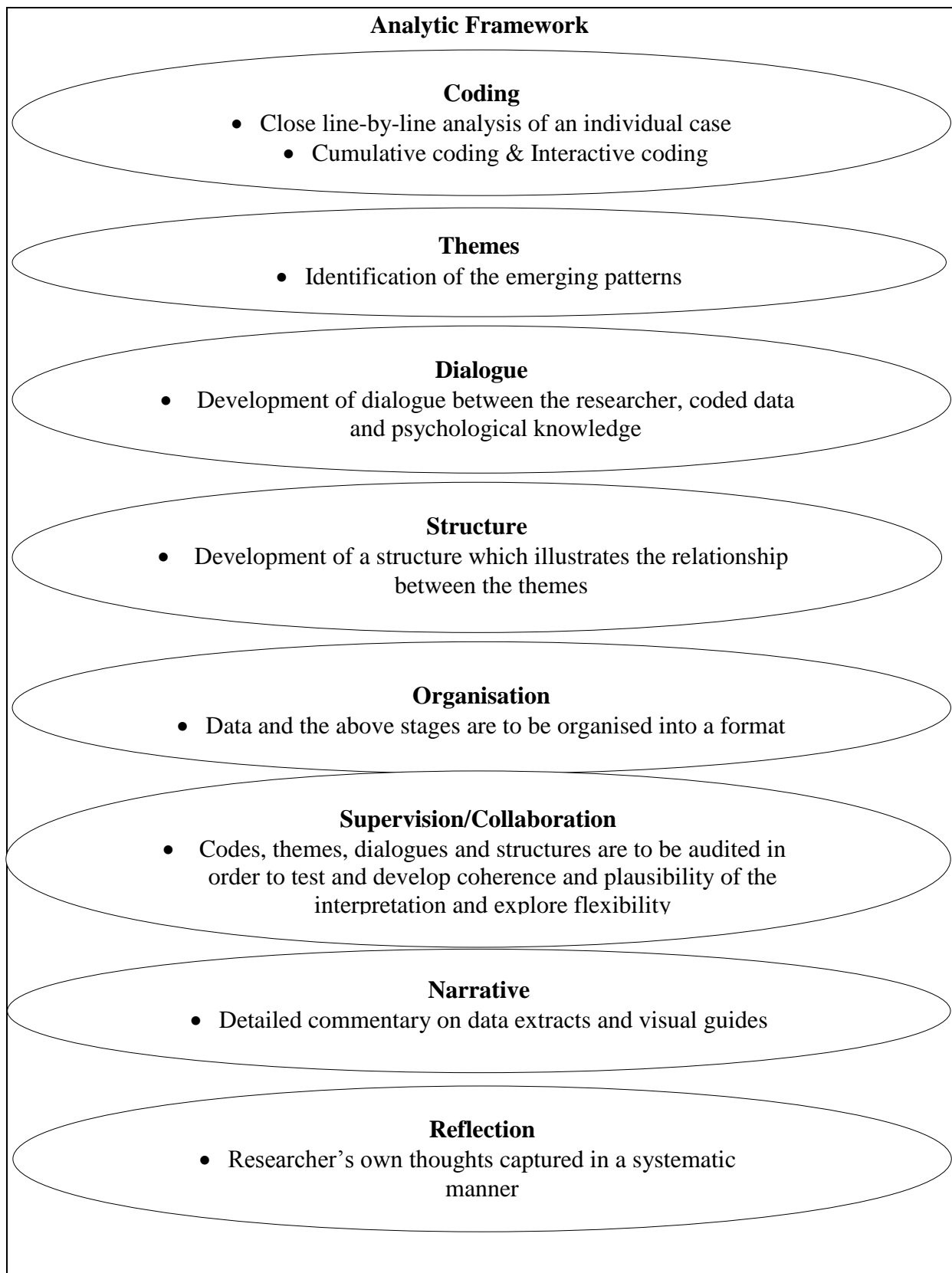


Figure 7 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Framework: The IPA framework can be used in the description and interpretation of individual cases and general patterns.

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Analysis was continued consistently with all the transcripts and reflective writing exercises. This assisted the researcher to identify patterns emerging between the participants. This process assisted the researcher in noting the nuances within the data, as well as identifying new issues from the analysis of subsequent transcripts and texts. A final table including the superordinate themes, identified across all the data, could then be created. While this table included the themes that emerged due to their prevalence in the data, themes characterised by the richness required to illuminate the topic were also included. The themes were then used and expanded upon to provide a narrative account of the data. Here, themes were explained, illustrated and nuanced, using verbatim extracts from the transcripts and texts. Relevant theory was also considered at this point.

5.6 Ethical considerations

The ethical guidelines proposed by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2010) and the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA, 2008) were adhered to in this study. The research committee of the Department of Psychology at the University of the Free State granted the researcher ethical approval for this study. Ethical clearance was also obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of the Humanities, University of the Free State (see Appendix C).

Informed consent implies that participants have been provided with the relevant information regarding the study in order to make an informed decision about their participation in the study (Allan, 2001; 2011). As most of the participants included in this study were under the age of 18 years, informed consent was first obtained from their parents. The parents were provided with information regarding the aim and purpose of this study, as well as what would be expected of participants during the two phases of data collection (see Appendix D). Once the relevant parents had consented to their child's participation in this study, the parent was also required to complete a consent form (see Appendix D). The selected participants were then provided with information regarding the aim and purpose of this study, as well as what would be expected from them during the two phases of data collection (see Appendix E). The participants were then also required sign a consent form (see Appendix E).

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During the initial information session with the participants, the researcher discussed confidentiality and anonymity. The manner in which the data were to be recorded was also discussed. Participants were ensured of anonymity based on the use of pseudonyms in the research study. It was also explained that information, provided during the semi-structured interviews and reflective writing exercises, would not be disclosed for any other purpose than for that of research. All the participants were ensured of respect for their personal opinions. Because the semi-structured interviews were directed predominantly by the participants themselves, the information disclosed by them was not challenged in any way.

The participants were informed that participation was voluntary and may be withdrawn at any stage during the research process. Participants were ensured that all information and/or data already gathered would be destroyed and not included in the research in any manner, should participation be withdrawn.

Because of the sensitivity of the research topic, the researcher was guided by the participants. Careful consideration was given to the participants' developmental needs and feelings throughout the research process. The participants were encouraged to answer in such a way that they felt comfortable with it. They were encouraged to interpret the questions asked from their own frame of reference. Although none of the participants included in this study became distressed at any point during the semi-structured interviews or reflective writing exercises, they were encouraged to contact the researcher should there be the need for any additional discussion.

As the nature of IPA research includes participants who are highly motivated to discuss the topic at hand, compensation of any kind was excluded. The participants, included in this study, all appeared to be self-motivated and discussions surrounding compensation were therefore not entered into.

5.7 Trustworthiness and rigour

IPA lends itself to the interpretation of the data collected during a study. The rigour and truthfulness of such an interpretation therefore becomes central (Morrow, 2005; Stiles, 1993; Walsh & Downe, 2006). To ensure the reliability and validity of the data analysis within an IPA study, certain trustworthiness criteria need to be used. These criteria include credibility,

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transferability, dependability and confirmability (Denzin et al., 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Table 11 includes a summary of the application of the trustworthiness criteria in this research study (Denzin et al., 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1986), following which each of the criteria is explored in greater depth.

Table 11

Application of the Trustworthiness Criteria in this Research

Quality criterion	Provision made by researcher
Credibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research methods – appropriate and well recognised ○ Rapport established with participants ○ In-depth description of research phenomenon ○ Triangulation ○ Theoretical framework provided by previous research
Transferability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thorough description of research phenomenon ○ Data collection methods – transcriptions and exercises ○ Data storage
Dependability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research methodology provided in detail – allow for replication of study ○ Audit trail ○ Guidance from research supervisor
Confirmability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Triangulation ○ Acknowledgment of limitations of the study ○ Research methodology provided in detail – allow for scrutiny of data ○ Audit trail ○ Direct quotations to support research results

Credibility, located within the field of qualitative research, may be equivalent to the internal validity within quantitative studies (Schwandt, 2007). Credibility suggests that the researcher engages in attempts to demonstrate that an accurate picture of the phenomenon under investigation is being presented to the audience (Shenton, 2004). Credibility in this study was ensured through the data collection methods selected. Semi-structured interviews

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facilitated the process of rapport building with the participants. Data collection methods allowed for the preservation of the totality of the data, which also emphasise the pursuit for credibility. Due to the data being collected in two phases and with two methods, data triangulation was ensured. This is important as data triangulation contributes to the credibility of a study (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Credibility was also ensured with the review of previous research and literature. It assisted the researcher to develop a theoretical framework.

The transferability of a qualitative study may be likened to the external validity found within quantitative studies (Schwandt, 2007). Transferability implies that a sufficient amount of detail has been provided by the researcher regarding the fieldwork of the study (Shenton, 2004). The detail may then be used by other researchers to determine if the results of the study may be applied to another context or if the relevant frame of reference is similar to that in the original research study. The transferability of this study was ensured by the sampling techniques that were selected. In this regard, inclusion criteria were determined and used to select the sample. Although samples sizes tend to be small within IPA studies, the sample included in this study included a total of twelve participants. The combination of the aforementioned factors contributed to the transferability of the study.

Dependability, or reliability in quantitative research, ensures that research may be replicated in the future by different researchers should the need arise (Shenton, 2004). While transparency is required in documenting the details surrounding the research sample and data collection methods, the use of an external auditor may also contribute to the dependability of the research (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Morrow, 2005). The existence of an audit trail may therefore be useful, because it allows an external auditor to explore the manner in which the data was collected, analysed and interpreted. The supervision process, included in this research, contributed to the dependability of the study and data collected during this study was audited.

Confirmability involves objectivity and ensures that the findings that emerge from the data are not the researcher's own predispositions (Shenton, 2004). Triangulation contributed to the credibility in this study, but additionally each of the interpretations was drawn from two sources to affirm the confirmability of this study. The supervision process also contributed to the confirmability of the research as the data were audited. The audit trail created during the

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process of data collection and data analysis therefore facilitates the confirmability of this study. Direct quotes from the participants, portrayed in the discussion in chapter 6, further exemplifies the confirmability of the study. Consideration of the limitations, associated with this study also signals confirmability. These limitations are discussed in the concluding chapter.

5.8 Researcher as instrument

Phenomenology is characterised by an intersubjective interconnectedness between the researcher and the researched (Finlay, 2009). While researcher subjectivity is inevitably implicated within the research process, the role of the researcher within this process is central. Giorgi (2006) stated “nothing can be accomplished without subjectivity, so its elimination is not the solution. Rather how the subject is present is what matters and objectivity itself is an achievement of subjectivity” (p. 205). Phenomenologists also propose that researchers engage in a phenomenological attitude when conducting research (Wertz, 2005). Such an attitude is characterised by openness and an active attempt to understand the world from the perspective of the other.

Rather than attempting to set aside the researcher’s experience and understandings, researchers engaging in phenomenological research are required and encouraged to be critically aware of their own subjectivity, expectations and assumptions. This may assist them to identify how these may influence the research process and research results (Finlay, 2003, 2008). Researcher reflexivity is the process of consistently reflecting on interpretations of both experience and the phenomena being investigated. Researcher reflexivity was actively pursued in the research process. The researcher within qualitative phenomenological research therefore becomes an instrument in the research process as they are an active participant within the research process.

5.9 Chapter conclusion

This study aimed to explore the experiences of a sample of South African adolescents in relation to spiritual identity development during these years. A qualitative, phenomenological study was undertaken. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was selected as it allowed the researcher to explore the detailed accounts of the participants’

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experiences of their personal and social worlds to investigate spiritual identity development. Purposive sampling and snowballing was used to select a total of 12 participants to engage in semi-structured interviews and reflective writing exercises. There was a good fit between the topic and the research methodology, because the researcher was able to obtain in-depth and rich descriptions of the lived experiences of the adolescent participants' spiritual identities. The ethical considerations relevant to this study and the application of the trustworthiness criteria were highlighted. The rich descriptions provided by the participants form the focus of the next chapter. Herein the results from this research are presented.

Chapter 6: Results

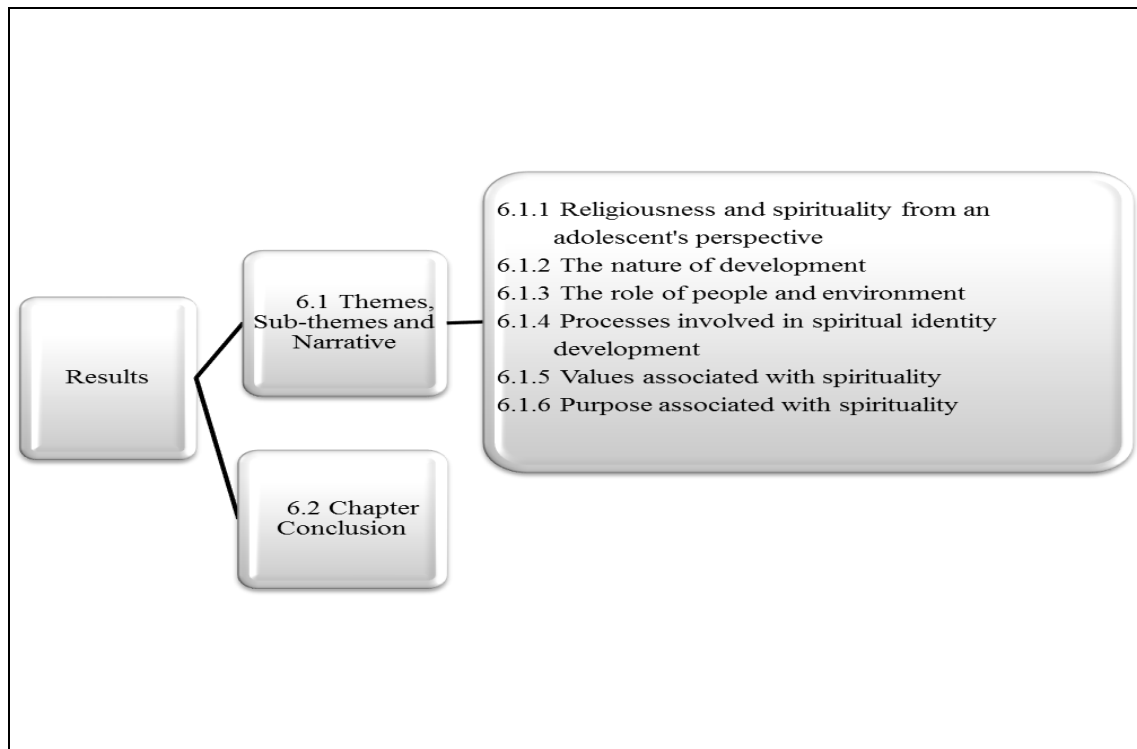


Figure 8 Visual outline of chapter 6: Results

The research methodology presented in the previous chapter considered how the spiritual identity development of a sample of South African adolescents could be explored. The research methodology produced rich, in-depth descriptions of this intricate phenomenon. These descriptions will form the corpus of this chapter. The themes and sub-themes are firstly summarised in Table 12. A narrative of the research results is then provided which chronicles the emerging themes and sub-themes from the data analysis. The latter is then explored and illustrated with the use of direct quotes from the participants as recorded during the semi-structured interviews (SSI) and reflective writing exercises (RWE). The direct quotes within this chapter include identifiers that link them to either the semi-structured interview or reflective writing exercise from which they originated.

6.1 Themes, sub-themes and narrative

The general themes and sub-themes that emerged from the collected and analysed data are summarised in Table 12.

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Table 12

Summary of Themes and Sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes
Religiousness and spirituality from an adolescent's perspective	Connected and overlapping concepts Centrality in identity development
The nature of development	Awareness of changes due to maturation
The role of people and environment	Parents and caregivers Peers Educational environment Geographical location
Processes involved in spiritual identity development	Exploration Participation Choice Commitment and sacrifice Contradiction Movement
Values associated with spirituality	Authenticity Acceptance
Purpose associated with spirituality	Trust and comfort Feelings of despair Awareness of consequences

6.1.1 Religiousness and spirituality from an adolescent's perspective. Religiousness and spirituality were described by the majority of the adolescent participants as connected and overlapping concepts. While the participants appeared to be in agreement that the concepts religiousness and spirituality are intertwined, the nature of each was described differently. According to Angela *"My spirituality is closely linked to my religion. The one way that I know how to feel connected and to know what is right and wrong, is when I look at my religion to help understand it. I have my own sense of these different things but they all stemmed from my religious beliefs and I don't know what I would believe if I didn't have my religion to show me. The reason I feel spiritual is because of my religious activities and beliefs"* (RWE, 6.8.1). Angela also explained *"I know certain people, that even though they*

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could be very religious, they don't feel a connection to anything, they just do it because they want to do it. So I think you could be religious and not spiritual at all, you could be spiritual and not religious. I don't think that it is totally connected, I do think that they intertwine a little bit but they are not dependant on one another (SSI, 6.176)... yes, and somethings I don't want to do, but I still do because I am religious, even though I may not feel connected to it at all, I still do it because it is the religious way" (SSI, 6.180).

Similarly, Shai distinguished religion from spirituality as he stated *"I think that there is a difference because religious is like you study four hours a day, you might not be that passionate but that you do at school, so you keep the Sabbath, you go to synagogue, you have requirements to put on something in the morning and you pray, you do all of this and you can call yourself religious, you can tell your friends that you fasted or the fasts that weren't compulsory. But spiritual is when you are religious and you can make a connection, like you actually feel, you actually feel the need, not even the need, you feel a closer connection with God and that is when, like I mean, you are religious. I think spirituality comes through being religious and being close to God" (SSI, 2.81).*

The overlapping nature of religion and spirituality was also described by Aleeya who commented *"I think of them as linked, because there's different parts of religion that have the spiritual part in them, like what I understand about the spiritual part is your interaction with God, how you praise Him and stuff like that, and then there's also the more religious part of like the commandments you follow or the way you live your life. I think they're related (SSI, 11.60)... I would say both, I can't really choose, because I can't praise God spiritually and ask Him for help and all of that, and then I don't live the way I'm supposed to live, like according to His commandments, because that would be like 'Okay, I go to church on a Sunday, I'm a Christian', just the fact that I go to a religious building, I'm a Christian" (SSI, 11.62).*

Religion was described by the majority of the participants as something that provides structure and facilitates understanding. Spirituality, on the other hand, was described as the connection and relationship with God. In this regard, Olivia articulated: *"There is no spiritual part of who I am, I would like to think that my whole being is spiritual. I wouldn't be able to go on through the day without listening to God and speaking to Him" (RWE, 10.8.1).* Rose appeared to think and feel similarly as she explained *"I don't think that there is*

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just a spiritual part of me as I am a spiritual being. All of me is spiritual. My faith is a huge part of who I am. In fact, it is probably all that I am. Everything I do and believe revolves around God and being obedient to Him” (RWE, 12.8.1).

The nature of religion and spirituality was described as being qualitatively similar and the participants appeared to agree that both religion and spirituality are important in their lives and contribute to their sense of identity. This finding was confirmed by the aforementioned quotes from both Olivia and Rose, as well as illustrated in Tylah’s words *“I do take my religion very seriously and that is the focal part in my life and that is the only reason I am here really, school is also very important, friends are very important, but the reason I am here is, I want to live a holy life, a God-filled life and a life with values and morals and spirituality”* (SSI, 5.2). According to Carla *“Because for me Jesus is the centre of my life”* (RWE, 8.10.1). Rose explained *“I know that God knit me together in my mother’s womb, and I am secure and have found my identity in Him”* (RWE, 12.6.1).

6.1.2 The nature of development. The participants described the progressive nature that characterises development. They recognised that their spiritual identities evolved over time due to the unfolding of the maturational process. Most of them reflected on a lack of awareness in younger years which changed as they grew older and became more aware of their spirituality. The unawareness of spirituality in earlier years was expressed by Tylah with *“I was too young to notice anything obviously [referring to his spiritual identity], I was 4 years old, you know I don’t know anything”* (SSI, 5.21). The stage of unawareness was also noted by Olivia who recalled that *“When I was very young and I wasn’t in touch with my relationship with God in any way, so I didn’t understand that part”* (SSI, 10.18).

The maturational process naturally unfolds in conjunction with increased age and experience. Olivia voiced *“I’ve grown leaps and bounds these past months, spiritually and emotionally”* (SSI, 10.8.1). Although the participants did not reflect in detail on specific domains of development, they highlighted the role of cognitive and psycho-social development. Participants described how their understanding and reasoning increased as they grew older. They also stated how their perception of traditions and rituals changed with their escalated understanding. Angela described the surge in understanding that she experienced with increased age. She also explained how this increased understanding contributed to the presence of self-directed behaviour in her life. Kaitlin described a similar process with

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heightened, own decision-making abilities with increased age. She explained “*I just grew up with that type of environment [Christian] and when I was about nine or so, I decided this is what I wanted (SSI, 7.44)... I just sort of thought I realised that this is what I want for the rest of my life, it was actually, probably one of the best decisions of my life, I felt really happy and it was just a good feeling within me inside, and I woke the next day feeling great*” (SSI, 7.46).

In sum, the natural transition from childhood to adolescence, and the accompanying maturational process, was generally mentioned by participants. Angela confirmed convincingly “*I think its [spiritual identity] changed but I don’t think it’s changed that drastically, like I have grown with it, because I have learned more, I become more religious in some way, because I have learned more, I didn’t really connect with it, then I have gone back some ways, it is like a, it is evolving*” (SSI, 6.142).

6.1.3 The role of people and environment. While the maturational process was found to trigger the development of a spiritual identity, there also appeared to be people and environments that facilitated this process. All the participants described the role of the influences they had perceived to have impacted on their belief systems and chosen spiritual identities. The role of people and environment was noted in all of the transcripts. The participants were able to reflect on perceived influences and considered how such influences resulted in their own decisions pertaining to spiritual identity. It was noted that spiritual influences were included in relationships with significant others, most specifically relationships with parents.

Both Jared and Chantal described the role of their parents and family members in the nurturance of their spiritual identity. They provided guidance and direction with regard to their spirituality. Jared reported “*I am a Christian, yes, and I believe in Christianity because I believe in my family’s religion (SSI, 1.32)... My mom, my granny, not my grandpa, my step dad, my real dad, my other granny and my other grandpa [are all Christian]*” (SSI, 1.36). Similarly, Chantal also reflected on the role of her parents and narrated “*My parents [have influenced me], by always telling me that I need to spend time with God, to get to know Him better and to know when He is talking to me and encouraging me*” (SSI, 8.80). In this regard, some of the participants also valued the influence provided by parents and caregivers. Rose recounted “*It is really a blessing because I know a lot of people who do not have that, they*

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don't have that input from their parents, that spiritual input, so in that sense it is really a blessing" (SSI, 12.38). Olivia explained *"I've always been brought up on it [Christianity] so I don't know really what it's like to be without it and so I would probably still, even if it weren't for my parents, make my way into becoming a Christian but because my parents are so strong in the church and so high up in the church it kind of fast forwarded it for me, it's kind of given me this huge jump, so if it wasn't for my parents, I would still be going steady but because of my parents it's kind of given me a jump into it more"* (SSI, 10.36). Tylah described the significant role his grandmother played in his life and in the nurturance of his spiritual identity, *"My grandmother is also very spiritual lady, she is not converting but she also has the same belief as us in one God, Judah. So she would also come along and be this kind of a spiritual leader"* (SSI, 5.21).

The majority of the participants appeared to perceive the role of parents and other significant figures as supportive in the development of their spiritual identity. However, for some, the experience in terms of parents and/or significant others were quite prescriptive. Aleeya presented it as *"Uhhh, okay, I must say, personally my mom doesn't like the Catholic religion and their way of thinking or whatever. But, I find myself confused at times because I do see similarities. I don't want to judge them too fast and I don't want to accept it too fast, but I don't really have a decision, even if I wanted to be Catholic, I'm limited and just told 'Go straight, focus, you're just a Christian, don't go on to the other side'. And I often think that 'What if I am on the wrong side? What if the Catholic side is the better side?' I mean there are things that I don't understand that they might do"* (SSI, 11.37).

The peer group also appeared to be influential in the development of spiritual identity. Some of the participants explained that they actively engaged in discussions with their peers regarding various religious and/or spiritual beliefs and practices. Other participants appeared to observe the practices and beliefs of their peers and drew conclusions on the basis thereof. The impact of the peer group on the participants seemingly carries both positive and negative qualities. Olivia described the positive impact her peers had on her as *"Probably not as strong as I am now, because I wouldn't have my friends who obviously have a big impact on how I am so strong as a Christian. I think I would be, probably just not as strong"* (SSI, 10.34). However, Thato pronounced his peer group as *"Yes, lots of influences. I would say maybe 60% bad guys. Maybe 40% good guys. Or maybe it's not even that much, maybe only 30% good guys."* (SSI, 3.8). He stated *"There are just sometimes temptations, like as I said*

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before, all those people at school are bad influences, but you just have to be strong and have backbone, you know, you have no choice, if you know your background and where you're from, you have to say no to most of the things, especially the bad things.” (SSI, 3.28). Thato compared his own behaviour to that of one of his peers and explained that some differences may be attributed to religion and/or belief systems *“He is wild, he's into partying and I don't go, I'm always at home, I have boundaries, I don't have that much freedom”* (SSI, 3.139). Veronique also reflected on her discussions and observations with one of her peers as *“I've got a friend whose lying in hospital right now, she tried to commit suicide. Because as a Muslim, you submit to your father until he passes you over to your husband and you submit to him. She's 18, she's got dreams, she's got goals, but her father beats her, doesn't want her to have a career, won't let her leave, doesn't want her to be friends with a coloured person, and he said this to her in front of me, I don't want you hanging out with your 'moloto' friends because we influence her. We have our dreams, and our goals and that people she used to hang out with, they were the drunks, and they got high, and they have babies and whatever, he didn't want that for her. But I'm different, so I can't even be under that same category. Now she can't have the friends she wants, she can't have the career she wants, she can't have the life she wants, she can't have the husband she wants, she wanted to take her own life. And it's all under the fact that she's Muslim. That is her, her role as a human being. You are born, you submit to your father, you get married, you have his children, that is all you do. So I can't agree with the Muslim culture because firstly, you can't treat your woman right and why would God create something that you're supposed to disrespect and degrade, I don't believe in that. I also don't believe in God saying 'I created a whole world for the people but they don't, if they don't believe in Me, you have the right to go and kill them'. I don't agree with that either. So that's how I know that that religion can't possibly be right, because then this world would be a mess”* (SSI, 9.70).

The role of the educational environment was also found to be significant in the development of a spiritual identity. Educational environments that nurtured the development of spirituality through religious education, traditions and rituals contributed to an integrated spiritual identity. Angela discussed the role of her educational environment as *“It is not an extremely religious school, but it is a Jewish day school, so we do general study subjects like maths, English, science for 3 quarters of the day and then the rest, we do kind of bible studies, or something like that or laws about Judaism, kind of a mix of both* (SSI, 6.14)... *I don't think I would feel as connected to my religion if I went to, if it wasn't part of my*

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everyday life, so I feel like, not that if I had an opportunity to learn more about it and to be more involved in it, and it becomes more integrated into my overall life, not just on a day I do religious stuff and on another I don't" (SSI, 6.80). The influential nature of Angela's educational environment was also resonated in her reflective writing "*There are a vast variety of factors that contribute many important aspects toward my life like my school and home environment, family and friends, my spirituality and community*" (RWE, 6.3.1). Similarly, Shai contemplated on the important role his educational environment played in the development of his spiritual identity. He stated "*But like yes, my family does have an influence but not as much as school. School is a foundation and then it just been built on since then*" (SSI, 2.66).

Some of the participants were also able to describe the role of their geographical location in the development of their spiritual identities. Some participants articulated a greater sense of connection with God when visiting certain geographical locations. Tylah voiced "*So we would go to Israel many times and obviously we went on a, I think my parents at some stage went on many intellectual journeys, asking a lot of questions in the root of what they believe in without sounding too dramatic, and you get exposed to Jews, to Israeli life and you see, you see that there is so much more to Israel when you look at it from a Jewish point of view, not from a Christian point of view. So every time we would go we would be more exposed to Jews, we would be more exposed to Judaism and questions would come*" (SSI, 5.21). Tylah elaborated on the importance of geographical location and explained "*So I would say the land itself and the culture is involved, the people, the places, that is also a big influence, I think it has enriched my life, I think it [trip to Israel] has enriched my whole class, I think their lives are enriched, I would say Israel definitely*" (SSI, 5.33).

6.1.4 Processes involved in spiritual identity development. Participants reflected on the processes through which spiritual identity was explored. Participants mentioned that they engaged in the discussion with peers, parents and educators to explore their ideas about spirituality. Jared said "*Sometimes, like when my friends talk, the people who talk and say 'Christ doesn't exist', I think about it, uhmm, until I come back to what I remember and then I say that He is real*" (SSI, 1.122). Angela recited on the engagement with her peers "*We often have open discussions in class without teachers, like in our break but even in our class there are people that are very religious and people that aren't, so then you kind of, you do get to talk to them and people have their own opinions but I think that, like one of my friends is*

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quite religious and she wears skirts all the time, and she covers her elbows all the time, so I don't know, like we can still talk about that without having an argument but she has her own perspective about it and I have mine" (SSI, 6.136). Discussions with educators were described by Angela as *"So we are like very encouraged in Judaism to ask questions, like we don't really believe in blind faith. We need to have questions answered if we are going to do it, like to choose, so we ask questions like why we have to cover our knees and why we have to cover our elbows and they [educators] tell us what the basic law is and we kind of choose ourselves instead of being told that we have to, so the teachers, they do receive things quite well and they don't ever say like 'I am not answering the question' or avoid the topic, they always take the question"* (SSI, 6.138).

Many of the participants also appeared to model their parents, accepting the belief system of their parents as their own. Carla propounded that some of the roots of her spiritual identity were within her family, with her later choosing a spiritual identity that is congruent with that of her family. She explained *"Growing up in a Christian home, it's always been a part of my life. I think that because I, in the end, made the decision myself to follow Christ it makes up a whole different part of my identity and through Jesus I know who I am in Him"* (RWE, 8.9.1). According to Angela *"My religion has been integrated into my life since I started having ideas about life or religion. My religion and lifestyle were there first and all my behaviour and thoughts stem from that. Most of my behaviours and thoughts are based off of what I know from my religion because as much as it is a religion I also believe it is a guide to life on how to act and behave"* (RWE, 6.11.1).

Participation in specific traditions and rituals often was accepted through modelling with parents and significant others as the primary influences. According to Rose, her parents initiated a blessing ceremony in which she participated. She experienced it as significant in her relationship with God as well as in her relationship with her parents. She stated *"Like being a teenager can be a really awkward phase because you are being expected to act in a way, being an adult but you are being treated like a child, and so having a blessing ceremony is like confirmation that you are becoming an adult now and you need to start acting like one, and if you act like one, they will treat you like one"* (SSI, 12.48). Kaitlin also described her participation in church as being primarily initiated by her parents. She explained *"Every*

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single Sunday, my parents won't let, like if you are tired that's not an excuse you've got to go [to church], but if you are sick, then its ok, but otherwise, ja, every Sunday" (SSI, 7.77).

Participation in religious and spiritual activities was also described to foster a relationship with God. Thato explained that he experienced a better connection with God when participating in religious and spiritual activities. According to Thato *"I enjoy doing this [engaging in religious activities], It makes me connect with my Creator"* (RWE, 2.15.1). Olivia described her own desire to participate in religious and spiritual activities as follows *"I believe that in order to have a good relationship with God, we must take time every day to read His Word, the Bible. To spend time in prayer. I spend every day at church, because I believe that in everything that you do, you worship God. You don't have to be physically shouting praises to Him, but in everything, every action, every thought, worship him that it brings glory to Him"* (RWE, 10.14.1).

The importance of choice in spiritual identity development was also clearly expressed. In this regard, Tylah explained *"I am not Jewish by birth I am converting"* (SSI, 5.2). Olivia also clearly pronounced *"It's my choice. I know that it makes me a better person, it inspires me from the inside out, it humbles me"* (RWE, 10.15.1). Aleeya felt quite restricted in the choices she was able to make regarding her religion and spirituality. She elucidated *"So if it was up to me, I'd just stay at home and grow spiritually by myself, with prayer and believing in that"* (SSI, 11.47).

Commitment was prominent. Participants expressed that they felt that their chosen spiritual identity was right for them and that their spiritual identities were unlikely to change at later stages of life. Chantal described it as *"I am a child of God. Jesus is my Lord and Saviour (RWE, 8.8.1)... My beliefs influence every area of my life because for me, Jesus is the centre of my life"* (RWE, 8.10.1). Thato explained *"There are a lot of temptations so you need to be committed, you need to have a backbone"* (SSI, 3.28). Veronique stated *"I believe in Christianity because God has proven Himself to me many many times (SSI, 9.56)... that's why I won't leave God, full stop, I won't leave God because I know it will get better"* (SSI, 9.66). Olivia confirmed *"I feel like there is only one way and that's God and that's Christianity and that is the only way to heaven and just like everyone else believes the same thing, I wouldn't be able to because I have such a strong relationship with God and it has*

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such a strong impact on my beliefs and my growing as a person and I can't deny it, I can't deny what is my experience with my relationship with God" (SSI, 10.44). Similarly, Kaitlin committed with *"Sometimes I still don't feel a hundred percent sure about some things, but you just have to go back to how you are supposed to live by faith and not by, you just think questioning is not probably such a good idea* (SSI, 7.58)... *I'm really convinced that Christianity is the way"* (SSI, 7.89).

A sense of commitment also yielded sacrifices on the part of the participants. Some of the participants felt it was necessary to prioritise their spiritual development and/or relationship with God. This is deemed valid even in the presence other needs that are then sacrificed in other areas. Sacrifices associated with time and relationships, specifically peer relationships, were noted. Kaitlin specified *"It's just hard because, you have to be a certain way, but you also have to get other people to be that way with Christianity, and it's really hard because if you try people will box you out 'like no I'm done'"* (SSI, 7.133). Sacrifices associated with peers were also described by Rose *"And then, ja, there were also some guys from my grade who started coming but that was just like to laugh at us, so eventually my friend asked them to either behave themselves or leave so they left, uhmm, because it was just distracting for other people"* (SSI, 12.86). Tylah recounted *"There are times with inspiration, there are times without, when you feel like 'ag do I really want this?' it's so much work, so much effort, like getting up in the morning early, coming home late, such a hectic life"* (SSI, 5.41). Olivia reported *"Constant struggle because I know that I have to keep God as my top priority but at the same time, I get so much pressure from my school, from different people, 'what are you doing with your future' etcetera, it's like you are getting pulled into one direction, but you are trying to keep your faith at the same time and it's an ongoing struggle. I think the one thing that actually keeps the ongoing struggle not as much as a struggle is my Christianity"* (SSI, 10.48). Rose said *"Especially in the school that we are in where it is so diverse and Christians are actually persecuted so it is tough but ja"* (SSI, 12.74).

Although the importance of choice, commitment and sacrifice appeared prominent, the presence of contradiction was also apparent. This was noted by some participants with the consideration of their own ideas and/or belief systems compared to those of others. Contradiction results in confusion at times as well as the need on the part of some of the participants to challenge ideas and/or belief systems. In this regard, Aleeya reflected on her confusion surrounding the ideas held by others and those of her own. She explained *"But, I*

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find myself confused at times because I do see similarities. I don't want to judge them too fast and I don't want to accept it too fast" (SSI, 11.37). However, the presence of contradiction also reinforced some of the participant's ideas and/or belief systems. Veronique voiced her ideas regarding belief systems different to her own *"I don't believe that God has got His chosen people, like Jehovah Witnesses. Mormons were high when they wrote that book. And, the others, I have never been exposed to. And if I can look at three other religions, and completely disagree with it, then I know that what I have been doing is right. It makes sense, it really really makes sense"* (SSI, 9.56).

Some participants described movement or shifts in their spiritual identity. They explained that they experienced instances in which they felt closer in, or more distant in, their relationship with God. Rose explained that she experienced her relationship with God as closer when she was younger, but more distant when she entered into high school and experienced some of the challenges associated with adolescence. She annotated *"So during the beginning of high school, my relationship with God was really good and then it sort of, I wouldn't say died down, but it was just like good, and then ja, every now-and-then I just have to get back on"* (SSI, 12.114). Tylah also rendered some movement in his spiritual identity which appeared to be associated with a shift in focus, namely *"Uhhh, at times, you know, where you just want to have fun, you don't really want to, you just want to have fun. You don't want some meaningful experience, you just want fun. Uhhh, obviously nothing too, still within the boundaries, but I think it is very easy to lose focus, I really think it is. Especially at this age, uhhh, and also you have go so many, if you want to do well at school, you have to work really hard, and it just takes away your time to dedicate yourself to what you believe in"* (SSI, 5.51). Similarly, Olivia reflected on busy times and focusing her attention on her immediate activities. She explicated *"Well I mean, it's confession time, the hard days, because we all live such busy lives and especially during exams and things like that, and when you are just so focused on other things, like worldly things where it is like 'I don't have time for Christianity right now'. Even if you are not mentally being 'No, I don't have time for Christianity' it's kind of your priorities, and you kind of not making time for God and for my faith. It's a constant struggle because I know that I have to keep God as my top priority but at the same time, I get so much pressure from my school, from different people, 'What are you doing with your future?' etcetera. It is like you are getting pulled into one direction, but you are trying to keep your faith at the same time and it's an ongoing struggle"* (SSI, 10.48).

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Emotional experiences also appeared to impact on the relationship with God. Some participants have been experiencing closeness or distance in certain instances. This process was described by Aleeya, who elaborated *“I feel like I move further away because I feel like ‘Where is He?’ (SSI, 11.76)... I don’t necessarily ask Him knowing that He’s going to help me, I just do it to reassure myself that I prayed about it and that I tried my best and that’s it, if He helps me, He helps me, and if He doesn’t. I just guess that is the way it was meant to be and I do like doubt Him at times, like if I feel He hasn’t been around all this time, that prayer is just like ‘Help me through this exam and then you can disappear again”* (SSI, 11.96). Aleeya further explicated *“These past few weeks, I’ve felt really sad and down and stuff and angry at God, so no, I haven’t been reading it at all. When I try and read it, I just feel more frustrated, and yes, I just feel really frustrated. And I end up closing it and trying to forget about it because I feel like it’s just not going to help, I’m just going to get my hopes up, reading a verse that says ‘Everything is going to be okay, I’m going to protect you’, and then when something bad happens, I just don’t think things are going to get better”* (SSI, 11.88).

6.1.5 Values associated with spiritual identity. Participants revealed some of their values on exploration and experimentation, leading to spiritual identity development. The participants firstly revealed a need to live authentically. Angela conveyed that *“You don’t need to be out there or put yourself out there all the time, you can be yourself and be who you want to be and people should see you as who you are, ja”* (SSI, 6.110). Carla orated *“Growing up in a Christian home, it’s always been a part of my life. I think that because I, in the end, made the decision myself to follow Christ, it makes up a whole different part of my identity and through Jesus I know who I am in Him”* (RWE, 8.9.1). Shai explained that *“I would be a proud Jew if I had to go to Dubai or Iran or whatever, even though I wouldn’t be able to go there, but like I am a proud Jew I would take, like I wouldn’t pretend I am not a Jew”* (SSI, 2.93). Tylah recited that *“Here many friends share the same views and accept you for who you are, for what you believe in and then you can just express yourself more freely and just be who you want to be and there is no ‘you have to restrict yourself or feel weird about yourself”* (SSI, 5.16).

Some participants felt it necessary to withhold their belief system and/or religion because they feared rejection and/or violence. However, discontent was expressed in this regard. The participants wanted to be congruent within multiple contexts and free enough to make their own decisions with regard to their spiritual identity. Olivia said *“When I was in church I*

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loved every moment of it, I had amazing friends, Christian friends who didn't go to my school but every Sunday it was like our family all together and I could be myself and I never felt that in school, because I had to constantly hide, because I didn't think that anyone would understand. But what I didn't understand until I came here, is that there are so many other people who are also hiding that they go to church and they also have a family like my family" (SSI, 10.22). Olivia's quote illustrates that she had the need to live authentically, but felt as though in certain contexts, this was more difficult. Some of the other participants also expressed the desire, and their difficulty, to live authentically. Difficulties because of the fear of rejection and/or violence appeared to be prominent. According to Angela *"Because you don't really know how people are going to react to what you are telling them. I have met tons of people who are like totally fine with it [Judaism], they respect that we are different, but then there are others who are kind of like 'Oh, okay you are Jewish', and they kind of like don't want to be with you anymore"* (SSI, 6.154). Angela further explained *"I just, sometimes I just don't understand why people would want to do that, if it is like 'You stay in your religion', 'You stay in your religion', it's okay. I don't understand why people would want to interfere, but if people are going to do what they are going to do, then we kind of got to be prepared to protect ourselves"* (SSI, 6.164). Shai expressed similar feelings and ideas as he explained *"It wasn't an aggressive attack but like, one of the girls, like said an anti-Semitic, not anti-Semitic, but it just came from her mouth and it was offensive but it was just in the spur of the moment"* (SSI, 2.50).

A sense of commitment appeared to result in the participants' own decisions about the enduring nature of their spiritual identities. But all expressed that they felt that others should also live authentically, even if it is according to a contrary belief system and/or spiritual identity. The need for authenticity therefore appeared intertwined with acceptance, because the participants stressed the importance that everyone has to be able to freely choose and express their spiritual identity. Acceptance was described clearly when Angela explained *"It needs to be their choice if they want to be part of it or not, and if they don't, then that is okay, it is their choice. So we [Jewish individuals] never blame someone for not wanting to, or for wanting to become Jewish"* (SSI, 6.168). Similarly, Veronique reflected on the importance of acceptance *"... because you're in no place to change what I believe and I'm in no place to change what you believe and I'm in no place to insult what you believe even. So, being in a mixed school, you, you better learn to tolerate, not tolerate, you need to accept them as they are, otherwise you're just in for conflict or unnecessary drama"* (SSI, 9.72). According to

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Olivia, *“Our religions are going to be different and in the end, it is about what I decided to believe and what you decide to believe, and yeah we are going to have discussions but it is not like it’s going to break-up the school you know, because we are all so accepting. That is you and this is me and this is them and this is us”* (SSI, 10.42).

Within the sub-theme of acceptance, Shai described his feelings regarding a lack of tolerance he has observed *“Because I still don’t understand why there are killings between people because we are all human, that should be the main thing”* (SSI, 2.58). Nonetheless, Rose explained that her educational environment has facilitated acceptance *“I find it a little bit easier because this school that I am in has taught me to, uhmm, accept people more for who they are and not to try and force God down their throats”* (SSI, 12.72).

6.1.6 Purpose associated with spiritual identity. Finally, participants either experienced a sense of purpose in their relationship with God, or perceived that their spiritual identity provided a meaningful direction and intended purpose for their life. Jared reflected on his ideas surrounding purpose *“I think we are here to spread our religion”* (SSI, 1.82). Carla expressed similar thoughts as she explained in her reflective writing that *“I think we are all here because God has a plan for us to bring other people to faith as well and to help other people”* (SSI, 8.86). She also explained that she believes *“We are created to live life for Jesus and Jesus is the only One who can make us completely whole”* (RWE, 8.3.1). Thato expressed his thoughts surrounding purpose as *“[We are here to] Praise the Lord and preach to others who don’t know about Him”* (SSI, 3.82). Olivia also echoed the mentioned viewpoints in this paragraph with her ideas surrounding purpose *“I believe that life is a gift, a gift from the creator, God. We were chosen to live it to the fullest. We were chosen to be here on earth to make an impact, to do work for God. I believe that we can do anything we want and put our mind to, especially through God”* (RWE, 10.3.1). Furthermore, Rose further argued *“I think we are here for God’s pleasure and not because some people messed up. We all messed up. So now we are just here to love God and to love others and to worship Him and to tell others about Him”* (SSI, 12.124).

While some of the participants were less clear about what their purpose and/or meaning in life were, they were still able to reflect on their thoughts regarding the presence of a sense of purpose. In this regard, Veronique said *“I believe God has a plan for my life and everything I have ever gone through is for a very good reason”* (RWE, 9.81). Tevin positively described

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“It’s nice that, you know, someone who knows us, He is like our Creator, so He wouldn’t put you in the earth for nothing, He has got a purpose for you” (SSI, 4.83). Similarly, Aleeya mentioned *“I think we all have a purpose, ja, but I do feel like we all have a purpose, but it’s hard to figure it out and give room to it, in a way”* (SSI, 11.66).

It also became clear that a sense of trust and comfort was experienced in relation to the participants’ spiritual identity. Olivia worded this with *“God just gives me that peace, through the chaos I know that God actually has a plan for my life, I don’t need to worry, I don’t have to be like ‘Oh, I don’t know what I’m doing with my life’, because He gives me peace and He’s in control and yeah”* (SSI, 10.52).

In some instances in which participants experienced trials and tribulations that resulted in feelings of despair, it was also perceived to be associated with their spiritual identities. Veronique was able to reflect on some difficult situations with *“I love You no matter what, but there will be times when I don’t wanna talk to You because I feel hurt by You, so that’s normally when things hit rock bottom and I am not happy where I am, or my dreams are not coming into play and no doors are opening up for me, then it’s like ‘I am not abandoning You, I am not saying You don’t exist but You’re hurting me right now and I don’t wanna talk to You”* (SSI, 9.42). Similarly, Aleeya stated *“I feel like I move further away because I feel like ‘Where is He?’* (SSI, 11.76)... *I don’t necessarily ask Him knowing that He’s going to help me, I just do it to reassure myself that I prayed about it and that I tried my best and that’s it, if He helps me, He helps me, and if He doesn’t. I just guess that is the way it was meant to be and I do like doubt Him at times, like if I feel He hasn’t been around all this time, that prayer is just like ‘Help me through this exam and then you can disappear again”* (SSI, 11.96). Despite feeling despair at times, Aleeya also reflected on her feelings of trust as she stated *“God planned that it had to happen, the bad things had to happen so I could help other people, but then again, I do feel like it’s unfair”* (SSI, 11.84). The sub-theme linked to feelings of despair is therefore associated with a sense of purpose that brings hope during difficult experiences. This sub-theme slots in with the movement described in the processes associated in spiritual identity development.

A sense of purpose and ultimate meaning also appeared to be associated with an awareness of consequences. This awareness seemingly resulted in commitment and sacrifice in certain instances. Jared expressed an awareness of consequences as he explained *“We will*

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be buried or our bodies will be burnt and our souls will go to heaven, but not all of us, because some of us do wrong things and we don't believe in God, I think the ones that don't believe in God they will go to heaven, yes I think they will go to heaven (SSI, 1.88)... yes but the people who don't believe in God, when they do something wrong, I think it is worse because who are you going to ask for forgiveness from" (SSI, 1.90). An awareness of consequences was also expressed by Rose with "God will convert those [who don't believe] somehow and if they don't listen, then that will be unfortunate and that is an understatement, I have compassion for them and I feel sorry for them" (SSI, 12.74). Similarly, Kaitlin reflected on her awareness of consequences, which appeared to provide her with a sense of motivation and direction. She explained "I'm not sure I really have no clue at this point, but I know when I will die, maybe I will go to heaven or to hell. I actually got baptised this year, before I asked the questions 'That is it true that if you don't get baptised, you going to go to hell?' and as it is 'Yes you are', so that kind of bugged me, so eventually I just decided I needed to this, so I did. But if God wants me to use my talents for His work, then I'm willing to do that. So maybe that's what God planned" (SSI, 7.60).

6.2 Chapter conclusion

This chapter highlighted the themes and sub-themes that emerged through the data analysis and presented a narrative with participant quotes to illustrate the results of this study. The sample of South African adolescent participants distinguished between religiousness and spirituality. They described these concepts as connected and overlapping. The centrality of spirituality in the lives of most of the adolescent participants was prominent. Themes surrounding the developmental influences on spiritual identity were also prominent. The process through which the research participants explored, participated and committed to their spirituality was described. The participants' values associated with spiritual identity included authenticity and acceptance. Furthermore, spiritual identity appeared to provide a sense of purpose for all the research participants. The chapter that follows will discuss and interpret these findings with the utilisations of relevant theory.

Chapter 7: Discussion

*I began by being perplexed about my body,
And I ended by being anxious about my soul.*

In short, I wished to know what I was.

(Monod, 1842, p.3)

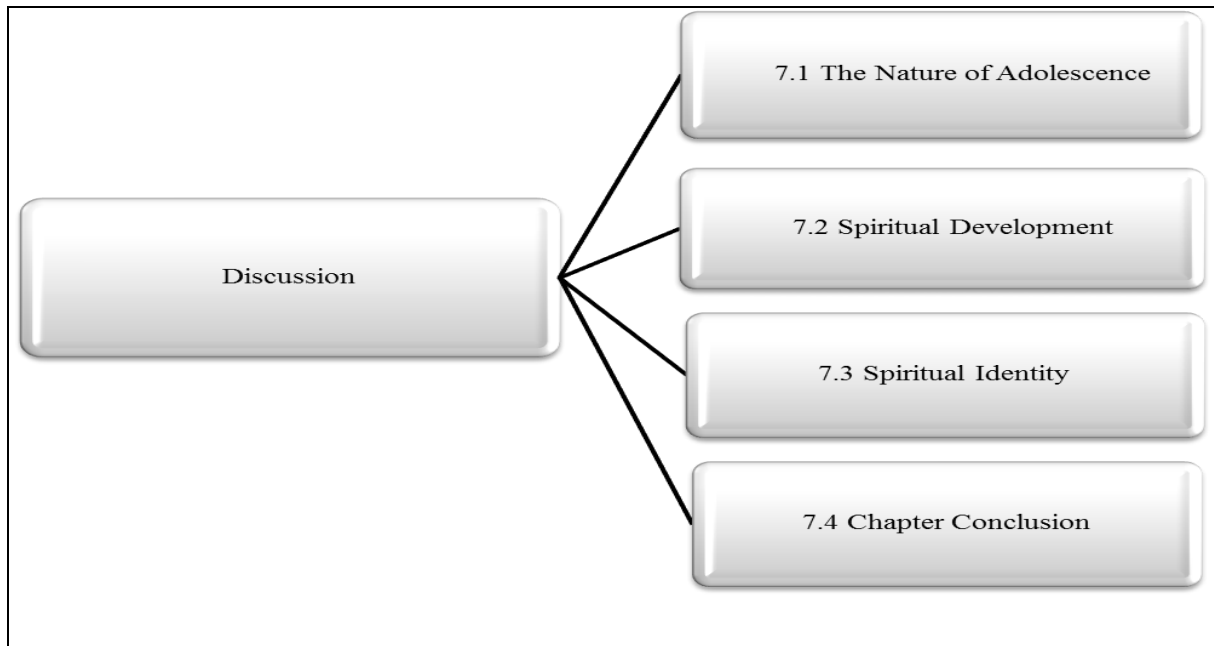


Figure 9 Visual outline of chapter 7: Discussion

The previous chapter highlighted the research results following from the process of data analysis. The main themes and sub-themes that emerged in the data were introduced in a narrative and were then illustrated with the use of selected direct quotes from the participants. The chapter that follows draws from the research results. It is interpreted and discussed in relation to the literature that was reviewed. Consequently, the research results are firstly discussed in the context of the nature of adolescence, the domains of development and developmental tasks taking place during adolescence. The research results are then positioned in relation to the foundational works generally and then in terms of spiritual identity development in particular. Lastly, the research results are considered in relation to the Lifespan Development Perspective. The chapter draws to a close with concluding comments on the three aforementioned aspects.

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7.1 The nature of adolescence

Adolescence is generally accepted as a time of transition characterised by significant development in the physical, cognitive and psycho-social being of adolescents (Arnett, 1999, 2000, 2010; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003). The transitional nature of adolescence was reflected upon by the research participants as they identified and acknowledged their own growth and the development taking place from their childhood years. This maturational process is captured in the theme associated with the nature of development. It demonstrates an awareness of the changes taking place with increased age and experience. This research therefore supports and is consistent with the literature regarding the transitional nature of adolescence (Arnett, 1999, 2000, 2010; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003).

Specific contexts may highlight the nature of the changes taking place in certain domains of development. While this research study highlighted the changes taking place in all the domains of development, the cognitive and the psycho-social domains received the most attention from the sample of adolescent participants.

The participants appeared to pay little attention to changes taking place with regard to their physical development. Although the nature of this research elicited specific information, the participants in this study were more invested in their psycho-social development and the changes experienced with increased age and exposure. This finding is therefore contrary to some literature that states that the dramatic and accelerated changes within physical development are central. This research claims that physical appearance commonly assumes paramount importance during adolescence (Gentry & Campbell, 2002).

The role of cognitive development was highlighted within this study. While some of the participants demonstrated characteristics of concrete thinking, others demonstrated more abstract abilities and deductive thought processes. It was noted that the older participants, or those that appeared to be more cognitively advanced, were able to express their lived experience with greater confidence and detail. The older and/or more cognitively advanced participants also appeared to be more aware of their spirituality. These findings are consistent with the literature that postulates that cognitive development plays a crucial role in the ability to represent the self in more abstract ways. It thereby enables a more effective negotiation of the contradictions and paradoxes that characterise life experiences (Erikson,

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1956, 1959, 1968, 1974; McAdams & McLean, 2013, Piaget, 1965). Evidence of the stages of cognitive development, as proposed by theorists such as Piaget (1965) and Fowler (1981, 1995), were therefore observed.

The emphasis on the cognitive development in this research overlapped with that of the emphasis on psycho-social development by the participants. Aspects associated with the task of identity development, namely the increased need for autonomy and the heightened importance of the peer group, became visible as central in this study. These findings are therefore consistent with the developmental literature pertaining to adolescence (Arnett, 1999, 2000, 2010; Salkind, 2004; Santrock, 2003). It is also consistent with the primary research findings on identity development which indicates that this is a central task associated with adolescence (Erikson, 1956, 1959, 1968, 1974; Marcia, 1966, 1980). Narrative identity develops as cognitive capacity increases, because individuals learn how to share their stories within formal and informal social contexts, as well as within specific cultural parameters (McAdams & McLean, 2013). Furthermore, as adolescents broaden their social networks, they more often begin to share themselves with others, also in a wider range of conversational contexts (McAdams, 2001).

The focus of the participants on their psycho-social development and the increasing importance of the peer group during this stage were considered important in this study. The literature mentions that self-disclosure, and the sharing of experiences, often requires of participants to have interesting stories to tell about the self. They also need to be able to tell them in such a way as to capture the attention of potential listeners (McAdams & McLean, 2013). The literature states that the social pressure experienced in adolescence emphasises the need to define the self. It places more prominence on, and encouraging adolescents to explore and investigate, who they are (McAdams, 2001). Evidence of these processes was observed in this research.

Consistencies were also noted between the relevant literature and the finding in this study that suggested that the adolescent participants experience a growing need for autonomy and independence. Participants expressed a desire for more freedom and pronounced their need to freely choose and accept a value or belief system that may guide their current and future behaviour. The sub-theme associated with authenticity was also prominent because many of the participants expressed the desire for others to also have the freedom of choice to

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make their own decisions. This finding is also supported by the literature (Louw & Louw, 2014). It is explained that the development that takes place in the physical, cognitive and psycho-social dimensions during adolescence, also contributes to a growing need for autonomy and independence. This need propels the adolescent towards an increased awareness of the self. It focuses on the premise that the adolescent is an independent and unique individual, which facilitates the development of a personal identity.

In conclusion, the participants in this study demonstrated a cumulating complexity in their thinking with their increase in age and experience. The older, or more cognitively advanced, participants provided a more comprehensive account of their experiences and also focused on their spirituality to a greater degree than their younger counterparts. The need for autonomy and independence was also more prominent in the older participants. These findings are consistent with the literature pertaining to development during adolescence.

7.2 Spiritual development

The reviewed literature provides an overview of the psychological theories that may be considered key to understand spiritual development. These theories included psychoanalytical, developmental stage, developmental systems-oriented and narrative theories. These theories conceptualise spiritual development with different lenses. This resulted in each theory having a unique focus on this phenomenon. Consistencies between these foundational works and the research results from this study are present and were observed. The universality associated with the spiritual development of the research participants was noted. The discussion that follows considers these foundational theories in relation to the research results found in this study.

The data provided the researcher with the opportunity to understand the unique context of each of the participants. It was noted that experiences associated with caregivers and also with God, were qualitatively similar. The participants who appeared to feel secure within their significant relationships also demonstrated the same trust and comfort in their relationship with God. But participants, who judged their significant relationships as more distant, also felt more despair within their relationship with God. Parents and other significant caregivers were therefore observed to have had a fundamental role in the spiritual identity development of these participants. They are one of the primary influences in the

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participants' understanding and ideas associated with their spiritual development. Consistencies were therefore noted between the psychoanalytic theories and the results obtained from this study.

The Object Relations Theory and Attachment Theory, which are located in the psychoanalytic paradigm, consider the function that representations of God may serve and link to the primary relationships experienced with caregivers. While theorists from the Object Relations tradition propose that images of God serve as illusionary transitional objects that provide comfort and meaning, the theorists from the Attachment tradition propose that internal working models are extended to images of God and provide a guide on how the divine attachment figure may be experienced (Bowlby, 1973; Davis et al., 2012; Rizzuto, 1979; de Roos et al., 2001, 2004). Support for both Object Relations Theory and Attachment Theory was therefore obtained. The hypotheses proposed by the Attachment theories, such as the Correspondence Hypothesis, were also supported by the results obtained from this research (Davis et al., 2012; Granqvist et al., 2012; McDonald, Beck, Allison, & Norsworthy, 2005).

However, the multidimensional nature of spiritual development, indicated in the literature, was absent if the research data were analysed from the psychoanalytic perspective only. This research study exhibited support for the multidimensional nature of spiritual development as indicated by means of the themes that emerged. They include the various domains associated with development and the role of people and environment within the context of the participants.

The results of this research study therefore also demonstrated support for the Developmental Stage theories. In sum, the Developmental Stage theories suggest that spiritual identity development is a process that parallels other developmental processes (Barret, 2000; Cartwright, 2001; Good & Willoughby, 2006; Poll & Smith, 2003). The Developmental Stage theories involve a common thread associated with the premise that development is characterised by a progression of increased levels of complexity and maturity (Cartwright, 2001; Erikson, 1959, 1968; Piaget, 1965; Marcia, 1966, 1980). The theorists included in the Developmental Stage tradition propose that individuals travel through successive stages of development. At each of these stages, they build thereupon and transcend the previous stage.

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More specifically, Developmental Stage theories associated with spiritual identity development appear to share their underpinnings in the Cognitive Developmental Theory. They suggest that spiritual identity development is a process of meaning-making (Cartwright, 2001; Visser-Vogel, Westerink, De Kock, Barnard, & Bakker, 2012). Individuals therefore shift from a place of having no awareness of, to having relatedness with, God. The work of James Fowler (1981, 1995) and Fritz Oser and Paul Gmunder (1991) appear to have been influential in this regard.

Some participants reflected on a change they experienced from their younger years. Others reflected on unawareness in younger years that grew into awareness with age and experience. Some also reflected on a greater understanding that developed with increased age and experience. The increase in awareness and understanding described by the participants appeared to be linked to an increase in the meaning experienced.

The Faith Development Theory of Fowler (1981, 1995) was reviewed in greater depth in the literature review and was also considered significant when the research data in this study were analysed. Fowler (1981, 1995) proposed a lifespan approach and suggested that faith development involves a process of meaning-making. During this process, individuals seek to understand their own lives as well as the commitments and the values which guide them through their lives. As seen in the other Developmental Stage theories, Fowler (1981, 1995) agreed that individuals move through a series of stages which increase in complexity with the development of meaning-making and relating. Of significance to this study, is Fowler's (1981, 1995) viewpoint that progression through the stages is not inevitable or automatic. This is significant, because it was noted that some participants appeared to display greater development irrespective of their age. In this regard, some of the participants appeared to be further developed in their spirituality despite being younger in age than some of the other participants. According to Fowler (1981, 1995) the interplay between biological maturation, emotional and cognitive development, as well as psycho-social experience is considered. This may account for the variability observed. Evidence for the mythic-literal and synthetic-conventional stages of faith development (Fowler, 1981, 1995) were also observed.

Similarly, the ideas proposed by Oser and Gmunder (1991) in the Religious Stage Theory were considered relevant in this research. This theory is centred on how individuals construct

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relationships with a higher power. The theory postulates that the development of cognitions of a religious and spiritual nature, are independent from moral and cognitive development. The finding that some of the research participants appeared to be further developed in their spirituality, despite being younger in age than some of the other participants, is again key.

This research provides support for the presence of greater spiritual development in the context of spiritual nurturance and discipline, consistent with the literature which emphasised the importance of context in faith development (Fowler, 1981, 1995). The theme emerging from the data supporting this statement is that of the role of people and environment. The interplay of factors is used to explain why some of the participants appeared to transition through the stages associated with the Faith Development Theory more swiftly than others.

However, alternatives to the Developmental Stage Model theories of spiritual identity development are found in the work of theorists such as Lerner (2007). He proposed that spiritual identity development is a far more fluid process that evolves and grows in by means of connections and relationships with others. Rather than being dependent on other development processes, spiritual identity development is understood as being relational and contextual (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; King, 2003; Ray & McFadden, 2001).

Support for the Developmental Systems theories was also gained within this study. Angela said "*There is a concept that one man is one heart, so we do see the whole Jewish nation as one body and one soul. You don't kind of distinguish how firm you are or how religious you are, it doesn't really play a part in it, as long as you are Jewish, then you are part of it*" (SSI, 6.172). Developmental Systems theorists emphasise the role of the context in spiritual development. They shift the focus to the contact between the individual and the contexts in which they are involved (Lerner, 1996). Developmental Systems theorists propose that spirituality is not the sole pursuit of the individual alone, but also a communal experience and phenomenon (Lerner, 1996). This research is consistent with the literature in this regard, particularly in the instances in which the educational environment and community nurtured religious and spiritual development.

As mentioned above, the participants who experienced spiritual nurturance within their relationships and contexts appeared to have a more integrated spiritual identity. This finding is consistent with the Developmental Systems theorists who, as with the Developmental

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Stage theorists, emphasise the role of significant relationships with parents, caregivers and peers in the spiritual development of adolescents (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Contextual factors, including the educational environment and culture are also considered. The goodness of fit between the always interacting variables either promotes or restricts spiritual development.

This research study displays several consistencies with the Narrative theories. According to the Narrative theorists such as McAdams and McLean (2013), evolving life-stories provide unity, meaning and purpose in life. Purpose, and ultimate meaning in life, was a prominent theme within the findings. All the adolescent research participants explained that their spirituality provided them with a sense of purpose. Narrative identity enables individuals to convey to themselves and others who they are, where they have come from and where they hope to go (McAdams, 2001). This was clearly demonstrated in the lived experiences shared by the participants.

In conclusion, this research study can provide support for all of the lenses used by foundational psychological theories to understand spiritual development as outlined in the literature review. However, no one lens can be used to exclusively describe and explain the nature of spiritual development, because it involves a complex interplay between a variety of factors and domains of development. It was noted that not all individuals of the same age will necessarily demonstrate the same development with regards to their spirituality. Spiritual development is therefore unique and specific to the individual and their context. The need for an integrated perspective is therefore highlighted in this research. A Lifespan Developmental Perspective may be valuable in understanding spiritual development as this may account for the variability observed. The South African adolescent participants included in this research demonstrated the universal human process and multidimensional nature associated with spiritual development described by researchers such as Johnson and Boyatzis (2005), King (2003) and Poll and Smith (2003).

7.3 Spiritual identity

Consistent with relevant literature and demonstrated within this research, spiritual identity development conceptualised with the use of only a single lens fails. It disregards to capture the complex interplay between the domains of development, biological and environmental determinants as well as the multiple other influences on development that exist. The

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Lifespan Developmental Perspective, as proposed by prominent theorists such as Bronfenbrenner (2005), Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974), Fowler (1981, 1995) as well as McAdams and McLean (2013), provides a comprehensive understanding of spiritual identity development. It is therefore applied in this research as a framework used to conceptualise the spiritual identity development of the sample of South African adolescents included in this study. The Lifespan Developmental Perspective aims to obtain knowledge about the general principles involved in life-long development, the inter-individual similarities and differences observed in development, as well as the degree and conditions associated with the variability observed in development (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Poll & Smith, 2003; Smith-Osborne, 2007).

Lifespan Developmental theorists, as well as many theorists from other prominent traditions, have been confident in their ideas surrounding the relationship between developmental competencies and spiritual identity development (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Fowler, 1981, 1995; Smith-Osborne, 2007). One key issue that remains constant within the Lifespan Developmental Perspective is the debate with regard to the developmental process ; whether such a process is continuous or discontinuous (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). This debate has been extended into the field of spiritual identity development. Continuous processes associated with development describe change as being gradual with achievements building upon previous achievements. Underlying developmental processes are seen as consistent over the lifespan (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007). Conversely, discontinuous processes associated with development describe change as occurring in distinct stages, each of which is characterised by behaviour and processes that are qualitatively different (Baltes, 1987; Baltes et al., 1999; Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009; Smith-Osborne, 2007).

This research provides support for the discontinuous nature of spiritual identity development. The participants demonstrated significant variability associated with their spiritual identity development. Furthermore, the inevitable progress described by some stage theories, could not be observed in this study. Some of the younger research participants appeared to be far more advanced in the development of their spiritual identity than their older counterparts. This research therefore provides support for the idea that spiritual identity development may be less biologically driven than other domains of development. Rather,

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this research obtained significant support for the role of idiosyncratic development and for the idea that spiritual identity development is not characterised by a linear epigenetic unfolding. This finding is consistent with integrative ideas proposed by theorists such as Poll and Smith (2003), Roeser et al. (2008) as well as Templeton and Eccles (2005).

According to Poll and Smith (2003), spiritual experiences occur throughout the lifespan and in all life-stages of development. Individuals vary greatly in how they perceive spirituality and experience their relationship with God. Consequently, the content associated with spiritual identity is highly idiosyncratic and reliant on religious orientation, personality traits and previous spiritual experiences. Support was found in this research for these broad and flexible stages, proposed by Poll and Smith (2003).

While all of the participants demonstrated that they had progressed through the stages associated with pre-awareness and awakening, most appeared to be within the stage of recognition with regards to their spiritual identities. The recognition stage is characterised by the progressive experiencing and creating of the self in relation to the world and others. The research participants demonstrated that they were in the process of developing a more stable spiritual identity. The majority of the adolescents therefore appeared not to have a fully integrated spiritual identity. Some of the participants, such as Tylah, Olivia and Rose, appeared to be progressing to the stage characterised of integration. The salience of their spiritual identities motivates this statement and was emphasised in their verbal accounts.

Erikson's Lifespan Psycho-social Theory (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) and Marcia's Model of Identity Statuses (1966, 1980) serve as dominant theoretical and conceptual frameworks when studying identity and spirituality. Erikson (1956, 1959, 1968, 1974) and Marcia (1966, 1980) propose that a key component to healthy identity development includes a process of exploration and commitment characterised by reflection on experiences and options in life. Marcia (1966, 1980) applied the processes involved to explore and formulate four identity statuses, namely identity diffusion, identity foreclosure, identity moratorium and identity achievement.

One of the twelve participants seemed to still be in the identity diffusion status, which is characterised by low levels of exploration and commitment. Identity foreclosure was prominent in this research, with ten of the twelve participants committing to spiritual

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identities in the absence of active exploration. This finding is closely associated with the theme that the role of people and environment was central. Here, the adolescents included in environments characterised by spiritual nurturance appeared to be foreclosed. Identity moratorium, which is characterised by active exploration in the absence of commitment, was demonstrated by one of the adolescent participants in this study. Identity achievement was not as apparent, because few of the adolescent participants had engaged in active exploration prior to committing to their spiritual identities. This finding is consistent with relevant South African research which demonstrated that identity foreclosure and identity diffusion was the most prominent for samples of adolescent participants (Alberts, 1990, 2000; Alberts & Meyer, 1998). This finding is postulated to be true due to the significant impact of the environment in the lives of the adolescent research participants.

In conclusion, the adolescent participants included in this research demonstrated significant variability in their spiritual identities. This study therefore provides support for the idiosyncratic nature of spiritual identity development. Prominent foundational works are essential to understand spiritual identity development amongst adolescents. However, theoretical integration is necessary to fully understand the complexities associated with this intricate phenomenon. The findings associated with this research are consistent with the findings from other South African studies. The importance of environmental and contextual factors are emphasised in understanding the spiritual identity development of South African adolescents.

7.4 Chapter conclusion

The research results obtained during this study were interpreted and discussed considering the literature reviewed in earlier chapters. It was concluded that the participants included in this research demonstrated an increased complexity in their thinking with the increase in age and experience. The older and/or more cognitively advanced participants provided richer accounts of their experiences and portrayed an increased focus on their spiritual identity development. The research results also produced findings that were consistent with much of the literature in the field and support was demonstrated for the ideas proposed by foundational theorists. It was concluded that no single theory can adequately conceptualise the spiritual development and spiritual identity development of adolescents. This is due to the complex interplay between several factors and influences. This challenging context is

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more approachable when a multidimensional perspective, such as the Lifespan Developmental Perspective, is considered. In this regard, this research study provided support for the discontinuous nature of spiritual identity development and indicates that it displays significant variability amongst a sample of South African adolescents. The chapter that follows concludes this research.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

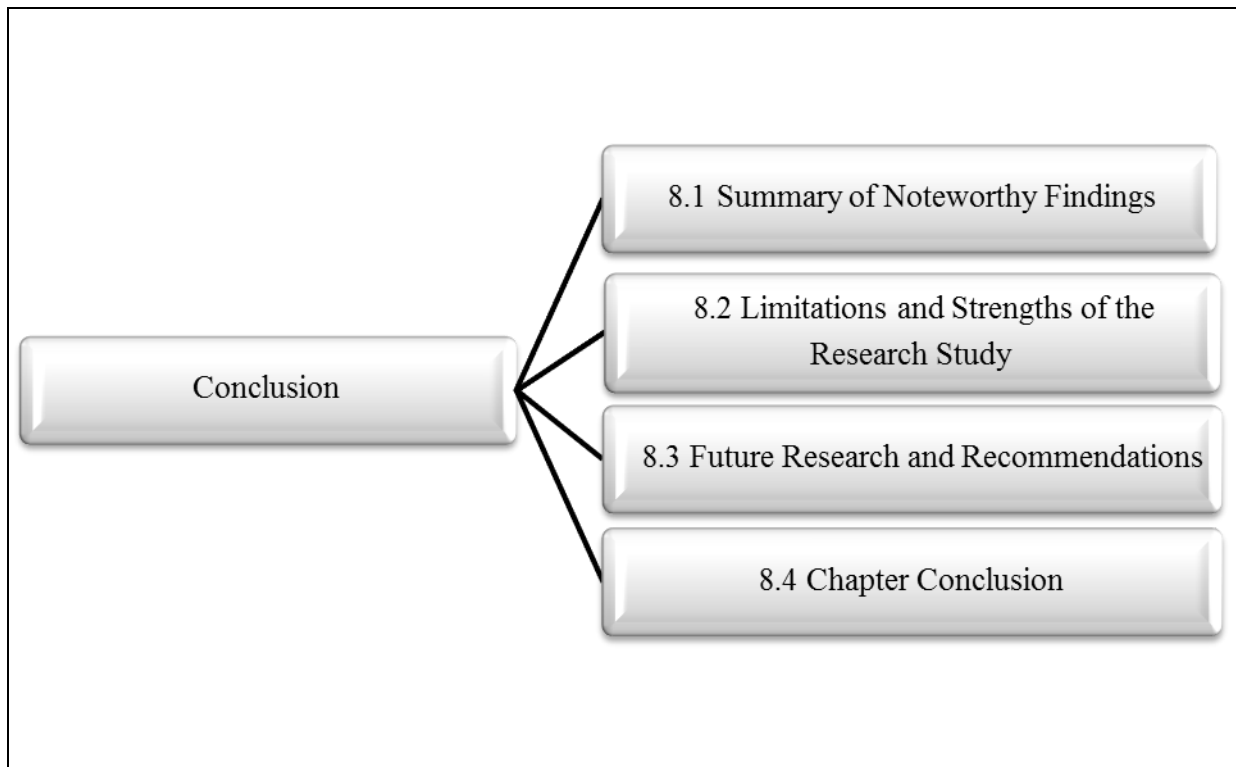


Figure 10 Visual outline of chapter 8: Conclusion

This chapter forms the final chapter in this study and aims to integrate the research process by summarising the noteworthy findings included in this study. It reflects on the limitations and strengths of this study and provides brief recommendations for future research in this field.

8.1 Summary of noteworthy findings

The aim of this study was to capture the lived experiences with regards to the spiritual identity development of a sample of South African adolescent participants. They were explored in association with relevant developmental psychology theories. This research produced exceptionally rich data, which was collected by means of semi-structured interviews and reflective writing exercises during two data collection phases. Interpretative phenomenological analysis contributed to the identification of themes in the data set. These themes included religiousness and spirituality from an adolescent’s perspective, the nature of development, the role of people and environment, processes involved in spiritual identity

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development, values associated with spirituality and purpose linked with spirituality. An understanding of how the adolescent participants experience and perceive their spiritual identity therefore became apparent as the study progressed. Consequently, the aims and purpose of this research study were realised.

The psychological lenses, explored in the literature review of this research were considered with the interpretation of the research results. This study identified consistencies between the literature reviewed and the research results. However, only certain elements of the results could be recognised in, and coupled with, these theories. It was therefore concluded that the application of a single theory to understand the development of spirituality may be limited. This limitation exists, because spiritual development includes a complex interplay between a variety of factors and domains of development. Such a challenge is made more approachable when a multidimensional perspective, such as the Lifespan Developmental Perspective, is considered.

It was concluded that the participants included in this research study demonstrated an increased complexity in thinking with the increase in age and experience. Furthermore, the older and/or more cognitively advanced participants provided richer accounts of their experiences and a greater focus on their spiritual identity development. Physical development, specifically brain maturation and cognitive development therefore appeared to play a significant role in the spiritual development of the participants. They were also impacted by their relationships with family members and peers, highlighting the importance of psycho-social development in the development of spirituality. The role of parents and significant others, peers, the educational environment and geographical location suggested that contextual factors are equally significant. They may contribute to the variability observed in the findings. This research was therefore able to conclude that both biological and environmental aspects played a significant role in the spiritual development of the adolescent participants. These findings and conclusions provide support for the use of a perspective such as the Lifespan Developmental Perspective in the conceptualisation of spiritual development and consequently, spiritual identity development.

While the participants were able to reflect on their own growth with regard to their spiritual identity development, it was suggested that the participants explore and commit to their spiritual identities through a process of discussion and modelling. Spiritual identity

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development was exceptionally important to some of the participants included in this study. It was attributed greater significance than other domains of development. This research also demonstrated that spirituality was associated with values, such as authenticity and acceptance. Finally, the spiritual identities of the adolescent participants were linked significantly to a sense of purpose and meaning in life. Collectively these findings suggest that spiritual identity development is not only a prominent process during adolescence, but also contributes to development in the other domains and dimensions of identity.

This research was therefore able to contribute meaningfully to the current body of knowledge that exists regarding the spiritual identity development of adolescents. This research displayed strengths, but also has its limitations. These were considered and reflected upon in the section that follows.

8.2 Limitations and strengths of the research study

The strengths and limitations that characterise all research studies are typically located within the application of the research design and methodology (Parker, 2004; Struwig & Stead, 2001; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). This research used a qualitative interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). Its strengths and limitations were located within the data collection methods as well as in the analysis and the interpretation of the data.

As qualitative research is characterised by openness and flexibility, the researcher is able to adapt to unexpected events that emerge during the research process (Parker, 2004; Struwig & Stead, 2001; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). The research methodology itself provided the researcher with a meaningful structure and was fluid enough to be adapted to the interaction with each of the unique participants. Furthermore, phenomenology and IPA is able to investigate process and relationships (Moran, 2000). The “lived-through” experiences of the participants involved were captured in such a way and the “lived world” formed a central theme (Crist & Tanner, 2003, p.202). The research design and methodology therefore allowed the researcher to explore a detailed account of the participants’ experience of their personal and social worlds. It assisted to investigate a concept as intricate as the spiritual identity development of adolescent participants. Consequently, the research aim and purpose could be achieved.

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Semi-structured interviews facilitated the process of establishing rapport between the researcher and the participants and also allow the researcher to adapt questions where necessary (Potter & Hepburn, 2005; Rabionet, 2011). These strengths, associated with the use of semi-structured interviews, were particularly valuable due to the complex nature and sensitivity of the topic that was explored. The open-ended questions allowed the researcher to adapt the questions as necessitated. It thereby ensured that developmental considerations were central. The open-ended questions also allowed for each participant to discuss what was central in his/her experience and for the researcher to obtain clarification where necessary. However, the semi-structured interviews were time-consuming in certain instances. It thus also produced some irrelevant data to this study.

Reflective writing exercises provided participants with the opportunity to engage in extended reflection and also afforded an alternative medium of expression (Boud, 2001; Kennison & Misselwitz, 2002). The strengths associated with the use of the reflective writing exercises were exceptionally apparent in two instances, namely where participants appeared more reserved in nature and preferred written expressions over the semi-structured interviews. However, the reflective writing exercises did not provide opportunity for clarification. It was also noted that the data produced from the reflective writing exercises appeared to lack the depth that was obtained in the semi-structured interviews. In this regard, it was hypothesised that the reflective writing exercises may have been too abstract for some of the participants.

Sample sizes are typically small within IPA studies, because the goal is to comprehensively document the perceptions and experiences of the participants (Devers & Frankel, 2000; Finlay, 2009). Generalisations are therefore not critical in this type of research. While the research design and methodology facilitated the collection of data that produced in-depth and rich descriptions of the spiritual identity of a sample of South African adolescents, the findings are not generalisable. It only applies to the sample included in this research.

Typical of qualitative research, the researcher becomes an instrument in the study and also engages in self-reflexivity (Parker, 2004; Struwig & Stead, 2001; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). Data collection and interpretation is therefore influenced by the researcher's own perspective, expectations and viewpoints. The data narrative included in the results chapter

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includes a co-construction of the participants' perspectives, the researcher's own perception and the literature that was reviewed leading to the data collection phase.

The themes emerging within this research, as identified by the researcher, include an integration of the researcher's own dynamics, individual characteristics and dynamics associated with each of the participants. The participants were engaged using semi-structured interviews and reflective writing exercises. It needs to be considered that the nature of the questions asked might have influenced the collected data. The identified themes may therefore reflect the participant demographics and characteristics, as well as the data collection methods.

Another limitation associated with this research included the time-limited nature of the study. Research that aims to explore developmental processes and specific developmental periods may contribute significantly to the understanding of such processes if it is longitudinal in nature.

In sum, research within the social sciences will inevitably produce various limitations due to the unique individual and dynamic phenomena that are studied. The documented findings are therefore unique to the context in which they were revealed. While the limitations associated with this research study may therefore be located within the research design and methodology, the same variables simultaneously produced the strengths associated with this study. The conclusions reached in this study may therefore contribute to the database of rich knowledge regarding the lived experience of spiritual identity development amongst a sample of South African adolescent participants. The nature of this research calls for the generalisation of data. This might be possible, based on the replication of the results within and across various research studies. Some recommendations may therefore be made for future research within this field.

8.3 Future research and recommendations

Future research and recommendations may include the continued investigation into the spiritual identity development of South African adolescent participants using various samples to draw more generalisable conclusions regarding this intricate phenomenon. Samples of participants of various cultures, religious groups and geographical locations may further

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contribute to this knowledge base. Because the various dimensions of identity, including - but not limited to - ethnicity, race and culture, intersect, future research may therefore explore this intersectionality.

Research designs and methodologies that facilitate the investigation and exploration of lifespan development may also be beneficial. Cross-sectional research and longitudinal research may be considered. Furthermore, varying approaches to data gathering and analysis may assist researchers in exploring the presence, development and impact of spirituality in the lives of diverse adolescents. Quantitative studies may add dimensions which were not yet included or considered in this research. These types of studies may also include larger sample sizes, which may contribute to the generalisability of the results.

Additional research in the field of spiritual identity development is therefore recommended. New studies, which may explore the topic with different lenses, will be beneficial. Research within this field may, in turn, contribute to recommendations for practice. Therapeutic interventions may initially assess a client's spiritual identity development and then aim to match intervention with the relevant stage of spiritual identity development. In so doing, the therapeutic intervention may simultaneously promote psychological well-being and develop the client's identity. Further studies may explore the correlation between psychological health following interventions that incorporates spirituality.

A multidisciplinary approach to both research and practice may be recommended, because such collaboration will be mutually beneficial. Collaboration between religious leaders, religious scholars, psychologists and other professionals may contribute to a richer and deeper understanding of the spiritual self.

The findings of this research and others within the field of spiritual identity may contribute to an increased understanding for parents, educators, religious leaders and other professionals with regard to their role in the development of spiritual identity during adolescence. Such an understanding may facilitate the process of meeting adolescents where they are in terms of their spiritual development and spiritual identity.

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This research and others within the field of spiritual identity demonstrated the importance of this domain of development in the lives of adolescents. Practitioners may therefore incorporate this knowledge into their interventions with adolescents. Conversely, practitioners may also be encouraged to be aware of their own spiritual development and spiritual identity and how this may impact on interactions and relationships with adolescent clients.

8.4 Chapter conclusion

This concluding chapter provided a summary of the key findings of this research study. Strengths and limitations were highlighted. Future research and recommendations were also considered. This research study explored the spiritual identity development within a sample of South African adolescent participants. Through this research process, spiritual identity was conceptualised with the use of the Lifespan Developmental Perspective. Essential determinants, as well as other influences, were identified. It was concluded that spiritual identity development within the sample of adolescent participants in this research involved a multi-dimensional, discontinuous process characterised by considerable variation.

Elements of the findings of this research were also observed to be consistent with the ideas expressed in prominent psychological theories, such as the psychoanalytic, developmental stage, developmental systems and narrative theories. Consistencies with relevant South African research were also noted. Although longitudinal research may be useful to explore the progress of the sensitivity during adolescence in the development of a spiritual identity, this research served a significant purpose. It demonstrated that this domain of development is prominent during adolescence and contributes to purpose and meaning in the experiences and perceptions of the participants.

South African research therefore seems consistent in suggesting the salience of spiritual identity in the lives of adolescents as well as the crucial role played by the environment and context in the development of spiritual identity. A country, characterised by transformation and diversity, may continue to nurture the acceptance and variability of spiritual identity amongst adolescence. As spiritual identity has been identified as a developmental asset and is positively correlated with health and well-being, additional research within this field may

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contribute to the empowerment of the individuals working with adolescents as well as empower adolescents themselves.

*Once upon a time, I dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and tither,
To all intents and purposes a butterfly.
I was conscious only of my happiness as a butterfly.
Unaware that I was myself.
Soon I awaked, and there I was, veritably myself again.
Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly,
Or whether I am now a butterfly, dreaming I am a man.*

(Zhuangzi, 1990, p.222)

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SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

APPENDIX A
SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Semi-structured Interview

Date: _____

Name: _____

Venue: _____

Introduction:

My name is Tracy-Ann Smith and I am a psychologist. However, I am here to engage with you in a research project so that I can begin to understand how you understand yourself and make sense of your experiences with regard to religion and spirituality. I am going to go over things with you just to make sure that you understand. But please ask me as many questions as you would like to.

- 1) This research project is being completed as part of my studies into child and adolescent psychology.
- 2) Your participation in this project is voluntary and you can change your mind at any point if you decide that you no longer want to be involved.
- 3) Your answers are going to be audio-recorded but your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- 4) There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- 5) I am going to spend time with you twice. Today is the first time, where we will just talk. I am then going to contact you again in three months and ask you to complete an exercise for me.
- 6) I will remind you of everything when we see each other again.
- 7) Do you have any questions?

Questions:

1) Biographical information:

Name:

Gender:

Current age:

First language:

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

School:

Current grade:

2) Relevant background information

Family structure:

Leisure activities:

Religious affiliation (if any):

3) What does it mean to you to be a teenager?

4) How would you describe yourself?

5) Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life?

6) How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

7) Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

8) Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

9) What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

10) Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

11) How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

12) Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

13) If so, what do these mean to you?

14) Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

15) What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

16) What else would you like me to know about you?

17) Any other significant aspects associated with the participant's spiritual identity will be further explored should they emerge.

APPENDIX B
REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISE

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Reflective Writing Exercise

Introduction:

When we last saw each other, I explained that I would be in contact again in three months. Below is the exercise I was telling you about that I would like you to complete for me. But before you start, I just want to remind you of a few things. Please ask me as many questions as you would like to before you start the activity.

- This research project is being completed as part of my studies into child and adolescent psychology.
- Your participation in this project is voluntary and you can change your mind at any point if you decide that you no longer want to be involved.
- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

Biographical information:

Name:

Current age:

Current grade:

Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

What does it mean to be you?

What does it mean to be a teenager?

Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

What do these mean to you?

Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

What else would you like me to know about you?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

APPENDIX C

ETHICAL APPROVAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

5 June 2015

Me TA Smith
Department of Psychology
UFS

Ethical Clearance Application: Lived experiences of the spiritual identity developments among adolescents

Dear Me Smith

With reference to your application for ethical clearance with the Faculty of the Humanities, I am pleased to inform you on behalf of the Ethics Board of the faculty that you have been granted ethical clearance for your research.

Your ethical clearance number, to be used in all correspondence, is: **UFS-HUM-2015-91**

This ethical clearance number is valid for research conducted for one year from issuance. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension in writing.

We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your research project be submitted in writing to the ethics office to ensure we are kept up to date with your progress and any ethical implications that may arise.

Thank you for submitting this proposal for ethical clearance and we wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Katinka de Wet

Ethics Committee (Faculty of the Humanities)

Copy: Charné Vercueil (Research Co-ordinator: Faculty of the Humanities)

APPENDIX D

RESEARCH INFORMATION LETTER AND CONSENT FORM: PARENT

Research Information Letter

Dear parent

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to share my research project details with you.

I am a registered clinical psychologist currently specialising in the field of child and adolescent psychology. Relevant research with children and/or adolescents forms a significant part of this specialisation. As such, I have planned a research project which I am hoping to complete with adolescents aged 14 to 18 years. The research project is focused on trying to understand the identity development of adolescents with particular reference to their experience of their own spiritual identity.

Two phases are to take place in this research project which will involve direct interaction with those who become a part of this project. Firstly, a semi-structured interview will take place at an individual level in order to obtain a brief understanding of your child's background and to explore how your child understands his/her own spiritual identity. The second phase involved in this research project will include a reflective writing exercise 3 months following the initial interviews which will be done at an individual level and ask your child to reflect on some of their experiences with regards to spirituality, religion and identity.

Participation in this research project is voluntary and your child may withdraw from the project at any point. All the information obtained will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. When the results of this research project are documented, the anonymity of your child will be protected by making use of pseudonyms. This research project is being supervised by Professor Luzelle Naude in the Department of Psychology at the University of the Free State. The results of the research will, however, be provided to you in order to share the understanding that is gained by completing this research project.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

I hope to meet with you in the near future in order to answer any questions you may have and move forward with this project. Please do not hesitate to contact me at any point should you wish to discuss things further.

Kind regards

Tracy-Ann Smith

Clinical Psychologist

Signature of researcher:

Signature of research supervisor:

LETTER OF PERMISSION

This letter of permission is to be signed by the parent with the following considerations:

- I have received the relevant information about the project from Tracy-Ann Smith;
- I provide my permission to have my child participate in this project;
- I understand that participation in this project is voluntary and my child may withdraw at any point.
- I acknowledge that I have given my permission willingly and without being unduly influenced by Tracy-Ann Smith or any other person to do so.

I, _____, hereby provide permission for Tracy-Ann Smith to continue with the research project discussed with my child, _____.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX E

RESEARCH INFORMATION LETTER AND CONSENT FORM: PARTICIPANT

Research Information Letter

Dear participant

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to share my research project details with you.

I am a registered clinical psychologist currently specialising in the field of child and I have planned a research project with people between the ages of 14 and 18 years. The goal of this research project is to try to understand how you view yourself and the spiritual part of who you are. The understanding that I gain from this project will help me to work towards a specialisation I am completing in child and adolescent psychology.

Two phases are to take place in this research project which will involve direct interaction with you. The first phase will include a semi-structured interview will take place one-on-one in order to gain a brief understanding of your background and to explore how you understand your own spiritual identity. The second phase involved in this research project will include a writing exercise 3 months after the first interview. This will also be done at a one-on-one level.

Participation in this research project is voluntary and you may withdraw from the project at any point. All the information obtained will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. When the results of this research project are documented, your anonymity will be protected as I will be changing your name. This research project is being supervised by Professor Luzelle Naude in the Department of Psychology at the University of the Free State.

I hope to meet with you in the near future in order to answer any questions you may have and move forward with this project.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Kind regards

Tracy-Ann Smith

Clinical Psychologist

Signature of researcher:

Signature of research supervisor:



INFORMED CONSENT FORM

This informed consent form is to be signed by the individual participating in the project with the following considerations:

- I understand what will be expected of me in this project;
- I agree to participate in this project;
- I understand that participation in this project is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any point;
- I understand that the time spent with Tracy-Ann Smith will be audio-tape recorded;
- I understand that my name will be changed in order to protect my identity.

Tick the box:

Yes I agree

No I don't agree

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX F

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Semi-structured interview: Jared (14 years old)

1.1 Interviewer: Maybe you can just tell me a little about yourself... tell me who you are and about your school maybe which grade you are in?

1.2 Participant: Uhhh... I am in grade 9 and I like soccer and swimming.

1.3 Interviewer: Okay and you are 14 years old now? And when did you turn 14?

1.4 Participant: On the 16th of June.

1.5 Interviewer: Okay... And tell me about the school that you go to?

1.6 Participant: Uhhh... I go to X and it is good because you are allowed to wear whatever you want to wear... it is an easy way to express yourself.

1.7 Interviewer: Okay... so is your school mixed? Boys and girls?

1.8 Participant: Yes.

1.9 Interviewer: Okay... And you are allowed to wear whatever you like so you don't have to wear A uniform?

1.10 Participant: No, I don't wear uniform.

1.11 Interviewer: Okay... And what subjects do you do at school?

1.12 Participant: Pardon?

1.13 Interviewer: What subjects do you do at school?

1.14 Participant: Uhhh... Because I am in grade 9 I can't change any subjects, so I just have to do all of them.

1.15 Interviewer: All of them... Okay... And you said you have extra interests in soccer and swimming?

1.16 Participant: Yes.

1.17 Interviewer: Okay... What about on the weekends? What do you spend your time doing?

1.18 Participant: Relaxing at home or going to the movies... Or I will go play soccer with friends.

1.19 Interviewer: Tell me about your friends?

1.20 Participant: Uhhh... They are different age groups but they are still my friends... Uhhh... Yes I think that is all.

1.21 Interviewer: Okay... So you said they are all in different age groups? So what ages are they?

1.22 Participant: From 17 to 11.

1.23 Interviewer: Okay... So older than you, younger than you, some are same age as you?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

1.24 Participant: Yes.

1.25 Interviewer: Okay... At the school that you go to, do you have any subjects about religion? Like religious education or religion instruction?

1.26 Participant: No.

1.27 Interviewer: Nothing like that?

1.28 Participant: No.

1.29 Interviewer: And so do you have a religion that you follow?

1.30 Participant: Yes.

1.31 Interviewer: Okay... Can you tell me about it?

1.32 Participant: Uhhh... I am a Christian... Yes and I believe in Christianity because I believe in my family's religion.

1.33 Interviewer: So that is how you became a Christian? From your family?

1.34 Participant: Yes.

1.35 Interviewer: Okay... So which of your family members are Christian?

1.36 Participant: My mom, my granny, not my grandpa, my step dad, my real dad, my other granny and my other grandpa.

1.37 Interviewer: Okay... So most of your family?

1.38 Participant: Yes.

1.39 Interviewer: Okay... And your friends? Are your friends also Christian? Or are they other religions as well?

1.40 Participant: They have other religions.

1.41 Interviewer: Like what?

1.42 Participant: Some of them are atheist, some of them are Muslim... uhhh... Yes that is all... And then some are Christian.

1.43 Interviewer: Okay... And do you ever speak about your religion to your friends?

1.44 Participant: No, we don't bring it up.

1.45 Interviewer: Okay... And at school, does anybody ever bring it up?

1.46 Participant: No, we all the same at school, we do not have a religion at school or religious education because we believe that there are multiple, different religions... And if you are learning about another one, some parents don't think it is right.

1.47 Interviewer: Okay... So you don't learn about any one and you also don't discuss it? You don't bring it up?

1.48 Participant: No, but when I was in primary school, I learnt about different religions.

1.49 Interviewer: Okay... Which primary school did you go to?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

1.50 Participant: X

1.51 Interviewer: And what did you learn when you were going there?

1.52 Participant: Uhmm... We just learnt why uhmm... Why the Muslims celebrate at a certain time or why Christians celebrate or why others celebrate.

1.53 Interviewer: Okay... And so for you, what does it mean to be a Christian?

1.54 Participant: To follow and believe in Christ.

1.55 Interviewer: And so do you have special things that you do that make you a Christian?

1.56 Participant: Uhmm... I just go to youth.

1.57 Interviewer: Okay... Is that part of your church?

1.58 Participant: Yes.

1.59 Interviewer: Okay... And what do you do at youth?

1.60 Participant: We sometimes... We sit down for about an hour and the pastor speaks to us about different subjects. Yesterday it was about discrimination against people... So... Yes.

1.61 Interviewer: Okay... And you go to youth and you go to church on another day as well?

1.62 Participant: No, because my mom doesn't go to church, I don't go.

1.63 Interviewer: Okay... So it is just youth on a Friday?

1.64 Participant: Yes.

1.65 Interviewer: Okay... So do you ever do anything like pray or read a holy book or something like that?

1.66 Participant: I pray but I do not have enough time to read a holy book.

1.67 Interviewer: Okay... And do you think that praying is something you do every day or not every day?

1.68 Participant: Not every day.

1.69 Interviewer: Okay... So what kind of a person are you? How would you describe yourself to maybe somebody who has never met you before?

1.70 Participant: I would show how I am by doing it, showing my actions... Like if somebody does not have money, I will give them money or I will split my money with them in half... And then, like if we are playing soccer and there is a guy who cannot play as well as others and a guy who can play better than others, I would pass to that guy sometimes... Not all the time though.

1.71 Interviewer: Okay... So it sounds like you try really hard to make other people feel like they also included and have things?

1.72 Participant: Yes.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

1.73 Interviewer: When you are trying to decide for yourself if something is right or wrong, how do you decide?

1.74 Participant: I decide by what I have been taught or sometimes my friends could tell me.

1.75 Interviewer: Okay... So when you say you decide by what you have been taught, uhmm... Who teaches you?

1.76 Participant: My parents.

1.77 Interviewer: Okay. And do you have any rules that you follow of things that you have learnt about that will help you if maybe mom and dad aren't around or maybe your friends aren't around?

1.78 Participant: Yes... Like I have to be in bed by nine but that doesn't happen a lot though... And I know to stay out of trouble... Like if my friends start talking in class, I will just move away.

1.79 Interviewer: Okay... And how did you learn how to do that?

1.80 Participant: Because I used to get in trouble a lot because of the same thing.

1.81 Interviewer: Okay... And if you think about all the different kinds of people who are on earth... Why do you think we are all here on earth together?

1.82 Participant: Uhmm... I am not sure... I think we are here to spread our religion.

1.83 Interviewer: Okay... And how do you think the world started?

1.84 Participant: By Adam and Eve.

1.85 Interviewer: Okay... So the way the bible tells us?

1.86 Participant: Yes.

1.87 Interviewer: Okay... And what do you think will happen to all of us once we die?

1.88 Participant: Uhmm... We will be buried or our bodies will be burnt and our souls will go to haven... But not all of us because some of us do wrong things and we don't believe in God... I think the ones that don't believe in God, they will go to heaven... Yes, I think they will go to heaven.

1.89 Interviewer: Okay... And the people who do right things will also go?

1.90 Participant: Yes... But the people who don't believe in God... When they do something wrong, I think it is worse because who are you going to ask for forgiveness from? Because some of my friends who are atheist... Who do not believe... Say that they are... Say that they were made from apes... And then they say that when they die they go into a new world.

1.91 Interviewer: And what do you think about their ideas?

1.92 Participant: I don't believe at all.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

1.93 Interviewer: Okay... So when they say things like that, what do you do? What do say?

1.94 Participant: I just laugh at them and I walk away but then afterwards, I will be like "You know I was just joking, it is what you believe in"... Yes... that is all... But if the person is not my friend, then I will not do that... I will just walk away.

1.95 Interviewer: And is there anything you can tell me about your faith and your religion or what kind of a person you are?

1.96 Participant: No, nothing really.

1.97 Interviewer: Okay... I see sometimes on the TV... When people play sports... So like sometimes if it is with rugby or sometimes even when it is soccer... When they score a goal, sometimes it almost looks like they are thanking God... What do you think about that?

1.98 Participant: I saw Wayne Rooney... When he scored, he made the triangle and I think it is really stupid because... And some people say that... uhmm... People who are on the devils side say that the world is going to end... Well, later on in the world... They are going to put chips in your head and chips in your arm and if you don't have... like... a tag with triple six on it... Or they will kill you... Or they will put it on you.

1.99 Interviewer: And what do you think about that?

1.100 Participant: I don't know about that because one-by-one the days... Everyone is changing... And especially now that Kanye West is running for president... If he becomes president, the world is just going to go down.

1.101 Interviewer: How come?

1.102 Participant: Because he is on the devils side.

1.103 Interviewer: Okay... And how do you know that?

1.104 Participant: Uhmm... On his music videos... What he does shows that he is on the devils side.

1.105 Interviewer: Okay... So it is kind of like through people's actions you can see what they believe?

1.106 Participant: Yes.

1.107 Interviewer: Okay... So let's say you were in one of the shops... So you think that people would see what you believe in by what you do?

1.108 Participant: No.

1.109 Interviewer: They wouldn't know? Okay so how would they know?

1.110 Participant: Maybe because of the way I dress, they wouldn't know... Or just the way I act, they wouldn't... I know about Kanye West because... Like if he sends out an album, it will have like praying hands but then the six underneath.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

1.111 Interviewer: And how did you learn of this?

1.112 Participant: Uhhh... I learnt about it from my friends and my family.

1.113 Interviewer: And when you hear about this stuff, is it something that makes you feel afraid? Or does it make you feel...

1.114 Participant: Uhhh... I can see that the world is changing... So like... If my friend does not believe in Christ, I will try and make him turn around and believe... But then sometimes, I am scared for my friends or my family because they don't believe.

1.115 Interviewer: What do you think is going to happen to them?

1.116 Participant: Well... They say it is either heaven or hell so.

1.117 Interviewer: Are these kinds of things, things that you think about a lot? Or don't you think about it that much?

1.118 Participant: I don't think about it... I don't like thinking about that... They say the world is going to end with triple six all over the place or other stuff.

1.119 Interviewer: Okay... When you say you do not like to think about it, is it because it makes you feel sad or scared or unhappy?

1.120 Participant: It makes me sad, because of the people who I care about who do not believe or... Yes

1.121 Interviewer: Okay... Anything else you want to tell me about your religion, your faith and the things that you believe in?

1.122 Participant: Sometimes... Like when my friends talk... The people who talk and say "Christ doesn't exist"... I think about it... Uhhh... Until I come back to what I remember and then I say that He is real.

1.123 Interviewer: So sometimes, when they say things like that, you start to have your doubts?

1.124 Participant: Yes.

1.125 Interviewer: And how do you come back to remember what you have been taught?

1.126 Participant: If I go to youth... Or if I just get home... Like randomly a day or two after... My mom will be like "read me a story about God"

1.127 Interviewer: Okay... Does mom do that quite a lot?

1.128 Participant: No.

1.129 Interviewer: Okay... Just now and then?

1.130 Participant: Yes.

1.131 Interviewer: Okay... And what are some of the favourite stories that you have heard?

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1.132 Participant: Like... One that was showing that God is real... Like... It was a poem it was like "God is real"... And then it would say why He was real and they would believe in Him and then they would say why they believe in Him.

1.133 Interviewer: Okay... So that was one of your favourites?

1.134 Participant: Yes.

1.135 Interviewer: Okay... The friends that you have at your youth... Do they go to your school as well? Or are they different?

1.136 Participant: Different... They are my friends who I play soccer with on the weekends.

1.137 Interviewer: Okay... So youth friends are the same as your soccer friends?

1.138 Participant: Yes, but not all of them.

1.139 Interviewer: And your school friends? Do you see them on the weekend? Not so much?

1.140 Participant: Yes.

1.141 Interviewer: Okay... Anything else you want to tell me?

1.142 Participant: No.

1.143 Interviewer: Okay... Is there anything that you want to know?

1.144 Participant: No, not really.

1.145 Interviewer: Okay... So I am going to turn this off...

Semi-structured interview: Shai (15 years old)

Note: Recording of semi-structured interview starts after participant introduces himself and reports to the researcher that he will be going on a trip to Israel.

2.1 Interviewer: Is it? How many people get to go?

2.2 Participant: It's about fifty two... The boys and girls

2.3 Interviewer: Okay... So it's like the whole of grade 10?

2.4 Participant: Yes, it is like three or four people that get to go.

2.5 Interviewer: Okay... So you go for two months... And have you ever done something like that before?

2.6 Participant: Not like that, no.

2.7 Interviewer: Okay... And so who do you stay with and what do you do there?

2.8 Participant: We stay in Yeshiva... Which is basically a mix of a high school plus it has got a religious side to it... So you also study religious studies for quite a majority of the day and the rest of it... Like solid subjects like maths and English... But we just going to go there to study the religious stuff and then go to the army for a week and then go to a (secament like a moshav) and like work there... Yes.

2.9 Interviewer: Wow! Sjoe... So how do you feel about going?

2.10 Participant: I am excited.

2.11 Interviewer: So you are going to have friends who are going with you?

2.12 Participant: Yes.

2.13 Interviewer: But your family is not going to be there with you?

2.14 Participant: Yes.

2.15 Interviewer: And how do you feel about that?

2.16 Participant: I don't know... Maybe later I will.

2.17 Interviewer: Wow... That is very exciting! So what date do you actually leave?

2.18 Participant: The 29th of October.

2.19 Interviewer: Wow... sjoe... That is very exciting... Okay... So you go to the other part of Angela's school? The boy's side of the school?

2.20 Participant: Yes.

2.21 Interviewer: And you are in grade 10 there? She explained to me a little bit about how the school works... Did you also go to the primary school side of the...

2.22 Participant: Yes and nursery school.

2.23 Interviewer: Okay... So you have also been involved the whole time?

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2.24 Participant: Yes.

2.25 Interviewer: Okay... And in terms of who you live with? Are you an only child? Any brothers or sisters?

2.26 Participant: I have a brother in matric and it is just us two... And our parents.

2.27 Interviewer: Okay... So mom and dad... is it just the four of you?

2.28 Participant: Yes.

2.29 Interviewer: Okay... And what do you do in your spare time outside of school?

2.30 Participant: I have got quite a lot of work... Even now... I play quite a lot of sport... I've got a...I've got a soccer club... It's finished now at the moment... The season... But it takes up the majority of my day... And I've got now that I am going to in about 45 minutes... And I've got study... Torah study... And then I will go on my phone for like 20 minutes during my break and... uhmm... Yes.

2.31 Interviewer: Okay... So it sounds like you are quite a busy person?

2.32 Participant: Yes, very.

2.33 Interviewer: Okay... You said that you are in grade 10? So how old are you now?

2.34 Participant: 16.

2.34 Interviewer: 16... Okay... You have already had your birthday this year?

2.35 Participant: Yes, in June.

2.36 Interviewer: Okay... So you have been 16 for a while?

2.37 Participant: Yes.

2.38 Interviewer: Okay... uhmm... When you think about being a 16 year old boy... Or 16 year old man... I am not sure which one you prefer to be called?

2.39 Participant: Man.

2.40 Interviewer: What does it mean to you? Like, if you were to describe yourself to other people, how would you describe yourself?

2.41 Participant: In terms of like religion or?

2.42 Interviewer: Anything.

2.43 Participant: So... I would probably describe myself as a religious Jewish boy that has got a balance in terms of sports, religion, Jewish stuff as well as circular stuff... And I've also got a mixture of different types and kinds of friends... And yes... And I try to have a mixture of a social life, some sports in it and still try to get good marks at school.

2.44 Interviewer: Okay... You said that you have got a mixture of friends? So what do you mean by that? When you say mixture of friends?

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2.45 Participant: Okay... So like I am sure majority of the boys and girls in my high school have Jewish friends... Like majority for sure... Maybe I will have one or two non-Jewish friends... Like since I have been going to soccer, there are two whites in the team and the other 14 are black and two Muslims... And then I don't know if you know Johannesburg's Union Counsel? So I was a prospector there... And so I have bonded... Not necessary bonded, but I have made one or two friends from that... And then I have my friends from different types of schools... Mainly Jewish... My friends... friends that have become... That I made... Jewish friends that I have made are mainly from school and synagogue and then the other ones have been external things like sports and JJC... And that is why I said boys and girls don't have many other friends.

2.46 Interviewer: Okay... So is it just this year that you have been making friends from other religious groups?

2.47 Participant: So I have been playing soccer for about eight years so I mean... And about five of my friends have been with me for about five years... uhmm... And then I mean... If I see someone I don't know... Where it will be like... If it happens when I am out in the park I don't know, I will like speak to them or whatever... But yes, mainly from soccer and JJC this year.

2.48 Interviewer: Okay... And what has it been like for you interacting with people from different religious groups and different races and making friends with people who are different?

2.49 Participant: I can definitely see a difference though... uhmm... What I can see is some boys that are from our school are just as accepting as like... let me try think of the right words... uhmm... Not judgemental but kind of like they... Both of them are different... Both types of my friends in like good ways and bad ways... But some are more natural, genuine from both types but I find it is easier maybe because I spend most time at school... It is easier to make solid friendships with boys at school than like other boys... Now I don't know if that is anything to do with race, our features or the time involved that we meet each other.

Interviewer: Okay... So when you meet like, for example, the guys from the soccer team who are maybe from a different religious group, does it come up? Does it come up that you are from different religions and different kinds of backgrounds?

2.50 Participant: Uhmm... So at soccer maybe mainly we will like... We won't bring out religion. Maybe once or twice the boys will... Not tease me... Not in a nasty way but just joke... But nothing like nastily... Like I've never been in a fight in soccer... But I remember in one of the JJC events... It wasn't an aggressive attack but like... One of the girls like said

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an antisemmatic... Not antisemmatic... But it just came from her mouth and it was offensive but it was just in the spur of the moment... It was with some of the Jews from our school... We didn't say anything because at the spur of the moment we didn't want to make a big deal... But nothing has really happened I mean... But I have heard about incidents from my previous counsellor... That there has been some antisemmatic comments as well as... The other night I was at a party and I was introducing this guy from X... Like not a really Jewish guy... I mean he doesn't even... I don't know if he recognises Judaism... Maybe he does but he had told me that like... The other day he saw a fight with this Jewish guy and this Muslim guy... But yes... Other than that I haven't experienced anything personally.

Interviewer: Okay... So you were saying that in your soccer team you actually have two Muslim soccer players?

2.51 Participant: I think... Yes... Muslim... Hindu.

Interviewer: Okay?

2.52 Participant: Yes... We just don't bring it up... We don't think about it... We are there to play soccer... I mean, I am friends with... I am not very good friends with... When I say... Like there are maybe two or three that I consider proper friends and the other guys... I am there to play soccer with... I will speak or make a joke but not proper friends like at my school.

2.53 Interviewer: Okay... What do you think being Jewish means to you though?

2.54 Participant: Uhhh... Just... I look at it as like a guideline or a path to something that can lead me somewhere... As well as there is restrictions with religion and without it, I think everything would just kind of like go away... Like... I wouldn't have any boundaries to be restricted to... I wouldn't... I mean... I wouldn't have a purpose really... I could just do what I wanted, whenever I wanted until there is no purpose to fulfil.

2.55 Interviewer: Okay... What do you think your purpose is?

2.56 Participant: Uhhh... So there is a concept that everyone... In Judaism, there is a concept that everyone has a purpose in life but you don't necessarily know it until you have passed away or until the second phase... So, at the moment I am not sure, I am just carrying on with my religious life as per normal... Like praying and I learn like four hours in the morning and then I am going to Israel soon and like ten hours... Uhhh... but yes, I mean I don't know the purpose at the moment but there is different... Other things I do to carry on until I actually reach that time when I realise my purpose... Like for example, someone's purpose... Like I heard a few stories about a guy who used to like... A very wealthy guy and his purpose... Like, he used to find it hard to give to charity and his purpose was by the end

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of his life time was to give like, charity to this poor person and he ended up saving like, this poor person's life or something like that... So I am not sure at the moment but it might be like, there are different purposes... It is just a story... I hope you understand? But yes.

2.57 Interviewer: Uhhh... Okay... Do you have any idea of what you would like your purpose to be? Like if you could pick it?

2.58 Participant: Uhhh... Let me think about that... Uhhh... I mean, to be honest... To kind of... I mean, the whole world, not even Arab/Israeli in the middle-east conflict... But uhhh... And it is not even a purpose that is linked to Judaism... It is just like to bring peace like, so that there will be no killings... Because I still don't understand why there is killings between people because we are all human that should be the main thing... But it is not really a purpose to fulfil but that is possible to fulfil... That's an idea.

2.59 Interviewer: Okay... It sounds like if you could almost pick a purpose, yours would almost be bigger? You would think almost bigger in terms of what's happening in the world and just the conflict and the fighting?

2.60 Participant: Yes, because if ever... If that fighting is prevented and everyone would just back each other of what they hold... That... I mean, everyone could just live their lives... There wouldn't be problem in the world.

2.61 Interviewer: Okay... When you uhhh... I know you said when you play soccer, you only kind of just play soccer and maybe things like... Maybe religion does not really come up that much... But if you do, for example, go to parties and you meet people elsewhere, do you tell people about your religion? Is it something that you know when you are getting to know people? You want to share with them?

2.62 Participant: Uhhh... to be honest X college's outlook and view on that is... They bubble you... They put you in a bubble... I am not saying they don't allow you to go to parties or that, but even according to Judaism, we are not supposed to make the action to lure people into converting into Judaism... Like... whereas other religions do like, for example, like missionaries do whatever... But Judaism looks at it like... If you are really passionate about it, then you will come to something called the (base-inn) and then they will help you and it is a lengthy process... Like, I know there is a guy who just moved from X... This Afrikaans guy from grade 11 and him... It took him like, eight years to convert... But so like, if I mean I don't... They put us in a bubble... Not to go to parties and things like that because of religion... Because it might cause us to touch girls... Because it might cause us to do other things... And uhhh... So they don't influence that, but if that's were to happen, I mean, I wouldn't really... I don't feel a need to express my religion... My religious views to other

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people... To express why I am a Jew to other people... But I mean, maybe it would be different if I was in the scenario with a guy who was willing to listen to my views and express his views and his religion.

2.63 Interviewer: Okay... You have learnt a lot of what you know from school?

2.64 Participant: Yes.

2.65 Interviewer: And your family? Is your family quite a religious family?

2.66 Participant: Yes... So my mom and dad... They were both born Jews... They weren't very religious but my dad has become very religious... My mom is also quite religious but my dad is very religious from what he was obviously... Because he didn't go to a Jewish school, he went to a government school and whatever... Ummm... But yes, they are also... I mean it is... They do have an influence on Judaism... Especially my dad... Like if I have got things that I am unclear about, I ask him... It is more like, we have got this Rabi... I don't know if you know if... But Rabi X... Like he is like... He learnt a lot about philosophical views and how to handle these type of questions... He is a proper pro and he is good according to the law of Judaism and according the legal law... Like, we had a discussion today about should Israel belong to the Jews legally and according to the Torah and that... And it was just amazing how he like, got like, proof by proof... But like yes, my family does have an influence but not as much as school. School is a foundation and then it just been built on since then.

2.67 Interviewer: Okay... And you said that you have got an older brother?

2.68 Participant: Yes.

2.69 Interviewer: And would you say that the two of you talk about religious ideas and beliefs?

2.70 Participant: No, we very rarely speak about religious views... He has been quite busy... his past advisor has been very busy... That ummm... Yes, we don't really chat about that... And obviously we have had a few discussions, but when I say discussions... Like every Friday night, when we have our feast, something called the Shabbat, it's about Torah and it means words of Torah... So we give over something that we have learnt in the Torah that week or something like a moral or a life lesson or whatever and he must give the talk on a Friday night and we discuss it sometimes... But I do not go up to him and say "why shouldn't I believe in God" or pose deep philosophical questions.

2.71 Interviewer: Okay... So the deep philosophical discussions you have more with people like the Rabi that you mentioned?

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2.72 Participant: Yes, but to be honest, I was thinking of this the other day... I mean like... I asked X questions I have been wanting about Israel, but then we haven't had that many deep philosophical questions about "should I believe in God" and "what is the rational approach to why there is a God"... I mean, I actually think it is a good... I was thinking the other day, it is actually a good talk for the Rabi to give like, to address, because I think us students need that... Because there is a lot of people like, you look at the past generation like my grandparents and my friend's parents, and most of them are religious and they weren't born religious... They went to government school and they felt a way about Judaism and they became religious... Whereas I think... uhmm... And I need to address this to the Rabi again but I think that a lot of the people... So these parents have children and they decided to send them to religious schools because religious schools are now private schools, and I am finding a lot of people that have gone to religious schools have "gone off the dereh" is a phrase we use which means "gone off the path"... And I think that is because of an overdose of maybe Torah or Judaism or God or whatever... And I don't know if it happens at other schools, but I was thinking like, if I had to do like a research project, I would find that there is a bigger percentage, a much bigger percentage of... Like, I know even in our school... And I mean a lot of them are going "off the dereh" and when I say going "off the dereh", I mean according to Judaism... So they will be... They won't achieve their goals... Like, for a while Torah says so... And then they decide they need to hug girls... They feel the need for it and then they feel like, they don't need to study Torah... uhmm... Yes... What was the question again?

2.73 Interviewer: Okay... Do you ever see yourself going off the path?

2.74 Participant: Uhmm... No, as I said, I try to have a balance which helps and I will never go off the path in a way that... That would like... like... I would never go and hug a girl... But yes, I mean, I don't even know... I don't think so though... I think like, I have a solid foundation... Like, whenever I feel like I am running off the path, like I will go and I will... Let me think of the right word... uhmm... So like, I have got cousins and whatever and I mean like, I am probably allowed to hug them... But I am saying I will hug them when I see them or whatever not like a... It is not like a defiance to Torah law... But I am saying I feel like I believe in my God and I believe in Torah... But if I feel like something is right or if I feel like something is too hectic like, I don't find... I don't really understand, then I will... I won't go against it but I will do what I want but I won't do something hectic... But like, I am steady on the path and I am going to this thing in Israel which is also... Is in both ways like, it is a leadership program.

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2.75 Interviewer: Okay... So you don't ever see yourself converting to another religion or?

2.76 Participant: No, that is... Definitely not converting to another religion... The worst I can see myself doing is becoming a bit less from like, maybe learning less like, maybe learning less you are required at X college... To have a balance of Torah studies and general studies... And at most I see myself defying... Even though I don't see myself defying Torah studies... Like not going to a class or whatever if I don't feel the need for it... Or not becoming (blee) which means I can hug girls or something like that... But no, I would never convert.

2.77 Interviewer: Okay... So it is an important part of who you are?

2.78 Participant: Yes, it is my path.

2.79 Interviewer: Okay... Do you think that it would be the case if you didn't go to the school that you go to? Like maybe if you were like your parents and went to government school?

2.80 Participant: So I was actually thinking about that a few weeks ago... So I was trying to think if my parents got lucky... I am saying they felt a need, a desire to study religion or to become more religious... uhmm... I am not sure if it was luck or if I did decide to go to a government school... I am saying like a nursery school where I was bought up... I wouldn't be sure... I mean, I would probably assume I would be quite secular and I wouldn't be religious... Because I mean, like I met this girl at JJC and she is a reformed Jew and she doesn't know what is courting in Judaism... She is not religious and she goes to a government school... I would probably be like that... Maybe whenever, I mean, uhmm... A person's... uhmm... actions and beliefs I think, are determined by the society he's in and the amount of people... I am saying, like if a lot of people, let's say are stealing... If you are in an area where a lot of people are stealing, I think that will... You have got a bigger percent of becoming a thief than if you were to come to an area such X... So, I think maybe if it had to happen now, I would be religious but maybe in those days that stuff was happening... It was the vibe.

2.81 Interviewer: Okay... Do you think that there is a difference between being religious and spiritual? Or are they kind of the same for you?

Participant: I think that there is a difference because religious... Religious is like, you study four hours a day... You might not be that passionate but that you are at school... So you keep the Sabbath, you go to synagogue, you have requirements to put on something in the morning and you pray... You do all of this, and you can call yourself religious... You can tell your friends that you fasted or the fasts that weren't compulsory... But spiritual is when you

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religious and you can make a connection, like you actually feel... You actually feel the need, not even the need, you feel a closer connection with God... And that is when... Like I mean... You are religious... I think spirituality comes through being religious and being close to God.

2.82 Interviewer: Okay... And where would you say that you are at?

2.83 Participant: So I think at the moment mostly... Most boys in my grade... And I think it changes the next few grades... I think the process, it happens all the time... But at the moment, I am religious and I feel splashes of spirituality here and there on certain days... Like Yucaipa... But at the moment, I think I am religious... But I... This is what the programme that I am going to Israel is mainly aimed at... And obviously I would like to be spiritual but I also think that because that is true and all of this, and I am not saying I am talking for other people, I think because they have thrown all of this stuff at people, like all of this work like, you come to class, you learn a few stuff and even if you are not enjoying it or you don't feel the need to... And I think that is what causes people to become religious... Maybe get one or two splashes of spirituality and totally drop everything, and then maybe become religious again.

2.84 Interviewer: Okay... So the splashes of spirituality that you talk about... What do you think contributes to that? So like when you are going through times when you feel like you are more connected... What is contributing to you feeling more connected?

2.85 Participant: So, you know Yucaipa?

2.86 Interviewer: Yes.

2.87 Participant: So like, it could be like, the actual day... Like everyone calls it Yucaipa... They make it holy, you perceive it to be holy whether you 10 or whether you 90 years old... And like, I remember this Yucaipa I felt like a connection, like, when I was praying specifically... And this could just be the environment I was in... Like, everyone was like praying from their hearts and it was just a good atmosphere, the perfect atmosphere to connect... And uhmm... Ja... So I mean it could be the atmosphere... But also in your mind, the day Yucaipa is a holy day... You want to connect to God... You... I want to say sorry for all the things you done in the past and hope that you get like, you have a good year like the next year... Uhmm... And sometime like, other times when I am praying, I mean, it's only when I am praying now that I think of it... I don't feel a spiritual connection with or with one in the spirit when I do a good deed... Uhmm... It's more like, when I am actually praying I don't know what triggers it though... Maybe it's the day that I have actually.

2.88 Interviewer: Okay.

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2.89 Participant: And... Also... Like the actual prayer that we say in English... It is like... It's amazing to see in the olden days when they actually wrote it, how accurate it would be and how scary in a sense the words are... Because some of the sins you have committed, like, they get so right... And also some of the things you didn't even commit... Just to see you are saying sorry for them... It doesn't make you feel guilty but it makes you feel more connected and you have more belief.

2.90 Interviewer: Okay... So anything else that you want me to know about you in terms of your spirituality and your religion or being a teenager?

2.91 Participant: Uhhh... Like, I think it is hard for teenagers to be religious... You are going through the spurts... Like your hormones are in the middle of finishing off... Uhhh... I do agree you have to have... uhhh... A religion... I mean respect to atheists and whatever, but even in your adolescent years... But I think that you can't force someone... Like, I know some Rabies who have expected their children to become religious like them... I don't think that is the right approach to force because as I said, a lot of these people have been going "off the dereh" and I personally believe it is because of this... Uhhh... I think that you have to have a balance... So if you feel the need to do something you just do it, you don't... But you obviously can't do something stupid... Or I mean, I am not saying go get drunk on a Saturday night... But uhhh... Like you need a balance... So if someone offers you a drink on a Saturday night... To have a shot... What is it going to do to you? But do not go overboard, but you definitely need a balance... I find that people even from my grade... People who have had a balance are more kind... Like better human beings and not as... Not even depressed but not as... Like... They are more happy people... And uhhh... like, they are cooler people, like I am saying in terms of the...

2.92 Interviewer: Okay... But for you? You kind of feel like it forms a big part of your identity and who you are?

2.93 Participant: Yes... Yes my Jewish identity... I am busy reading a book... Actually it is called "*The four rational decisions to believe why God exists*"... I have just started it but it is quite interesting how they have dismissed any disproof about why there shouldn't be a God and they are now listing the proof... But it is just interesting to know whether scientific or whether it was evolution or how they dismissed atheism and... uhhh... Ja... I mean, Jewish identity is a big part... And I wouldn't be scared, I mean, I wouldn't be scared... Obviously I wouldn't do this... I would be a proud Jew if I had to go to Dubai or Iran or whatever, even though I wouldn't be able to go there... But like, I am a proud Jew I would take... Like, I wouldn't pretend I am not a Jew.

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2.94 Interviewer: Okay... Well I think maybe we should start wrapping up so that you are not late for your next appointment.

2.95 Participant: You can have a few minutes... Ten?

2.96 Interviewer: Okay... Is there anything you want to know? Any questions you want to ask? Or anything you want to tell me in addition to what you have already told me?

2.97 Participant: Uhhh...

2.98 Interviewer: There doesn't have to be anything... Just that... I have been asking you many questions to try and get to know you a bit... Maybe you have got some?

2.99 Participant: Have you conducted other research projects to get stats that are regarding like, teenagers?

2.10 Interviewer: Well, the research project of this nature is the first one... During previous years I did research on things like trauma and the impact of being hijacked and things like that... And also with very little people... Their ideas about different racial groups... So this is the first kind of project about this sort of thing.

2.101 Participant: Uhhh... Also do you believe... I mean are you a Christian? Or what religion?

2.102 Interviewer: Yes, like... If I had to say and put it in a particular religion, it would probably be Christianity.

2.103 Participant: Do you believe that kids need more of a balance? Or they should be, not forced, but they should have a majority... I mean, even if they don't feel the need to do it, they should... They should do it just because... Just because the school says so? Or if... If according to the school or the Torah or their religion says you mustn't do it, do you think that if they feel the need to they should or not?

2.104 Interviewer: Uhhh... I think it is different for everybody... You know, I think that when it comes to your spirituality and your relationship with God, it is such a personal thing... That for some people, their answer may be "yes" and for some people the answer maybe "no".

2.105 Participant: I am saying but from your point of view?

2.106 Interviewer: From my point of view, I think that you should feel like you want to do things... Maybe the idea that you have a balance is a good one... Being exposed to things and being able to make up your own mind, also in terms of what you want to do and what you don't want to do.

2.107 Participant: Okay... Yes.

2.108 Interviewer: Any other questions from your side?

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2.109 Participant: I can't think of anything else.

Semi-structured interview: Thato (15 years old)

3.1 Interviewer: Maybe you can just tell me a little about yourself? We don't really know each other, so maybe you could just tell me how old you are and where you are at school?

3.2 Participant: I'm fifteen years old, uhmm, my school is X I'm doing grade 9, I like sports, there's nothing much, there's nothing much, ja, nothing else.

3.3 Interviewer: So you busy with grade 9?

3.4 Participant: Yes.

3.5 Interviewer: And can you tell me a little about your school? Like, the kinds of people who are there and the kinds of things you are learning while you're there?

3.6 Participant: There are different kinds of people, it's a boys and girls school. It's not a good place to be.

3.7 Interviewer: So when you say that it's not such a good place to be, you mean that maybe there are lots of influences?

3.8 Participant: Yes, lots of influences. I would say maybe 60% bad guys. Maybe 40% good guys. Or maybe it's not even that much, maybe only 30% good guys.

3.9 Interviewer: And which percent do you fall in?

3.10 Participant: We're all in the same class but I'm not bad, I'm not bad.

3.11 Interviewer: Okay. And what kinds of subjects are you busy with at school?

3.12 Participant: Religious education, history, science, literature and English, and geography, ja, that's all.

3.13 Interviewer: Okay. So the first one you said is religious education, what religion education is it that you are doing at school?

3.14 Participant: Well, all the different kinds of religions that are at school, like Hindu, Christianity, Judaism, Islam.

3.15 Interviewer: Okay.

3.16 Participant: And also traditional religions.

3.17 Interviewer: Okay. So you learn about all of them?

3.18 Participant: All of them, yes.

3.19 Interviewer: Okay. And you said that you like sports? So after school, is there any hobby that you have, like how do you spend time after school?

3.20 Participant: I go straight home. My mom doesn't allow me to join in to any teams, so I just go home and rest and afterwards I study.

3.21 Interviewer: Okay. And, uhmm, you've just got one brother?

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3.22 Participant: No, two. The other one is in his last year at university studying to be a pastor and then there's A.

3.23 Interviewer: Okay, so you're in the middle?

3.24 Participant: Mmm, I'm the second born.

3.25 Interviewer: Okay. So what's it like for you to be a teenager?

3.26 Participant: Difficult, it's difficult, this age, especially where I'm staying.

3.27 Interviewer: Can you tell me some more about the difficulties? Can you tell me in a little bit more detail what makes it so difficult?

3.28 Participant: There are just sometimes temptations, like as I said before, all those people at school are bad influences, but you just have to be strong and have backbone, you know, you have no choice, if you know your background and where you're from, you have to say no to most of the things, especially the bad things.

3.29 Interviewer: Okay, so what are some of the bad things that people try to get other people to do?

3.30 Participant: So maybe something like alcohol and weed. I don't try to surround myself with those kinds of people, I maybe just run away from them.

3.31 Interviewer: And how do you manage to run away from them? Ummm, what do you do that you stay away from the bad influences?

3.32 Participant: Where they are, I move, I don't want to be close to them. Like for example, if they are here, I'll move from this place to go sit there alone, I prefer sitting alone, so.

3.33 Interviewer: Okay. You said that you learning about a whole lot of different religions at school?

3.34 Participant: Yes.

3.35 Interviewer: And, ummm, is there a particular one that you follow?

3.36 Participant: Christianity, ja.

3.37 Interviewer: Okay. So how did you decide that that was the one for you?

3.38 Participant: It's because everyone at home, they follow, we follow the Christianity, so it is good, I like it, it is different. So like for example, the Islamics, the way that they do things, there are quite a few differences from like Christianity and some their rules, they are not as tough as Christianity. I sometimes get tempted but I don't like sometimes, I don't like some of the things they do, for example boklaram, so like, I don't like it.

3.39 Interviewer: Okay. So there are some things about their faith that you like and some things that you don't like?

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3.40 Participant: Yes.

3.41 Interviewer: And sometimes you feel tempted to change from Christianity to Islam?

3.42 Participant: Yes, because sometimes the rules in Christianity are more tough than like compared to the Muslims.

3.43 Interviewer: Okay. Can you tell me a bit about that? Like if the rules are tough with Christianity, can you see where the rules are not so tough with Islam? What rules do you have that you feel are tough?

3.44 Participant: They encourage the parents to beat their children and in Islam, it is quite different. They don't allow it, and even in class, they don't encourage a child to be beaten.

3.45 Interviewer: So you don't like that part of it? Ummm, ja, so in your faith, if you do something naughty, your faith says that your mom should beat you?

3.46 Participant: Ja. And in Islam it is quite different. They don't beat a child but they don't ja.

3.47 Interviewer: And what other rules have you been thinking about that you don't like or you do like?

3.48 Participant: From this side, like in Christianity, they don't encourage you to use a gun, but on the other side they do. So like on the other side, in Islam, they are quite good at reciting the Koran. Some Christians are not that serious as the Muslims. The Muslims are very serious when it comes to their religion, they are so much serious, some of them.

3.49 Interviewer: Okay. So you said that you also learn about Judaism, but it sounds like the ones that you compare most are Christianity and Islam? So what about Judaism? What do you think about that one?

3.50 Participant: Judaism is almost the same as Christianity. Christianity came from Judaism, so it is the same as Christianity, so there is nothing to compare with two. Except they will use Jewish names, that's all.

3.51 Interviewer: Okay. So the people who go to your school learn about all these religions, and so are they part of all the different religions? So, there are some people who are Christians, some people who are Islamic, some people who are Jewish?

3.52 Participant: We only have one Muslim in our class. Most of the people follow Christianity, so we don't have Jews.

3.53 Interviewer: Okay. And you said that your upbringing was based in the Christian faith?

3.54 Participant: Ja, my grandfather was a pastor, so ja. And my mom's cousin is a pastor, so like both her parents are pastors.

3.55 Interviewer: So lots of pastors?

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3.56 Participant: Lots of pastors, ja.

3.57 Interviewer: So like, have you ever thought about leaving Christianity and joining one of these other faiths and telling your family about it?

3.58 Participant: No.

3.59 Interviewer: What would happen if you did that?

3.60 Participant: No, no, so I'm good in Christianity, so I prefer Christianity.

3.61 Interviewer: So what things do you do then as part of Christianity? You come to church?

3.62 Participant: Ja.

3.63 Interviewer: Every Sunday?

3.64 Participant: Every Sunday and I read the scripture, ja.

3.65 Interviewer: And is praying something that you do?

3.66 Participant: Yes, when I go to sleep, and during school, and in the morning.

3.67 Interviewer: So maybe like three times a day?

3.68 Participant: Ja, three times a day.

3.69 Interviewer: And do you read your bible or anything like that?

3.70 Participant: No I don't read the bible, I prefer praying, I love to pray.

3.71 Interviewer: Okay. That sounds quite interesting for me, how come you prefer one to the other?

3.72 Participant: I don't like reading in general, I don't like reading, so I prefer praying.

3.73 Interviewer: Okay. So the friends that you do have at school, I know that you said that you like to sit alone but the friends that you do have, are they also Christian?

3.74 Participant: Yes, they sing, yes so choir masters.

3.75 Interviewer: And when you're with your friends? Do you ever speak about the Christianity side of things and what you believe?

3.76 Participant: Yes, coz uhmm, because they are different, some will serve at the 7th day Adventist and some will serve at Zionists. Because, ja the 7th day Adventists, they go to church on Saturdays and the Zionists will go on Sundays, so they sometimes talk about which is the right day to go to church, Sunday or Saturday.

3.77 Interviewer: So what do you think when you hear these debates?

3.78 Participant: As long as I go on a Sunday then I'm ok, because Sunday is the right day.

3.79 Interviewer: Okay. So one of the things that people debate about is what is the right day to go to church, and what else do they debate about?

3.80 Participant: Uhmm, there are lots of things.

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3.81 Interviewer: Okay. So when you think about why we are here in the world and what our purpose is, what are your ideas about that?

3.82 Participant: To praise The Lord and preach to others who don't know about Him.

Interviewer: Okay. And what do you think you're going to do when you are finished with school?

3.83 Participant: I don't know. Remember I said I like sports? So maybe something to do with sports, but I'm not sure and I'm thinking about changing to law.

3.84 Interviewer: So which sports are your favourite?

3.85 Participant: I like running, but I like soccer most.

3.86 Interviewer: Okay. So you think that maybe you'll change from sports to law and maybe be a lawyer after school?

3.87 Participant: Yes.

3.88 Interviewer: So although you have so many pastors in your family, you don't think you would ever want to be a pastor?

3.89 Participant: No, no, no, no.

3.90 Interviewer: What's your thinking about that? How come you wouldn't want to be one?

3.91 Participant: I don't know, I am shy, so speaking in front of a lot of people would be a problem for me. But beside that, I could do it, I could try.

3.92 Interviewer: And who else do you think influences you? Because it sounds like your family is a big influence on you in the Christianity side of you? Are there other people who also influence that side of you?

3.93 Participant: My family and pastor Kevin, that's all.

3.94 Interviewer: Do you ever spend time with Pastor Kevin?

3.95 Participant: No.

3.96 Interviewer: It's just what you listen to when you come to church?

3.97 Participant: On Sundays, yes.

3.98 Interviewer: So do you sit in the main church on Sundays? Or is there like a youth group or something you attend?

3.99 Participant: No, in the main church.

3.100 Interviewer: So if you were maybe to describe yourself to a group of people who don't know you, how would you describe yourself?

3.101 Participant: I'm shy, if I get used to you, I'm talkative and ja, that's all. I'm kind, ja, and I'm also patient, ja, that's all.

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3.102 Interviewer: And if people asked you what faith you followed? Are you open about being a Christian?

3.103 Participant: Yes, yes.

3.104 Interviewer: So what would you tell people about that side of you? So if they wanted to know why you decided to be a Christian, what it is you like about the religion, or how you practice Christianity, what would you say?

3.105 Participant: I would tell them that all of us at home are Christian, that is what I know. For me, it is a very good religion and they can see from my actions I'm a good guy, I'm quiet in class, I'm respectable.

3.106 Interviewer: And do you think you're like that because you're a Christian?

3.107 Participant: Yes.

3.108 Interviewer: So let's say there are some of those people at school that have the bad influences, I know that you said that one thing you do is you just avoid the situation so that you're not in it, but let's say they come to you and they say they want you to drink or want you to smoke or something like that, uhmm, what would stop you from doing that then?

3.109 Participant: It's because of where I am coming from and my background, and I hate alcohol.

3.110 Interviewer: So if you think about your religion, does it feel like your religion isn't ok with drinking and smoking?

3.111 Participant: But some of Roman Catholic men, they do drink and smoke and all of them go to church.

3.112 Interviewer: So what do you think about that?

3.113 Participant: That they are not a Christian.

3.114 Interviewer: So what does it mean for you then to be a Christian?

3.115 Participant: There are a lot of temptations, so you need to be committed, you need to have a backbone.

3.116 Interviewer: Okay, so commitment and having a backbone?

3.117 Participant: Ja, and being able to say no to all the bad things.

3.118 Interviewer: Okay. Is there anything else about yourself that you can tell me that you haven't told me yet?

3.119 Participant: Nothing, no, that's all.

3.120 Interviewer: Okay. I remember you said that you pray about three times a day, in the morning, at school when you have your scripture union time, and at night as well. You said that you prefer praying to reading your bible and that is because in general, you just don't

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really like reading. And are there any other traditions that you have or any other rituals that you have?

3.121 Participant: Okay, well my dad likes the traditional religion. And when you are at home, when you visit him, he sometimes does that thing.

3.122 Interviewer: Okay. Can you tell me about that? So because traditional religion is one that you learn about at school too, and if dad follows that, then you know a little bit about that? So can you tell me a bit about that?

3.123 Participant: Yes. They pray to God and to the ancestors, and they believe in the ancestors. And everything they do, they report to the ancestors, and if they get married, they don't have the white wedding, the bride goes into the kraal until she cries and then when she cries, they propose to the ancestors that there will be a new person who will be joining the family, which is good. There is no divorce, so if you are married, you married. But they are allowed to have more than one wife, polygamy, ja.

3.124 Interviewer: So you don't follow that religion?

3.125 Participant: No.

3.126 Interviewer: And what helped you to decide that it is not one that you would follow?

3.127 Participant: I think because my family has another religion that I am used to, Christianity ja, and it would be hard for me to change over. I don't believe in ancestors, if you are dead you are dead.

3.128 Interviewer: So when you visit dad and that is the religion that dad follows, what do you have to do then as part of that religion?

3.129 Participant: We usually only visit him during funerals so that we can stay away from all of these traditional things, ja.

3.130 Interviewer: And is dad ok with you being Christian?

3.131 Participant: Ja, because sometimes when we go and visit him, we still go to church on Sundays, so he's ok, yes.

3.132 Interviewer: And is there anyone else that you know who follows a traditional religion?

3.133 Participant: Yes, there is some guy in class who follows the traditional religion.

3.134 Interviewer: Okay. And is that someone that you speak to?

3.135 Participant: No.

3.136 Interviewer: Okay. Have you noticed that there are differences between you and him?

3.137 Participant: Yes, he is into cultural traditions.

3.138 Interviewer: Is that the only difference that you've noticed?

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3.139 Participant: He is wild, he's into partying and I don't go, I'm always at home, I have boundaries, I don't have that much freedom.

3.140 Interviewer: Anything else you want to tell me about Christianity? Or some of the things that you have been thinking about? Or maybe some of the questions that you have?

3.141 Participant: What I don't understand is, from the bible, is the colour of the skin. So Adam and Eve, is white. So where did the black people come from? That is something that I don't understand. And also, I don't quite understand creation. I don't understand how it happened?

3.142 Interviewer: And so when you have questions like that, are there people who you can ask?

3.143 Participant: I ask myself and try to answer myself.

3.144 Interviewer: And what answers do you come up with?

3.145 Participant: For the black and white, I don't have answers for that. And for the creation, I just go to the bible, that is when I go to the bible and try to read, re-read the story of creation so that I can try to understand what happened.

3.146 Interviewer: Do you ever think you'd be able to ask anyone at church those questions?

3.147 Participant: No, I'm scared.

3.148 Interviewer: What will happen do you think, if you ask?

3.149 Participant: I don't have a way to approach that person.

3.150 Interviewer: Is that because you're shy?

3.151 Participant: Yes.

3.152 Interviewer: So you're not scared of the answer, you just feel shy?

3.153 Participant: Yes.

3.154 Interviewer: So what about asking mom those kinds of questions? Have you tried that before?

3.155 Participant: Yes, she doesn't answer and she is always busy.

3.156 Interviewer: What about your brother who is a pastor? Do you think you can ask him these questions?

3.157 Participant: He doesn't live with us, so maybe when he comes for a holiday I can ask him.

3.158 Interviewer: What about in class when you are receiving religious education? Do you ever ask those questions then?

3.159 Participant: I am always quiet in class.

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3.160 Interviewer: Do you think there are other people your age who have questions like this?

3.161 Participant: Ja, I think so,

3.162 Interviewer: Okay. So what do you think you're going to do to try to answer these questions?

3.163 Participant: I think I will try ask Pastor Kevin one day. I will practice how I will approach him.

3.164 Interviewer: Anything else you want to tell me about you?

3.165 Participant: No, I think that is all.

Semi-structured interview: Tevin (16 years old)

4.1 Interviewer: Maybe you can tell me how old you are and when your birthday is?

4.2 Participant: Mmm... Well, just not so long ago. I am 16... Just on 6th... Ok so... But uhmm... 6th.

4.3 Interviewer: So it's just the other day?

4.4 Participant: Ja.

4.5 Interviewer: What did you do for your birthday?

4.6 Participant: No... Like, I went to school, like for half day, and I went home got dressed and went down to my granny... We had a small party. She always does it for us... For everyone... So we have a small... Ja.

4.7 Interviewer: That's nice.... So it was a nice family birthday?

4.8 Participant: Ja, it's mostly about family.

4.9 Interviewer: So it is a family thing.

4.10 Interviewer: What grade are you in?

4.11 Participant: Grade 9.

4.12 Interviewer: Grade 9... Okay... Can you tell me a little bit about your school? The type of school you go to?

4.13 Participant: Mine, is a private school... Mmm... Well, it's an old thing... Boys... Girls... everything... Different kinds of people... Coloured... All things.

4.14 Interviewer: Okay.... And are you doing all the subjects at this point or have you had to choose some subjects already?

4.15 Participant: Now? So far, I am doing all and only next year I have to decide in grade 10 where I wanna be... I choose... Maybe I wanna go... What I wanna do.

4.16 Interviewer: Okay... And what are your thoughts about this? Did you have any ideas?

4.17 Participant: Well, I was talking to my mother, even telling her, they want to know... You know... They don't wanna order books and no one will come for the subject... So... But a nightmare, its accounting... You know, things with numbers... But I am also into soccer... In a soccer team... So she was telling me "gentleman do you know something about soccer?"... I was like "ja"... But now I need to get before the end of this year... What I wanna do... So next year I focus on what I need for what I wanna do.

4.18 Interviewer: So it sounds like there are different sides... The one side is the accounting and Maths, the other side is the soccer side?

4.19 Participant: Ja, but mostly soccer... Anything to do with soccer.

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4.20 Interviewer: It's your thing?

4.21 Participant: Ja

4.22 Interviewer: Okay... And in your spare time? What do you do in your spare time?

4.23 Participant: Mostly with my cousin... Then go out... Gables and places... Friends and all that.

4.24 Interviewer: So you just spend lots of time socializing after school? Weekends?

4.25 Participant: Ja... After school... Weekends... Some weekends I've decided not today... This weekend, I am not in the mood of doing anything... I will sit home alone... Maybe my cousin will come and do something... Then we go back up, watch TV or do something... Simple things.

4.26 Interviewer: Okay... And I just met your mom... And you have a younger sister who is 13?

4.27 Participant: And a younger brother.

4.28 Interviewer: Okay... And how old is your younger brother?

4.29 Participant: Ten

4.30 Interviewer: Okay... So you are the oldest of the three?

4.31 Participant: Ja... Nice thing.

4.32 Interviewer: Why do you say that?

4.33 Participant: Like, this is like, being the oldest... And you must teach them... Well the only thing... Also start comparing... You are older but you are not concentrating on your school work... You know... Have that with my sister, she is just behind me... It is also giving me that pressure... To that I have do it.

4.34 Interviewer: So a lot of pressure at this point? And who else lives in your house? So it's you and your younger sister?

4.35 Participant: No, uhhh... Like I stay with like, before last week... I used to stay with them... My father, my grandfather... But he was not like, he's there, he goes to his house in like... He's got a farm... He goes there... He comes back... He visits you know... Stayed maybe for a weekend, things like that... But it was like me, my father, my mother, my brother, and sister... So we like, five and six if he comes... But now I am staying with my granny, with my uncle... My other uncle and my step grandfather... Yes.

4.36 Interviewer: Okay... And is it just for the holidays that you staying there or?

4.37 Participant: No, like... I will stay there and I will stay there... It's just that you know... I've got three places to go... Even my other granny, then my cousin... I will go there, I will sleep... So I am always up and down.

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4.38 Interviewer: How do you decide?

4.39 Participant: No, like... Like... Okay... Just... You know this... Go there home, missing my mother... Go home, spend some time... Do what... Do anything... Then if like, okay I go down to my granny with my uncles and all that... Then X will tell me “you know come this weekend”... Maybe we gonna see girls or something like that... We go.

4.30 Interviewer: Okay... So just to... Okay... And you said you just turned 16... So what is it like being a 16 year old?

4.31 Participant: It's nice... It's nice when you see on TV... It tells you age restriction... You like... Ja, I am older than your sister... You can watch this... But uhmm... You know, I am just trying... But it's nice.... Growing older... Finishing school in two more years... So it's gonna be nice.

4.32 Interviewer: Uhmm... So... If you think about being 16, and like you said, you almost finishing school, and things like that... If you were to describe yourself, maybe to a group of people who don't really know you, how would you describe yourself?

4.33 Participant: Well I am very shy, very very shy... I have been with friends, you know... So it's nice... Talk to you... Will have that thing... I wouldn't be shy, not talk... I always, even if there is nothing to talk about, I will make something... You know... That's how it is... Ja.

4.34 Interviewer: So... In the beginning maybe you feel a bit shy... But then after that, you get used to people, you not shy anymore?

4.35 Participant: Ja, I will say... Being thing... Like you know... Then will talk... Become friends... You know.

4.36 Interviewer: And so if you were trying to explain to people about you and things that you like and things you didn't like, what would you say?

4.37 Participant: No, like mostly everything, like is soccer... You know... I like sports, any sports... Not most... But mostly is soccer... Coz like my grandfather, he is a legend for manzini Sundowns... So him and my uncle... He's got that thing... Now they all want me, you know, I must also improve... I have got their thing... That you know, where... My uncle and my grandfather... It's what my father... He is like more in pool, so pool... I am in a soccer thing... That's how it is.

4.38 Interviewer: So if you wanted people to try to get to know who Tevin is, the only thing is that soccer is important to him? And other important things?

4.39 Participant: Mostly its soccer.

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4.40 Interviewer: If you think about life and why you think that we here... What are your ideas about that?

4.41 Participant: mmm... I am not sure.

4.42 Interviewer: Is there something that you believe in? As in... Like do you believe that there is a God?

4.43 Participant: Yes

4.44 Interviewer: So would you be able to tell me a little bit about what it is that you believe in?

4.45 Participant: Ja, I do... Like if I have I do go to church... It's not like I don't want, you know... It's nice, you know... Hearing words... It help.

4.46 Interviewer: So if you do go to church, what kind of church do you go to?

4.47 Participant: It's a small... Well they like, it's a small church... They are not very big... There is two types... We go to any, you know... This one here... We go there... When you go to church, there is times that when you get in there you can feel it... That no He's here... Or it's like that on Sundays.

4.48 Interviewer: What kind of church is that? Like a Christian church or?

4.49 Participant: Christian

4.50 Interviewer: And you said that you go when you want to and whenever you get the opportunity?

4.51 Participant: Yes

4.52 Interviewer: And where did you hear about things like church and Christianity?

4.53 Participant: From my uncle, he was saved also... He went for something in Durban and when he got there, just like... That he changed... Thing, he was a heavy Christian... Church every day... He used to go walking... Ja, so it's nice.

4.54 Interviewer: Is this the same uncle who plays soccer that you were talking about?

4.55 Participant: Yes.

4.56 Interviewer: Okay.

4.57 Participant: You can say, you can actually say he is like my role model... Like twenty thousand... Very nice... Like soccer team.

4.58 Interviewer: Sounds like you and your uncle are very close?

4.59 Participant: Ja.

4.60 Interviewer: So you found out quite a lot about church and Christianity from your uncle... What about school? Do you have some bible study or religious education at school?

4.61 Participant: No, not where I am schooling now... Where I was in grade 7, that's where.

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4.62 Interviewer: Okay... So what did they used to have there?

4.63 Participant: They will tell you about the types, you know... Well the ten commands and all that.

4.64 Interviewer: Do you and your friends speak about things like religion and church and that stuff?

4.65 Participant: Well, not the friends from school... There are other friends... They will just now and again, send you a verse, you know... Thing like that... They tell you to send to people, I will send... You don't have... I will just send because I can feel it.

4.66 Interviewer: So why do you think you are here? Why have you been sent to earth what is your purpose now?

4.67 Participant: When you told us... So that you wanna know about us, you know... Our type of life style and all that?

4.68 Interviewer: So what else can you tell me about that?

4.69 Participant: It's not easy to pity... It's not easy... Now you get that pressure, people you know talk about you... Well, I have learned that you can talk about me... Doesn't make me a bad person... You just, you just said it... You can't... What I can... So.

4.70 Interviewer: So there are some challenges?

4.71 Participant: There are but you know, you just have to keep your head high and you know, continue.

4.72 Interviewer: With the challenges that you face... Is it ever that maybe you need to make important decisions about like, what you going to do and what you not going do?

4.73 Participant: Yes there is thing but now, it's not very important, but it's also help to make decision.

4.74 Interviewer: And how do you make your decisions? So if there is something you have to decide on, like maybe an example, like how do you go about making that decision?

4.75 Participant: Mmm... Well I look at what I like, what type of thing, what I am good at, what basically... What I know I can do and enjoy... I don't wanna do something that I won't enjoy and say no because I am getting this money... It doesn't really... You going to work and you like aah... You know, you not even... You not even gonna get up in the morning, say "oh I don't wanna"... so it's nice to go.

4.76 Interviewer: So when you are making decision, you think about the things that you like or the things that are maybe important to you? Do you ever pray about decisions that you need to make or anything like that?

4.77 Participant: Ja, there is times that or the day, I will say something... Then... The time.

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4.78 Interviewer: So you said that every now and again you go to church... And you said you don't really speak so much about it with your school friends... But there are some people who you will send message here and there?

4.79 Participant: On whatsapp, Ja, talking about... I had facebook... Used to send things... It would be nice... I like it... Then they say... They will tell you a story, you know... And you like yoh... You pray for the person... Something like that.

4.80 Interviewer: Okay... So what does being a Christian mean to you?

4.81 Participant: Well, we chose that... That God like, He made us so that one, you know... Like, I haven't read the whole bible but what I've heard is that He made us... He then made everything, everything that you can think of, everything... Nothing that He hasn't made... So it's like that thing, believing Him.

4.82 Interviewer: Okay... So what does that mean to you when you think about it? Do you think that like, God made everything, everything around you? What do you think about that?

4.83 Participant: It's nice that, you know, someone who knows us... He is like our creator so, He wouldn't put you on the earth for nothing... He is got a purpose for you.

4.84 Interviewer: So why do you think He put you here?

4.85 Participant: Not sure.

4.86 Interviewer: Not sure... Okay... Is there ever anything... Do you think about this sometimes or not so much?

4.87 Participant: Well, there is a time I think why He put me here... Why... You see... But there is a reason that we still have, I have to live... I haven't seen... One day, I will see Him.

4.88 Interviewer: When do you think that would be?

4.89 Participant: Not sure.

4.90 Interviewer: Not sure... How do you think you develop your purpose? So like you say, you not too sure about yours is now... But maybe one day it will be clearer to you what it is? And if you think about people around you, people who maybe know what their purpose is... How do they come to know?

4.91 Participant: As... What they got that or something like that, you know.

4.92 Interviewer: Okay... So like, maybe your purpose is linked to the things that you good at, your talents?

4.93 Participant: Ja.

4.94 Interviewer: Okay... So the people who you talk to about this stuff... Is it the church people?

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4.95 Participant: Well, it's... There some that they have parent... So they in that thing, you know... There is even some that you don't expect but... Coz a lot of people that changed for this last two year... A lot of people have changed and now Christians you know, believe... Something that they used to do... It's nice you know, seeing new people.

4.96 Interviewer: What then causes them to change?

4.97 Participant: It's that you know... Maybe its people, what they hear from people like at school... There was a person who came to our school, for Christian... And she is like no... She prayed... She like "close your eyes, don't open your eyes"... And if you want me to pray for you, pick up your hand... It was like maybe, we don't know... I don't see, but I know basic that everyone had to put up their hand... She made us close our eyes, then she you know... Because you won't be like, eish... Because you don't wanna pick up your hand, because you have that thing... But she said "no close your eyes", then she started praying... We all picked up our hands... Well I did, I don't know about... Everyone was like "did you pick up your hands?", and I am like "Ja"... No it wasn't that thing that I was scared... Everyone has problems so no one is perfect, you can't say no he is perfect... He's got his faults... He's got but.

4.98 Interviewer: Okay... This lady that came to your school and she asked you all to close your eyes and to pick up your hands if you needed prayer...uhmm... Was... And you said that uhmm... You didn't feel scared, but do you think that there were some people who were scared to lift up their hands?

4.99 Participant: You know, how your friends will take it... Well, it's not about that, you must feel free you know... Don't be scared... Well, I was also scared but I like "no, it is helping me"... Not you... If you got problems you don't wanna show, you gonna be a big boy you know, and you like "no, I've got no problems" and you know, you've got problems but you don't wanna show it... And I was like "no".

4.100 Interviewer: Okay, okay... So do you think that some of the people at school were afraid to lift their hands because they thought they were going to be judged?

4.101 Participant: Yes

4.102 Interviewer: Okay... So it sounds like in the time that you've got problem, that prayer is good for that?

4.103 Participant: Yes

4.104 Interviewer: Are there other times that you pray?

4.105 Participant: Ja, I pray like anytime, anytime to say thank you, thank you for this day you know, if.

4.106 Interviewer: Are there any religious holidays that you celebrate?

4.107 Participant: Mmm... Yes... Mmm... What you call this... I am not sure what it's called, where you don't eat meat, its only fish... That's what we do... We don't at all... Not at all... We only eat fish... My granny's got her pickle fish... It's called pickle, that's what she makes... She makes about four trays, then anytime you feel, that's what you eat... You don't eat vienas, chicken no... That's on its side, you eat... Well I've that well like no... It's really nice... I am not complaining, it's nice.

4.108 Interviewer: So that's one religious time that you celebrate and you only eat the fish and specifically, the pickled fish. And are there other times that you celebrate?

4.109 Participant: Mmm... There is this time, Ash Wednesday, there is always... You go to church... I missed the first... Those one, those year... Coz I was thing... I wasn't feeling well... So I didn't go... I wanna go the next with my cousin... He won't show you that, but he feels it... Even like, there is one day at church and... I am singing... I'm like, I know this song but I don't know the words... Even if you sang, you sing... I am singing because I am praising him... You know, he started singing, even if you had saying... He was like not sing, say the words but you know... Gives that thing. And this song was from what... uhhh... How my granny... Great granny told me that she loves this song... Every Sunday she plays the song when we come back from church... So it's like, you know... Like there was one Sunday, my granny decided like you know, I... She fell then she sat down... Like, I looked and she started crying... I looked this side and my cousin started crying... You know, she felt it... She was like there with us... Now I was also feeling that, so I was like aah.... Then X, my cousin, stop also... He helped his mama because he was also feeling that... Though it felt as if we have someone here... It was nice.

4.110 Interviewer: Is this feeling that you get, can you tell me a little bit about it?

4.111 Participant: It's like, you cold... You like feel you know there is some one here... We don't know who, but you can feel that are no... There is someone here... It's nice.

4.112 Interviewer: Okay that's a good feeling?

4.113 Participant: Very nice, that feeling... Our people... There are... There are watching so, it's so nice.

4.114 Interviewer: Okay... So you feel like there is somebody watching over you? It feels good? Uhhh... When do you get this feeling?

4.115 Participant: There are times, even when I wake-up every day... When I get up, I go outside and feel "this is nice"... That there's... Then you stop... You feel that okay there is

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someone that morning... You like mmm... Then throughout the day, you have a nice day... Very very nice day... Ja, it's nice.

4.116 Interviewer: So when did you first start feeling things like this?

4.117 Participant: Well when I go... When I was thirteen... Like that thing you know, it came with teams, all you know... Okay... when my grandfather's brother passed away, that's when I you know, I have that.

4.118 Interviewer: So do you think it's because of your grandfather's brother passing away that it started?

4.119 Participant: Well, I... We didn't like, we weren't very close but you know... I knew there was my uncle... So it's nice.

4.120 Interviewer: Okay.

4.121 Participant: And we actually buried my grandfather's things... it's so nice, every time we go up there, we say a pray... It's nice.

4.122 Interviewer: So when you were about thirteen and you started to get these feelings and you noticed that it was also someone important in your life that passed away... uhmm... And sometimes when you go and visit the grave where he is buried, then you say a prayer... Things like... uhmm... Before that, like before when you were a teenager?

4.123 Participant: Well, no... I did not worry about anything... I wasn't you... I was like that thing I have... You know, I am older now... No, you know... I was like you know, in that small child playing, I wasn't like in that state... I was... Wonderful girls... Mostly every day I Go play soccer, play soccer, play soccer at my friend's house... Didn't have that mentality... When I was thirteen, that's when I started you know.

4.124 Interviewer: So you started thinking a little bit more when you started being a teenager?

4.125 Participant: Ja.

4.126 Interviewer: What else can you tell me about being a teenager? And about who you are?

4.127 Participant: Uhmm... Not sure.

4.128 Interviewer: Okay... It sounds like you've got quite a lot of freedom to decide where you going to stay... So you stay at three places... Sometimes with your mom, sometimes with your uncle and there where your cousin is... uhmm... You said that you decide depending on what's happening and also depending on maybe... uhmm... Who you missing and things like that... uhmm... Are you allowed to do that because you are getting a bit older now or do your brother and sister also do that? Like, how does it work?

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4.129 Participant: Well... uhhh.... I am the oldest, you know... Me and my sister, she... But I am mostly older... I am mostly not mostly at home... If I am not at home, I am with my granny... I am there, you know... I've that, that thing... And all I've got to do is tell them where I am going.

4.130 Interviewer: Okay... And they don't worry about you?

4.131 Participant: Yes.

4.132 Interviewer: So... So the uncle that is your role model, where, where is he? Uhhh... You stay with him sometimes?

4.133 Participant: Like no, he just moved... He just got married last year... So now, he's got a kid also so he moved out... He was by my granny, he moved out to his own house... But there's times that there's a game and like, the last time and I actually walked from home just to go but it wasn't that far from home... I walked and watched the game with him... And we went home.

4.134 Interviewer: How old is the son?

4.135 Participant: He's thirty... Twenty... I think twenty something... Or thirty... Wait he's thirty, just turned thirty.

4.136 Interviewer: Okay... So he is a bit older than you but he's not the same age as your parents?

4.137 Participant: No, I think ja... My mother is the oldest... They two only, no they four... But she is the oldest... It's my uncle and the other two uncles... She is the only girl.

4.138 Interviewer: Okay... But this this uncle is like your favourite? What is it about him that makes him your favourite?

4.139 Participant: Well, he acts like a father to me... You can say that.

4.140 Interviewer: Okay... And your own dad?

4.141 Participant: Mmm... Well... You know, it depends that... He is that type of person that he wants you to be like him... We have got our music, it's not nice music, but to us it's a nice... Mino... nice music... He wants me to listen to him... His type of music... That's oldies... But now in our, our generation, it's not... We want our also music that we love, that we like, you know... Also... So it's nice... My mother she can't, she don't say much... The thing is... If you say no, they go on the dot... That's like type of thing is... So like first time... I had a girlfriend... I told my mom, she was the first one to know... You know, and she didn't say the name... She just said and the first thing she said was no, you know, "you too young"... He had like... She was already shouting, she had that thing, you know... She

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didn't tell me and explain no this is why... You know he didn't explain... He said "no"... You know, that harsh thing... Only when you are 17 like me... But that's the thing.

4.142 Interviewer: Okay... So it sounds like your uncle gives you a little bit more freedom to be yourself?

4.143 Participant: Ja, but there is... I have always got that thing, I won't over step him... Like I'm here and he's here... I'm here and he's here... I'm here... On top never... that's how the thing is... I am always at the bottom... Not that, I am gonna take over now you know... Got the respect you know, he is older and say things but there is a limit.

4.144 Interviewer: Okay... So where did you learn about that kind of respect?

4.145 Participant: Well it's just that... How I grew up you know... I always had that thing to greet people when I come in or just look even in the kitchen... I walk to the lounge... Just like that... Even it means when you are at the door, I will come out and greet you... I come out... I won't be like... "Oh look at what you doing" and just continue with my phone... I will greet you and put my phone in the pocket and welcome you... You do things, you know... When you talk to my granny or whoever you came with... I have already created a self, and then I will go back to what I was doing... You know, it's like that.

4.146 Interviewer: Okay. You said that that's the way you grew up, so who taught you manners like that?

4.147 Participant: I think it's my granny, because I was mostly with her.

4.148 Interviewer: Okay, okay, okay. So do you do things now because it's the right thing to do or because you will get into trouble if you don't or...?

4.149 Participant: It's not that I will get into trouble, but I've got that thing in me that it's a good thing to do. If you do it you know it means you will get thing, you not gonna. They all look at you, they look at your parents. So you giving them when you know it's your role, you doing.

4.150 Interviewer: Okay, so it's almost like out of respect for your parents? You will have good manners because people who look at you and you don't have good manners and think that your parents didn't do a good job?

4.151 Participant: Ja, they the one's that didn't show you respect or something like that. It's you that.

4.152 Interviewer: Okay, so how do you decide for yourself between right and wrong?

4.153 Participant: It's the way people take it, you know, you do something and then you know, they have faith in you. You know you were wrong so you like 'no, that is' about what I was doing. You then apologise you know, you don't do it again, things like that.

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4.154 Interviewer: So it's like almost like you wait to see what their reaction is?

4.155 Participant: You do something, then you like, you see your friend, if it's okay, ja.

4.156 Interviewer: So if you see that it's something that hurts them, then you apologise and you do differently next time? And what about if you are with some of your friends? Do you ever feel like maybe, uhmm, uhmm, you do things that you wouldn't usually do on your own when you with them?

4.157 Participant: No.

4.158 Interviewer: What else can you tell me about yourself?

4.159 Participant: Mmmm, nothing.

4.160 Interviewer: Nothing else? Okay. If you hear people speaking about things like religion, what does that mean for you?

4.161 Participant: Well, maybe it feels like, it tells you that they wouldn't have things that they didn't if there was no God, you know. They wouldn't talk about something that is not there. Why would they? Like a bible, if it's not real, just making, so.

4.162 Interviewer: How do you think people pick which religion they are going to follow?

4.163 Participant: Well, I think it's the type of family you have, basically, because like we Christians. If we were in the Muslims, of course you were gonna be a Muslim. You from that type of thing, so.

4.164 Interviewer: So it depends on your family?

4.165 Participant: Ja. You know, here people talk about Christianity. You know all that thing, early change, but when they do that, their father or family, then say will like you know take them out, kick them out, you know, out of the family, you know. Because they don't believe in that you believe in that, it's outside.

4.166 Interviewer: So it's almost like if they choose something different from what their family believes, their family will disown them?

4.167 Participant: Yes. Well there is, I heard from one guy I used to know, used to play at the gym, and used to teach, you know. I will do something for 10 minutes. He will be like here 20 minutes, do talk. I do 20 minutes. Bicycle 20 minutes, I do 20 minutes. He will give me all that so, I knew him, used to and I heard that his father did things, he had no money. No before that, he had a wife, then she got a son, so he, she was a Christian so I think that maybe might have to change you know. She didn't wanna change. It must have change.

4.168 Interviewer: So she is a Christian but he wasn't?

4.169 Participant: Ja, he wasn't and she didn't wanna change.

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4.170 Interviewer: So he didn't wanna follow Islam but then he changed to Christianity? What do you think about that?

4.171 Participant: If you, ja, if you have that love for her, then so you have to do it.

4.172 Interviewer: So you feel like its okay to change your religion if it's to be with somebody you love? And his family?

4.173 Participant: I don't know now, now he's stopped gym, I am ten years already so I don't know he's back or he's still, I'm not sure. But so far but he was.

4.174 Interviewer: Do you ever think that you will change your religion?

4.175 Participant: I don't know but I don't think I would.

4.176 Interviewer: You don't think so?

4.177 Participant: Ja.

4.178 Interviewer: How come?

4.179 Participant: Well you know, changing, I wouldn't you know. Not that I wouldn't go.

4.180 Interviewer: What would stop you from changing?

4.181 Participant: Just me.

4.182 Interviewer: Okay, so it is because you're worried that your family?

4.183 Participant: No just me.

4.184 Interviewer: And what do you believe in?

4.185 Participant: Ja.

4.186 Interviewer: Okay. And your friends? What do you think they believe in?

4.187 Participant: Well, ja most, all my friends are Christians. They do, you know, they do have that thing. That means they don't. There is times that I am telling them 'You know guys when do you ever think of stopping?' They even get mad at me but inside, they thinking you know, 'When am I gonna stop?' There are people that stop it, it's a nice thing, I do tell them that you know, it's wrong, don't do it. You take it or you leave it. There is a verse; I think its proverbs, psalms, just can't get it now. My uncle from my father's side, he even has a tattoo here with that verse. You can take there is something; you can take my advice, or stand with pride you know. Cos you got so much pride you don't need to take my advice, but maybe that advice will help you, so.

4.188 Interviewer: Okay. And that's the way you work when you tell your friends, that you give the advice but it's up to them to take it if they want to or not?

4.189 Participant: Well, if you don't wanna take it, you don't have to. I am just saying what I know, you know. What I have been through or something like that.

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4.190 Interviewer: So how do you know? So let's say you tell your friends that they shouldn't be doing something, how do you know?

4.191 Participant: Cos it's like, I have seen it, I have. My uncle, he's got a drinking problem. When he drinks, he starts getting loud, he starting swearing a lot you know, so, he start that thing.

4.192 Interviewer: So it's always like, you see things and then you decide for yourself that its?

4.193 Participant: There are people that, you know, who can handle themselves, but you know, it's just you know their type of thing.

4.194 Interviewer: Mmm, okay, mmm. Do you use some kind of rules or something like that to try and decide what is good and what's bad, what's right and what's wrong?

4.195 Participant: Like there's no rule, but here [in my heart] I know, you know. I have got my rules, like there's no rules, but for me, I know this is not right, this is, you know, what you hear. Less pictures. After picture, alcohol, you see like, uhmmm, like this year. But next year I have got bigger, I have seen other things.

4.196 Interviewer: So you kind of have your own things for yourself that help you to know the difference between right and wrong? And what you wanna do and what you don't wanna do?

4.197 Participant: Ja.

4.198 Interviewer: And how do you think you got that part of yourself?

4.199 Participant: It was just me, you know. What I was seeing, you know.

4.200 Interviewer: Okay. Anything else you thought of that you wanted to tell me about?

4.201 Participant: I have told you most of things.

4.202 Interviewer: Okay. Do you have any questions you wanna ask?

4.203 Participant: No.

4.204 Interviewer: Okay, okay, okay. I am going to turn this off if that's okay with you?

Semi-structured interview 3: Tylah (16 years)

5.1 Interviewer: Okay, so maybe you can just tell me a little bit about yourself, you can start anywhere?

5.2 Participant: Uhhh, a little bit about myself? Well, I speak Afrikaans that is a start. I am not Jewish by birth, I am converting. I have only lived in X for almost two years now, a year and 10 months. I used to live in the Western Cape down there in X, where the weather is very pleasant and the beaches around and it is much more friendly, environmentally friendly. Life is slower, we have always been a religious family since that we have always been looking for the truth. My parents were Christians before they decided to accept Judaism as the ultimate truth. I was fairly involved in this decision to convert, as far as I know I am fairly a normal guy, 16, school, trying to do well at school, I play sports, hang out with friends, nothing too unusual. But I do take my religion very seriously and that is the focal part in my life and that is the only reason I am here really, school is also very important, friends are very important but the reason I am here is, I want to live a holy life, a God filled life and a life with values and morals and spirituality and something that...meaning that non-Jews do not necessarily have. Yes, that is basically a summary.

5.3 Interviewer: Okay, so you go to the same school that the girls do, you just go to the boys school?

5.4 Participant: Yes, the boy's side.

5.5 Interviewer: Okay. And you are in grade?

5.6 Participant: Eleven

5.7 Interviewer: Eleven? Busy year!

5.8 Participant: Busy, very busy, it's crazy.

5.9 Interviewer: And you said you are how old?

5.10 Participant: I am still 16, my birthday is like in four days.

5.11 Interviewer: Okay, so you are almost, almost 17!

5.12 Participant: Almost, almost 17!

5.13 Interviewer: Okay. And what was it like going from the Western Cape to X?

5.14 Participant: Well, I think when you are young, older people complain about 'Ag, it is so hot and it is so dry here, it never rains', I mean that doesn't even affect me at all. So from a weather point of view, I don't really think it made a difference to me. I was never a beach person in the first place, so it didn't really make a difference to me. The biggest thing of course, was the course of life and the people, I found that the people here are definitely a bit

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more intense, a bit more intense people, a bit more vibrating because life here is so much quicker here and it is stressful, and there is crime and there are high walls and everything. Where as in X, without a doubt people are way more laid back, relaxed, and they are friendly. In X, you will never hear a car hooter, people are friendly and they are embracing, and they live at a very steady, comfortable pace in life. Whereas here, it is going, especially I feel like in this Jewish community, I feel like there is always something happening. School is jam packed, people are busy, lives are busy, so many things going on. Everybody goes to Israel after school and we all live so close to each other, so we are always in each other's faces in all ways. So I definitely feel like in Johannesburg, the pace of life, is definitely at a high tempo but in saying that, I also feel like we achieve more here because you are so involved in so many things.

5.15 Interviewer: Okay, so the decision to move from the X to Johannesburg was specifically so that you can come and school here?

5.16 Participant: Uhhh, so to answer that, we moved when I was 15 years old. It was, it is obviously an age where you want to start making, well I already had real friends, but I mean you want Jewish friends, somebody who shares the same point of view because in X 99% of people are Christian and fairly religious Christians. Some don't really care, but some of my friends were Christian and I was the odd one out. So when you are smaller, let's say below 14 years old, it doesn't really matter, it doesn't really clash, but as you get older you have to start making your own choices, you have to decide what you are going to be, what kind of person are you going to be, friendly etc, then it becomes quite hard to stay in touch with these people that are totally different to you. So I wouldn't say I necessarily came here for school, definitely not, I actually feel like my education in X was a little bit better to be honest. But we all have to compromise somethings. But overall, here many friends share the same views and accept you for who you are, for what you believe in and then you can just express yourself more freely and just be who you want to be and there is no 'You have to restrict yourself or feel weird about yourself', so yes.

5.17 Interviewer: Okay. What kind of a school where you going to when you were in X?

5.18 Participant: So I was a home schooler. From the age of 8 years old, I went to school in grade one, but school was a little slow for me at that point. I was always working a bit ahead, nothing was keeping me back. So I was home schooled and it really worked for me. I was very much ahead in almost everything because you don't have to wait for a class to catch up as well, it's just you and if you understand, you can fly. Luckily my mother is also a fairly smart lady, so she home schooled me between the ages of grade 2 and grade 7. And then from

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grade 7 grade to grade 10, I worked on my own. I did this Cambridge syllabus, it is in England, it is a very nice syllabus and it is quite a high level. So education was slightly better in X. But here, here you get so much more than just education.

Interviewer: Okay. So is it just your folks and yourself or do you have brothers and sisters?

5.19 Participant: Uhhh, so I have my father and my mother, and I do have a little brother who is eleven, and is also at X College.

5.20 Interviewer: Okay. And you mentioned that you parents, they grew up Christian? So they were Christian and then they decided to convert, and then you mention that you were part of that process? Can you tell me a little bit about that time and that process?

5.21 Participant: Uhhh, a good way to explain it is that we have been to Israel many times, I think I have been there thirteen times in my life, since I was a little kid, probably four or five years old. Uhhh, and for Christians, Israel is still a holy place, a lot of religious significance in the country. So we would go there from when I was too young to notice anything obviously, I was 4 years old, you know I don't know anything. Uhhh, and probably from the ages four to eight, we would probably go to Israel more from a Christian perspective and look more at things from a Christian point of view. I wouldn't say, we, my parents, also my grandmother. My grandmother is also very spiritual lady, she is not converting but she also has the same belief as us in one God, Judah. So she would also come along and be this kind of a spiritual leader. So we would go to Israel many times and obviously we went on a, I think my parents at some stage went on many intellectual journeys, asking a lot of questions in the root of what they believe in, without sounding too dramatic. And you get exposed to Jews, to Israeli life and you see, you see that there is so much more to Israel when you look at it from a Jewish point of view, not from a Christian point of view. So every time we would go, we would be more exposed to Jews, we would be more exposed to Judaism and questions would come. I would say when I was probably, I am turning seventeen now, so I would say when I was probably ten or eleven years old we were really close to saying that Christianity definitely has fault in it. But we had no idea of what it means to be Jewish and what it meant to be part of a nation that was completely stuffed away. It was just about the intellectual and spiritual values we were trying to achieve. So through that and then up until to the point where we were keeping Shabbat as far as we can understand, no oral Torah, no Alach, like the Rabbi says, just as the Torah says it. Isolated mostly, because nobody else was Jews like us. We were still living in X, it's kind of like identity, it's not a Christian identity either. Like I said, when I was about fifteen years old, I told my parents 'Look, this isn't going to work for me, I don't want to be isolated. I want a bit of a life wider

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than that', and then we came here and that was our first step in actually becoming part of the Jewish nation.

5.22 Interviewer: Okay. And for you, what is it about this particular faith that draws you to it?

5.23 Participant: Uhhh, that is a good question, let me just think first for a second. So the truth is that I was definitely exposed to Christianity because most of my friends were Christian and I actually went to a Christian youth group on Friday night and it was lots of fun, I wouldn't say I went there for the religious part of it, more for the socialising part and for the fun of it. We were obviously very exposed, very exposed, and they would teach you everything involving the foundation and the core of what Christianity is all about. Meanwhile, we were also starting the Jewish journey, so I was kind of like half way here and half way here. And I think from the first point of view, Christianity has death like Judaism has, I am just speaking from the literal point of view, in terms of the things you can study in, Judaism is very overwhelming. In Christianity, it is generally the bible and that is it. So that kind of impressed me I think, I feel at that age I am like you know, no offence, but Judaism is more clever than Christianity, it's a childish point of view. I was still, I think I was still too young to take it seriously. When I was probably thirteen/fourteen years old, then I started, then my parents gave me more freedom and then they asked, you know, you could be whoever you want to be, or you can start being who you are. Obviously there were still many rules as every parents should, but then I started asking more questions, like what really speaks to me about Judaism, and I really asked what is Christianity more often. I think that Judaism, in a very profound sense, it empowers myself in that it gives you more self-worth. Judaism is really about how much Harshen sees worth in you and how much he believes that you can achieve. Christianity is basically based on the belief that we are all sinners and that we are all hopeless without accepting Jesus as our saviour, and I don't really like that. I mean, if it was the truth, it was the truth, but I knew it wasn't, so it really didn't appeal to me. And when I came to Judaism, I just saw that how much Harshen believes in us and how much He sees in us and how much we can do, I mean, I think everybody would like to do something that empowers them and lifts them up to be greater, more greater people.

5.24 Interviewer: Okay, so the depth of the religion was what really attracted you?

5.25 Participant: Yes.

5.26 Interviewer: And it sounds like you like to think, so the stimulation that it provided was good for you? Uhhh, so at this point, if you were to describe yourself to a group of people

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that maybe you haven't met before, and they didn't know you, how would you describe yourself?

5.27 Participant: Are they Jewish or non-Jewish?

5.28 Interviewer: Uhmm, let's say both.

5.29 Participant: Uhmm, so what would I say to them, well firstly, I think what I would have to say is that I do believe in something that rules the world. Uhmm, I do many things, I would say that I do many things, uhmm, you know Judaism is all about action, it's about action, we do commandments, we do things. I would say to somebody, I do lots of things. I do school, I do friends, I do many things. But I also do many things that probably some of you wouldn't understand, I put things around my arm because that is my thing, that kind of shows my way of appreciation towards the God that I believe in, to my things of connection that I believe in. But I am also somebody that believes you should be involved in the world, that you should get a job, that you should raise a family, that you should experience what the world has to offer, obviously the good things, that you should explore the world and think about what the world is. You should try and kind of get to know as more people as possible. I would say I try to be somebody like that. Somebody that is open minded that, because I feel, like many people here living in this area, feels like you have to be able to step outside. So I would say in summary, tries to think and tries to see things as they really are, that is a difficult question!

5.30 Interviewer: It is, it is, but it does sound like in your way of describing yourself to other people, your religion would be a part of it? So at this stage, you feel like it is a big part of your identity, of who you are?

5.31 Participant: Yes definitely.

5.32 Interviewer: Okay. It almost sounds like your parents were the most influential? Just in terms of exposing you and maybe also in your decision to convert? Have there been other things that have influenced you? You mentioned your grandmom as well?

5.33 Participant: When I speak about my grandmother at length, she is a very spiritual lady, like very spiritual. Like she speaks Harshen, like all the time, and she says Harshen speaks to her, and I do believe her. She is a lot about faith, and prayer, and looking for messages, Harshen is always sending messages. So I think she had a big influence in terms of always trying to find the soul behind what you believe in, because obviously in Judaism, like I said, is a religion of action. But because it is a religion of action it can become very mechanical, and that you can lose the meaning, the intention and the concentration that you should have when performing the commandments that Harshen gives us. So she gave that aspect, but I

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have to be honest, many people have influenced me. I would have to say Israel, the country itself, without a doubt, influenced me, I mean I was there last year for two months, we went on a program. And we learnt in many different places, encountered people from all kinds of spectrum of life, non-Jewish, Jewish. So I would say the land itself and the culture is involved, the people, the places, that is also a big influence, I think it has enriched my life , I think it has enriched my whole class, I think their lives are enriched. I would say Israel definitely, my granny definitely, of cause my parents, giving me direction as far as I know. Uhhh, I would also have to be honest, I think for example, I had a maths teacher in X, she was completely non-Jewish, she didn't really know what Judaism is or what Jewish meant, but she was also quite a thinker. So we would have lots of conversations. I don't think it was specifically about Judaism or specifically about Christianity, but a lot about moral values and how you should be as a person, and that you should work hard, and it is not okay to become a looser and a psycho, you have to work hard for what you want to be. So she was quite a good motivator, uhhh, I mean I knew an old lady, she's probably, I don't know, I hope she is still alive or whatever, uhhh, she was an atheist, lots of arguments. And of cause my friends without a doubt, without a doubt my friends there big influence, I have met many role models, I thought they really embodied what it means to be a good person and also some bad people and I think 'Ag, now I see what I don't want to be'. And of course, here as well, uhhh, seeing how they operate, how they have been brought up and drawing up the lessons from them as far as you can.

5.34 Interviewer: Okay. Going through the process of conversion is quite a lengthy one, it involves quite a lot. Do you ever see yourself converting to another religion maybe in the future?

5.35 Participant: Uhhh, well I am going to give a straight answer, definitely not. Uhhh, I believe it is the absolute truth, absolute. And I think everything else, I don't mean to offend anything, no offence, I think everything else is just some sort of falsehood. I think, I believe, uhhh, I mean I would never say, I respect, I definitely respect other religions. I respect them because they are still good people, they still do good things and they still believe in Harshen, they still believe in God as they perceive him. But I definitely, definitely, I still see Judaism as the only thing that I would ever, I would either be Jewish or nothing, but I am committed to finishing this process because I think that that is the truth.

5.36 Interviewer: Okay. And where do you see yourself in the future? I mean, you are in a school now that is a Jewish school so there is a lot of teaching there, religious instruction, and beyond high school?

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5.37 Participant: Ummm, so after school, I definitely think I will go to Israel for a year. I think it is a very common thing that happens in this community, everyone goes to Yeshiva for a year. It's like the way you learn everything about the religion as possible, you learn how to learn actually because it is a lot of ancient text, Hebrew, speaking the language very important. So I am definitely going to go there as a growing experience. Ummm, I would consider myself, I don't really like using the word, but very Zionistic, I am Zionistic, ummm, so I would actually strive to live in Israel, simply because I believe that Israel is a spiritual and a physical home of Judaism, that Jewish people should really be in Israel if they want to reach their fullest potential and want to be powered and radiant individuals. But it is obviously very complicated to get to venture out or to enjoy without adults, I am sure that it is very populated, I am sure in most of the world's countries, it is probably the unsafest place to be in at the moment. And of course, the people, Mediterranean people, completely different from the people in South Africa, so it's a huge factor. Ummm, and obviously the language, if I, after my Yeshiva years, I will probably have to go to university, not probably, I have to go to university. I have to get my degree, but I would love to live in Israel, that is the dream, that is my aspiration. But I don't, I mean if push comes to shove, and I have to come back to South Africa, I would probably study here. I don't know where I will meet my wife, if that makes sense. But I think my aspirations after school, is to go to Israel for a year and hopefully if things work out, maybe live there.

5.38 Interviewer: Okay. How were you received into the Jewish community here?

5.39 Participant: Ah, very good question. I think in my class they were probably a little, I guess, a little cautious in the beginning. Ummm, because Jewish boys, when they are young, they are very small, very small and fragile, and small and a little childish in a way. When I came in grade 10, they were really small, some of them, twelve years old, so it was, I guess I looked way older than them. They have now kind of caught up to me, ummm, so probably very cautious from a physical point of view, and obviously because I speak Afrikaans, I have an Afrikaans accent, blonde hair, blue eyes, so something that they were not accustomed to at all. But, ummm, really you just have to be yourself, and I can only say thank God that I have made some really good friends. My class has accepted me very well, and ummm, the biggest thing is you should just treat others like you want them to treat you. That is how the world treats you, so if I treat them with respect and have respect for what they do, they will have respect for what I do. I guess that is what I would like, but there will always be exceptions, but that is the general principle. Ummm, and as far as the wider community goes, I think this community has been really good to us as a family. Very friendly, very embracing, very

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accepting, always teaching us, especially in the beginning when we knew nothing, and not judgemental, that is a big thing, not judgemental at all. They were really fascinated by us, they really, they took a lot of inspiration from our story of how we got here. As far as the Rabbi's go, I am very thankful for the things they thought me and are still teaching me. They were always very open to teach, they were friendly and they always try to make you feel like you are definitely going somewhere and definitely understanding some things. So, I think overall, I can safely say that this community has been very nice, and accepting us. I can only say good things.

5.40 Interviewer: Okay, so the process for you so far has been quite a pleasant experience?

5.41 Participant: Ja, I guess mostly, uhmm, obviously there have been bumps along the road, no journey, ag 'journey', I don't like the word, just like this thing that I am doing now, there are obviously bumps along the way, as with everybody's life really. There are times with inspiration, there are times without when you feel like 'Ag, do I really want this?', it's so much work, so much effort, like getting up in the morning early, coming home late, such a hectic life, I mean let's just run back to X, it's so much nice, much more comfortable, you live in your comfort zone. Because I think when I got here, this is, I don't really share this with people, but when I got here, the first three months, I was in a cloud mostly. Very inspiring, everything was new, brand new, exciting, and of course you will be full of adrenaline, for three months I was basically full of adrenaline. I would wake-up in the morning and I was really ready to take on the day. And then it was holiday, things slowed down a little and when I got back, this was now last year like June, I really had no energy for anything, I was just like 'I don't want to do any of this, nothing!', I think like, everything just feels dry and heavy. The people, my questions about the people, and then things go up from there. I think that is the story of our lives, that we do have moments of inspiration, moments where we will have moments of clarity, really that is the world, moments of clarity. But most of what we do, we really don't know how it is going to end up, we generally, we don't live like every morning, when you wake up, you are like 'Yes, I feel good, let us do this!', you don't feel like that, that is not what it is meant to be. So the challenge is there. But now I can't say I am as inspired as I was then, for those first three months of last year. But this I feel like, now it's a sustainable level, but of course there have been bumps along the road. With people as well, I mean, you can't get along with everyone, uhmm, you get tired, you get cranky, and you get grumpy. Our parents also find it hard, I mean they, I mean it is easy for me, I have basically just started my life, they are already half way through their lives, with all lots of baggage, with memories and everything, so it has been difficult for them. Sometimes

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along the road, early part, I would miss my friends in X, you miss your old life and you have doubts how good this new one is going to be. So without a doubt, there have definitely been bumps in the road, but overall I thank God that I am a here now and things are going fairly well.

5.42 Interviewer: Okay. At this point are you interacting predominately with Jewish people? Or do you have friends outside school or in other religions?

5.43 Participant: I definitely can't say it is just Jews, definitely not, because I still keep in touch with many people in X that are Afrikaans, some are English. But completely, some of them don't even know what Jews are like, they are very clueless, so definitely you still keep interaction with them, and I think the biggest thing also is that you have to accommodate every person as that person is. Because I am obviously not going to talk to my Afrikaans friends about things they can't relate to at all, like it's something they will not even understand. So, it's something that I don't even talk to them about. So when I go back to X for holidays, I don't even think they know what I am doing here to be honest, and I don't tell them because they won't understand. Uhhh, I do have lots of interaction with non-Jews still, uhhh, but over here mostly Jewish people I think, I guess, yes definitely, mostly Jewish people. But I do think it is important to, I don't want to use the word 'balance', but it is nice to have a bit of feet in both kinds of worlds.

5.44 Interviewer: Okay. You said sometimes you don't feel like your friends in X would really understand what you are doing? Uhhh, if you were to try and explain it to them, how would you explain it?

5.45 Participant: Uhhh, just want to think about the question. Well, if I take my one friend, I think T has average knowledge, it's a girl, average knowledge about a lot of religions in the world. I would obviously have to say, probably what I am doing is that, she is a Christian so she believes in the New Testament, probably the first thing I would tell her is that I don't believe in the New Testament. I believe that Jesus existed, I believe that He was definitely there, but I do not believe that He was the Messiah as the Jewish predicted Him to be as the Jewish way and stuff. But I do believe He existed, I just don't believe, I just think He is a man, a normal man, in Jewish point of view, He would be a normal man. Christianity, they believe that He is some part of God, son of God. So that is the first thing I would say, to clearly have the distinction, is that they believe the saviour is coming again for the second time that will be the ultimate redemption, we are still waiting for the ultimate redemption, so there is a clear distinction of what I am doing and what she is doing. But overall, I don't think most of my friends there, they are involved, they are involved in what they believe in and

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they are involved in their religion and their spirituality but up to a point, not overly. So I would probably tell them this, but in a very indirect sense, uhmm, they would probably lose interest maybe after a while. So really the reason I don't tell them, is really because I don't think they, I don't want to say, I think they do care but it is just not something they could really comprehend. It is not something that you can tell them, you can tell them the facts, but they don't really mean, they don't know the ramifications and the implications. That is something that I don't think they want to understand, I think they are just fine with having an understating of the bible, the basics, ja.

5.46 Interviewer: Okay, so would you say, maybe sometimes you have to kind of change who you are in a way just to kind of fit in with the people that you are with?

5.47 Participant: Good question. Uhmm, it is actually important to be who you are in whatever circumstance you find yourself, that is important, you can't really change who you are, that is not a good thing to do. I really don't, I don't think I would say I change who I am, I just don't express myself as much. I think that I am generally more quiet. I mean, obviously to be honest, religion is very important to me but in this day and age at sixteen years old, you've got other things to speak about anyway. Uhmm, so many things really that it is kind of easy to get away with not spilling your beans, not having to explain everything, and leave them confused as hell. But you can get away with just being, I am definitely, for example, with my friends in X, I am definitely a bit more quite, definitely a bit more flowing with how they are going. But I don't change who I am, I don't think I would say that, I think that is a bit more hectic, I think that is a bit drastic, I don't think I would do that. I just don't express myself as much and I just flow with what they are talking about, you know, just add here and there, but I don't really stay in the conversation, I don't change it to be like 'Guys what do you think about, what do you guys think about the trinity?', I won't ever do that because I don't think they really want to talk about it, some maybe, uhmm, but I don't think it is really a topic that forces me to change who I am, I don't think so.

5.48 Interviewer: Okay. When you hear the words 'religion and spirituality', for you, is there a difference between them?

5.49 Participant: Uhmm, definitely without a doubt, you can be a very religious person, very, and you can have no spirituality at all what so ever. I generally, actually, I genuinely believe spirituality is a higher ideal to strive for than religion. Is that I don't feel especially in Judaism, Christianity, I think in Christianity, those two are very interlinked because if you are religious that means you are spiritual in Christianity. While in Judaism, it is very, well not very, a distinction in that, uhmm, spirituality doesn't, religion looks more as the means

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towards the ends. Spirituality is the ends, spirituality is what you want to do, and spirituality is really trying to connect to your creator. It is really trying to understand the deeper meaning behind life. Whilst religion, Judaism is your ways, is your means, is your path, is your vehicle and is your mechanism to achieve that goal. To achieve that goal of achieving a truthful life, a meaningful life, and a productive life. Whilst religion is your means to get there, but means is not the end in that we Jews, do so many actions, they keep Shabbat, they put on tefiles and they wear kippot, they wear Kippot, they do many things because that is the means through which we do believe, that you connect to Hashem. So there is definitely a big distinction and I think obviously, you want to get to the end, you want to get to the real thing, therefore I think you should always strive to be spiritual. And how do you strive to be spiritual? It's through being a religious person. I think the one can't go without the other but if you don't, if you are not religious, if you are not spiritual but you are religious, that is a bit of a problem. That is what I believe.

5.50 Interviewer: And would you say that at this point you are both?

5.51 Participant: I would have to say yes. I think my family though will always be more spiritual I think, I mean, for example, very religious Jews, they wear like black hats and whatever and I don't think we will ever be like that. We are not as strict when it comes to Jewish law or whatever, we are as strict as you should be, nothing too stringent or overly exacting, always like 'I am doing this wrong and this wrong', definitely not like that. Ummm, and, but it is challenge to be spiritual without a doubt, especially at this age. I believe so many things that, especially in grade 11, grade 10 you just have fun and you can do whatever you want, grade 11 definitely more responsibility. Ummm, girls are also a big issue, definitely a big thing that can take away your focus as well, and at the end you have to ask yourself 'Do I want to spend time with Hashem or with a girl?', so that is a question that you sometimes have to ask yourself. I can't say I always say that I want to spend time with Hashem, I can't always say that, I don't think that would be truthful. Ummm, at times, you know, where you just want to have fun, you don't really want to, you just want to have fun. You don't want some meaningful experience, you just want fun. Ummm, obviously nothing too, still within the boundaries, but I think it is very easy to lose focus, I really think it is. Especially at this age, ummm, and also you have to go so many, if you want to do well at school, you have to work really hard, and it just takes away your time to dedicate yourself to what you believe in. But you see that once again, that is what Hashem expects from us, and that Hashem wouldn't have put, I think many people in this situation especially in my class, many schools, I think it is a challenge, being spiritual. I think religion comes easier, I think it is easier to just do the

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action every day, but to be spiritual, to really try and find deeper meaning behind everything, that is something that is definitely harder. I mean, I can't say I am always there, that would not be truthful. I don't think anybody can say they are always there, but I guess that I am always striving to be in a mode that I can call myself spiritual if that is the term.

5.52 Interviewer: Uhmm, okay. If you consider maybe your peers in your class, and maybe even those you left behind in X, do you think you are a typical teenager? If you think about yourself, that you are a typical sixteen, going to seventeen, year old?

5.53 Participant: Uhmm, I definitely do not consider myself extraordinary, I don't think so. I think I am very ordinary, I don't think I'm, I want to say, I don't think I am weird maybe I am, I don't know, I don't consider myself that. I think that, I think that my peers, I guess some you can probably put in a category, I guess you can say that. It is a difficult question, I have to say. I think that at the end, everybody is essentially different but I mean at this stage in my life, I think some people definitely have a better focus than others. Some people mature way quicker than others without a doubt. Some people that are sixteen, I am not saying I am going to be like this, but some sixteen year olds, they really know what they want to do in life, very focused and they don't compromise, discipline, self-control, all those things you really want yourself to have when you go out to the real world. I think some have that whilst some not all, some is all about, they don't really have, they don't really take it upon themselves, responsibility, they just, like I said, sometimes you just want the fun, they just want the fun, and they just want to have a good time. So I would say generally I think my peers, I think they are generally focused, I can't say completely, I think there is a balance. When you are still sixteen, you are still a child, you still probably should enjoy life as much as possible. Uhmm, but it is important to have focus and I guess I am just somebody who is still trying to find that balance between living a meaningful life and also enjoying life.

5.54 Interviewer: Okay. You described maybe a category of teenagers that are quite focused and know what they want, would you fall in that category? Or would you fall in the category more on the other side, a little bit less focused at this point?

5.55 Participant: Uhmm, I think I would be pretty disappointed in myself if I was in the other category. Like I said, I can't say I am always there but I do think, I do think it's a big thing in my life to be focused so I think, I can't say, I think it's wrong for me to say I am in that category but that is what I am aiming for.

5.56 Interviewer: Okay. Maybe one last question from me. If you were to kind of try to explain what it means to you to be a Jewish sixteen year old, or I don't know if you would put the Jewish part in front of the sixteen year old?

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5.57 Participant: Ummm, what it means for me to be a Jewish sixteen year old, I think that, I think that it is a very powerful age, you have got your whole life ahead of you essentially. Some people really do have problems, some people really do have bad circumstances which they find themselves in, and I can just say thank Harshen that I am in a position that has lots of opportunities open for me. So, I think it is a very powerful age, I really do, you are discovering yourself, you are discovering all your talents and you are discovering your strengths and weaknesses. It is a very kind of empowering experience, like I said, some people mature faster than others, that is the truth. Some people only discover, some people maybe never discover who they really are meant to be. But I think at this age, to be what it means, to be a Jewish sixteen year old is really kind of, you find your purpose in life and what you are doing here and whatever, 'Why am I here, why am I living in South Africa, what am I trying to do here?'. I don't think you just, I don't think in life you have this checklist of all the experiences you want to have and as soon as you have them, then you are fine, you can die. I don't think that is it at all. I don't think that is, there is definitely a greater purpose and at sixteen years old, I think that is the age to really try and probe and find what is the purpose that you are here for, for you. I think that everybody had a different answer but I think at sixteen years old, that is the question, that many, I think that many sixteen year olds are supposed to be asking themselves.

5.58 Interviewer: Do you have any answers to some of those questions?

5.59 Participant: To my purpose in life? So there is this idea that, ummm, and this is somewhere in psalms it says, if you go on the way of Harshen then He will show you His path. What is the difference between a way and a path? It's that we all have a general purpose in life that we share, is that we, the purpose of all Jews and non-Jews, everybody is trying to be a good person, is that we are trying to reveal Harshen's goodness. Harshen is synonymous to goodness, Harshen is synonymous to love, Harshen is synonymous with faith, Harshen is synonymous to decency. And that your general purpose at this stage, is to reveal those qualities that Harshen wants to put in the world. It is a very deep idea, but basically your purpose should be that I should be a person that is loving, I should be a person that is caring, I should be a person that is trying to show goodness in the world, I am a person who is supposed to be disciplined, I am a person that is supposed to be respectful to their parents, a person that is supposed to be respectful of others. That is the general purpose in life. Because basically Harshen wants us to live holy lives, holy lives that are on a different stratosphere, on a different level, everything means different things to somebody trying to live elsewhere. And when you are trying to live that, when you are in the ball game, when you are in this ball

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game, you have to decide which player you want to be. Holy life? What kind of a holy life? I honestly can't say that I know that, I mean, some people are supposed to be teachers, some people are supposed to be taught how they are supposed to live a holy life, some people are supposed to give to charity, some people are supposed to be doctors to heal people. Everybody has their own kind of sense of purpose, their mission, their path. The way, like I said, the way of Harshen, is that we all have this general purpose to be good people but your path is, how do you manifest your goodness, your love in the world. And it says that if you go in the way of Harshen, then eventually Harshen will go 'Ah, then you go turn right, that is your path', so I don't know if I have reached my path. But at this stage, I think at this stage, I am still on the way but you know, I can only pray and hope that sooner or later I will have my path to see on which direction my kind of life is supposed to be.

5.60 Interviewer: Okay. Any questions from your side? Anything you want to tell me about you and where you are at and this journey that you are on? You said you don't like the word journey, but we will use it for now.

5.61 Participant: Uhmm, all I can say is that it is hard. I think that it's a good, it is good but it is hard, it's definitely hard. Uhmm, it is no fairy-tale, uhmm, like I said, most, this sounds very like deep and stimulating or whatever, but most days are ordinary days, most days you follow your routine, mostly you used to it, used to seeing the same people, most days are normal. Like I said, it is fun, it is exciting, the first few months, but most of your days are normal and that makes it hard. Because, really like I said, we are trying to find this meaning in life and it is sometimes hard to do that when you are doing the same thing over and over. You go to school every day, meet the same people every day, and in Judaism, we have to pray three times a day every day. Uhmm, so that routine can be very challenging, uhmm, like I said before, even in that, I still believe that meaning is still to be found and goodness is still to be found and that routine isn't necessarily a bad thing. Routine, if you do something over and over again, you become very good with it and it equips you with skills, I think in many ways. Like if you do maths, if you do maths over and over again, you become good in maths that is how it works. So, I think that conversion basically is your practise run, if you know, if you want to run a marathon, you can't just run your first time, you probably first run 5ks ten times over and then you say 'Okay, I am good with 5 kilometres, now I can move to 10 kilometres, up until you work yourself up to 40 kilometres'. But that is hard, that is hard to run 5ks 10 times and then 10ks 10 times, that is a hard thing to do but you are always aiming, you are always aiming for that 40 kilometres. So I think at this stage in my life probably the biggest challenge is still finding the meaning in the routine. The meaning and the ordinary

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life, because you have to see it as your practise run, as your run to become good at something so that you can take the next step. And Harshen gives you adequate time to achieve that, ja.

5.62 Interviewer: You have provided me with so much information today, thank you. I think we should start wrapping up. I am just going to switch this off.

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Semi-structured interview: Angela (15 years old)

6.1 Interviewer: Okay. Okay... maybe you can just tell me a little bit about yourself? Like, uhmm, given that we are meeting each other for the very first time... is there anything that you would want me to know about you?

6.2 Participant: Uhmm... not particularly, no.

6.3 Interviewer: Okay... your mom said you are 14 almost 15?

6.4 Participant: No, I am 15, she just got confused. I turned 15 on the 28th of September... so a few weeks ago.

6.5 Interviewer: Okay... okay so on the 28th of September you turned 15.

6.6 Participant: Yes

6.7 Interviewer: And what grade are you in?

6.8 Participant: Grade 9

6.9 Interviewer: Grade 9

6.10 Participant: Yes

6.11 Interviewer: And your school? Which school do you go to?

6.12 Participant: X College... so just down the road

6.13 Interviewer: Okay, I saw the signs on the way up. What kind of a school is it? How would you describe it?

6.14 Participant: It is quite a... it is not an extremely religious school, but it is a Jewish day school. So we do general study subjects like maths, English, science... for 3 quarters of the day and then the rest we do kind of bible studies, or something like that or laws about Judaism... kind of a mix of both.

Interviewer: Okay, so you do kind of the normal school stuff and the religious part is also there... and it is part of your syllabus?

6.15 Participant: Yes, and you get exams on it and tests, so it is like a normal subject.

6.16 Interviewer: Okay, and is it like a mixed school? Boys and girls together?

6.17 Participant: It's on the same campus, but the boys' campus is on a separate side of the school to the girls' campus. But in primary school up to grade six it's mixed classes. And once we turn 13 for boys and 12 for girls, we separate.

6.18 Interviewer: Okay, so at this point everybody your class, they are all girls? Same age?

6.19 Participant: Yes

6.20 Interviewer: And your teachers? Are they also then... do you have any male teachers?

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6.21 Participant: We do... most... for some subjects we do, but they try not to have like too many and most of them are quite... like, they are married, they don't bring unmarried men to the school... just like in case.

6.22 Interviewer: And then it is the same for the boys? In the boys' side? They have mostly male teachers?

6.23 Participant: Ja, so it is not like strictly male and female, it's kind of separated.

6.24 Interviewer: Okay, and then when you have like break time? Or lunch times?

6.25 Participant: We have our breaks at separate time to the boys... so then that would be the period before us and we would have it after. But we are allowed on like the same campus.

6.26 Interviewer: So during school hours you wouldn't socialise at all because break times are different?

6.27 Participant: Not really... because sometimes they will have a free period or sometimes the teacher is not there... we will mix at our break so, there is... like, on the weekends as well so...

6.28 Interviewer: Okay, and when you were in primary school... did you go to that primary school as well?

6.29 Participant: Yes

6.30 Interviewer: So you know most of the guys that are in high school then because you went to the same primary school?

6.31 Participant: Yes. Sometimes I get a bit of a fright because you see like a million new faces. So sometimes, but I feel like it's a bit nicer sometimes to have it just girls... it's a lot of... sort of like... less stressful to impress people.

6.32 Interviewer: Just to focus on one thing at a time?

6.33 Participant: Ja

6.34 Interviewer: And sports? Or are there after school activities? Do you do any of that?

6.35 Participant: I don't do any with the school, but I do do like separate activities. I do... I do... I have an extra maths class after school, and then I do saxophone, and I did karate and I kind of took a break, so I don't know if I am going to go back to that or not so.

Interviewer: Okay, that is quite a variety... okay. So karate, is it something that you... I know you said you are taking a break now, but is it something that you did for quite a long time?

6.36 Participant: Yes... so I was doing it at one studio when I was quite young, like 4ish. And then I moved to X when I was 7 until the beginning of this year.

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6.37 Interviewer: Oh wow!

6.38 Participant: Ja, so quite a long time.

6.39 Interviewer: So what colour belt do you have?

6.40 Participant: Junior black

6.41 Interviewer: Okay wow! That is impressive!

6.42 Participant: Yes, so I don't know if I am going to go all the way or take a break.

6.43 Interviewer: Okay, and the saxophone? That is interesting!

6.44 Participant: Ja, it is going well... I just felt like playing something that nobody does... like drums or guitar... they are kind of generic. So I thought I should try something else.

6.45 Interviewer: Okay, so when did you start that?

6.46 Participant: I started middle of last year, so a year and a bit.

6.47 Interviewer: Okay, so that is something that you feel you will continue doing?

6.48 Participant: Ja, I hope so... ja.

6.49 Interviewer: Oh that is very interesting! And it looks like, just from the people I met down-stairs, that you have got two younger sisters?

6.50 Participant: Yes

6.51 Interviewer: And no brothers?

6.52 Participant: No

6.53 Interviewer: And then it is your mom and your dad?

6.54 Participant: Yes

6.55 Interviewer: And then I think your mom said that that was your gran down-stairs?

6.56 Participant: Yes, so my mom's mom and then my dad's parents are also here

6.57 Interviewer: Okay, so does everybody live here?

6.58 Participant: No, they live in a... my grandparents live separately but they are not too far away... so they are all in the area here.

6.59 Interviewer: And your mom's mom? She lives here with you?

6.60 Participant: No, she also lives in a different area... she just comes often.

6.61 Interviewer: Okay, so in terms of living here... it's just you, your mom, your dad and your two sisters?

6.62 Participant: Yes, the five of us... yes

6.63 Interviewer: And then the dogs?

6.64 Participant: Yes

6.65 Interviewer: The one that just came up just now looks quite similar to T-rex?

6.66 Participant: Ja, it's the same breed... ja

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6.67 Interviewer: Okay... okay because I have just seen photos of T-rex... I have never met him.

6.68 Participant: Ja

6.69 Interviewer: And then of course Diva, Diva looks a bit different.

6.70 Participant: Ja shame, poor Diva.

6.71 Interviewer: And anything else that you do? Hobbies or?

6.72 Participant: I like to read a lot... it is one of a passions of mine... so I do that quite often, and ja. I am quite... I do like school work, which is a bit strange but I do. Like... I enjoy getting focused on one thing and kind of just... so, I don't mind all the studying and ja.

6.73 Interviewer: And you said you enjoy reading... are there particular books that you like to read?

6.74 Participant: Uhhh... I am not... I prefer fantasy more than the realistic type of books. But I don't like the horror kind of fantasy, that kind of... so I like more like... the fairies, kind of the girly stuff.

6.75 Interviewer: Before it starts crossing over to things that are too dark?

6.76 Participant: Ja

6.77 Interviewer: Okay and uhhh... you told me a little bit about your school... your school is a Jewish school... and it sounds like in primary school you went to the same school... you had a Jewish school for primary school as well?

6.78 Participant: Ja... and then there is a nursery school and a play school, but I went to a separate nursery school and play school. I only moved there... I think I went to a separate play school and I moved during nursery school at the middle. So I have been there for a long time.

6.79 Interviewer: And what is it like going to school where your religion also forms part of the syllabus?

6.80 Participant: I don't think I would feel as connected to my religion if I went to... if it wasn't part of my everyday life... so I feel like... not that if I had an opportunity to learn more about it and to be more involved in it, and it becomes more integrated into my overall life, not just on a day I do religious stuff and on another I don't... so ja.

6.81 Interviewer: Okay... so for you it's like... it makes more sense to like combine things than to have them separated out?

6.82 Participant: Ja

6.83 Interviewer: Okay... and what is it that you believe? So if you think about earth, and why we are all here, and what our purpose is and things like that?

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6.84 Participant: So, in Judaism, we do believe that there is one God... only He sort of runs everything... and we are put here for a purpose and once we fulfil our purpose, we don't need to be here anymore. So we are here for one specific mission and once we are finished, we can do whatever else we need to do.

6.85 Interviewer: Okay... and have you figured out what your mission is?

6.86 Participant: No, that is kind of one of the most controversial topics in Judaism... is that we know we are here for something... the whole point of life is just figuring out what that is. Whether you are doing it to bring your family happiness, or to do something for others, or to bring world peace... it's like... we don't really know but once we figure that out though, hopefully we will know.

6.87 Interviewer: So when do you think you will get to a place of being able to figure it out?

6.88 Participant: What is kind of understood in Judaism, is that once you have fulfilled your mission, you pass away. So once you... your mission in life could be to raise a family... and once you raise a family, you pass away. So it's like you could fulfil your mission when you are 1 day old and you bring joy to your parents and then you pass away... or 89 years old and then you bring joy to your grandchildren... so it can be anytime.

6.89 Interviewer: And you wouldn't actually know until you have done it?

6.90 Participant: Ja... and they say when you get to the world to come, you look back on your life and then you see that your whole life was based on that one mission... so your whole life led up to that, and once it happened, that was your whole life. But you can only look back on it, and not see forward kind of thing.

6.91 Interviewer: Okay... so do you ever think of what you would like your mission to be? Even though it might not turn out to be that?

6.92 Participant: I do think I would want to do something a little bit more big, not glamorous necessarily, but something more than just me and my family. I want to make a bit of a difference to a society... to the world... So I don't think I want it to be a small thing... ja.

6.93 Interviewer: Okay... and any ideas about how you would go about doing that? Like, are you thinking of going into a particular kind of profession or...?

6.94 Participant: I am... I think I want to do biomedical engineering and move to prosthetics and rehabilitation and that kind of... So I want to do something for others more than anything else.

6.95 Interviewer: Okay, wow! Well then that is going to be very interesting to do hey?

6.96 Participant: Ja

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6.97 Interviewer: And I think a lot of studying after school... but you enjoy that type of thing?

6.98 Participant: Ja... so I am quite excited to get going.

6.99 Interviewer: Okay... so if you were to describe yourself to people that you do not know... maybe you have got some kind of a social at school and you are trying to get to know people... so you tell them about yourself... how would you tend to describe yourself to people?

6.100 Participant: I am quite an introvert... I don't like... like once I know a person, I am quite comfortable with them, but at the beginning stages, I don't really make an effort to know a person... which I think could be like a flaw, so I am trying to work on that... but ja, I think I am not really an outgoing person... I don't like being loud or boisterous... I prefer just being calmer. And I don't like, want to attract people to me... I kind of want them to come on their own almost... so I don't want to be at the centre of attention all the time.

6.101 Interviewer: So you have a more shy nature?

6.102 Participant: Ja

6.103 Interviewer: What you were saying about wanting people to come to you... without being the centre of attention... it sounds like it is something that you do purposefully though?

6.104 Participant: It's not that I... it's just that I try not to be like... I don't like to be very like boisterous or like... create an energy that people feel like they need to come to me almost... like there these people who always need to be out there and be part of things and be the centre of everybody else's attention... I don't really want that.

6.105 Interviewer: Very interesting what you are saying... when you said that that's the way you prefer to do things... what do you then find attracts people to you?

6.106 Participant: I don't really know, so I don't... I think I would like people to be... like, I don't want to put an outside persona that people are like... I don't know how to describe it... like those people who always want to say the right thing or be funny all the time... like those people are funny and they are nice, but I don't feel like I need to do that... I don't want to have to do that to get people's attention... I kind of want people to come to me because I am shy... I know that doesn't happen quite often... but ja.

6.107 Interviewer: Okay... so you want people to see the real you and come to you because they see the real you, not something that you put on?

6.108 Participant: Yes

6.109 Interviewer: Okay... so if you think about your personality and the way you describe yourself now, does it feel like you as a person and your religion fit into each other?

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6.110 Participant: Sometimes yes... I do feel like because there is a big part of my religion that is modesty... like not just clothing covering up, but modesty as being a modest person... you don't need to be out there or put yourself out there all the time... you can be yourself and be who you want to be and people should see you as who you are... ja.

6.111 Interviewer: Okay... so that particular aspect of your religion fits in well with how you see yourself and how you portray yourself?

6.112 Participant: Yes

6.113 Interviewer: Okay... so going to a Jewish school... I am then assuming that your mom and dad are also Jewish?

6.114 Participant: Yes... so my dad is Jewish from birth... so the Jewish line kind of follows through your mother... so if your mother is Jewish, you are Jewish. My mom converted... she was never Jewish... I don't think she was like a specific religion... so then she converted... so then because the mother is Jewish, we were all born Jewish, once she converted.

6.115 Interviewer: So she converted before you were born?

6.116 Participant: Yes. So she converted because she wanted us to be Jewish, so then she... once she decided she wanted kids... she did. I feel like it is nice because I do get both sides of it almost. Like my grandma, who is downstairs and my auntie Sharon, she is not Jewish... so I kind of get both perspectives because I sometimes feel like even though... like Judaism... because of the modesty almost, we are like very sheltered. Like if I didn't know them, I wouldn't know anybody who is non-Jewish... so I feel like it does help having, like kind of a two-way perspective.

6.117 Interviewer: Okay... that makes sense... because the people at school are all then Jewish?

6.118 Participant: All Jewish and then the community is all Jewish... like the whole area here is Jewish, so until you get past... like there is a bubble... until you get past like a certain point.

6.119 Interviewer: So apart from your aunt and apart from your gran, all of your friends are Jewish as well?

6.120 Participant: Yes

6.121 Interviewer: Okay... and when you think about people like Sharon and your gran, and the people that you know who aren't Jewish, does it feel like they are very different?

6.122 Participant: Not really... I don't think that... like religion is a big part of you... I don't think it describes who you are entirely... so I don't judge people who aren't Jewish just

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because that's their choice... I chose to be Jewish... it doesn't mean I should push away those that are not.

6.123 Interviewer: Okay... do you think that you will always stay within Jewish faith?

6.124 Participant: I hope so... but there is like the very ultra-religious side of things that I am not so in to... like there is a way to still stay Jewish... like I will always stay Jewish because of my mom and I will pass it on to my children, but I do think that I will... I don't think that... I hope that I will be more religious... I just don't know if I will.

6.125 Interviewer: Okay... when you say that you hope you will be more religious... does that kind of mean that right now you think that you are not that religious?

6.126 Participant: I feel like I am where I am supposed to be... so in some of the areas of it I feel like I don't think that I could go further than where I am... like with the modesty... there is a commandment that you have to cover your knees and cover your elbows, and then when you are married cover your hair... I don't think that I will get... like I hope that I become more connected to do that, but I don't know if I would now looking forward... so I think that I am quite happy where I am at the moment.

6.127 Interviewer: Okay... so you are talking about maybe certain... uhhh... you refer to them as commandments or rituals... so at this point in your life... like where you are right now... is there anything that you do do that is like a ritual or fits in with your faith?

6.128 Participant: Like there is... our whole lives basically revolve around... like Judaism is part of our lives... so every day we wake-up and we wash our hands and we have to say a blessing on the food and then after the food... every Saturday we go to Shul and we dive in and pray and so... our whole life is basically revolving around Judaism.

6.129 Interviewer: Okay... and do you enjoy all of those aspects?

6.130 Participant: I do... I feel like I don't know anything else so I have been brought up to love them... so I don't think there is anything like... like... there are some aspects that I am like WHY?... but I like, still do them.

6.131 Interviewer: Okay... so which are the aspects that you question a little bit and wonder about?

6.132 Participant: Just because of the culture today... like it's not... it doesn't really... it sounds a bit babyish, but it doesn't really fit in to the culture to wear long skirts and cover your elbows... so like that... so I don't wear skirts... like I wear skirts often, but I don't wear them over to the floor or anything like that sometimes uhhh... and then there is also a commandment that you cannot touch the opposite sex until you are married... so like that... I am kind of like what if I do find a person that I really want to be with... what's the point of it

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if I know that I am going to be with them for a long time... so there are some things I question.

6.133 Interviewer: Okay... so almost like... in a way, some of the beliefs are a little bit old fashioned if you think about what happens in this day and age?

6.134 Participant: Yes... it's just they don't fit in with what society kind of brought us to believe, so it's like a bit of conflicting thing.

6.135 Interviewer: And do you ever talk to your friends about this stuff?

6.136 Participant: We often have open discussions in class without teachers, like in our break but even in our class there are people that are very religious and people that aren't... so then you kind of... you do get to talk to them and people have their own opinions but I think that... like one of my friends is quite religious and she wears skirts all the time, and she covers her elbows all the time, so I don't know... like we can still talk about that without having an argument but she has her own perspective about it and I have mine... so we kind of get along... we don't argue about it all the time.

6.137 Interviewer: And if you were maybe in this class discussion, for example, and asked some of the questions that you do have... is it quite well received?

6.138 Participant: Ya... so we are like very encouraged in Judaism to ask questions... like we don't really believe in blind faith... we need to have questions answered if we are going to do it... like to choose... so we ask questions like why we have to cover our knees and why we have to cover our elbows and they tell us what the basic law is and we kind of choose ourselves instead of being told that we have to. So the teachers... they do receive things quite well and they don't ever say like, I am not answering the question or avoid the topic, they always take the question.

6.139 Interviewer: Okay... and have you ever had any questions that that, up until this point, that you feel people haven't been able to answer?

6.140 Participant: Well the major questions... kind of like well... how do we know if there is a God if we can't see Him... like all those fundamental questions... I don't think anybody in any religion can answer. So those are always the big ones... ja... so then I guess that is where blind faith does come in but I don't think it's that.

6.141 Interviewer: If you think back to when you were in primary school, do you think that your faith changed over the years since you have gotten older?

6.142 Participant: I think it's changed but I don't think it's changed that drastically... like I have grown with it... because I have learned more I become more religious in some way...

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because I have learned more... I didn't really connect with it then... I have gone back in some ways, it is like a... it is evolving.

6.143 Interviewer: Okay... and what do you think helps it to evolve?

6.144 Participant: I think if we... we do learn about it often at school... so once you know something you, and you know why... you have practical uses for it... then it becomes "okay I can actually do this without having to give up this, or I can do this"... so then it's like... okay I will take that on, and I will take that on and it does change.

6.145 Interviewer: So it's like the older you get the more you learn, and the more you learn, the more you?

6.146 Participant: Understand why it is happening and why you have to do it.

6.147 Interviewer: Okay... so in the past... maybe when you didn't understand everything behind it... you would do it, but now that you understand, it is more like you want to do it?

6.148 Participant: Makes you want to do it more.

6.149 Interviewer: Okay... that makes sense... so I know that you have said on a couple of occasions now that your faith... it forms part of your daily life... so even your routine during the day... it's all there?

6.150 Participant: Yes

6.151 Interviewer: Uhhh... and if you were to describe yourself to people who don't know you, would you ever include aspects of you being Jewish... because you mentioned that you are quite shy or reserved by nature?

6.152 Participant: I don't think... like I would openly tell people... I think it is very personal... sometimes... and then also if it is someone that I don't know and there is a bit of anti-Semitism that plays in... like... I don't think I want people to know almost... so then I think if someone asked I would definitely tell them... I wouldn't try to hide it.

6.153 Interviewer: Okay... that is interesting... what you were just saying now... that maybe you would be a bit worried about what other people's beliefs would be... just in terms of what their feeling are about your faith... have you encountered anything like that?

6.154 Participant: Like sometimes in the shops... recently I don't know if you have... there have been a lot of terror attacks on Jews in Israel now... so it does make you a little bit more worried to tell people about yourself... so ja... we were in... me and my friends were in the shops the other day and the cashier was talking to us and she is like... "so what are you guys going to do tomorrow?" which was on a Friday and we said on Saturday we were like "no we are just going to hang out"... I didn't say we were going to the synagogue and pray because it makes you a little bit nervous almost... because you don't really know how people are going

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to react to what you are telling them. I have met tons of people who are like totally fine with it... they respect that we are different... but then there are others who are kind of like... “Oh, okay you are Jewish”... and they kind of like don’t want to be with you anymore.

6.155 Interviewer: Okay... and the people that you have met... were you... when you felt like they don’t really want to be with you anymore... what kind of people are they?

6.156 Participant: I think it is just people who have been mostly also very religious... either religious people from a different religion that have been... like if “we have never met someone who is religious in another religion we are not going to be too accepting either”... So I can kind of understand where they are coming from.

6.157 Interviewer: Okay... so its people who have like, quite strong religious backgrounds but in other religions... who maybe just keep their distance if they know that you are quite firmly in the Jewish faith?

6.158 Participant: Yes

6.159 Interviewer: You said you are a little bit cautious in terms of what you say to people... do you ever feel scared?

6.160 Participant: Sometimes yes... so we have got... there is security around this area in particular more often like... sometimes during the year if there are things going on in Israel... to Jews in particular... so there will be security... but like we aren’t encouraged to walk around if we are like in a shopping centre... it’s like kind of a no-no to walk around by yourself... or like if you are with, like a few friends and you are all girls... and it is not such a big thing for safety reasons... like we are not encouraged to walk around after synagogue on a Friday night... it is not such a big thing to walk around, like after it is dark by yourself... but like it’s not like we are scared... but just in case, we have security or whatever.

6.161 Interviewer: Okay... so it is more just being cautious?

6.162 Participant: Yes

6.163 Interviewer: Okay... how does that make you feel?

6.164 Participant: I just... sometimes I just don’t understand why people would want to do that if it is like you stay in your religion... you stay in your religion, it’s okay. I don’t understand why people would want to interfere... but if people are going to do what they are going to do... then we kind of got to be prepared to protect ourselves.

6.165 Interviewer: Okay... so not understanding why people would want to interfere... if you think about yourself and what your beliefs are, do you ever feel like you would want to interfere in other people’s religions? You used the word interfere that is why I am using that

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word... but do you ever feel like you would want to maybe convince them of things and change their ideas?

6.166 Participant: Not really... in Judaism when someone wants to convert they can go to the (betdine) which is like Jewish counselling, and they say they want to convert... we try and turn them away almost because we don't want them to come because someone has convinced them... we want them doing it out of their own choice... so I would never go to someone and try to preach to them to be Jewish... so I don't think it has ever occurred to me to do that.

6.167 Interviewer: And you said earlier that choice is a big part of it... so then that makes sense that you wouldn't want to kind of convince someone or interfere in somebody else's religion?

6.168 Participant: Yes... it needs to be their choice if they want to be part of it or not, and if they don't, then that is okay... it is their choice... so we never blame someone for not wanting to... or for wanting to become Jewish.

6.169 Interviewer: Okay and then that makes me understand a little bit about why you don't understand why other people would want to interfere in other people's religion... because it is like you are making a choice and you respect the choice that they make, so why can't they respect the choice that you make?

6.170 Participant: Yes

6.171 Interviewer: Okay... when you speak you use "we" a lot... you talk about "we" or "us"... so it is almost like you are grouping yourself together as a group of people?

6.172 Participant: There is a concept that one man is one heart, so we do see the whole Jewish nation as one body and one soul... You don't kind of distinguish how firm you are or how religious you are... it doesn't really play a part in it... as long as you are Jewish, then you are part of it.

6.173 Interviewer: And so it's almost like when you are speaking now you are speaking from your perspective but you are also including other people because you are part of the Jewish group?

6.174 Participant: Yes

6.175 Interviewer: Okay... do you ever think about things that... like there is a difference between religion and something like spirituality... I don't know if that was ever a discussion that you had in class or?

6.176 Participant: Not really... I know certain people... that even though they could be very religious, they don't feel a connection to anything... they just do it because they want to do it.

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So I think you could be religious and not spiritual at all... you could be spiritual and not religious. I don't think that it is totally connected... I do think that they intertwine a little bit but they are not dependant on one another.

6.177 Interviewer: And where would you say you are at?

6.178 Participant: I think I am religious and spiritual... I don't think I am at a spiritual high or low... I think I am like, where I need to be... in the middle.

6.179 Interviewer: Okay so... okay... that helps me to understand... also it is not like you are doing all of the things that you need to do from a religious perspective or because it is expected of you, you feel a connection and you are doing them because you want to do them?

6.180 Participant: Yes... and something I don't want to do, but I still do because I am religious... even though I may not feel connected to it at all... I still do it because it is the religious way.

6.181 Interviewer: Okay... and so what would those things be? I know you said that you sometimes have... there is a little bit distance between maybe some of the rules from your faith and what happens in society now?

6.182 Participant: Yes... so then that would be... kind of be a conflicting thing... so then I think if I were to have a boyfriend... I don't know if I wouldn't touch him because it is the religious thing to do or I would want to do it for myself... for my spirituality... and then with the covering up and being modest... I don't know if I would do that... like I do that sometimes just because it is the religious thing to do... and sometimes I do it because I actually feel like being connected and spiritual.

6.183 Interviewer: Okay... so those are things that you were referring to when you said that you do it because it is the right thing to do?

6.184 Participant: Ja

6.185 Interviewer: Okay... you said the school encourages you to discuss things... and that you have some open discussions in class... and you mentioned that with your friends, you also discuss things quite openly? What about in terms of your home life... your mom and dad and your sisters? Apart from the routine that you follow that forms part of your religion as well, do you also have discussions? Or do your mom and dad also teach you about certain things?

6.186 Participant: Sometimes we do... but I think because we all go to the same school and my parents... we sometimes teach our parents about things and they teach us about things... but we don't like... we kind of know where everybody is in the family... so if we are all at the same kind of level, we don't really discuss like anything really.

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6.187 Interviewer: Okay... so you mentioned that your dad grew up Jewish because he was Jewish from birth and your mom made the decision to convert... and do you notice any differences in them?

6.188 Participant: So when my dad was growing up, he didn't grow up religious so he just... he did the basic holidays and the basic festivals that you needed to do... and he did the basic requirements that you needed to do, but he wasn't like overly religious... so I think they kind of grew up, not on the same level... they kind of grew up with the same mind set... so there isn't that much difference between them.

6.189 Interviewer: And you haven't noticed at this point one is more religious than the other?

6.190 Participant: Uhhh... there is sometime like... in Judaism, there are requirements for men and there are requirements for women... so there is a requirement to go to synagogue every Saturday for my dad but not for my mom... so then he would do that and she wouldn't... but then if she had to, she would... so it is not like a difference.

6.191 Interviewer: Okay... and you are the oldest of 3... but it seems as though you are quite close in age?

6.192 Participant: Yes... so between me and my next sibling there are 14 months... and between her and the youngest, is three years and between me and the youngest, is four years. So we were all born close.

6.193 Interviewer: And do you ever notice that between the three of you... are there differences between you in terms of where you at right now with regards to your spirituality and your religion?

6.194 Participant: Sometimes yes... so like with something's like... with Kosher... some of the things like... Amy has recently been Kosher... because it didn't have the stamp on it my sibling wouldn't drink it... so I think like... and I did... so there wasn't like a... that was a bit of a conflict as well. And then like some of the things... like in bakeries... like the hot chocolate there ... what would they put in the hot chocolate that would make it not Kosher... so I would drink that and she wouldn't... so sometimes there is a bit of a conflict.

6.195 Interviewer: So you would almost be a little bit more open and she would be a little bit stricter?

6.196 Participant: Yes

6.197 Interviewer: Okay... and do you think that is because you are different ages or do you think it's because you are different personalities?

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6.198 Participant: I think just different personalities... like she likes to be quite direct and honest about what she is doing, so if it is not direct to her that it Kosher, then she is not going to... but like... I would look a little bit more into it and be like... okay they couldn't have put pork into the blender to make the smoothie, so how could it have been not Kosher... so then I would drink it and she wouldn't.

6.199 Interviewer: Okay... so it's almost like you go through a thinking process before you decide to do something... but once you decide to do it, you are quite comfortable with the decision you have made?

6.200 Participant: Ja... so some of the things I wouldn't be comfortable with... like eating maybe a meal out somewhere, even though there wouldn't be anything not Kosher in it... sometimes it just feels a little bit strange... so some of the things I do... like I know I shouldn't.

6.201 Interviewer: Okay... I am just thinking about what you were saying just now... feeling like sometimes... if I can explain it like this... that sometimes you don't advertise your religion just because of things happening in the world... So sometimes feeling like you need to be more cautious... just so that you don't become vulnerable.

6.202 Participant: Ja

6.203 Interviewer: Are there any times were you feel like the opposite of that... where you like... you want everyone to know?

6.204 Participant: Sometimes... like I do... like there are rallies or in support... then you do want everybody to know "I am in full support of"... so like we were given... at school we were given shoe laces to support the things going on in Israel... so if someone were to ask, then I would openly tell them why I was wearing a different colour shoe lace or why... whatever... like I am not ashamed to hide it... I just wouldn't advertise publicly all the time.

6.205 Interviewer: And that is more for safety?

6.206 Participant: Ja

6.207 Interviewer: Okay... what else can you tell me about your spirituality and your religion?

6.208 Participant: I can't really think of anything... or is there anything specifically that you would want to know?

6.209 Interviewer: Uhhh... I am just thinking... you were saying earlier that you know each person has got their purpose here... but that it may be only at the end of one's life that one figures out their purpose... and then it almost becomes clear that that is what your

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purpose was... and you are not too sure what your purpose is yet... but you do have an idea that you would like it to be quite a big purpose?

6.210 Participant: Yes

6.211 Interviewer: What about things like after being here... where you go... and how you get there... and what happens then?

6.212 Participant: So... I have thought about that quite a lot... because Judaism is such an integral part of our lives... like all the time we are doing something to do with Judaism... the whole thing is that whatever you do in your life, it adds up and the sails get weighed and if you did good or bad kind of thing... then you go to heaven or hell. Nobody really knows what heaven or hell is, but we have an idea that all the commandments we fulfil and do with our entire hearts... then we get like points almost... not that there is... and then there are rewards in this world and the world to come... so you can get rewarded for something here not there... or you could do something here and then get rewarded for it there... or the opposite... if you do something badly, you can get punished or ...

6.213 Interviewer: Okay... I like the way you are explaining it... and I know that you mean... like maybe it is not exactly like points, but it is a way to make sense of the way it works?

6.214 Participant: Yes... because that is how we see it... as a teenager, I can't really think about what is going to go on there... I know... like... if I do this, it's a tick kind of and then I know I have done it for myself and for everything, like, I have done it. So I do see it as points almost, but I know that is not really how you are supposed to do it... you are supposed to do it because you want to.

6.215 Interviewer: Okay... but then it sounds like that is something that you think about quite a lot? You know... like... what can you do to get these points... so that you know that you are on the right track?

6.216 Participant: Ja... so then it kind of guides you... almost like if you say a blessing on food then you get a point... so then you are like okay that is an easy enough thing so I will do it... and then you start thinking that... okay wearing a skirt is not that hard of a thing, then you get a point kind of... and then you can grow with that.

6.217 Interviewer: Okay... so what about if there was something where you got, like a minus point then, or points taken away then?

6.218 Participant: Yes... like there is a... it is quite a serious... a serious sin to do is if you speak badly about another person... that is called (Lashon Ha-ra), which means bad language in Hebrew... so if you speak like you are swearing or if you say just a nasty thing about

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someone else... then like... I do that often... like I do gossip and like... I know that I have done something bad... but because we don't know what's going on or what's going to go on after we die... so it doesn't really influence us. So like if I were to see a piece of food, and be like "okay I don't really have to say a blessing because we don't know what is going on so it doesn't affect us"... so like the whole point is that you have to do it because you want to do it, not because you know what is going to happen afterwards.

6.219 Interviewer: Okay... it almost sounds like at times we do things that we know we are not supposed to do... you do kind of feel guilty but you do still do it?

6.220 Participant: Yes... it is like quite a dilemma... like you know you are not supposed to... but then it is so easy to... and then you know you are not going to get struck by lightning, so then you do it anyway because it is easy... and you don't really know what is going to happen once you have done it... so then we are not really told the reward and punishment for doing anything... so then it could be a minor punishment or it could be a serious punishment... so it is easy to do it.

6.221 Interviewer: And the consequence... you will only know later?

6.222 Participant: So it does kind of make you think about what you are doing before you do it... so you do kind of think "okay what if it is quite a serious thing", so I better not do it... so it does get you to contemplate what you are actually going to do.

6.223 Interviewer: Okay... you were talking just now about being a teenager... and I am just wondering... I mean if you think about yourself as a Jewish teenager... do you ever feel like you are different from other teenagers that aren't Jewish?

6.224 Participant: I have never really... I have never really put like... I don't describe myself as a Jewish teenager... I would be like a teenager who likes reading and likes music so I don't think I would feel different to any other teenager... even though it is quite a big part of me, like it doesn't differentiate... like it does differentiate... but it doesn't make me opposed to someone else who isn't the same as me kind of.

6.225 Interviewer: Okay... so you wouldn't describe yourself as a Jewish teenager because you feel like, first and foremost, you are a teenager just like any other?

6.226 Participant: Yes... and even though religion is a big part of me, it is not the thing that describes me the most almost... it is like there but it is not the main part.

6.227 Interviewer: What do you think is the main part? Like what do you think would describe you the most at this stage of your life?

6.228 Participant: Like... I see religion and my personality almost as different... they like... they are intertwined but I don't see them together... so I think the more... the shy and the

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music and the reading and that would be how I would describe myself... maybe I would use “Jewish” as an adjective but I wouldn’t like use it first almost.

6.229 Interviewer: Okay... do you think that there was ever a stage in your life where you would have used that first?

6.230 Participant: Yes I do think so... like when I was little... like... what we were taught that you are Jewish and you are proud to be Jewish and if someone had asked me what is your defining... I would have probably said Jewish. But because there are so many other things that come into play as you get older... then it is the... it’s like the root of everything but then there are other things that you do have that you could use to describe yourself.

6.231 Interviewer: I like the word that you used when you said “intertwined”... so it is almost like you can see yourself as being separate from your religion but it is also a big part, so you don’t want to separate yourself from it?

6.232 Participant: Yes

6.233 Interviewer: Okay... and you said that at your school... that maybe the people who are in different places... that maybe are more or less religious... and if they were to hear the way you describe yourself, would they describe themselves similarly?

6.234 Participant: I do think that they would because where we are in life is that we are teenagers, even though we do go to a Jewish school... so everybody is a teenager first almost... and you could be a Jewish teenager but I don’t think that many people would describe themselves differently.

6.235 Interviewer: Okay... and I know that this was something that you brought up... that maybe I am going to use it in a different context now... that perhaps at some point you will get to an age where you want to start dating

6.236 Participant: Yes

Interviewer: And would that be like a defining characteristic in terms of the person who you want to date? That they would need to be in your religion?

6.237 Participant: Like ja... I don’t think I would... I think I would look at their personality also first and not... like I would hope that they would be Jewish and then I would find someone for me... but then if I don’t, I am not going stop dating and become... there are always options, like my dad and my mom... she wasn’t Jewish and then she converted... so like there is another way of doing it. But I have never come to like... there hasn’t been a... like I have never come across the problem of dating yet so I haven’t really thought about it.

6.238 Interviewer: Okay... your gran... your mom’s mom... you mentioned isn’t Jewish... so when she comes to visit what’s that like?

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6.239 Participant: So like sometimes she will come for Friday night Shabbat or the holidays and sometimes I do think she feels a little bit left out... like she doesn't really know what's going on but she still comes because it is what we do and she respects it... she does enjoy it... sometimes because it is quite a nice atmosphere... that you put everything away and you just focus on your family and so if she is family, then she is a part of it.

6.240 Interviewer: So even though she wouldn't say that she follows the Jewish religion as such, you still feel like... I like what you said just now... that she is a part of it... like do you mean that maybe you see her also not necessarily following the religion but still being a part of...

6.241 Participant: Yes... and like we will also do things for her... like she comes over for supper... when we were little we used to hunt Easter eggs with her because she wanted to do it with us... or sometimes we would go to her and decorate her Christmas tree for her and even though we are not part of the religion, she still wants us to be a part of it for her... so the same thing... we want her to be a part of it for us and just to feel with us.

6.242 Interviewer: Okay... so it has never been something that has gotten in the way?

6.243 Participant: Not at all no... so sometimes... like... she does feel a little bit uncomfortable because she doesn't really know what is going on exactly... like she doesn't really know why we are going to wash our hands or why we are saying a blessing over everything but she does... she still does it because she does it for us... so.

6.244 Interviewer: Okay... do you think that, in addition to what you have already told me, kind of like contributes to how you think you are going to turn out?

6.245 Participant: I do think... like... it has given me the kind of tools to be the person that I want to be... so it has taught me how to be a good person... how to be a kind person... and how to be a modest person... so I hope that I will use it when I need it... so right now we are sheltered and we are with other Jewish people and then when we get to university, we aren't going to be... so then I hope I can kind of stay who I am like with other influences.

6.246 Interviewer: Okay... I know it is difficult to kind of see into the future, but do you think there will be parts of you that would be different when you start interacting with people that aren't in the same faith... like you said... when going to varsity?

6.247 Participant: I think it will be a test to kind of see if I can still do what I believe in and practice it... but I think that it will obviously influence me and I hope it does not influence me too much. But sometimes I think that there are things that I would want to be influence with... like I don't want to be such a shy kind of bubbled person... I do want to be more interactive with other people and more outgoing... so if I do meet other people then it will

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help... like you see because of what I was saying earlier when... because all Jews... we all feel very connected to one another... if I met another Jew even if they were strangers, I would feel very connected to them... but it is not like I am meeting a stranger almost... So I think meeting someone who is not Jewish would also help.

6.248 Interviewer: Okay... so you really taught me quite a lot!

6.249 Participant: Am I finally giving you what you want, or telling you what you want?

6.250 Interviewer: Yes it is very, very useful information... I think anything you have to say is useful

6.251 Participant: Okay

6.252 Interviewer: I think it's more about me trying to understand where you are at... that is why I am also asking so many questions. If you think about yourself then as kind of like a spiritual being, does it feel like... that is quite a big part of who you are at this point?

6.253 Participant: Like, I do have conflicting thoughts and emotions about it but I think that... that is who I am... I could think of doing other things but that is who I am, so it is quite a big part of it.

6.254 Interviewer: Okay... is there anything else you want to tell me about your faith?

6.255 Participant: Not really... I can't really think of anything off hand.

6.256 Interviewer: In terms of your routine... you said that you wake-up in the morning and you wash your hands... then you pray?

6.257 Participant: Ja... so if we are eating and we say a blessing on it and then we go... like there is a requirement for men to pray three times a day and then for a women only once... so then we will do that in the morning and then at school... whenever we eat we will have to say a blessing and after... blessing for bread if you eat bread... and like otherwise it feels very... whatever else I do... like after the bathroom, you have to say a blessing for health and thanking God for allowing you to be able to... like there are a whole lot of things but it feels very normal to do it because I have been doing it all my life.

6.258 Interviewer: So almost like after each... uhhh... if I can call it... after each activity, you say a blessing?

6.259 Participant: Ja... like after every task that God has helped you with, you say a... you either say a blessing thanking him for allowing you to go to the bathroom or allowing you to have food or for growing the food for you... you have to be thankful... like all the time... so if there is anything that He has helped you with... you have to be thankful for it.

6.260 Interviewer: You say your prayer in the morning and what about at night? I know you said there is a requirement that women only pray one prayer a day?

6.261 Participant: Ja

6.262 Interviewer: But do you ever find that you pray more than once a day?

6.263 Participant: Sometimes... like there is... like... I think it is Psalms in English... we call it (Tehillim)... so like if there is something going wrong in your life and you want a prayer for health or happiness or success, then there are like, little things that you can say in that area specifically... so sometimes I would do that... and then there are the... every night before you go to bed, you say another prayer to keep you awake and so that you do not die in your sleep or like that kind of thing.

6.264 Interviewer: Okay... so you are praying and saying many blessings and do quite a lot during the day?

6.265 Participant: It doesn't feel like that at all... it just feels like a natural thing that I am saying.

6.266 Interviewer: Okay... and what about... like... surrounding important days in your faith?

6.267 Participant: There are quite a lot... so like there are the big ones that I am sure are quite... like Rosh Hashanah... the new year... and then Yom Kippur where we fast... there are like little ones... where it is kind of like... when the two temples were destroyed there is like a little... there is a fast... and then when there were important saints who died... then we fast for them... so there are little ones in between but then there are also the big ones... so then it feels like there is one all the time... so there are a lot.

6.268 Interviewer: Okay... and do you always participate in those?

6.269 Participant: Yes

6.270 Interviewer: Okay... so if there is a fast for example, you are always fasting?

6.271 Participant: Sometimes... so it depends... sometimes there is the minor fast and the major fast... so if it is a minor fast for a saint who died that we don't really know, it is a 12 hour fast... so I wouldn't really... like... I would try and not purposively eat but if I am not feeling well, I am not going to fast for nothing... but then there are the two major ones where you fast for the 25 hours and those ones like... you don't miss those ones.

6.272 Interviewer: Okay... what happens if you do miss them?

6.273 Participant: There is a thing that you... like the Yom Kippur one... and... so if you eat that day, they say that you get "Karath" which means cut off... so then it means your soul... because you purposefully ate on that day... you purposefully went against God... you are not part of the nation anymore... although you will always be Jewish, you are not there with everybody... it is quite a serious thing.

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6.274 Interviewer: It sounds like it!

6.275 Participant: Yes

6.276 Interviewer: So it would be kind of an act of defiance?

6.277 Participant: Yes... like obviously if you ate by mistake... then you are not doing it to defy God... but if you actively like rebellious, then it is a bit of a problem... but then there aren't many things like that... that are like very serious.

6.278 Interviewer: And what about like... I know a lot of the public holidays in South Africa surrounding Christianity... so if you think about the 25th of December and the Easter weekend which usually falls in April... what do you think about all of those holidays?

6.279 Participant: So... we kind of take them as public holidays... so we get off school and we do whatever... but sometimes also we have Jewish holidays... we have got Jewish holidays also that time... like in April we have Pesach which is the one where you don't eat bread and then in December we have got Hanukkah with the lighting of the candles... so we have our own thing to do during that time anyway... so it is kind of like we have got an extra day off school and it is never really a big thing.

6.280 Interviewer: Okay... and the other thing that I have noticed is that in South Africa... you know sometimes the Christian holidays are almost recognised... but like for example the Jewish holidays... although in the Jewish faith you know when they are, they are not made public holidays.

6.281 Participant: Yes

6.282 Interviewer: How do you feel about that?

6.283 Participant: I don't think it is a... like I don't expect the whole of South Africa to have to fast because the Jewish people are fasting... I don't think that religion has anything to do with nationality... and I understand why the Christian holidays would be... because they are quite a big religion and Judaism is quite a minority... I am not really filled with envy at all or anything like that.

6.284 Interviewer: Anything else that you have thought of that you might want to share with me?

6.285 Participant: Not really... I am not such a... like if you provoke me to talk kind of thing then I will talk, but I am not really a talkative person

6.286 Interviewer: I did write down some questions, but I think you were so easy to talk to... so I don't think I even needed to look at them... I think that you spoke openly about just where you are at. And if it is okay with you... what I would sort of like to do, maybe in January... maybe towards the end of January when you have gone back to school and things

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have settled... if I can... maybe I can even do it via email with your mom... just to send some questions through. Would you be okay with something like that?

6.287 Participant: Yes absolutely

6.288 Interviewer: Okay... do you have any questions... anything you want to ask in terms of the things I have been asking you?

6.289 Participant: Not really

6.290 Interviewer: Not really

6.291 Participant: Are you religious?

6.292 Interviewer: Ja... just out of interest... I suppose if I had to define myself in one religion it would probably be Christianity... because that is also just the way I grew up... my parents were Christian or are Christian... I grew up in a Christian home... and I think that being a little bit older and being able to explore things for myself... but that would probably be the one that I would say feels most familiar and most right for me. Any other questions?

6.293 Participant: Not really

6.293 Interviewer: Okay... well thank you so much for talking to me.

Semi-structured interview: Kaitlin (15 years old)

7.1 Interviewer: How old are you now?

7.2 Participant: I am 15.

7.3 Interviewer: And have just turned 15? In 2015?

7.4 Participant: Just turned 15 in July.

7.5 Interviewer: What grade are you in now?

7.6 Participant: I am in Grade 9.

7.7 Interviewer: Can you tell me about your school? Just what kind of school it is?

7.8 Participant: It's a private, and it's very strict. There is a lot that goes on, and, and, it's really quite a good school, but it's got a lot of problems like any other normal school. Like just the usual, like drugs and alcohol. But because the management is so strict and kind of put us off, sometimes unreasonable, it's not as bad but the minute they start to count down, it's sort of like really hard for people who are actually not a problem, because the rule is strict and people who don't do anything wrong are usually given the punishment for it, for when they aren't really in, that's too hard.

7.9 Interviewer: And when you say that they are strict and the rules are very strict, like what kind of rules?

7.10 Participant: This is really unreasonable, like, people are not allowed to be closer than 30 cm away from each other. If you hug someone, like for example I hug a boy, it is considered as physical contact, and I can get in trouble for something like that. And if someone doesn't have the right haircut for school, they will get sent home immediately, like one time, and they had to go cut their hair and come or don't just come to school until they.

7.11 Interviewer: And the 30 cm rule? Is it with boys and girls? That when you want to hug your friend, you are not allowed?

7.12 Participant: It's mainly with the opposite sex.

7.13 Interviewer: So some are?

7.14 Participant: Everything has to basically perfect.

7.15 Interviewer: And a part from school, what kind of hobbies or interests do you have?

7.16 Participant: I am really into arts, so sometimes on the weekend I will draw, paint on things, or I'll go out with friends, coz my sister has a boyfriend and her boyfriend has 3 nephews and we are close, so we just spend time together.

7.17 Interviewer: And where do you go and what do you do?

7.18 Participant: We are just in the complex in X, we just spend time there in the park.

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7.19 Interviewer: And you said that your school is a private school? Does it teach just the usual subjects or are there different subjects?

7.20 Participant: They have the usual subjects but, am not 100% sure but, there like a few different subjects like, food technology, design technology, IT, but it's no more, and accounts, economics, just as usual.

7.21 Interviewer: Is there any kind of like religious instruction at school?

7.22 Participant: No. They do sort of claim to be a Christian school, but there aren't any values about Christianity within school, the most they have is prayer, but that's in the high school, in the primary there is religious instruction.

7.23 Interviewer: This is in high school? The prayer? Is that something that you do together, do it every day, or how does it work?

7.24 Participant: We have prayer when we line-up, maybe twice a week, so the principal will come talk to us probably about something that has gone wrong usually most of the time, or for uniform most of the time. Before they start that, the teachers come down to the designated area. And then during assembly as well, before they start with bible reading.

7.25 Interviewer: Would you want to have more religious instruction at school?

7.26 Participant: Well I think, because I'm a Christian myself, it would probably be good, but at the same time there are a lot people out there who have different beliefs or don't respect the religion in any case, so if you do bring it in, people ask 'Why do we have to do this, it's not like I'm a Christian'. So the way it is, is ok, but at the same time personally I think they should promote it.

7.27 Interviewer: So the people in your school aren't just Christians? They are from different denominations? But the school itself says that it's a Christian school? But there is only a little bit of?

7.28 Participant: Let's say it's a good Christian school, but most of the moral rules are based on that. I feel it's sort of unfair that Christians can practice their belief, but then Muslims, people from other religions are forced to do this. They don't have choice coz they will get in trouble if they don't do that.

7.29 Interviewer: So you said you just turned 15. What is it like to be 15 now?

7.30 Participant: It's not really much to it, but this year I know it has been quite hectic coz we have more work, like you have more to think about, the time to choose your subjects like with the system. Like you have a lot of thinking to do. Just deciding now what you want to do for the rest of your life for instance, that's quite serious decision to make.

7.31 Interviewer: You said that's quite stressful? Could you explain that a little bit to me?

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7.32 Participant: Well you are basically expected to know exactly what you want to do and have your life basically planned at the age of 15. It's kind of, if you don't know, you are sort of indecisive. What if I get to grade 10 and I'm doing all the subjects and I don't like it, then I have to go back and start over. You know, just worry about all these things. It's pretty stressful.

7.33 Interviewer: So a lot of pressure? It's kind of knowing where you are doing? And do you have an idea about that?

7.34 Participant: I've got an idea but I'm not 100% sure. I'm interested in the arts like I said, I was thinking about doing graphic design, am also interested in mechanical engineering, those kind of fields, because my dad is always interested in Math, so I've got an interest too.

7.35 Interviewer: Okay, that's a big decision that has to be made school wise.

7.36 Participant: Yes.

7.37 Interviewer: That sounds like graphic designing versus mechanical engineering? There are quite a few similarities but there are also differences. So, if you were to describe yourself to people who maybe don't know you, how would you describe yourself?

7.38 Participant: I am very shy when I first meet someone, but if you make an effort to get to know me, then I'll open up, just be myself. I do not like drama, so I get pretty annoyed with people who just act all big and whatever, and kind of terrible acting sometimes. But that depends with your actions toward me, ja, I can be very kind person but you have to treat me with respect, and I will respect you because it's not taken.

7.39 Interviewer: And at this point, you describe yourself as a Christian? Would you say that if you think of your religion, that it is the same religion of your father?

7.40 Participant: You sometimes, you do sometimes make mistakes about, but this is part of life. But I guess I have a little bit of a temper, it's sort of weird.

7.41 Interviewer: For you, that kind of a temper doesn't fit with Christianity?

7.42 Participant: Exactly, ja. Christian people are supposed to be patient, I'm not patient and pride is not a thing, you want everything to be done this way or your way, like you all back, you think people won't accept you. So you try things for yourself, you just think 'That's not right' so.

7.43 Interviewer: So how is it that you became a Christian?

7.44 Participant: My parents are really really strong Christians and my dad is passionate about the Bible. So I just grew up with that type of environment and when I was about nine or so I decided this is what I wanted.

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7.45 Interviewer: So what happened at the age of nine that helped you to decide?

7.46 Participant: Ah, I am not even sure, I just sort of thought I realised that this what I want for the rest of my life, and because you are always around that type of influence you don't think about anything else, it's just Christianity, Christianity, Christianity, so your mind is basically, you just, not a bad thing because I would ask questions, like when dad is around. In the beginning of this year I was asking a lot questions. I was given reasonable answers so I just didn't think about anything else.

7.47 Interviewer: What kinds of questions were you asking?

7.48 Participant: Things like why is it that people have not got that equally? Why is it that some people have more than other people? Why is it that everyone is not equal? How it feels like if God loves us all, why is it certain people have almost everything and the others have absolutely nothing? And people who have nothing are such good people, like how does that work? And at school, we do science and we were just talking about one of my friends in school, she doesn't believe in Christianity. She thinks that it doesn't all make sense, coz like rational beginning where you are forced to move out and help, when you think of African religion, everything is completely different and people from the other side of the world came and forced Christianity to people, and she thinks that, that wasn't fair, sort of influenced a lot of it, and evolution and how everything came to form, there are a few pieces here and there, like sort of ridiculous and go against it, and so I will come up with something that doesn't make sense, so.

7.49 Interviewer: So the beginning of this year, you had a lot of questions, and you said that you got reasonable answers for your questions? Who is it that gave you the answers? Who were you speaking to? Who were you asking?

7.50 Participant: My dad, because at school we will talk about it, and now I come home and its bothering me, and then I just talk to my dad about it. I wouldn't go to my friends to talk about it because we are just two of us.

7.51 Interviewer: So did you say that you would speak about it at school? Specifically with your friends?

7.52 Participant: Ja, my science teacher, he also asks quite a few questions, so sometimes we would just sit together and start to discuss this kind of stuff, one would say something or to start talking about that specific thing, or let's say something and then you just fall into that kind of conversation, but it doesn't happen very often.

7.53 Interviewer: It sounds like having had all these discussions at school, you have more questions?

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7.54 Participant: Yes.

7.55 Interviewer: And you go and ask your dad and your dad gives you some kind of answer?

7.56 Participant: Ja, he just seems to have an answer for everything.

7.57 Interviewer: So are there times that you would feel confused about things? Or does speaking to your dad help and afterwards getting an answer from him helps?

7.58 Participant: Sometimes it does help, sometimes I still don't feel 100% sure about some things, but you just have to go back to how you are supposed to live by faith and not by, you just think questioning is not probably such a good idea, just don' do it. I don't know why, it's just like that I guess.

7.59 Interviewer: So what is it that you do believe in then? So why do think that you are here on the earth? And where do you think your life is going to go? What do you think will happen after you've finished on earth?

7.60 Participant: I'm not sure what my life going to be like when I get out of school. I'm not sure I really have no clue at this point, but I know when I will die, maybe I will go to heaven or to hell. I actually got baptised this year, before I asked the questions 'That is it true that if you don't get baptised, you going to go to hell?' and as it is 'Yes you are', so that kind of bugged me, so eventually I just decided I needed to this, so I did. But if God wants me to use my talents for His work, then I'm willing to do that. So maybe that's what God planned.

7.61 Interviewer: How did you come to the decision of getting baptised?

7.62 Participant: Actually I had really frightening dreams that sort of, it got me to realise that this is what needs to be done, basically how really, that was happening self, looking at things which was the devil, and, and there were people who were probably angels basically just facing each other, and it was just really scary, and there was a woman in a white dress, she was very beautiful but she had this serpent basically wrapped around her and she was saying two things. All that kind of frightened me, a lot of what was happening, it seems like the dark side was wining the good side, so it just got to me a lot.

7.63 Interviewer: And you had that dream this year?

7.64 Participant: Yes, I do have quite a lot of weird dreams like. I dream about something and during the day, something will happen and make me think about that dream I was dreaming about, so I think come on just, dad doesn't, he used to care but now it's just like, it's sort of kidding as he could say, I just try to ignore them now.

7.65 Interviewer: Why do you think you have these dreams?

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7.66 Participant: I really don't know, sometimes I think I'm just maybe being paranoid or just details for nothing into something, but if it was something a lot bigger, I'm sure there could be a sign. For now, I guess it's a dream I can see.

7.67 Interviewer: So you said that you used to speak to your dad about these dreams?

7.68 Participant: It was only the one that got me baptised basically. But it would be similar things, maybe I dream about a house and then maybe a couple of months later, I'd see that house or it's basically like phases, maybe a large field or a house or staircase, just stuff like that would make me immediately think that was the dream that I had, even if it was like long long ago. I just started to ignore it because people don't seem to see it as anything, so.

Interviewer: So it kind of affects you if it's important but other people don't feel like that means anything to them? You are going to just live with that?

7.69 Participant: Ja, basically.

7.70 Interviewer: Okay.

7.71 Participant: I don't want to become everybody's, I don't want to be a person who is like 'I had a dream', I just want keep quiet, just, because people really don't believe in stuff like that and I have noticed that my dad does not, because that is not one of the things that he sort of, I'm not sure if he understands or he doesn't see it as possible, so. Before I moved into this place, we used to go to another church and the pastor used to do a lot of prophecy and talk about what is going to happen and stuff like that, and my dad used to get really annoyed when the pastor would say something like that that, so I just don't want to talk to him about this kind of thing because even now, he used to get kind of a bit, I don't want to say annoyed, but he is uncomfortable when people start to prophecy like in church, so I just don't talk to him about that kind of thing.

7.72 Interviewer: Coz it sounds like when it comes to your religion, your dad is quite important?

7.73 Participant: Yes he is because he's known it basically his entire life, that's his passion, so I feel like I can talk to him about stuff that makes, makes me uncomfortable or the questions that I have.

7.74 Interviewer: So you do go to church then?

7.75 Participant: Yes.

7.76 Interviewer: Do you go every week or once a month or after?

7.77 Participant: Every single Sunday, my parents won't let, like if you are tired, that's not an excuse, you've got to go. But if you are sick, then it's ok. But otherwise, ja, every Sunday.

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7.78 Interviewer: Are you sort of involved in the church? like in the youth group or something like that?

7.79 Participant: There is youth group but I went once and I wasn't very comfortable with the people there. It was just a few people but I don't know many people, so when we would be like separated into groups, so I could get along with people but when they put us all back together, I just like to keep distance because everyone has their own little clicks, so you will stand alone in the corner or someone will be nice enough to come up to you, which never happens, so actually it bothers me, because the first time. And I was invited by a friend to go again this week but wasn't sure if I was going to do that again. Most of the pastors at the church have noticed that I play guitar not too bad, so they try and get me involved. But I don't know, I just don't feel like doing that kind of thing. I don't feel comfortable being in front of so many people.

7.80 Interviewer: So which kind of things do you feel comfortable being involved with?

7.81 Participant: Yes, I tend to do some things alone and I do have teen children with me. Small things I try on own, but something big or I'm not sure what's, like putting things together or setting up an area or helping others with some sort of designing or something, simple things like that, like being on the stage performing, that's not me.

7.82 Interviewer: Are you involved in any ministries apart from going to church every Sunday? Do you do something extra?

7.83 Participant: No, not really. There is a choir practice that comes up together but mainly for people who would like to learn how to sing, and people who want to learn how to play instruments. The first time I went, I thought it was for instruments and stuff, but was for singing, so. So mum asked me to stay and we tried to just stay and they sort of just said that we are there so we should learn, so you basically go every month and just stay. So my mum, she thought I'm interested, but I said I'm not, she said 'Just do it for fun' you know, but I just don't want to do that. But for the music yes, I guess so. But now I'm not involved with anything.

7.84 Interviewer: If you think about yourself like from a day-to-day basis, do you think of this every day? Or do you have other rituals, traditions that you have to do?

7.85 Participant: No, not really. In the morning, I pray then I just go to school, then during the evening, but I have noticed recently it's not that often, not every single day, it's mainly when you feel like someone else needs prayer, so then you just do it immediately. So just small things like that.

7.86 Interviewer: So you pray for somebody else at this point rather than for yourself?

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7.87 Participant: I guess so, but sometimes I do pray for small things, like for people who know me a lot and mean a lot to me, like my family, my friends, to help my school just keep on the right track.

7.88 Interviewer: Do you think that you will ever change your religion?

7.89 Participant: No I don't think so. I'm really convinced that Christianity is the way. And if do so, my dad will do anything to convince me back into it. It's like complicated because he is very very convinced that Christianity is the way to God, so If I don't believe, he would never want us to be influenced by something else.

7.90 Interviewer: It sounds like it's a combination of you not wanting to do anything else and you believing that Christianity is best for you?

7.91 Participant: And my dad.

7.92 Interviewer: Okay. You said that some of your friends believe other things, so it sounds like all your friends are not necessarily Christians?

7.93 Participant: Not all of them, most of them are actually atheists. A lot of them just don't believe because you can't do whatever you want. There have been lots of things that are happening in their lives which basically makes them act the way they act. So most of them just believe that you only look once to find out what can make you happy.

7.94 Interviewer: What is it like being friends with people who have different ideas?

7.95 Participant: It's just become familiar with things, because people don't really talk about their ideas, about how things should be. It's more like no more day-to-day kind of things, you know, like talk deep about things like maybe religion. We don't go to that kind of thing most of the time, because people get very uncomfortable after when you talk about that, I don't know why, but it's just how it is. And people don't really talk about their ideology of different things, so you don't really, ja.

7.96 Interviewer: What about decisions that need to be made? So let's say, for example, you are with your friends and you have to make decisions, how do you make decisions then? Given that you believe in different things?

7.97 Participant: If I'm not uncomfortable with it, then I don't do it, then if you have a problem then you, you clearly aren't good friend. Like at the moment, I think I've got only two close genuine friends, everyone else is just who are just around. Its peers pressure you can relate to, people you can't spend time with. The two, the most genuine are the ones that you spend most of the time with, so if they are not at school, you sort of have to try to either get along with someone else or just be by yourself. If you are by yourself, you will be considered as a loner. So you just have to force yourself and try to fit in with other people,

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but then you just want to be considered as flop flops, basically someone who spends time with these people, be your friend and when their friends are back, you just leave them like nothing happened. I don't want to be that type of person because it's not a nice feeling for someone, come up here when we are friends and we think everything is going to be fine and then, the next day when you try to go that person, then that's what happens to me quite a lot because I'm sort of everyone's second choice. So when their friends are not around, I'm here. So it's kind of difficult because you don't have enough genuine friends, because all of them are sort of the same. And you just like one different person that people just see, acknowledge.

7.98 Interviewer: What really makes you different?

7.99 Participant: I am not loud, there are a lot of girls at school who are loud and out there and just and get in so fast. I'm not like that. I sort of just sit in the back and watch what goes on. And these people, like those loud people who can get along with everyone and talk about literally anything, And because I have morals, I think differently from them. Sort of, just people would prefer to be with the loud person who doesn't really care about everything around rather than a person who is focussed and knows where she's is going. I'm in the top 5 at school, so people are like 'Oh she's smart, oh she's just boring', because if people see you are smart, they see you as someone quite, so that's basically what happens.

7.100 Interviewer: So you were saying you've got two people who you would collaborate with and call genuine friends? And those two people are they Christians?

7.101 Participant: No, I do have one Christian friend but I can't talk to her about everything that goes on because I feel like she's going to judge me for some things, so I decide either keep to myself or tell the other two friends about it.

7.102 Interviewer: You said, like you were somebody who has consistent morals?

7.103 Participant: Yes, I think so.

7.104 Interviewer: So how did come up with that? How did you decide what your morals are?

7.105 Participant: I guess it all started at home, my parents always taught that respect is very very important, and to get, you have to earn it, and it goes both ways. So when I see other people disrespecting teachers, or just doing something that's disrespectful even to somebody else, I get really annoyed, really offended in my own way because that's just not right. And people don't really treat each other the same way. That also really get's to me because I'm not one of those people who doesn't like, get treated the same way as they ask you to treat them. Because people feel like, I'm just intimidating because I'm smart so. Just the way you

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act, there different people, just because you don't see yourself as equal. But I think the biggest one is respect, because everything revolves around it.

7.106 Interviewer: So you kind of decided on your own morals and starting from what you were taught at home? And then it sounds like because you are smart, you can think for yourself as well, and if you are not comfortable, you are not going to do it? It doesn't matter what people will think of you as a result of that?

7.107 Participant: Okay, I choose sometimes. I do pay attention to what people think about me. So I'll just try to find some sort of excuse to get out of it, leave without people having to think this is how I do. If I know beforehand, I know I'm not going to do this, and if people have a problem then, if they try to pick a fight with me, then I'll fight it out because this is my thinking, this is how I feel and no one can go against me. But people don't really try too hard to get me to do things because like, during normal school hours, people can see that I'm that sort of person that you just don't mess around with. Because I know what I want and I'm smart enough to make my own decisions. And I'll do whatever I feel comfortable with and people know that, so they don't try anything too much.

7.108 Interviewer: They don't challenge you too much about that?

7.109 Participant: Yes.

7.110 Interviewer: So if you think about being at school, and just what they could know about you, it sounds like they know that you are somebody who is a bit shy, maybe somebody who isn't one of the loud people, and maybe you are somebody who is smart?

7.111 Participant: Yes, basically.

7.112 Interviewer: You just described yourself as a Christian, is it something that you are quite open about? Or something that you are not so open about at school?

7.113 Participant: I'm not open at school. It's just that people basically judge you for being Christian in a way, because it's like 'She thinks she's perfect', that's what they think at school, so there are a lot of people who just don't come out and say 'Hey, I'm Christian and this is how I feel' you just sort of just keep quiet about it. Even when you feel uncomfortable, you just keep quiet, you don't try to say 'Hey, this is wrong because Jesus says this', no we just keep quiet.

7.114 Interviewer: Being baptised this year, did you tell your friends at school that you were baptised?

7.115 Participant: I told a few, but they don't really see this as a big thing, so, except my one friend who is Muslim, but she was happy for me for making that kind of decision, but

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because she comes from another religion, it's not a big deal. So it's just in the family that people really cared about it.

7.116 Interviewer: What was it like for you?

7.117 Participant: Getting baptised?

7.118 Interviewer: Mmm.

7.119 Participant: It was actually probably one of the best decisions of my life. I felt really happy and it was just a good feeling with me inside. And I woke the next day feeling great. After that, sort of just became normal again, but it was a little bit different.

7.120 Interviewer: So this year you got baptised, and do you have any plans for things that you want to do?

7.121 Participant: Not at the moment, no. Just sort seeing what happens with what. Because we moved to a new church this year, I think it's also been pretty hard in way because it's different, obviously with the people, you just feel like a new person every week. People don't come up to you, people are not friendly. The old church I used to go to, everyone would come up to you and make you feel that you're welcome in that. But now that aspect is gone. You are just there because you want to be there, people just ignore you and you are, so it's only the adults that are coming to greet you, the youth just stick in their groups basically. So I'm not sure if anything is going to happen with me in that section.

7.122 Interviewer: The way you describe that, I just wonder if you enjoy this church?

7.123 Participant: Church itself, the sermon is great, but usually when I wake-up in the morning, I just feel like I don't want to go to that place because it makes feel unwanted, invisible basically, so what's the point? Then you get there, then you realise everybody else is just talking about you, so sometimes it's just like get the keys, go sit in the car, just wait basically. Because you will sit around, you will stand, people will look at you, they will smile, look away, walk away, they don't come out and try to talk to you about anything. So you basically go to church, do your thing and come home. You don't have Christian friends who are at church. You don't have that kind of environment, it's just you yourself. So yes, I do enjoy it but sometimes I don't.

7.124 Interviewer: So you said there no plans at this point?

7.125 Participant: Not really.

7.126 Interviewer: Okay. You said that at school it's something that you don't always think about that much, because everybody is different, everybody has a different religion?

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7.127 Participant: Ja, basically sort of, everyone just drops, leaves it at the gate and comes in, do what you need to do, leaves, and then it feels like always no time to, which not good but it just happens.

7.128 Interviewer: So what takes up the time then? Because you said if everybody decides to leave everything at the gate, there isn't really time for that type of thing? What do people have time for?

7.129 Participant: It's basically jump out to work. Basically you always have something to do. And they just keep you busy from 7:35am until 4:00pm. They just keep you busy the whole time. We don't really have time to think about lots of things, it's just busy busy.

7.130 Interviewer: You mentioned sometimes what you do is to spend time with your sister and her boyfriend and his nephews? And what about when you are in that a group?

7.131 Participant: Same thing, we don't talk about religion, because their parents are Christian but they all have that type of 'Live life to the fullest in the meantime'. I think they haven't made the decision for themselves. Hey, they do go to church once in a while, but they don't really observe what's going on. But, the Christian boyfriend seems to like to make changes but his nephew, not so much, because they are still young and they want to do all sorts of things and I'm not what exactly, they just have their own way of thinking right now. If I start to talk about church, everyone gets really quiet, I did, I haven't tried because I don't know, just the fear of being judged I guess, unwanted, just feel imperfect or whatever. So, I can't really talk that kind of thing with them.

7.132 Interviewer: So is that the way that you feel? I am just thinking now that you said if you speak to people about your religion, they might feel that you trying to make them feel judged. Is that the way the religion makes you feel?

7.133 Participant: Yes, it's just hard because you have to be in certain way, but you also have to get other people, to be that way with Christianity. And it's really hard because if you try, people will box you out 'Like no, I'm done'. It just becomes one person after the next and eventually a group people are against you. If you try and you don't want that to happen, so you just keep quiet. I guess I do feel that way sometimes. And I don't know how to change that.

7.134 Interviewer: So what would you say then if I asked you this question? What do you think makes up your identity? What would you say could be the things that contribute to who you are?

7.135 Participant: To do with Christianity?

7.136 Interviewer: Definitely and?

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7.137 Participant: Ah, hmmm, my identity probably would be a person who expects to be respected. Uhhh, I don't know.

7.138 Interviewer: What else could you tell me about being 15?

7.139 Participant: There is really not much to that, but I think, just really this big year, things change when you turn 15. You just about all the different things that will happen, you just think about next year. Basically, it's just a change. Being at school, and basically that's it.

7.140 Interviewer: You said that you changed your church this year, but the school you're in now? Have you been there since the beginning?

7.141 Participant: I have actually been here since grade 5. I think we will be leaving. My sister is graduating next year, so.

7.142 Interviewer: Can you think of anything else you want to tell me about yourself?

7.143 Participant: I think I am, I don't think there anything else I can think of right now.

7.144 Interviewer: You said that you are somebody who really enjoys the arts? Can you tell me a little bit more about that if you want to?

7.145 Participant: I really do it for entertainment, when I'm bored, I just sit down and start doodling something, then I take that idea and get serious about it. And I will draw something that makes sense out of that, or maybe I'll feel something, then I'll draw how I'm feeling. Mainly if I'm feeling upset about something. I'll draw something that describes that you can see something, like mainly when I'm angry, depressed or feeling low. I usually draw a lot and afterward, I feel really drained and tired because it's getting hot if you are out there, I need a table when it comes to speeches. That's the way of expressing myself sometimes.

7.146 Interviewer: So when you feel tension you express it through art?

7.147 Participant: Ja, or sometimes when I get tired, I just play the piano, just that creative side of me.

7.148 Interviewer: What about when you feel happy, excited? How do you express that side of yourself?

7.149 Participant: Somehow kind of come out with my art work. But when I feel good about myself, I may be listen to music that makes me feel happy, or I spend a lot of time with my phone, so I'll just talk to a lot of people, because where we used to live by the college, I could go outside but now we are here, everything is so closer, so we are basically inside. So when you can't get out, you are just happy. Basically being with other people makes you happy.

7.150 Interviewer: So it's your art, and it's your phone, and it's being with other people?

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7.151 Participant: Ja, I guess it's just, maybe if I do something else, I'll be a little bit lost with myself. Either I take my Bible or find something else, like a small devotion book kind of, just read through that and get myself back in a way just for some time. I do it when I feel like I just want something different.

7.152 Interviewer: Anything else you would like to share about?

7.153 Participant: My life is basically just around home and school. You wake up, go to school, and come back to your homework. You don't have time with your family because, like during the holidays, because they are working away from home so you just at home alone until 5pm, so. When the parents come home, it's like 'I don't want to spend time with you, you were not here with me the whole time, why should I?' So you sort of just box yourself away from people, you find comfort by being with your friends. So if you are not at school, you are at home, if you are not at home, you are school. Only on the weekend, you can go and be with friends if the parents allow it. When they say 'No you have to stay at home this weekend', you just stay away from them. You just don't want anything to do with that. So life is just home, school, basically. You get tired with that kind of routine.

7.154 Interviewer: What would you like to do? What would you like to be different?

7.155 Participant: I wish that my parents were closer to me in way, like I wish I could talk to them about literally anything. I can do that with my sister, she and I are very very close. And it's a good feeling, but sometimes I hear from my friend talking about how she can talk to her mum about anything, she won't be, she won't judge her for that, she will get her in the right direction, there wouldn't be punishment if there is something wrong. But she never feels she can't talk to her mum, she just has good time. And my family, we only know how to have a good time together, we can't just talk about what's going on. I wish that could be different.

7.156 Interviewer: It sounds like you want to feel free enough to talk to your parents about whatever is on your mind and in your heart. Thank you for speaking to me today. You have given me so much information. I am just going to switch this off.

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Semi-structured interview: Carla (15 years old)

8.1 Interviewer: And maybe you can start by telling me a little about yourself, like what grade you are in and what kind of school do you go to at the moment, how old you are?

8.2 Participant: Okay, I go to X and they work in a form system, so I am at form three which is the same as grade nine. I am 15, yes.

8.3 Interviewer: And when is your birthday? have you been 15 for a while?

8.4 Participant: Uhmm, 1st March.

8.5 Interviewer: Okay, so you are almost at the 16 mark?

8.6 Participant: Yes.

8.7 Interviewer: And what is it like to be 15?

8.8 Participant: Alright.

8.9 Interviewer: Fine? Okay, can you tell me a little bit about your friends?

8.10 Participant: Uhmm, in primary school I had a really good friend. But she went to a different high school in South Africa, so I don't see her that often but we are in contact. And then I have two good friends at school, they go to the same church as me so, uhmm, they are really nice that is all.

8.11 Interviewer: So here at home, it looks like you have got only one sister?

8.12 Participant: Yes.

8.13 Interviewer: No brothers?

8.14 Participant: No.

8.15 Interviewer: So it is just you and your mom and your dad and your sister?

8.16 Participant: Yes.

8.17 Interviewer: And it looks like you have a whole lot of pets as well?

8.18 Participant: Yes.

8.19 Interviewer: Okay. So after school, what do you enjoy doing? What are your hobbies and interests?

8.20 Participant: I used to play hockey but that is not a big thing anymore, I used to play but I don't anymore. And I also do swimming sometimes but usually just for fun, and then yes.

8.21 Interviewer: Okay. And you are saying that your two friends who are at school with you go to the same church as you?

8.22 Participant: Yes.

8.23 Interviewer: Which church do you go to?

8.24 Participant: X Church.

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8.25 Interviewer: Okay, and that makes me think that you are a Christian?

8.26 Participant: Yes.

8.27 Interviewer: Okay, what is it like being a Christian?

8.28 Participant: Good.

8.29 Interviewer: Have you been a Christian for a very long time or is it a new thing?

8.30 Participant: No, my parents brought us up Christian, so.

8.31 Interviewer: And mom and dad have always been Christian?

8.32 Participant: Yes.

8.33 Interviewer: Okay. Have you been going to church this entire time or have you recently started going to church?

8.34 Participant: Uhhh, we went to a different church when we got to X, well when my friends got to X and then we stopped going there. And for a few years, we didn't go to church but we went to church again, ummm, 10 years ago.

8.35 Interviewer: Okay. Is it something that you enjoy doing or is it something that you do just because mom and dad are going?

8.36 Participant: Uhhh, it depends, because my parents are quite involved, so we almost have to be there every Sunday and sometimes it feels like we just have to go because our parents go, but other times I really want to go.

8.37 Interviewer: And you said mom and dad are quite involved, what do they do at the church?

8.38 Participant: Uhhh, my mom is the children's pastor but she is on a bit of a break for now. And they are both elders as well.

8.39 Interviewer: Okay. And are you involved in anything else at the church?

8.40 Participant: Uhhh, I am involved at the kid's church, I do, I help out there and I do worship sometimes.

8.41 Interviewer: And do you attend maybe some kind of a youth group or something like that?

8.42 Participant: Yes, our church has youth group is every Friday.

8.43 Interviewer: Okay. And what kind of things do you do at the youth group every Friday?

8.44 Participant: Uhhh, we do games and we do worship and then we do a teaching.

8.45 Interviewer: And do you think that you will stay a Christian or do you think you will ever convert to a different religion?

8.46 Participant: I think I will stay a Christian.

8.47 Interviewer: Okay, do you know about other religions?

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8.48 Participant: Yes a little bit.

8.49 Interviewer: And how did you learn about them?

8.50 Participant: From school and my parents.

8.51 Interviewer: Okay. At your school, do they have a subject like religious instruction or education that teaches you about it?

8.52 Participant: No, but in primary school in one of our history lessons, we did a history religious teaching of all the different religions.

8.53 Interviewer: Okay. And that is how you got to know about some of them?

8.54 Participant: Yes.

8.55 Interviewer: Okay. And now at school, is it something that you speak about?

8.56 Participant: Uhhh, yes we have lots of different cultures and religions at our school, so yes.

8.57 Interviewer: Okay, from what you noticed, do people from different cultures and religions get along?

8.58 Participant: Uhhh, some more than others, but most of them usually stay away from Christians

8.59 Interviewer: Okay, that is interesting, can you tell me more about that?

8.60 Participant: Uhhh, well many people say they are Christians but they don't necessarily are Christians and they will be more involved like everyone else. But the people who really speak out are Christians, they will speak for themselves.

8.61 Interviewer: Okay and why do think that is?

8.62 Participant: Lots of people think Christians are judgemental people and, ummm, because of the different cultures, different types of people, ummm, so yes.

8.63 Interviewer: Okay, so it is almost like Christians have this label of being judgemental?

8.64 Participant: Yes.

8.65 Interviewer: Do you think that they are?

8.66 Participant: Some are.

8.67 Interviewer: Do you, ummm, if you just think about it on a day-to-day level, so you do things like pray, read a bible and maybe read devotionals or something like that?

8.68 Participant: Uhhh, yes I usually do in the morning and sometimes I don't, but I usually pray almost every day.

8.69 Interviewer: And do you find that your faith is able to help you with particular things?

8.70 Participant: Yes.

8.71 Interviewer: Okay, like what?

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8.72 Participant: Well, last time at school, I didn't have a really good time and I always felt like I could rely on God to help me in times of need.

8.73 Interviewer: So during the tough times?

8.74 Participant: Yes.

8.75 Interviewer: Okay. So your relationship with God is something that you draw from in times of need, and when things are going well?

8.76 Participant: Also, but not as much.

8.77 Interviewer: Okay, who do you think has influenced you the most in terms of your relationship with God?

8.78 Participant: My parents.

8.79 Interviewer: And how have they influenced you?

8.80 Participant: By always telling that I need to spend time with God, to get to know Him better and to know when He is talking to me, and encourage me.

8.81 Interviewer: Okay. And your two friends that you mentioned that go to the same church as you, do you find that you speak about your relationship with God to them as well?

8.82 Participant: Not very much.

8.83 Interviewer: What about your sister, do you speak to sister about things like that?

8.84 Participant: Yes.

8.85 Interviewer: Anything else you can tell me just about what you believe in? Maybe if you think about why we are here on earth, why you think we are all here?

8.86 Participant: Uhhh, I think we are all here because God has a plan for us to bring other people to faith as well, and to help other people, yes.

8.87 Interviewer: Okay. Do you have any ideas about what you think your plan is that God has for you?

8.88 Participant: Uhhh, not really but I have ideas about what I might want to do. I am thinking about maybe paediatrics. And then we have a team here in X called The Luke Commissioned and they go into rural areas and do clinics. I am thinking about doing a similar thing in Madagascar, there is a committee there.

8.89 Interviewer: Okay. And what would you like to do? It sounds like you want to be a doctor then?

8.90 Participant: Maybe.

8.91 Interviewer: So being a doctor is one option?

8.92 Participant: Yes.

8.93 Interviewer: What would the other options be?

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8.94 Participant: Uhhh, I have also thought about speech therapy and teaching, ummm, yes.

8.95 Interviewer: Okay, so it sounds like you really are going to work with children?

8.96 Participant: Yes.

8.97 Interviewer: Okay, and you are choosing the sort of work that would help other people?

Do you feel like that is part of the plan for you, for you to help other people?

8.98 Participant: I hope so.

8.99 Interviewer: Okay. What else can you tell me just about your faith or your relationship with God or things at school or?

8.100 Participant: Uhhh, when I turned 13, I had a blessing ceremony where I made promises to God and to my parents, and one of them was I wouldn't date and court. And so when I am old enough to get married, then I will ask God to show me who He wants me to go get married to. And my one friend did the same promise, so we can help each other with that and my sister as well and yes.

8.101 Interviewer: So you said you had a blessing ceremony?

8.102 Participant: Yes.

8.103 Interviewer: So how does that work? What do you do? How does the ceremony work and how does blessing ceremony work?

8.104 Participant: Uhhh, well basically my parents bless me as well, and it is like almost a spiritual walk into adulthood and to be more richer and more responsible and stuff like that.

8.105 Interviewer: So who was there? Your parents?

8.106 Participant: Yes, and my sister and some of the people who are very involved in my life before that, and friends and family.

8.107 Interviewer: Okay so one of the promises you made was just around dating and did you make other promises at that time?

8.108 Participant: Uhhh, to honour and respect my parents and know that they are God's gift to help me, to press for me. And to honour God and His plans for me, and yes some other stuff as well.

8.109 Interviewer: Okay. And you said that happened when you were 13, and was it your idea or was it your parent's idea? How did it come about?

8.110 Participant: Uhhh, our pastor at church, he did it with his kids and then we just happened to do it as well, but I am glad I did it.

8.111 Interviewer: Okay. And are there going to be other ceremonies coming up or any other big events like that?

8.112 Participant: No.

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8.113 Interviewer: Do you and your family celebrate Christmas?

8.114 Participant: No.

8.115 Interviewer: Okay, when the 25th comes what do you do?

8.116 Participant: We just don't do anything, we just spend time as a family.

8.117 Interviewer: Okay, so you do not exchange gifts or anything like that?

8.118 Participant: No.

8.119 Interviewer: Okay, and is that something that also forms part of your religion or?

8.120 Participant: Uhhh, well my parents have stopped celebrating Christmas before I was born. Uhhh, and they felt that it wasn't something that they wanted to do because of various reasons that I cannot remember now. I just never celebrated it.

8.121 Interviewer: Okay, so you have never ever because they stopped before you were born?

8.122 Participant: Yes.

8.123 Interviewer: Okay, what about your birthday?

8.124 Participant: Yes, we celebrate birthdays.

8.125 Interviewer: So what do you usually do for your birthdays?

8.126 Participant: My birthday is usually on our mid-term, so we usually go away and I like going to the beach, so we go to the beach.

8.127 Interviewer: Okay that sounds nice! And Easter?

8.128 Participant: No, not really. We usually do Passover at church. So the whole church does a meal together.

8.129 Interviewer: So it is your family and all of the rest of the church that does it together?

8.130 Participant: Yes.

8.131 Interviewer: Okay anything else you want to tell me? You can't think of anything?

8.132 Participant: No.

8.133 Interviewer: Okay, I am just trying to think from my side if I have any more questions for you, but I think I have actually asked everything as well. Anything that you want to know or anything that you want to ask?

8.134 Participant: No

8.135 Interviewer: Okay, I am going to switch this off then.

Semi-structured interview: Veronique (17 years old)

9.1 Interviewer: Maybe we can just start by you telling me just a little bit about yourself, anything you want me to know?

9.2 Participant: Oh, okay. The first thing that comes to my mind is that I am very honest.

9.3 Interviewer: Okay?

9.4 Participant: Explicitly honest.

9.5 Interviewer: Okay?

9.6 Participant: I don't hide, I'm not the type of person to beat around the bush, if I think something, I say it.

9.7 Interviewer: Okay.

9.8 Participant: Uhhh, I'm interested in music, I enjoy being with lots of people, I'm a very talkative person, uhhh, I don't know what else to say about myself.

9.9 Interviewer: Okay.

9.10 Participant: Coz, I'm the type of person, I don't talk too much about me, I'd rather you ask me what you want to know about me, I don't know if that means I'm not open, but I'm not going to lay out my life, you know? If you want to know something, I'll tell you, I've got nothing to hide, but I won't just put it out there.

9.11 Interviewer: Hmm.

9.12 Participant: Oh! I am very strong-willed, and I am very strong on my opinions, I don't, I notice I don't look at things the way most people do, like everybody's got this one angle of life, and I choose to see it another way, so, I don't enjoy talking about other people, uhm, even though I'm aware, and I like, take notes, and I, I make sure that I know what goes on around me, but I won't discuss it with the next person, uhhh, I grew up in a very strict, uhhh, home, not that I am complaining, I've looked at other people's lives, and I am thankful for where I am and who I am.

9.13 Interviewer: Hmm.

9.14 Participant: Uhhh, but I don't exactly, uhhh, I'm not everything my mom and dad would want me to be.

9.15 Interviewer: Okay?

9.16 Participant: So, they told me one way, but then some places where I have decided.

9.17 Interviewer: Hmm

9.18 Participant: To experiment with these things, and I find I'm not the only one that has done it, some actually start really really young, and to a point where they can't control it now.

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I only started, like, experimenting with new things and new places and meeting new people, trying new things recently, when I actually figured ‘Okay, I am maturer than I was, I will probably decide it better now’. Uhhh, I am very mature for my age I’ve been told, mainly because I had to grow up with adults, it was just me and my sister in a very secluded area, and, uhmm, there was just adults all the time. Mom and dad’s work-friends, co-workers, they used to teach at a school, students were adults so, I had to grow up very quickly, and, ja. Is there anything else you want to know there? Okay?

9.19 Interviewer: Well, how old are you?

9.20 Participant: I am seventeen.

9.21 Interviewer: Okay. And have you just turned seventeen? Or have you been seventeen for a while?

9.22 Participant: I turned seventeen in September.

9.23 Interviewer: Okay.

9.24 Participant: Ja.

9.25 Interviewer: Okay.

9.26 Participant: Ja, so not too long.

9.27 Interviewer: And you are saying that maybe you feel a little bit more mature than other people your age? Uhhh, so what do you think other seventeen year olds are like?

9.28 Participant: Well, me going to a school, I have seen other seventeen year olds, but not like me, there’s different types of people, and the people I go to school with, are kids who had money, have all the freedom in the world, but they haven’t grown up yet. They are still so loud, they are still so, they don’t think before they act. So my interpretation of other people my age is, yes you get my group, which is mature, reasonable, but then you get that other group, which almost, they don’t think, they do crazy things, get that tattoos, drink themselves sick and get involved with guy’s or whatever, girls and, you know I can’t respect that kind of lifestyle because, where I grew up, even though yes, now and again I will drink and I, I have a boyfriend, but I haven’t pushed it the way they push it, to a point where they get bad reputation’s, and they get called all the names, because of the way they carry themselves out. I keep my stuff behind closed doors and I prefer it that way, because maybe I can do something, like maybe I won’t have a drink with my boyfriend, and if a younger person can see me, because they’re young, they don’t understand, they will have a bowl of gossip on my one drink with my boyfriend. So that mentality doesn’t go away sometimes, so even at seventeen years old, they still, that’s how I explain gossip, it’s a young minor understanding that one day you are going to do exactly the same things I’m doing and you will find reasons

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to talk about it to somebody else but you won't appreciate somebody talking about you. So, I've got a very negative view on other seventeen year olds that are immature because they just cannot understand, and the things I've been through in my life personally, if they just knew what, there are so many sides to life, they wouldn't act the way they acted.

9.29 Interviewer: So, do you think that's what helps you to be more mature? Is it just the experiences you've had?

9.30 Participant: Yes, definitely.

9.31 Interviewer: You've said that you feel that you think differently to other seventeen year olds, that you are more mature, uhmm, one of the things is just the experiences that you've had to help you be more mature, hanging around outside with adults, like your parents' friends, your parents' co-workers, uhmm, is there anything else that you think influences you into being more mature or to think differently?

9.32 Participant: Uhmm, I guess it is just also a choice I've made, but subconsciously, coz I can always choose to be louder than everybody else or to talk about other people, but, I just, it is just in my character, in my personality not to, and you know I can't say that I got teachers that will probably have made me more mature or whatever because I am not the only one. Maybe my angle is different, but I'm not the only mature seventeen year old out there and I understand and respect that. So I think the main influences are past experiences, views on other people and how my parents raised me to be.

9.33 Interviewer: Ok, what influence have your parents had? If you say they raised you a certain way, how have they raised you?

9.34 Participant: Uhmm, respected everything. You cannot, you respect everybody until they give you reason not to. So, and you be polite to everyone. There is a difference between being respectful and being polite. So, I might, for example, may have a problem with my head mistress. There are ways that she, uhmm, as a leader, you don't expect her to react the way she does. So, I will be polite when I am around her but I have no respect for her. So, respect is a really really big thing in my family, or to me at least, and is one thing that I've learned from my family. Uhmm, I also like to work hard. I am a lot like my parents, everything they have they worked for and when I look at other kids lifestyles they are just given everything, they don't appreciate it the way I do when I get something really big. So, I've learned to be appreciative from my people. Uhmm, I'm also, uhmm, organised. Maybe my room doesn't tell it, but if I know I have to get something done, I sort it out. This is what I start with, this is what I do next and this is what I finish with. I know exactly how to plan things and that is one thing I got from my mom. I'd say that my mom has a bigger influences

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in my life than my dad, even though they live together and I love them both equally, but I spend more time with my mom than I do with my dad. Mostly because my dad has always been the busier of mom, uhmm my parents. So when he was writing his masters, every time something went wrong, I needed to go to my mom coz dads working. So I always went to mom all the time, so when dad would reach out to me or discipline me, I would either be afraid of him because of the types of males I would see at school or outside of school. I don't know how to spend time with my dad, even though we live in the same house, you know, but the minute he gets angry, I think he's going to react the way I've seen other males react. So, that kinda kept this gap in between me and my father, that's why I am closer to my mother even though I love my father and we can get along, you'd swear we were closer but in reality I fear my dad, and even though it's a fear I created, it's still there. And so, my mom has influenced me more. So I am neat like her, I am organised like her, I have got a strong tongue like my father. My father is very straight forward and I got that from him and my grandfather. So, dad and I are straightforward. So that is his influence on me. I am also a critical thinker. That's how my angle is different than most seventeen year olds. Dad taught me how to think critically. Uhmm, think other influences I got from my family is the importance of having people close to you. It's just been my dad, my mother and sister since I was born. I never went to granny overnight on my own. Could never walk down the road to my cousins or just drive up and out to go see them. It is either six to Joburg, or nineteen to Cape Town. So I never, I don't even know half of my cousins. I think, even though most families are ideal to be in, if mom and dad are together, that's awesome, but they don't have mom and dad together, they have cousins down the road, and grannies and mom and dad are split. Now I think you need both, because sometimes you need, your aunt isn't as strict as your mother, sometimes you can confide in her, more than you can in mom, because I'm afraid of my mom. If she was being mad at me or I must disappoint her, I will feel really bad. But at least my aunt can, coz she's in no place to discipline me, or judge me, unless it's life-threatening, kinda like a counsellor.

9.35 Interviewer: Hmm?

9.36 Participant: You can tell her whatever you want, but the minute they can see it's a problem in your life, only then will they confront your parents. So, uhmm, I don't have that. So, I either deal with my issues on my own or turn to a friend, who isn't as mature as I am and ended up stabbing me in the back. So that, that's why I value my close family, but at the same time, I still wish I could've had more cousins I could've gone to places with and had memories with people that I share blood with.

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9.37 Interviewer: Hmm?

9.38 Participant: But I guess that will just have to mend.

9.39 Interviewer: Okay, what are your ideas about the world? So if you think about why you're here, what you're supposed to do over here, and maybe who put us here, why are we here, what are your ideas about all of that?

9.40 Participant: Well, that's gonna take a while, because I grew up in a Christian home.

9.41 Interviewer: Okay?

9.42 Participant: We've got a purpose, God has given you a purpose. But being in a Christian school, in a, not Christian school, more than my Christian home, I pick up more and I see more of what really goes on compared to the fairy-tale that is set at home. So from the one side, and this is my battle every single day, on the one side, God is everything, He will protect you, He will guide you and He sent his son to die for you. That line of Christianity, not the Jehovah Witnesses and that, that line of Christianity, uhmm, that is supposed to be my, my, my guidance for like if I want to know what I want to study, I need to ask God and He will show me the way. I am not in control of my own future, God will sort everything out. I just need to trust Him and keep going. But, I've seen people hurt, I've seen people become successful and it's not because they waited until, they knew what they wanted to do from high school already. I don't know what I wanna do, because I've been waiting, waiting, waiting to see where I wanna go. So, on the one hand it's just hurt and pain and, mom and dad are divorced or I can't be who I wanna be because my parents have got this life plan set out for me or, uhmm, I drink, I smoke, I don't care about my future, dad's got a company, I'm gonna inherit it anyways. And then there's me, I need to work for everything I need to get, so when I look at the world, the world is an unfair place, but it's very simple. It's not that complicated, unless you make it complicated. A lot of people are too afraid to take risks and that's why they are so set back, kinda like, everybody believes that they need university to be someone or something in life but I can name people who dropped out and still became very successful, it's on the internet its everywhere . People, I think university is overrated but it is a requirement for you to get a job with. Its, it's so, I find the world very contradicting. Because on the one side it says do this and the second you do this, it contradicts each other. So, life and the world as it is, is simply what you make it and that's how I've always viewed it. That's how I've always seen it. But then, I don't know if that is right, because when I was growing up, God was in control of the world. That is how your life would end up. Everything that happens to you, happens for a reason. Now with my past experiences, I struggle to believe that because of what I have gone through. I don't see the point to anything I have ever

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gone through, so it kinda leaves that, that question mark, that 'Where are you' question mark. And that's why I feel many people fall away from Christianity, because they go through so much that it's not even gonna be necessary or relevant years later. So in that gap, that's where people fall. Now me, I've always made that, not deal, but that like, 'I love you no matter what, but there will be times when I don't wanna talk to you, because I feel hurt by you', so that's normally when things hit rock bottom, and I am not happy where I am, or my dreams are not coming into play and no doors are opening up for me, then it's like 'I am not abandoning you, I am not saying you don't exist but you're hurting me right now and I don't wanna talk to you'. I'll just leave it at that, my mistake is, I'll go out with my boyfriend, I will drink and I will almost suppress that emotions, and that's not a way to handle it, if I am not careful, I could end up an alcoholic and I understand that, and I am trying to work on it. But that's the reality, that's how most teens fall to their drugs and their addictions, coz they're looking for a suppressant, a relief from whatever they are feeling, the abuse that they get from home, anything to numb those emotions. I know what it's like to be drunk, your head is heavy, you can't think straight. I know what it's like, you don't think straight and in that moment you're not at home, you are surrounded by people you know and don't know. So you don't have to think about your problems and your situations, because either you have to look out for yourself because you're around people, or because you're around people you don't have to care. So, that's what the world has come to. Everybody has put overrated standards on what you need to be successful. Love is overrated, university is overrated, you know, and I've seen people tell me that all men are dogs coz their dad isn't in the family. So that's when you question love, like 'Does love really exist?' And then people want to shove statistics down your mouth and it doesn't mean anything to you because you're not a statistic and people need to realize that they are not statistics. You shouldn't put a number on what is going on. Because that really just discourages a person, the drop-out rates. Coz you could, ah they tell you, ja five of every ten people drop out and then you start counting and you look at people who could actually make it and you start doubting yourself. So in essence, the world is overrated and it's whatever you want it to be.

9.43 Interviewer: So, you were saying that you grew up in a Christian home and that, uhmm, it was almost like a fairy-tale and when you kinda got out into the world, you saw what it was like, and saw that there was a big difference between what you thought it was, and what it actually is? And it sounds like at times when things are really really difficult, you decide to manage your difficulties in other ways? So not necessarily through prayers, going to church or anything like that? You would rather be with your boyfriend, having a drink with him.

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Uhhh, so what then? There was a big disconnect with what you grew up with and the fairy-tale and what is really happening in the world. Where does it leave you?

9.44 Participant: Well, the only reason why I'd rather have the drink than pray is because is because my prayers don't leave, you know that moment when you don't feel that your prayers are really getting far, and you give up. That only takes a week, two weeks, three weeks, you just keep going and going and then you give up. You move on. That leaves me in a very unstable place.

9.45 Interviewer: I understand that.

9.46 Participant: Coz on the one hand, when everything is great, I'm, I'm quite opposite to the Christians. When everything is amazing, I thank God, when everything is not going well, 'Where are You?', normally it's the other way around. When everything is great, you forget about God, uhhh, it leaves me unstable because now, uhhh, I don't know what I believe. Because the minute things get tough, I switch over to how the world deals, how the world deals with its problems, and then when everything is great I switch over again, which isn't exactly ideal. Even your one side, because if you keep switching, eventually you're gonna lose yourself. And you won't know where to leave what, and which time. I don't know how to fix that, yet, but I know it needs fixing. And, I, my issue with the whole Christianity thing is, when I'm down, I get attacked. I get attacked pretty bad. I have on the one side, verses like 'Your God will never leave you', and then other verses will be like 'In your suffering there comes joy', and it just like, contradicts each other. And I don't, I hate these contradictions. So that will be one side of Christianity, that everything's perfect because God loves you, then you look at the other side where sometimes you need to suffer, sometimes you need to go through things and I understand it, but I won't agree with it. So when I have been suffering for such a long time, it's like 'You're the Almighty God, should You not have the power, that I not need to suffer because You are all powerful? Not in my weakness you find strength'. I don't think it works like that, 'How long am I supposed to be weak for You to be strong?' That is what, that's what it gives to me. And I'd rather not blasphemy and curse, I'd say 'I'm gonna go and get a drink'. Because I'm more afraid of damnation than I am of just stepping away, and I'll calm myself down, away from God and away from all these contradictions.

9.47 Interviewer: Hmm?

9.48 Participant: So I take the positive contradictions of the world and I kinda put it together, and now I'm living a fairy-tale life, so.

9.49 Interviewer: Okay. So it's not like you stop believing, but sometimes you move away from God because you are angry?

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9.50 Participant: Yes.

9.51 Interviewer: Okay. And have you ever considered if maybe there's another religion that would be better for you?

9.52 Participant: No.

9.53 Interviewer: Okay.

9.54 Participant: I have looked at Muslims.

9.55 Interviewer: Mmm?

9.56 Participant: I don't believe that God has got His chosen people, like Jehovah Witnesses. Mormons were high when they wrote that book. And, the others, I have never been exposed to. And if I can look at three other religions, and completely disagree with it, then I know that what I have been doing is right. It makes sense, it really really makes sense. You can prove it. That's my thing, you know, people believe in evolution because it could be proved. I believe in Christianity because God has proven Himself to me many many times. There are so many times when I should have died, and I haven't.

9.57 Interviewer: So, it's just when things get a bit difficult when, then it's difficult to move closer to God?

9.58 Participant: Yes, because I feel left, when I go through something I feel like God has left, and I ask Him 'Why would you do that?' Because in my past, there have been deep things I did not need to go through. I didn't need to go through them. But I did anyways, and I don't understand that. And it felt like a game, like 'Why would You put something in my life that hurt me, and then it doesn't even change me?', so.

9.59 Interviewer: So the biggest thing is just our understanding?

9.60 Participant: Mmm.

9.61 Interviewer: Of what is going on?

9.62 Participant: Yes. And you don't know who to talk to because no one can relate, no one understands what you are going through.

9.63 Interviewer: Hmm?

9.64 Participant: So you just try to fix it yourself, so I am a very independent person because of, I need to rely on myself. I can't speak to my dad, coz my dad will just tell me what I am trying to get away from for that, for a little bit.

9.65 Interviewer: Mmm.

9.66 Participant: I always thought, you know, you could share things much much stronger when you're an adult, you've got everything you want going for you, and you've only got yourself to blame for your mistakes. But when you're a teen, everything around you is not

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your doing. You don't choose which school you wanna go to, you don't choose how people treat you. When you're an adult, you choose where you wanna work, you applied there, you accept the job and you can always choose to leave but you must know where you wanna go next. You can't do that, you're under somebody else's, you're in somebody else's hand to do whatever they feel is best for you and that's why I always thought being a teenage Christian is difficult because you always blame other people's decisions for you as God's decisions for you. And when they say 'I had no idea that was gonna happen', you know it could've only been a higher power because my fate is in God's hands. So I'm here because God wants me here and I'm hurting here, so at least if I was in a university that I'm not too happy with, I can always change things, change my major, change my course, remove myself from my friends, move off campus, I can always do something because I'm my own person, and I might not have all the finances for it but I've seen people pray 'God save me', and it's easier for them to move, unlike here, my parents must fill out paper work, this must happen, that must happen, I must get accepted. It's not simple, it's not that simple for me to make changes in my life because somebody else is in control. So that's why I thought ok I just need to, that's why I won't leave God, full stop. I won't leave God because I know it will get better, I just need to get out of high school. Coz from there, God is gonna guide me and I'm going to chart my own course almost, because I'm in control.

9.67 Interviewer: Okay. So it's almost like your age and being in high school at this point are placing limits on, on your ability to go where you want to go?

9.68 Participant: Yes.

9.69 Interviewer: But you've considered other religions and feel like that isn't the answer? It's not about changing religions, it's more about living out this phase of being a teenager?

9.70 Participant: I've got a friend whose lying in hospital right now, she tried to commit suicide. Because as a Muslim, you submit to your father until he passes you over to your husband and you submit to him. She's 18, she's got dreams, she's got goals, but her father beats her, doesn't want her to have a career, won't let her leave, doesn't want her to be friends with a coloured person, and he said this to her in front of me, I don't want you hanging out with your 'moloto' friends because we influence her. We have our dreams, and our goals and that people she used to hang out with, they were the drunks, and they got high, and they have babies and whatever, he didn't want that for her. But I'm different, so I can't even be under that same category. Now she can't have the friends she wants, she can't have the career she wants, she can't have the life she wants, she can't have the husband she wants, she wanted to take her own life. And it's all under the fact that she's Muslim. That is her, her

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role as a human being. You are born, you submit to your father, you get married, you have his children, that is all you do. So I can't agree with the Muslim culture because firstly, you can't treat your woman right and why would God create something that you're supposed to disrespect and degrade, I don't believe in that. I also don't believe in God saying 'I created a whole world for the people but they don't, if they don't believe in Me, you have the right to go and kill them'. I don't agree with that either. So that's how I know that that religion can't possibly be right, because then this world would be a mess.

9.71 Interviewer: Mmm, so what is it like for you being friends with people who are non-Christians? So people who are Muslims, and maybe even from different religions?

9.72 Participant: I'm very accepting and I'm very very, I can mix with other people really really easily, I can become friends with all sorts of people, my youngest friend is 13 and my oldest friend is 27, uhmm, all of these people are different races, different cultures, different backgrounds, different religions, and it's never ever influenced me. I always try and influence them out of it, because you know that is what you are supposed to do, you are supposed to be open and I'm like 'Well I believe in this', and I've had friends turn and it was amazing! And I never ever look back. So I think the only point where it gets really really difficult for me, is when they feel the way I feel, 'How can God do this to me?' And it brings out my 'How could God do that to me' as well and then we kind of struggle, but I'm not influenced by other races, I'm not influenced by other cultures, I'm not influenced by all this religions, we can talk openly about it, but the minute I can see it's getting to a disagreement, I let it go because you're in no place to change what I believe and I'm in no place to change what you believe and I'm in no place to insult what you believe even. So, being in a mixed school, you, you better learn to tolerate, not tolerate, you need to accept them as they are, otherwise you're just in for conflict or unnecessary drama.

9.73 Interviewer: Mmm, so at school, for example, if people knew about Vernonique, do they know that Veronique is a Christian? Or is that something that they wouldn't necessarily know about you?

9.74 Participant: They wouldn't know it, but they won't be able to know where I stand because not, many people may know me as sweet, kind, honest and gentle but, make me upset and I'm gonna tell you exactly what I think. You can come talk to me anytime about anything, I don't judge and I don't open my mouth about it, that's who they know me as. They don't know me as Veronique the Christian, or Veronique the Muslim, they don't know me as that person.

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9.75 Interviewer: Mmm, okay. Is it something that you and your friends speak about? Or is it something that?

9.76 Participant: No, that's something I noticed, not many people, like nobody talks religion at all, ever.

9.77 Interviewer: Mmmm?

9.78 Participant: Even if you go to church, after church, you don't talk about what was spoken about, you don't talk about, even adults, unless your dad's a theologian, like mine, and conversations will come up and you'll talk God but, like your average Christian doesn't, unless they are going through something or they're trying to encourage someone. Like maybe that's the only time it will come up, when I'm encouraging another Christian friend, like 'Hey God has got you, God is gonna'

9.79 Interviewer: Mmmm?

9.80 Participant: But if you just talking it doesn't come up, I think a lot of people are ashamed of what they believe in, not ashamed, but they're not, they don't feel free to talk about it, they don't feel free to talk about it.

9.81 Interviewer: Mmm, what about you? Is it something that you also don't feel free to speak about?

9.82 Participant: I find there's some opportunities when it's necessary, because nobody likes a person who is constantly putting religion down their throat constantly, 'God this, God this, God this', it, it, it all shields people away, people don't want, they think of you as too saved, 'You're way in over your head, you should become a preacher, stop preaching at me', you know, 'You're in no place to judge me'.

9.83 Interviewer: Mmm?

9.84 Participant: Nobody wants you to act God, so you, if you can see that and it always, always comes up when you need to give someone emotional or, uhmm, emotional help or encouragement, but otherwise its, I'll talk about it, I will, but only if it's necessary. I won't just start a conversation on God, especially since there's so many people who don't even think one exists, so, that's cool.

9.85 Interviewer: Mmm, who would you say that, that you're sort of closest to at this point? You spoke about being the closer to your mom than to your dad and, uhmm, do you have friends, or is it your boyfriend, you kinda feel closest to, uhmm, who would those people be?

9.86 Participant: Uhmm, my boyfriend's probably the closest person I'll ever ever be with, and then my sister. My sister understands everything that I've, she's been there, with me through everything I ever gone through by force and because she can. There was a time in my

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life where she was in primary school and I was in high school and we just didn't talk, lived in the same house but we won't, I don't want her to be with my friends, she didn't want me with her friends. But then once she got into high school, it was the same and then she started seeing my friends in a different light and we started hanging out together. We accepted her, she accepted them, her friends still don't accept me, I don't mind, I don't mind them, so, that's how my sister experienced most of my experiences, because she's been there for me, she's been through what I've been through. Maybe not exactly been through it, but she's been there for me when I went through my things.

9.87 Interviewer: Mmm.

9.88 Participant: And then only my boyfriend and I are very close, because I never believed in love, I didn't even think it would last so long, but it's been seven months despite all my nonsense, despite all his nonsense, so I just feel like we should be very close. He knows everything about me, I know everything about him, his mom likes me, I've never suspect, like, he's loyal to me, I'm loyal to him. I don't see anybody else that way, maybe that's just a fiction that's gonna end, but I don't know, I don't see that being any time soon. I don't know if I'm crazy, but I mean I hear a lot of people going 'You're just in high school, what do you know?', but I find it very very difficult to think that he would ever leave me, maybe it's because I'm mature at my age and he's 23. So, he's also been through a lot, I've been through a lot, he's done messing around with his past life, and he's not looking for another thrill. He's settling down and I'm not into that. I don't need to tell my husband how many guys I've been with, the less the better. So, I'm not looking for that TV varsity life, where they'll go out drink, don't know how many guys they slept with and then go home. Because once university is over, it gets real.

9.89 Interviewer: Mmm, mmm, So these people you're closest to, like your sister, your boyfriend, your mom, would you say that you can be yourself entirely with them? Can you speak to them about anything?

9.90 Participant: Not my mom.

9.91 Interviewer: Mmm?

9.92 Participant: There's a line that she drew, because you can't be the same person to your friend like you can to your mom, you don't talk to your mom the same way you talk to your friend. Like maybe, if I have a hard time expressing myself I'll have other ways of dealing with my expressions that she won't exactly be very accepting to, so, and then.

9.93 Interviewer: Is that because she's your mom?

9.94 Participant: Yes.

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9.95 Interviewer: Okay.

9.96 Participant: There's a, there's a line of respect there. Sometimes you can just disrespect your friend and your sister, they will understand. They'll understand you're going through a rough spot, you just need time to get out of it, they forgive you, you'll move on. They don't make a scene about it. Your mom on the other hand, if you disrespect your mom, she will make a scene about it and you will fight. And then, it's pointless carrying on the conversation because there's that tension between you all.

9.97 Interviewer: Mmm?

9.98 Participant: You screaming 'You don't understand me', she's screaming 'You just disrespected me'.

9.99 Interviewer: Mmm, mmm, okay.

9.100 Participant: With my friends at school, there's some things I can trust them to keep quiet with and there's some things I trust them not to keep quiet with. So I've got friends for different things. I'm not manipulative, but if I want something, I will get it. And I won't need to force you or anything, I'll say what you need to hear and if you don't, I don't mind, I feel like I, I'm not gonna lose out much, I'm just asking you to do a simple thing for me. So I will find out information about you, right, now I got some dirt on you, so, I'll share something with you that's similar to yours, your story. Maybe you drink, I'm gonna come and tell you about my weekend. You're in no place to talk about me coz you do exactly the same things I'm doing. And that's how I place...because I can't, I'm a tough person, and if I keep things to myself for too long, I will crack. So I'll tell you a little bit, I'll tell somebody else a little bit, I will tell somebody else a little bit. Its stuff that, if it gets out, it will look bad but people will get over it. It's not stuff like my deepest most, this, I heard a phrase/quote somewhere that says 'Trust people with stuff you don't mind getting out', so if people must find out I drink, that's ok, it's ok.

9.101 Interviewer: Mmm.

9.102 Participant: There's so many people that I can point out who also drinks, if we gonna point, pointing fingers, point at yourself first. So, that in a way is my kind of, you need that one person you can totally confide in, and I've got that person but I know of people who don't, so they tell everything to that one person and they'll tell everything to another person, tell everything, and it's just sad because when that one person breaks that trust, you may as well have told the entire school what you have, what you were up to this past weekend. And how am I supposed to feel as your best friend? You're telling me all this deep, deep, deep

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stuff and I'm feeling like 'Wow, you really trust me', 'You know you're telling everybody so I'm not that special, but you're playing me to be so special to me'.

9.103 Interviewer: Mmm.

9.104 Participant: I don't always play people like that, even though I do have friends like that, I can't exactly respect them, so I'll just take whatever they want to say, keep my mouth shut, you can go tell the next person I know is gonna back stab you, I won't stop you, you didn't learn the last time, but go for it, it's ok.

9.105 Interviewer: Mmm, mmm. Something I was wondering about is, just now when you were just telling me a little about your family, you described your dad as a theologian, and given everything that you're telling me now about different people at school, and how sometimes you've know you tell certain people certain things, what is it like for you having a dad who's, who's into what he is into?

9.106 Participant: It's difficult, but then at least I've got one. My, I feel like I can't have that normal relationship with my dad because, you know, other people's parents, their fathers mostly drink, mostly smoke, my dad isn't like that, my dad doesn't even swear. So I'm thankful for mine but it's very, it's hard to say how I feel about my dad because, it's always been about reputation to my dad and that's the one thing I grew up absolutely hating about my dad. His reputation, he doesn't ask for help, and he doesn't listen to you. He'll start listening and then the minute you say something wrong, you, you're done talking for the night, he's just gonna talk and talk and talk and talk. Gently misses the point completely and then you can't, he'll turn it into something that it's not, and the thing is, he tries to get me to open up to him but I just can't because he doesn't even listen anyways. And everything has been about reputation to him. I don't want to tell him what I get up to, how I'm chilling, how I'm relaxing, what I get up to. I don't. And I respect him so much that, if I'm out and I can see people he knows, I'll stop what I'm doing, I'll go sit in the car and I will wait, because he's just so full of reputation that I know if I hurt his reputation, he will kill me. He will be so mad, so upset, and I got to a point where I thought 'Ja, the day I leave home, I am never coming back', because my dad won't let me be who I wanna be, because his pretty reputation is more important than how I feel, how I wanna live my life, and what I wanna do. 'What if I don't wanna go to university? What are your colleagues gonna say?' So, my dad probably got a wake-up call when I started confiding more in being close and it was so unintentional, but there was this time where I looked to my boyfriend for comfort more than my father. I could push my dad away, he would make me mad and I wouldn't talk to him. Not because I hated him but because I had nothing to say to him. I'd tell everything that I'm feeling to my

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boyfriend. My dad doesn't understand me, we just got into a fight, he accused me of being manipulative, that I'm ungrateful and it'll be, there was a time when I wanted to change schools because I actually hate my school where I am right now, and he told me I'm ungrateful because I asked to go to that school. At the time it was good, you know, the primary school was absolutely perfect but the high school was a problem. Now I didn't know about, mom and dad didn't know that. So I did grade 7 and when I went across, that's when we realised, we're in for hell. I tried to make grade 8, grade 9, grade 10, this year. I tried leaving, I got upset, uhmm, because the week my dad finally said I got a school for you, nobody was accepting grade 12's, so I couldn't go to grade 12 unless I repeated grade 11 and I blamed him coz I said 'You didn't try hard enough because if you could find this school now, why couldn't you find it in time?', like I went off on him. And he, he knew what I was saying is true, but he still wanted to call me manipulative. And I don't appreciate that, so I took a whole week off and right now its ok, its ok. My mom was pleading and begging with me, some girls don't even have father/daughter issues. My dad didn't have a father. He had a father but he wasn't a dad.

9.107 Interviewer: Mmm.

9.108 Participant: And that's another sad story. And that's why my dad is always worrying that he's not good enough coz every time we fight, he kept asking me 'Do you think I should've been a better dad to you?' He doesn't understand, he can't understand how I feel about him because he never had an actual dad and he thinks he's failing every time we fight, so.

9.109 Interviewer: But it sounds like you sorted it out now?

9.110 Participant: Uhmm, we have when, we're not closer, we'll talk, we'll get along but I can't open up to him.

9.111 Interviewer: Mmm, okay. Anything else you want me to know about you? Uhmm, I think we should probably start wrapping up, because believe it or not it's been over an hour.

9.112 Participant: Oh well (laughing).

9.113 Interviewer: Ok let me turn this off.

Semi-structured interview: Olivia (17 years old)

10.1 Interviewer: Maybe you can start to tell us a bit more about yourself, anything you want to tell me?

10.2 Participant: I'm 17 years old and I was born and raised in the United Kingdom and 4 years ago I moved to X because of my parents and missionaries, my dad's a pastor. I'm currently in my final year of high school. Me, my mom, my dad, my brother and my sister live in my home. My brother and sister are both younger than me, so I'm the oldest out of my entire family, including my cousins. All of my extended family is still in the UK, only we have moved. And we all lived in a little town, so it was hard to leave.

10.3 Interviewer: What is the plan, do you think that you will stay here for much longer or are you going back at some point?

10.4 Participant: I love living here and I think my parents love living here. I think my parents will stay here for the long term, but I think eventually my dad would like to have his own church in the UK. And because I am almost finished high school, I will have to go to college and I think I will probably go back to the UK to do my college.

10.5 Interviewer: Would you go back as early as next year?

10.6 Participant: Next year I want to do kind of a year out, just to get my head in order and try and figure out what I want to do with my life, and then the year after that, so 2017 probably.

10.7 Interviewer: Do you have any idea about what you'd like to do?

10.8 Participant: I love art design, text styles and things like that so that's one option and I also like music so I can go to a music school. I have a lot of ideas but that is why I need a year out just to figure out what I want to do.

10.9 Interviewer: What's it like being 17?

10.10 Participant: Being 17 I think is one of those ages where you literally can't wait to be an adult, because you are constantly put pressure on to be like, an adult but then still be like a child, like you are still growing up. I'm so excited to be 18 and to just go on with my life and don't have that kind of pressure from my parents, from my teachers and all of that. Being 17, I personally think it is my favourite of all the years I've experienced because it's like you are halfway, you are there, you will have the freedom soon.

10.11 Interviewer: When do you turn 18?

10.12 Participant: In March, so it's not long, but a little while still to go. I'm just so excited, so I can get my driver's license and everything.

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10.13 Interviewer: What's it like to have parents that are missionaries?

10.14 Participant: I think in the start, when they first told us, me and my brother and my sister in England, that they are going to be missionaries, it was really hard because in England I grew up in a completely different life with completely different friends. I didn't really have a lot of Christian friends who understood, so it was very difficult for them to understand, it was very difficult for me to understand because my parents felt that God was calling them to X but after a while of being here, I was like 'Okay, I'm starting to understand'. I heard stories from them, obviously I was involved as well, about how we managed to get from the UK, from having nothing to being here, and being blessed by so many people. Sometimes it's hard because I mean, being missionaries means that you have to rely on people a lot because you don't get any allowance from your work. You basically rely on people back in the United Kingdom to sponsor us, so it's quite hard when sometimes you don't know if the money is going to come in, but I wouldn't want it any other way that my parents are missionaries and I wouldn't want it any other way that we would be here.

10.15 Interviewer: So you say that you moved here 4 years ago?

10.16 Participant: Yes, 4 years ago in November, the 4th.

10.17 Interviewer: Initially when you're parents told you, you didn't really understand? When you say that you didn't understand, what did you mean by that? Do you mean that you didn't understand that they were called by God? Or was it that you couldn't understand how they could expect you to leave your home or your friends?

10.18 Participant: I think both of them played a role, because obviously I was younger then than I am now, I was 13, I think I was 12 when they first told us. It took us a year to finally get here, so I was very young and I wasn't in touch with my relationship with God in any way, so I didn't understand that part, I didn't understand how that would be possible and I didn't understand because I was so content with my friends and family. Like I said, we all lived in a little town so we were so close and I loved my school and I actually loved my life there so it was really, really hard for me to leave everything. My brother and my sister were very young so X is kind of all they've known. So for me it's kind of different because I remember everything about England and now I am in a new different life, but I prefer this life actually, but at that time, I was like 'No', and I think it took me half a year to actually get used to X and I was so moody and I didn't want to be here the whole first half of the year and I was just like 'No, take me home, take me home, I don't want to be here anymore.' But now I'm like that's the best decision that my family could make.

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10.19 Interviewer: So before leaving and coming this side, were your parents quite involved in the church?

10.20 Participant: My dad has been a pastor of two churches. The first church was in an actual town, so he was a pastor there and then we moved churches to a church in the city and then he was the pastor of that as well.

10.21 Interviewer: So you have actually been growing up in a church as well? What's that been like?

10.22 Participant: Yeah, I think it's very different being young in England, because there are not many Christians who are openly saying 'I'm a Christian' in England, so there is a lot of hidden things and a lot of teasing if you are a Christian, if you are openly a Christian. So a lot of my time being in school and in church, I wouldn't openly say 'I'm a Christian, I go to church', so it was more about a hiding thing and I kind of hated it, but I never thought about it because it was just one of those things. When I was in church I loved every moment of it, I had amazing friends, Christian friends, who didn't go to my school but every Sunday, it was like our family all together and I could be myself and I never felt that in school, because I had to constantly hide, because I didn't think that anyone would understand, but what I didn't understand until I came here, is that there are so many other people who are also hiding that they go to church and they also have a family like my family and it's just a whole different kind of environment and experience.

10.23 Interviewer: Why do you think people hide that they are going to church and hide that part of their lives?

10.24 Participant: I think the fear of not being accepted or of being teased, because I remember one time, this guy at my old school, my high school in England, he went to this church and I also did. One Sunday my church was doing something with his church and I didn't know that he went to church and he didn't know that I went to church, and we saw each other and then the next day at school his friends called me a "bible basher" and all of this, and I couldn't understand it, I was more like "But you also go to church and I don't understand why you are teasing me about it?", and I think it's like that a lot, because even if they are in the same boat as you, they don't want to feel like the outcast. They don't want to feel like "People are going to call me names" and "People are not going to understand this" and they kind of want to fit in with the rest of everyone even if someone is with you in the same boat, you don't want to share it. It's not a nice environment actually, because you have to hide who you actually are and what you actually do every weekend. I think socially growing up in England and being a teenager, there is a lot of peer pressure on having to go to

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parties. Even though I was 13 when I left, I think there was so much pressure on me that I had to go to parties, dress a certain way and hang with a certain people and all of that. If you are not going to parties, if you are not drinking and not smoking and all of this, you are an outcast and no one wanted to be like that. Then if you put on an extra thing like “Oh, I go to church as well” they would be “extra” bullying you.

10.25 Interviewer: Did your parents know that you were hiding this side of yourself or was it something that you hid from them? That you were hiding it?

10.26 Participant: I don’t think they knew, but I don’t think they didn’t know, because they also grew up in this whole experience, it was just a different day and age, but I think they understood, and it wasn’t a huge deal because I think a lot of the time, especially in England, the kids aren’t really in a church, the kids aren’t really focused on, it isn’t a big deal, it happens, so I think it didn’t really occur to my parents. They never really brought it up with me and it was only until they came here and they were like “Oh, this is how teenagers actually are supposed to be in a church, this is how they act, they are a big part of the church”, so they didn’t really understand, so that is okay. I never wanted them to understand because obviously I wasn’t proud of hiding a part of me.

10.27 Interviewer: And here in X, what are things like now?

10.28 Participant: I love living in X because for me, it’s very open, because you can be pretty much be whatever you want to be and people, especially for Christianity, people are quite open to it and most of the population of X is like “Yeah, I am a Christian and I go to church”. So I don’t feel that I have to hide anything and because I’ve been hiding that part of me in England, I was determined not to hide it and determined that it will not affect my social life, I wouldn’t let it affect anything, so I went with that mentality to my high school. People were so open to it and people were like “Oh your dad’s a pastor? That’s so cool!” It was just a completely different environment and you can actually be comfortable to be whatever you wanted to be and what you do, and now it’s to the point where my friends actually come to church and where they actually want to see what I’m actually doing. It is just so nice. Sorry what was the question?

10.29 Interviewer: I was just asking you what it’s like to be in X now, but I think you have answered that. Basically, you mentioned that you don’t have to hide that part of yourself anymore, maybe the community that you live in now is a lot more open and that your friends want to explore what you do here as well. Does that mean that they themselves aren’t Christians and haven’t really grown up in churches?

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10.30 Participant: I think some of them have because I go to a boarding school, I don't board though, it is tough boarding half day students. So a lot of them are boarders and even if they were in their home country they would go to church with their family, but being here they wouldn't really be able to because they don't have the resources. It is kind of nice that they understand, they are like "Oh you are going to church? I also went to church in my home country." We kind of arrange transport to get them to this church so that they can get down from school to church so that they can be able to experience it with me. I think there is always going to be the pressure of fitting in and doing things that the other people are doing, like partying and stuff like that, as long as you know what you want to be, you know who you are. There isn't anything wrong with partying, it is just that as long as you are aware of this is how I am, this is my boundary, this is my mark, these are my morals. I think there is always going to be that side, but it is just so much more open here and people don't have to hide it.

10.31 Interviewer: Do you think that if your parents weren't missionaries you would still be a Christian?

10.32 Participant: If I were still in England?

10.33 Interviewer: Let's say they had to come here for a different reason?

10.34 Participant: I think I would, but it would be different. It wouldn't be as open as it is now. I think X is a completely different environment and I don't know other places, but the places I have been is completely different. I think I would still have witnessed and I would still be involved in this whole thing, so I would kind of have to be a Christian. I wouldn't be able to escape it, because even in England it was hidden, I wouldn't be able to escape it because it would be like "Oh, wow, it's so open here", even if I wasn't in this church or even if I wasn't in this school, I wouldn't be able to escape it. It's so open here, people are accepting so yeah, I think I would still be. Probably not as strong as I am now, because I wouldn't have my friends who obviously have a big impact on how I am so strong as a Christian. I think I would be, probably just not as strong.

10.35 Interviewer: So you do feel that it is something that you have chosen for yourself? It isn't almost that you got into it because your parents are so involved?

10.36 Participant: Well yeah, I don't know because I have never "not" had it in a way. I've always been brought up on it, so I don't know really what it's like to be without it, and so I would probably still, even if it weren't for my parents, make my way into becoming a Christian, but because my parents are so strong in the church and so high up in the church, it kind of fast forward it for me, it has kind of given me this huge jump, so if it wasn't for my

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parents, I would still be going steady, but because of my parents, it kind of given me a jump into it more.

10.37 Interviewer: What are your ideas of other religions?

10.38 Participant: Well I went to an international school, it's called X College, so it is people from all over the world, all religions, all nationalities, so I'm very open. I have friends who are Muslim, who are Jewish, the whole range, so I'm very open to hear. I love hearing different views and opinions and I will even talk to my parents about it like "So like what happened that Muslim people think this and Jewish people think this". I love things like that, I like hearing about different religions and what they think.

10.39 Interviewer: How does your school manage that? Because you said there are people from all different cultures and all over the world? Is religion something that has been spoken about in school?

10.40 Participant: Not necessarily. Because it is a very open school, and its student led, so students are advised to make up their own groups, for example, there are Bible study groups. There are so many religious groups that are set up for example, in break time or after school. There are so many things like that, and it is just so open. It is a completely different world actually. People are so, even if you have to stand up and preach about God, people wouldn't be like "Argh", they will be like "Oh okay". They are very, very open. It is really nice to live in such an environment.

10.41 Interviewer: It sounds like the different groups are quite accepting of each other? That there isn't any rivalry or tension between the groups? Everybody just sort of accommodates each other?

10.42 Participant: Because there are so many religions, obviously there is going to be some conflict, like one religion says that and the other religion says that. When I think about the discussions I had with my friends about things, but in the end, we are going to an international school. Our religions are going to be different and in the end, it is about what I decided to believe and what you decide to believe, and yeah we are going to have discussions but it is not like it's going to break-up the school you know, because we are all so accepting. That is you and this is me and this is them and this is us.

10.43 Interviewer: Given to the exposure that you had of the different religions, do you think that you would ever convert to another religion?

10.44 Participant: I don't think so. I know that I wouldn't because I believe that, okay every religion believes that their religion is the one and the only way to heaven, that's how I feel, I feel like there is only one way and that's God and that's Christianity and that is the only way

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to heaven and just like everyone else believes the same thing, I wouldn't be able to because I have such a strong relationship with God and it has such a strong impact on my beliefs and my growing as a person and I can't deny it. I can't deny what is my experience with my relationship with God.

10.45 Interviewer: On a day to day basis basically, how do you feel Christianity fits in with your life or vice versa, your life fits in with Christianity on a day to day level?

10.46 Participant: On a day to day level, I wouldn't be in my life where I am now without my Christianity and my faith because honestly sometimes I don't know how people do it, because what I go through, the different experiences, even if they aren't even much of a big deal, it's just I rely on God so much just to kind of give me, kind of like a peace about things. I pray and I do my devotionals, which are like spending time with God in the morning, well I try doing my devotionals every single day but sometimes I don't do that. I think it plays such a huge part in my every day. Right now, I am at church because my parents work here, so when I'm not doing my exams, I come here to study so I'm constantly in this environment, and I'm also on the worship team so I have to come here for practise. I'm just constantly around Christians and around church and I'm also constantly around non-Christians, which is great as well. I think it plays such a big part, even if it's not right in front of me, it is in my head and it is in my body. I know God is with me so I pray to myself even if I'm in a sticky situation and no one else knows about it, I will always be in touch with my faith and my Christianity.

10.47 Interviewer: So there is never a day that goes by where it's almost like Christianity is put aside?

10.48 Participant: Well I mean, it's confection time, the hard days, because we all live such busy lives and especially during exams and things like that, and when you are just so focused on other things, like worldly things where it is like "I don't have time for Christianity right now". Even if you are not mentally being "No, I don't have time for Christianity" it's kind of your priorities, and you kind of not making time for God and for my faith. It's a constant struggle because I know that I have to keep God as my top priority but at the same time, I get so much pressure from my school, from different people, "What are you doing with your future?" etcetera. It is like you are getting pulled into one direction, but you are trying to keep your faith at the same time and it's an ongoing struggle. I think the one thing that actually keeps the ongoing struggle not as much as a struggle, is my Christianity.

10.49 Interviewer: So it sounds like it gives you strength when things are difficult?

10.50 Participant: Yes, very much so.

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10.51 Interviewer: What else do you feel your faith does for you in addition of giving you strength when things are difficult?

10.52 Participant: Let's say for example, when I am not sure about a certain situation when people ask me what I want to do with my future or what do I want to be when I'm older or what I want to do after high school, it's kind of like a peace that I know everything will be okay. God just gives me that peace – through the chaos I know that God actually have a plan for my life, I don't need to worry, I don't have to be like "Oh, I don't know what I'm doing with my life" because He gives me peace and He's in control and yeah, I think that's a lot of it.

10.53 Interviewer: What do you do? I mean apart from school and all of the exams and all the work that has to be done there? I know you've mentioned that you are quite involved in the worship team, other than that, do you have any other hobbies or interests?

10.54 Participant: I love to go with my friends and shop, just like most teenagers do, that is a big part of my life, I love spending time with my friends and just go and shopping and just going to the movies and I love spending time with my family, even though sometimes we don't get along, but I love going to the movies, going shopping. Yeah, I think I already have many hobbies. Oh, I love to sing and things like that. So, I do blogging as well, video blogging and just blogging, that is like my free time thing that I do.

10.55 Interviewer: What do you blog about?

10.56 Participant: Fashion blogs, I do different posts about fashion, like what I'm wearing in a day or something like that. Not right now, because I really don't look good, but like different outfits or videos about me singing, just a lot of random things, beauty tips, things like that.

10.57 Interviewer: Do you ever blog about your relationship with God?

10.58 Participant: Not particularly. It's not that I wouldn't, it's just, it hasn't come to my mind, I didn't have any experience that I was like "Okay, let's blog about this", where usually if I'm wearing an outfit, I will be like "Okay, let's blog about this", so it just comes to my mind as it is and maybe I will blog about God and my Christianity and things like that. It's just like, with my blog, it's about getting the audience first and then you work from there.

10.59 Interviewer: So you've mentioned that before you left to come to Africa, that there was quite a lot of peer-pressure and here ,you can be a lot more open about your religion and you don't see anything wrong with things like partying and things like that? Do you still experience a lot of peer pressure while you decide?

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10.60 Participant: I think because I'm 17 now, I can stand my ground in a lot of situations, but at school it's still very party, it's very much partying and things like that, and I don't think there's as much peer pressure, but I think there's still pressure, but like I said, they're very accepting. So I if I feel like I'm not going to do that, then I'm not going to do that. They're like "Oh okay, well why aren't you doing that?", but it's fine, there's still pressure, but it's minor and controllable. I think I'm a very strong person and I can stand my ground, and even if I'm at a party and I know that I shouldn't drink, its okay, I'm fine. But for other people it might be completely different and they can't do that. I know some people who are Christian, and they find it very, very hard in situations like that, so obviously peer-pressure does exist.

10.61 Interviewer: So when it comes to things for like example, drinking and smoking, and maybe dating, do you feel that a lot of your decisions are based on your religion? So the Christianity side of things or?

10.62 Participant: I think especially for drinking and smoking and things like that, I think like one, it's against the law for me to drink right now so even if, obviously I tried alcohol before, but even if I am in that party environment I know that it's not right. I know that God will expect so much more from me than that. I mean drinking is fine, just having a glass of wine with dinner or something like that, but getting drunk, I know that's against what God wants for me and He wouldn't, He wouldn't hate me for that, but I know I am more than that. I am expected to do more than that and better things than that, so I wouldn't put myself in a situation like that. With dating, I personally think there's nothing wrong with dating, but I know a lot of my Christian friends don't date because they feel like it's wrong, but for me and my family, I've grown up with the idea of dating. I've grown up in that western environment where dating is okay and it's just an innocent little thing and when you date, you date and you are going to find the person you're going to marry. That's just how I grew up. So I don't think dating is something that is affected by my Christianity but I know that being in Africa and being with stronger Christians, I know that it is definitely, it given me kind of, when I get into a relationship, it's like I kind of ask God's permission or not necessarily, but it's kind of a like a thing between me and God, and it's not like "Oh, let me just date whoever I want to date". I don't necessarily think that it's wrong to date. I also believe that if it's time for me to settle down, my Christianity and my faith and my relationship with God will have to be a part of that because I believe He needs to be involved.

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10.63 Interviewer: Do you ever feel like you get a lot of pressure from the church? I mean being so involved here, and having your parents being so involved here, does it feel like they kind of watching you more?

10.64 Participant: It always feels like that. It constantly feels like I'm sitting in the front row of church and, it was worse when I first arrived because I was different, I wasn't like everyone else and it was fine for me, I didn't want to be like anyone else, my parents certainly didn't want me to be like everyone else. Because it was four years ago, a lot, a lot, a lot has changed. People hadn't really got the open mind yet, they didn't fully develop that open-mindedness. I felt very violated and very judged because I was an outsider, because I was different, because I did think dating was okay and I didn't have a problem with partying as long as you can stand your ground, because of all that, I felt very closed off but I never really showed it to people. It would be more of, like again, it was just hidden, it was like a hidden thing as well and it wasn't until like people started to be like "Oh, differences are actually okay, differences are actually where we compromise and where we come together". It wasn't until that happened, that people were actually "Okay, this is all fine" and people around me started to change. They started to be more lenient and started to be more flexible and embrace different cultures and religions, okay not religions, okay religions kind of, but to be more open to different things. Was that an answer to the question? I keep forgetting what your questions are!

10.65 Interviewer: Yes, it's fine! So if you would've done something wrong, do you feel like you would be more judged than people whose parents aren't involved in the church? Or is it not really a factor?

10.66 Participant: I think there are different people in the church, more accepting people and more strict people, for example, my family, if I would do something wrong, even if my dad's high up in the church, it's like they're accepting, they're like "Okay, do you know what you did, do you know how we are going to move on from that?" and I think that is how a lot of people in the church would react. But then there would be also people who will be like "No, she went to a party!" or "No, she is doing this/she is doing that." And there are two sides to everything. I don't think they will be as strict, the overall church, I think they will be like "Okay, let's work out how we can get over this" or "Have you learned your lesson?" It's more of a family, so people will be very open and accept certain people. That's how it is with everything, because there are people who are accepting and people who are not.

10.67 Interviewer: If you have to describe yourself to a group of people who didn't know you, they didn't know anything about you, how would you describe yourself?

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10.68 Participant: I think I will describe myself as pretty outgoing. I am not shy to let people know how I think and my opinion, and I think that's one of the reasons why things have changed here, because there are differences and as those differences come, you can have a whole new remodel of, I guess, two different people coming together. So I see myself as outgoing and not afraid to tell you how I feel. I don't know, I like to think of myself as funny and I like to give people a good impression, but not if they already have an impression in their mind of me. I like to give people the real me and I have discovered that now, that I don't like to hide and I don't like to feel that I'm embarrassed of something. I like to just be open and, yeah, I think I'm quite confident. And I like to make friends, but I also really like to have my own close friends so I don't like to be all "Friend! Friend! Friend!" kind of thing, so I think I'm very confident and outgoing.

10.69 Interviewer: Anything else that you want to tell me about yourself?

10.70 Participant: I don't know, like what?

10.71 Interviewer: Absolutely anything, maybe something that we haven't spoken about yet, that you just want to share? There doesn't have to be anything?

10.72 Participant: I mean, going to like the dating thing, when I first got to X, like I said, it was very looked down on and I hadn't experienced that, so I just went ahead and started dating, and I kind of going back to the violation thing and all of that, like it was just like they look down on me all the time and I would have to fight like "No, it's actually okay". This one guy that I was dating, I kind of still am, I had to fight for kind of like my right, like this is actually okay, there's nothing wrong with this and at the end of it, people were like actually "Okay this is fine", like actually after a year of people giving me books about how dating is wrong and how I shouldn't date and how I shouldn't even like boys and things like that, and that's so stupid. I love kind of challenging people like that. I think it is really healthy, but it also can be a bit of a problem because you don't want to challenge too many people's way of thinking because everyone is different in their way of thinking and having their own opinion.

10.73 Interviewer: It sounds like you feel quite strongly about the issue of dating. Olivia, thank you for talking to me today. You have given me a lot to think about. I am just going to switch this off.

Semi-structured interview: Aleeya (18 years old)

11.1 Interviewer: Okay, so maybe we can start by you just telling me a little bit about yourself?

11.2 Participant: Okay, wow there's so many things. Firstly I love everything that's got to do with art. From singing, to painting, to dancing, even acting. Uhmm, I think you know I'm eighteen already and I have three step-sisters and I have my three brothers and it's just my mom and my gran. And my dad past away, was it, 2008.

11.3 Interviewer: Hmm, okay.

11.4 Participant: And I went to an all-girls school, in town and I'm in grade 11.

11.5 Interviewer: Okay. So you mentioned that you're eighteen and have you been eighteen for a while already or was it recently your birthday?

11.6 Participant: No, from the 5th of January.

11.7 Interviewer: Oh okay.

11.8 Participant: So for the whole year.

11.9 Interviewer: You could do anything?

Participant: Exactly. And although I'm eighteen, people assume that maybe I'm like twelve or fifteen, because I think I look twelve or fifteen.

11.10 Interviewer: Okay. So you feel you look younger than you actually are?

11.11 Participant: Exactly.

11.12 Interviewer: And what is it like being eighteen?

11.13 Participant: There are a lot of expectations, like okay, the majority of people that are eighteen that I know, like if they're not smoking, they're drinking and if they're not doing that, they're sleeping around, and being eighteen and not actually dating someone is like an abnormal kind of thing. Uhmm, and being eighteen, you're not expected to be like, childish, I don't know why, but most people are like expected to be serious and ja.

11.14 Interviewer: Hmm okay. So do you fit into that category? And are you very serious?

11.15 Participant: I would say that I would love to fit in and I do try, but it's kind of hard cause like, I'm a very bubbly person. I tell jokes and stuff and I think being serious all the time is not something I would love to do and enjoy and ja. But like I'm saying, it's hard because you want to fit in and not look abnormal.

11.16 Interviewer: You also mentioned that other eighteen years old are drinking or smoking or sleeping around and do all of those things, and the way that you described them would make me think that maybe those aren't the type of things that you would tend to do?

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11.17 Participant: Uhmm, I won't lie, because I'm eighteen and I've had instances or situations where I felt like, alone, cause my dad was my best friend so when he like past away, I felt really alone, cause all my life I've had people like come and go, come and go. So when he passed away, I felt like I had no one to hold onto. So I started like, I had that void, and my brother obviously, like I have a good relationship but not like close like that, so I would like, if a boy asked me to date him, I would say yes. And trying to please a person in a way, because I don't want to let them go or want them to leave me like my dad. And a lot of bad things happened and I didn't want to tell anyone, so in my sorrow and in my guilt and whatever, I would go steal alcohol from the fridge, but here at home which was safe for me, and drink till I got really drunk and got sick a few times and just go to bed and sleep. Just to forget about those things for an hour or two.

11.18 Interviewer: Okay. So you found a way of sort of coping with everything?

11.19 Participant: Yes. And even though it helped in the hour, the next day you'd feel even worse. It wouldn't solve anything because I'd still have the same feeling, but it became a habit and so, every time you felt like that, you need to drink. And it got to a point where, you know, before when you start you would be like 'Oh this stuff tastes disgusting'. Now you're just like, 'This is normal'. And hiding it from your family is like, not cool, but at the same time, if you tell them why you're doing that stuff, I can't say that they'll understand. Which is even worse because now you have to hide it and you can't be open and tell them.

11.20 Interviewer: Okay. You mentioned that you go to an all-girls school, so what kind of a school is it? I mean apart from it being all-girls?

11.21 Participant: It's very strict, because it's uhmm, it is run by the nuns, like they have different places. Like there's one run by the Italian nuns and there's another one, I'm not sure where these are from, but it is like partly government and partly run by the Catholic Church. There is corporal punishment, which I don't like at all, but it's for like, reasonable things, like if you don't do your homework repeatedly and stuff like that. Otherwise the teaching is good. And there is also that thing of fitting in. Like ja, if you're academic or not. I do feel like people don't respect you in a way if you're not academic and the funny thing is most of the academic ones that pass are the misbehaving ones, so you kind of feel like 'What's wrong with me? What's wrong with me because I behave, I listen, but I don't pass?' And it gets frustrating because it's, I feel like my family doesn't understand, like I'm more of the artistic kind and even though I do study, it's so hard to pass. And then at the end of the day it's like, she's not studying and she's not, ja. It's tough.

11.22 Interviewer: Have you been in this school since you started high school?

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11.23 Participant: Uhhh, no. I've had lot of changes. I finished my grade seven at another school and then for my grade 8, I went to X and another school for two terms, that's when my dad, like kind of passed away, so my mom took me to X for four more terms the same year. And then, obviously getting to a new place, I hardly knew anyone and people had the mentality that like if you are Swazi you're just not going to make it, forget it. So already, first day, I was degraded and I didn't know what to do with myself and I didn't know who to ask for help. So I didn't make the year and I came back here, to X and X, she's like kind of very Catholic, so she knew a few people that could help. So I went to boarding school for all-girls, Catholic, for three years, and it wasn't nice there at all, because they wouldn't look after you like their own child. They, if you got sick or anything, they didn't really care, so I changed this year for grade 11.

11.24 Interviewer: Oh okay. So, did you pick the school that you go to?

11.25 Participant: No, no I didn't. I liked it, but it was obviously an opinion. More or less I didn't have a choice, even though I did like it, I didn't have another choice.

11.26 Interviewer: Okay, because the school that you went to before was a Catholic boarding school, now it sounds like this school is also a Catholic school, just you're not a boarder?

11.27 Participant: Yes.

11.28 Interviewer: Okay.

11.29 Participant: But it is better, because if I like feel sick, I'm at home. I can have a decent bath or shower with hot water and stuff and those are the things you didn't get that side. And that side, it was like a competition sort of thing, because if you didn't run for a shower, you wouldn't get a shower. So being at home, is like very relieving.

11.30 Interviewer: Okay. So what subjects are you doing at school?

11.31 Participant: I do, uhhh, there are four choice subjects. Mine are food and nutrition, fashion and fabrics, bio, there's maths, there's siSwati, there's RE, religious education, there's English. Yeah I do a total of six or seven subjects.

11.32 Interviewer: Oh okay. And apart from school, what do you do in your spare time?

11.33 Participant: In my spare time, I love to paint. Anything with painting, drawing, uhhh, I used to make jewellery in primary. I love to do anything artistic in my spare time.

11.34 Interviewer: Given that you go to a sort of religious school, do you receive religious education at the school? Do they teach you about Catholicism? And are there certain things you need to participate in?

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11.35 Participant: The only thing that we do participate in, is the like, morning prayers at assembly. Like part of the Catholic prayers, like Hail Mary and Our Father. And there's the Catholic calendar, where they have like feast days for the Saints and stuff. Like my schools' Saint Theresa, like that's our Saint. So, we celebrate that when we go to church. But other than that, there's nothing else.

11.36 Interviewer: Okay. And how do you feel about that side of things? The Catholic side of things?

11.37 Participant: Uhhh, okay, I must say, personally my mom doesn't like the Catholic religion and their way of thinking or whatever. But, I find myself confused at times because I do see similarities. I don't want to judge them too fast and I don't want to accept it too fast, but I don't really have a decision, even if I wanted to be Catholic, I'm limited and just told 'Go straight, focus, you're just a Christian, don't go on to the other side'. And I often think that 'What if I am on the wrong side? What if the Catholic side is the better side?' I mean there are things that I don't understand that they might do.

11.38 Interviewer: Okay. So you say you've got people telling you to keep on a certain path, who are those people?

11.39 Participant: My mom, my gran, my one brother. Yes, they just believe the Catholic side, like its bad and ja. Like I would not even think twice, I wouldn't even go unless like my mom asked me to go to church with her and I wouldn't want my mom to know that I went to church, because it is like I'm going against her. In a way I'm disobedient to her, because I went to a Catholic church and I feel like it's unfair because at this age, I think it would be wrong to actually not let me choose a certain religion. Like, there has to be some things, I have to at least be allowed to say, you know, and have my opinion in it. Because it is my life and I'm going to be in this religion for life I guess and there are things that you have to do. Like there is a baptism and stuff like that, and I don't want to make big commitments like that before I'm sure.

11.40 Interviewer: So what is it that you believe in?

11.41 Participant: Slowly, slowly I've started to like the Catholic religion. Like, there are certain things that I don't understand, like for an example, Mary, it's Jesus' mother and they have to pay respect to her, but then I feel like, if you look at their prayers for Mary, there are only two prayers for Jesus and I feel like they put all the attention on her somehow. That's the only thing that makes me not want to be Catholic. Otherwise, there are a lot of similarities with the way they do things.

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11.42 Interviewer: And apart from the school's side of things, is there a church that you go to?

11.43 Participant: There is, it's called The X Church. It did start here at home and then it went out, like got bigger. But I only go there when my mom insists and my other brother comes and picks me up. I do enjoy it there, but I feel like people have more of a judgemental kind of thing going. Instead of like, prayer and worship, like if a car drives, and then everyone's like poor, and they want to see whose coming and what car they're coming in, what are they wearing head-to-toe, and that loses the whole thing. So, besides that, I like the church, but that makes me second guess, like if I really even want to be there.

11.44 Interviewer: Okay. So if you could kind of go wherever you wanted to go, irrespective of where your family goes, and extended family, where would you go do you think?

11.45 Participant: To what, like a church?

11.46 Interviewer: Hmmmm.

11.47 Participant: If I had a choice, I don't think I would go anywhere. One, because these days there's a lot of people who do it for money. And the way they are so convincing, I feel like it would be difficult to tell whether they're lying or not lying. So if it was up to me, I'd just stay at home and grow spiritually by myself, with prayer and believing in that, like, because there are so many ways it can divert you. Like they change things. Like now for example, the cross upside down means something bad and you don't know whether to believe that or not to believe that, so I think the safest way is to just be you and your Bible, and what you believe.

11.48 Interviewer: Okay. And what you mentioned is that you would just stay home and grow spiritually? And tell me about that, how would you do that and go about that?

11.49 Participant: Okay, there would be a few things I would use, like worshipping God for example, there is Christian music, like decent Christian music, not hard rock. Because you know now there's even that. I would use that, I would read my verses and if I don't understand, I would pray about it, because I feel like I would be getting an answer from God Himself. You know, instead of getting it from a person you're not sure of.

11.50 Interviewer: Hmm, okay. It sounds like the faith that you identify with strongly is that of Christianity? Have you ever been exposed to any other religions?

11.51 Participant: I have, I have four friends, there are two of them that are Muslim and there is one that is Hindu. And I have heard of like, they tell me about their festivals and stuff like that. And I have thought like this actually makes sense. But then again, because of confusion, you know they say its best that you grow your faith and don't look down on your

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own faith, because if you ask them about their faith, they are very confident in it. So I just hear what they have to say and then, you know, consider what they have to say, but then just focus on mine.

11.52 Interviewer: Okay, so you've never considered changing religions or anything?

11.53 Participant: I have thought about it. Like how it's so disciplined. How much time they dedicate to their religion and the respect that they give to it and the way they do it, you like won't it in the church I go to, like judging each other about the way they dress and stuff like that. Because, you know, they have maybe a mass, there are no men, there are no women, you all do the same thing and you all wear certain dress things, so you can't really judge anyone there. Those are the things I like about those religions.

Interviewer: And you've thought about possibly changing to other religions? Do you think you would actually do it?

11.54 Participant: Wow, I really, really don't know. I think I've been filled too much with the bad side of it. It would take time for me to look at it and think 'Do I really want to do this?' Because I would have to face so many people and would have to give so many answers to my mom and my brothers and stuff like that. Because my mom has bad stuff to say about that, so she would not even expect me to even think about it, let alone convert.

11.55 Interviewer: So your family has quite a big influence in terms of what you believe in?

11.56 Participant: Yes. More or less everything.

11.57 Interviewer: What about your friends? Do you and your friends ever have discussions about these types of things?

11.58 Participant: We do, we do have discussions, like my friend who is Muslim, she was thinking about converting to Christianity. Yes, but she said she wouldn't be able to because of her family. So we discuss like, what our families think about, some of the choices we make and we do like, share the choices that they won't give us. In a way, how unfair it is and how we just feel caged up. Like I mean, this is religion, it's nothing bad and you should at least have a chance to explain ourselves about why you want to be in that religion.

11.59 Interviewer: Hmm, okay. So do you think that there is a difference between something like religion and spirituality?

11.60 Participant: Uhhh, no not really. I think of them as linked, because there's different parts of religion that have the spiritual part in them. Like what I understand about the spiritual part, is your interaction with God, how you praise Him and stuff like that and then there's also the more religious part of like the commandments you follow or the way you live your life. I think they're related.

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11.61 Interviewer: So would you say that you are both spiritual and religious or is one a little bit more than the other?

11.62 Participant: I would say both, I can't really choose. Because I can't praise God spiritually and ask Him for help and all of that, and then I don't live the way I'm supposed to live, like according to His commandments, because that would be like okay, 'I go to church on a Sunday, I'm a Christian'. Just the fact that I go to a religious building, I'm a Christian. That's how I feel it would look.

11.63 Interviewer: Okay, you were talking about the commandments, and in the way that you live, and do you feel that your belief system has a big role to play there? So if you think about decisions that you are making, like on a daily basis, are those decisions informed by what you believe in? Or do you just make decisions in a different kind of way?

11.64 Participant: I personally just make rash decisions, but I do believe that if you're living a certain religious way, you have to consider that when you make choices, and I feel like it guides you in the right direction in a way. Because even when you're unsure, you can always go back to your religion and you can think 'Oh, what does it say about smoking and drinking, and even marriage in that it says marriage will come at a certain time'. So it's like getting advice from a good friend, helping with the decisions. And if you can't confront your parents or whatever, it is just like a book at your fingertips to help you.

11.65 Interviewer: Okay. So what do you think if we kind of talk about life and earth and why we are all here, what are your ideas about all of that?

11.66 Participant: I think we all have a purpose. We just have to find it. But there are days where you feel like 'Ag, what is the point of living?', you know, for like my life as an example, it was from boarding school and when my father passed away, I didn't want to be around, I didn't want to be alive and I still feel that way because not feeling like you fit in and not having room to express yourself, you feel like 'What's the point of being here?', you know, if I just wasn't here, it wouldn't make a difference anyway. Ja, but I do feel like we all have a purpose, but it's hard to figure it out and give room to it, in a way.

11.67 Interviewer: Okay. So although it's hard to figure out, do you have some idea about what your purpose will be maybe?

11.68 Participant: I do in a way. Like some of the things I've experienced from teenage years or from thirteen to eighteen, I feel like I've hurt a lot from those things and I wouldn't want another person to hurt from those things, so I feel like my purpose is to like give a warning, before it happens to you, to tell you about it in a way that you will understand and

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not feel judged, because I always think back and if someone did that for me, I would be so grateful and could avoid being hurt and depressed and suicidal. I'd avoid all those things.

11.69 Interviewer: Sounds like you've been through some really difficult times.

11.70 Participant: Ja.

11.71 Interviewer: So why do you think that you needed to go through that stuff?

11.72 Participant: Uhhh, I don't know. I find it very unfair, because like if someone says 'It's going to get better', but I feel like it just gets worse and I feel like being such a good child always, like why should it happen to me? Why shouldn't it happen to someone who misbehaves and drinks, whatever, they pass really well, they get everything they want, but I'm good, but nothing happens and I have thought about rebelling. Like what if I misbehave too, maybe if I make noise in class, I'll do really well. Maybe if I, like my family, I don't think they trust me in general, and sometimes they ask me questions and I'm like 'Really? Can you really ask me that?', it just means you don't trust me. So if I'm behaving and you're going to treat me like a misbehaving kid, maybe if I do it the other way around, I'll have a different reaction.

11.73 Interviewer: Hmm, and have you tried it out?

11.74 Participant: Uhhh, I have. But like I'm saying, like even relieving my stress, by drinking, no one's ever picked it up. And that even hurt more, because you assume that I do bad things, but I don't do bad things and even when I do them, you don't even notice. Like for my mom as an example, she doesn't know and it's been going on from like the beginning of this year. And I think to myself 'You are supposed to know me the most, but you hardly know anything'. Ja, so that makes me want to hide it even more.

11.75 Interviewer: Okay, so do you find that when you are going through difficult times, like those that you have gone through, that you've moved closer to God or move further away from God?

11.76 Participant: I feel like I move further away, because I feel like 'where is He?' Like, things can't be bad from square one all the way to the end, there has to be a good part somewhere. And I feel like there's just nothing, there's no sign, you can pray and say 'Don't worry, He's working on it', but like how long do you need to work on this plan for it to get better? Like is it going to be bad throughout? So you feel like it's a parent that has neglected you completely and you think like 'How bad does it need to get for Him to actually do something?' You know, and at this age, when somethings bad, it's like you've got flu, you need medication now, you need help now and if you don't get that then you do go and you

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smoke, coz you know something is going to kick in now. You're not going to be sober in a few minutes.

11.77 Interviewer: So it's almost like if things get a little bit tough, you're not too sure as to why God is not just stepping in?

11.78 Participant: Yes, exactly.

11.79 Interviewer: And what about when things are going well?

11.80 Participant: When things are going well, it's kind of hard to think about when things are going well, because in my life, when things go well it's just for like five seconds and then it just disappears. And you just feel like you're in square one again. So when things do go well, I do say 'Thank you God that things are going well', and then, I don't dwell on it too much because, I know, I automatically know, it's just going to go as soon as it came. So I thank God for the two seconds, and then it's gone. Like, don't appreciate it too much because it's going to hurt even more when it goes.

11.81 Interviewer: Okay, so if I understood you correctly, just now you were saying that, you would really like for it to be your purpose to help other people who may encounter similar kinds of difficulties to what you have had, and always be that voice for them that would allow them to go through a different path to what you did?

11.82 Participant: Ja, a safer path.

11.83 Interviewer: Okay. And if you think about who you are, and the experiences that you've had and just where you are at now, if you were to think about Christianity, does it feel like that fits within you and within the path that you've had so far?

11.84 Participant: I sometimes think that it's God's plan that it had to happen, the bad things had to happen so I could help other people. But then again, I do feel like it's unfair, like, I didn't have the happy teenage childhood kind of thing. And I do feel like I luck out sometimes, even like, it makes me feel like I don't fit in anymore because other people are talking about what they did and whatever and I missed out on that and I feel like that's just not fair.

11.85 Interviewer: And what is it that isn't fair? Is it life that is not fair? Is it God that isn't fair? Or what is it?

11.86 Participant: I don't know, it's just the way things go isn't fair, like, the person you are, you deserve better than what you're getting or what you have, and you don't understand why everything has to go wrong for you and right for the wrong person.

11.87 Interviewer: Okay. So you said at school, you have morning prayers and it sounds like everyone at school is expected to participate in that? And if you think about yourself, are

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there other times that you pray, holidays that you celebrate? You spoke about being at home with your Bible, so do you read the Bible?

11.88 Participant: These past few weeks, I've felt really sad and down and stuff and angry at God, so no, I haven't been reading it at all. When I try and read it, I just feel more frustrated, and yes, I just feel really frustrated. And I end up closing it and trying to forget about it because I feel like it's just not going to help, I'm just going to get my hopes up, reading a verse that says 'Everything is going to be okay, I'm going to protect you', and then when something bad happens, I just don't think things are going to get better.

11.89 Interviewer: So you don't really find any hope in the verses or anything at this point?

11.90 Participant: I honestly don't. I've come to a point where if it happens, it happens. Like the only thing I have been doing, coz I feel like I have no one else to ask, like in a desperate kind of situation, so like now I'm writing my exams, so I pray before my exam and that is as far as I get with praying these days.

11.91 Interviewer: And tell me a little bit about that, why is it that you pray before your exams?

11.92 Participant: Because I feel more nervous, especially because I know I'm not academic. My family says 'Don't tell yourself that, it's just in your head'. But I can see it myself, because I believe we all have different abilities in life, you can't force a person to be smart. We all can't get A's. So it scares me a lot because I know that like, even if it is just a small push, I need that extra bit of support. I try and find anything that would make me pass just a little bit more.

11.93 Interviewer: And it's always like praying before the exam does that, gives you that little bit of extra support?

11.94 Participant: Yes, like why shouldn't I fail, I mean why shouldn't I pass, because I did say a prayer, I did try and study that extra mile.

11.95 Interviewer: But then it sounds like you think that if you ask God, that He will help you?

11.96 Participant: I don't necessarily ask Him knowing that He's going to help me, I just do it to reassure myself that I prayed about it and that I tried my best and that's it, if He helps me, He helps me, and if He doesn't, I just guess that is the way it was meant to be, and I do like doubt Him at times, like if I feel He hasn't been around all this time, that prayer is just like, 'Help me through this exam and then you can disappear again'.

11.97 Interviewer: And is that what it feels like? Like God just disappears then?

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11.98 Participant: Yes it does feel like He disappears then. Obviously things feel like they're getting worse. You obviously feel like He's not even listening to my prayers, so you even like 'Why say them anyway?' So that works with not opening the Bible, not even praying before you sleep because it gets hard, you feel like heavy inside. He's not helping me and He keeps disappearing, so I might as well, you know, just give up and pray when I'm like super desperate like for the exams and maybe He feels concern like 'Shame, it is her exams so just push her'.

11.99 Interviewer: And your friends, do you think they think similarly in that they also feel like God disappears sometimes? Or do you feel that it is an experience that is quite unique to you?

11.100 Participant: I feel that my friends do feel like that. Like my one friend, who is a Muslim, she doesn't pass really well and she wants a different career path and her parents don't want that for her, and in their religion they fast a lot for God to help them and stuff like that, so she really doesn't understand why there is no help coming and like now during exam times, she's fasting again but she doesn't see any outcome. I think that's why she considers like, looking at my religion because if she thinks of Christianity, about my God, that maybe he will help her.

11.101 Interviewer: So it is kind of like you are not really getting the answers? Or you are not really getting the help you are looking for, so then you start to consider something else?

11.102 Participant: Yes.

11.103 Interviewer: At school, do people just expect of you to be Catholic, because you're attending a Catholic school? Or is everybody quite open-minded there?

Participant: There are a few that are open-minded but then the most assume basically, like, you must be Catholic or something. My sister-in-law's mom, she is really Catholic, and for me to get into the school, she said that I am Catholic, so I felt even more like this heavy block on my shoulder, does that mean now I have to act Catholic and play out a role so that I blend in? But when I saw that my Muslim friends and them weren't doing it, I felt relieved. But people don't express their religions a lot, so basically you just assume that everyone is Catholic.

11.104 Interviewer: Because it's a Catholic school?

11.105 Participant: Yes.

11.106 Interviewer: Okay. And when you said that people don't really express their religions a lot, do you mean that, like for example, one of your Muslim friends, they just don't really speak about it?

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11.107 Participant: Yes, because we're in an all Catholic school. Obviously our other religions would just feel like 'Okay, when we get to school, just put them in a bag and lock them up because there is no way you can even try'. You're in a Catholic school so you're expected to follow their rules and prayers, and even when you don't want to say it, like the Hail Mary prayer, I don't really like it because, like I said, I feel like they focus more on her. But then obviously if you don't say it, you will get into trouble when a teacher sees you not saying it.

11.108 Interviewer: So at school it is almost as if you just have to hide a piece of yourself because of it being a Catholic school? What about when you are not at school?

11.109 Participant: When you're not at school, like then, like I said, there are days when I was asked to go to the Catholic school, I mean to the Catholic church, and I did consider it but obviously I won't go because of my mom and her opinion. So it is like, get to school, you're Catholic, get home, you're a Christian. That is basically the end of the story, that's how it is, don't think twice. That's how I feel about it.

11.110 Interviewer: Okay. You mentioned that you really enjoy the arts, so whether it's painting or music. Do you find that through that you are able to express your spirituality? Or is that something quite different for you?

11.111 Participant: I think it's quite different. I think it's just a way of expressing myself, not necessarily spiritually, just expressing myself when I'm angry or sad or happy. And I feel like with art, no one can tell me what my life is about and to go right, go left. I just can mess the whole page, put any colour.

11.112 Interviewer: Okay, so that's your outlet?

11.113 Participant: Yes!

11.114 Interviewer: Anything else about yourself that you want to tell me?

11.115 Participant: Wow, I feel like my life is more complicated. There's like this academic side of me that falls for like the hardest classes and every year, I joke and then my family is like 'No, you need to push harder'. And if I had an opportunity to like express myself to them 'I honestly am not this person that you want me to be, like behind a desk and working'. I feel, like a job that you do is supposed to be happy and if you're happy about it, you'll do better within it. And it is frustrating that they won't even consider, and if my report comes back it's bad, I do get a lashing, like 'Look how bad it is?', and I'm just like 'Yes I know it is bad, I'll study harder'. But in myself I know, this is not going to get any better and I can see what I'm good at and what I'm not good at and yes, that is how I feel and I feel like this that I'm doing to help other people, like teenagers, it is a page I created on Facebook. I feel like, because I'm

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good with public speaking, I've done quite well to debate at competitions and stuff, I feel like that is kind of my purpose and that helps me focus on my purpose, my spiritual life because of like the commandments, obey your mother and father, I can give advice but not as a lecture but as an understanding teenager kind of things. So it helps me in a way that I'm helping these people, because maybe even if I fail, we'll see what happens then. But if I try this, maybe I can prove to my family that, no this is what I'm good at. But obviously they want me to go through that choice first, before I can do something else.

11.116 Interviewer: Would you be able to tell me a little bit more about your Facebook page?

11.117 Participant: Oh yes! I had, I actually wanted to write a book at first, called Strength, like topics about trying to fit in, because I've felt like I've never fitted in. My mom and dad past away actually, I am adopted, they died in a car accident and then the truth started coming out that they actually past away because they were sick and they used to drink a lot, and me and my brother, we thought we stayed with grandparents, but it was actually an aunt and uncle. They kept me and my brother apart, like they took me to different families, I went to coloured families, white families, siSwati families, just all different families and in some places, like I didn't fit in at all. I went to a white family and their son, like he didn't want me to go on the jungle gym because we weren't the same complexion, so all my life I had been trying to fit in and an incident really hurt me when the family I was with, the father told the mother that she must either choose us or go with her, like you leave completely. And she didn't choose me obviously, she chose her son and her husband. So she went to a doorstep of a nurse, which is my mom currently, and was like 'Please take her or I'm going to take her to an orphanage'. She took me in and stuff like that, and obviously if I don't see baby pictures and stuff like that, I still have that feeling that I don't fit in and I do feel at times, like me and my mom don't get along. I feel like we will never get along because she doesn't understand me, because we don't have the same blood, I'm not her biological daughter, so how would she understand me and I feel like there are other people who face like the same problems, whether it was with family or with relationships. Maybe that's why I even try dating other people and to fill that void, I feel like it's a void. So I feel like 'Why hide all of these things from other teenagers?' Maybe there is someone going through the exact same thing and this page could help them, because it talks about issues like that. The first topic I have so far, is on your appearance because teenagers these days think, like okay if you wear these shoes you are cool and because you don't wear these shoes you don't fit in. From dress standards, to the way you talk, to the way you wear your hair. Some say, when your hair is straight, you fit in

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and like curly of African hair, then no, they say I don't think you're supposed to be here. So I felt like I want to help, and by helping maybe heal myself in a way, knowing that in a way I went through the same thing and I'm going to help you and knowing your life is going to take a different route, I'll take pleasure in knowing you're happy and you don't have to go through the same things.

11.118 Interviewer: So you said the first topic is sort of just around the topic of appearance? And how are you going to decide on the other topics?

11.119 Participant: Slowly, carefully, I guess. But like most topics are related to teenagers, like drinking and stuff and who not to get it from than from a person who has been doing that and who was hoping to get it from other people my age. Like input so that maybe they've got something else to say, different from my opinion.

11.120 Interviewer: Do you think anything like spirituality or religion could ever be a topic?

11.121 Participant: I think it would be, like what your parents want for you in terms of careers and what you want for yourself. But I would also like consider, not offending anyone, especially parents. Just now I say 'Don't listen to your parents', but I don't want to go there. So maybe take it from a better side and say talk to your mom and talk to your dad. But that would also be hard, because I would have to be leaning that way, like with the substance abuse, I'd have to stop drinking, because imagine I'm writing this page and then someone sees me a few years later drinking a lot.

11.122 Interviewer: So you feel you would have to lead by example?

11.123 Participant: Yes, which would mean like, that would be part of the healing process, even though I haven't gotten there. But I feel like eventually it will help. So even if I feel like my spirituality and my Bible is not helping, I do feel like with this page I do feel ease in helping someone else.

11.124 Interviewer: Do you have any role models? Like people you look up to or people who are like in your everyday life or maybe they are just there and you just know about them?

11.125 Participant: I can't think of any, but my dad, the one who was married to my mom now. I looked up to him, because he didn't focus everything on perfection, he understood like for example my schoolwork. He helped me where he could, but he also understood more of my creative side. He wasn't very judgemental. I looked up to that as well because my mom was like, she doesn't really like siSwati people, not me but like if I wanted to date a siSwati person she would like have her mind set on one thing. Like marriage, there's modernised siSwati who believe in the wedding ring and that stuff but she has a whole mentality of the

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siSwati tradition, if you go and get married with the cows and everything. She doesn't embrace that part, and I looked up to him because he had humility, not judging anyone and trying to understand them.

11.126 Interviewer: So he would probably be the one role model that you have?

11.127 Participant: Yes.

11.128 Interviewer: And have you considered people in the media, like on social media? Would you have any role models there?

11.129 Participant: Uhmm, no I wouldn't say so, even though I do feel like there are a few and you know how they usually say that role models should be someone who does good things and stuff like that, and I am not perfect so I would take a role model who is not perfect, rather than someone who paints a picture that they are perfect.

11.130 Interviewer: Okay. Anything else you want to tell me about?

11.131 Participant: Let me think. Okay, as a teenager too, I feel like we hide a lot of secrets. Like if we have to tell you some of our secrets, like the families we have, you wouldn't want to try and understand, you would have that "how could you do that" or whatever, so we also, besides not fitting in or having the right friends, we also have secrets. So it would not only be, like kids don't only drink because they have school problems or boy problems but also because they have too much to hold on their own and the only people you can tell are your friends who can only give you a little bit of advice. So that is like a major thing that happened. And it does affect you a lot, because you don't want to keep it inside but you just can't let it out because you're very scared of the reaction you might get.

11.132 Interviewer: So it sounds like you expect a negative reaction?

11.133 Participant: Automatically. And I would think that the parents who have negative reactions, are either ones that don't care like 'Hey mom, I've started drinking, okay, that's fine'. But then even if I do care I feel like they don't try and understand it anyway, they are just going to go to a lecture and say don't do that but what they don't understand, like at my age, like how I take it, if you just lecture me and not try to understand me, I'm just going to rebel more because I feel like you're not even trying to relate to me. You were there once and you're not even trying to understand, you're just lecturing me.

11.134 Interviewer: And do feel like there is someone or something out there that just doesn't judge you and just accepts you for exactly who you are and how you are?

11.135 Participant: No, honestly no, because I feel like everyone judges you, even your friends and they say they don't, they still do, your family has that part, people who are around you, maybe even teachers, I feel like you always have to have a face to show, like hide your

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emotions and whatever, because the minute you change, even if you think there isn't someone watching, there is always someone that's watching you.

11.136 Interviewer: Hmm, and what about God?

11.137 Participant: I do feel like He is watching, obviously, 24/7. I haven't even thought about like, if He sees how you react and change, but I do feel like with people, you have to put a face on, like if I cry, my mom reacts really traumatised, like in a negative way, like 'Why are you crying?' and so, so you would rather not cry, you'd rather not smile, cause if you smile too much, then they ask 'Why are you smiling that much?' So that, it is too much for you, if you have it at home and you have it at school, the Catholic face, you don't smile, you don't cry, you just try and balance it out. So I feel like that is why teenagers go and smoke and stuff like that because it is like, if your religion doesn't help you, it seems like the only thing you can depend on, like not even your friends, they do eventually leave you and you're stabbed in the back. So you do feel like that is the only thing you have.

11.138 Interviewer: I think from my side that is all the questions I have, so I don't know if you have any questions you have to ask? Or do you have any thoughts that you have to share?

11.139 Participant: I can't think of any questions.

11.140 Interviewer: Okay.

11.141 Participant: Yes, I'm done.

11.142 Interviewer: Okay, I'm going to press stop here then.

Semi-structured interview: Rose (18 years old)

12.1 Interviewer: And then we will just talk as long as you feel you have something to say. So maybe you can tell me a little bit about yourself?

12.2 Participant: Uhmm, well I have grown up in X, I have lived here my whole life. My parents moved here while she was still pregnant with me, so yes, this is all I know, its home. And uhmm, yes, I have been in many, two schools. I don't know if pre-school counts, and I am in my second last year of school now, so yes.

12.3 Interviewer: Okay. And how old are you now?

12.4 Participant: Eighteen.

12.5 Interviewer: Have you been eighteen for a while or have you just turned eighteen?

12.6 Participant: In September.

12.7 Interviewer: September, okay so newly eighteen?

12.8 Participant: Yes.

12.9 Interviewer: And what is it like being eighteen?

12.10 Participant: Uhmm, it is, right now it is pretty frustrating because I am old enough to have a license but I haven't had time to get it. So I am like "Dad get in the car, we have to go somewhere", so yes it is a bit frustrating but other than that, I don't know, it is whatever.

12.11 Interviewer: Okay. But being eighteen means you are old enough to get a license, it also means that you are old enough to do things like drink and you know, vote and do things like that? What about that side of things?

12.12 Participant: Uhmm, well we were in Mozambique for my eighteenth birthday so I had a drink. But my family is not big on alcohol, especially in X with the culture and the position that my parents are in at church, like people look down on you if you drink and you are a pastor. So we do not drink really, like if we are in Mozambique or on holiday where we might have been usually. Uhmm, so alcohol is not really a big thing to me. And voting, well I do have a South African passport but yes, voting isn't really something as well.

12.13 Interviewer: Okay. Anything else changed when you turned eighteen?

12.14 Participant: I got a boyfriend.

12.15 Interviewer: Okay?

12.16 Participant: But I met him before I turned eighteen, so yes that was a big change.

12.17 Interviewer: Okay, were you not allowed to date before you turned eighteen?

12.18 Participant: Uhmm, actually I do not really believe in dating, so we are actually courting, so ja.

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12.19 Interviewer: Okay, so what does that mean? What is the difference between dating and courting?

12.20 Participant: Well, I think dating is more like just having fun with people, which is fine but I think that it is a bit selfish as well, because you just end up hurting people and you are just doing it to feel good about yourself. Whereas courting is, it involves dating, but it is much more serious than that and intentional, with the intention of getting married and getting to know each other and stuff.

12.21 Interviewer: Okay. And how did you meet?

12.22 Participant: Uhhh, he actually came, they came for a men's conference, his dad was one of the speakers and they stayed at our house.

12.23 Interviewer: Okay, so it was sort of love at first sight?

12.24 Participant: Yes, kind of.

12.25 Interviewer: Okay, is he also 18?

12.26 Participant: He is 21.

12.27 Interviewer: Okay, so a little bit older?

12.28 Participant: Yes.

12.29 Interviewer: Okay, so that is quite of a big change from before you were eighteen?.

12.30 Participant: Yes.

12.31 Interviewer: And uhhh, it sounds like your family is quite involved in church?

12.32 Participant: Yes, my mom was the kid's pastor, she is on a sabbatical now, so she is kind of taking a step back a little bit, uhhh, she will go back in but I don't think as much as before. Uhhh, and I am on the church worship band, I play guitar and sing. And I am on the youth band, and also help out in kid's church with, uhhh, uhhh, I help out with the kid's, uhhh, yes I am on their worship team as well. And my parents are elders so they also facilitate the 'Grand kid's Gods way' course and they have been doing that for a while, so ja.

12.33 Interviewer: So how much time would you say you spend at church?

12.34 Participant: Uhhh, a little bit less now than when my mom was more full-time, but quite a lot. Like Sunday mornings, we are usually there like between seven and eight and we will leave around eleven to twelve. Uhhh, Thursday nights are worship practice for Sunday, and so when I am on the worship team on Sunday, I am there. Uhhh, Friday nights are youth, so then I am there, sometimes like at five to like half past nine on a Friday.

12.35 Interviewer: So it is like every other Thursday, a Friday and then on Saturday?

12.36 Participant: Yes.

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12.37 Interviewer: Okay. And what is it like to have parents who are so involved in the church?

12.38 Participant: Uhhh, it is really a blessing because I know a lot of people who do not have that, they don't have that input from their parents, that spiritual input, so in that sense, it is really a blessing. But also, it is really pressurising because of how I think, sometimes I have more people watching me than an average pastors kid because I have, like my parents are into more roles than just pastors. So sometimes it is really almost stressful because I always have to be doing the right thing and have to be perfect. Even though I know, like that is not, like, I am not supposed to be perfect but I still feel like, I have that responsibility and I need to act in the right way all the time.

12.39 Interviewer: Uhhh, and how do you feel about that?

12.40 Participant: Uhhh, I think I have been fairly good at it, I think I am a pretty good actress but it is really tiring most of the time.

12.41 Interviewer: So it feels like there are always eyes on you?

12.42 Participant: Yes, and also being the oldest sibling is also hard, because then I do not have to, always have to be the perfect, for example to everybody watching me, to my sister and other family members.

12.43 Interviewer: Okay, so what happens when you mess up?

12.44 Participant: Well, I have a lot of people asking me what I have been doing. Like, when I was thirteen, I had a, almost like the Jewish bar mitzvah, but like a Christian version of it. I had a blessing ceremony, where my parents released me into womanhood. I made purity vows that I wouldn't date and stuff. And obviously I had a bunch of crushes after that and got too involved with a few of them, and even though we never like officially dated, but I got emotionally attached and, uhhh, ja, that was like when people started seeing that, and then everyone is like "Oh but I thought you said you don't date?" Even though in this relationship people are like "I thought you said you don't date?", I am like "we are not dating", so it is tough.

12.45 Interviewer: It sounds like you have to explain yourself kind of bit as well?

12.46 Participant: Yes.

12.47 Interviewer: Can you tell me more about that ceremony that you had?

12.48 Participant: Uhhh, basically it was like, it is so easy for people to, okay, like if someone asks you to marry, you know that because you had a wedding ceremony, but how do you know when you become an adult? Like being a teenager can be a really awkward phase because you are being expected to act in a way, being an adult, but you are being treated like

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a child. And so having a blessing ceremony, is like confirmation that you are becoming an adult now, and you need to start acting like one, and if you act like one, they will treat you like one. And you get given more responsibilities and more privileges so yes. So I did, I had quite a few people come over, it's like a whole day thing and I also got baptised on that day. And I made commitments to God and to my parents, and they made commitments to me, and then people prayed and got prophesies about me, and then yes, then I got baptised.

12.49 Interviewer: Okay. So is it something that you wanted or is it something that your parents initiated?

12.50 Participant: It was actually started by a family in X, well not started it, but they were kind of the first ones in X to start doing it. And then our pastors did it as well, and then we went to our pastor's son's blessing ceremony and then our parents were like "Oh we are doing this with you". And honestly, at first I was like "I am not doing this, to never date, that is crazy". So at first I wasn't too excited about it but as we started going into it, I realised how good it actually was and now I am so glad I did it.

12.51 Interviewer: So at the time it felt a little bit weird?

12.52 Participant: I was sceptical, yes.

12.53 Interviewer: Okay. When you say you are really glad that you did it now, what do you feel you sort of benefited from it?

12.54 Participant: Well just from watching my friends being in relationships and how, like even relationships we thought would last and then it didn't last, and everybody just gets heart-broken and hurt. So that is something big that like, I have gained from this. I haven't been in any serious relationships and so I have been able to see that happen. Uhhh, and also, I think that my relationship with my parents has gotten better from it because they are not treating me like a child and I do not feel confused about who I actually am. And I think it helped me, just in my identity, just to know who I am. Uhhh, I mean I will do a bunch of growing and yes, getting to know myself and knowing who I am in Christ, and ja basically.

12.55 Interviewer: So did you have any friends over when you had that ceremony?

12.56 Participant: During that time, I actually didn't have many friends. In primary school I tended to struggle a lot with friends. I did have one really good friend since childhood, she's nine months younger than me so she was a grade below me and, uhhh, she, they couldn't come that weekend so I didn't have any of my friends my age there. But a lot of people who have become friends with me now who were there, who are older than me, even some older than my parents, who have become friends. That is also something, that I feel I can relate to adults better.

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12.57 Interviewer: So you don't know anybody else, none of your friends for example had the same kind of ceremony that you did?

12.58 Participant: No not any of my close friends my age. Uhhh, my sister had one and some of her friends have had. Uhhh, and I am actually, I am quite close with my sister's friends as well, so I guess they could sort of count as my friends as well, uhhh ja, but yes, none of my close friends. My one friend did want to have a blessing ceremony but her parents weren't very encouraging about it which was actually sad.

12.59 Interviewer: Okay. Any other ceremonies coming up? Or anything else, like that you are working towards?

12.60 Participant: My wedding (laughs)! No, not specifically anything else.

12.61 Interviewer: Do you want to get married quite soon?

12.62 Participant: Yes. I always wanted to get married at eighteen but I realised I will still be at school till I was nineteen, so that wouldn't work out but ja.

12.63 Interviewer: Okay. And, and is there a reason for that? Is it that your mom got married quite young? Or is it just something that you always wanted to do?

12.64 Participant: Uhhh, my mom actually, she got married when she was 23, which is quite young for most people. But both my grandmas got married at 20, but I only found that recently. I think it is just never having been in a relationship and wanting to be in a relationship, but not just a relationship for the fun of it. But to actually be in a committed relationship, I think that was part of it. And I think the relationship that my parents have has been really like "Aghh, I want that" (laughs) and ja. Then I thought maybe I would wait until I was done studying, but now I have met someone so we will see what God does (laughs).

12.65 Interviewer: Okay, and he is also a Christian? So does he have the same sort of ideas as what you do? Or have you not spoken about it yet?

12.66 Participant: Yes, he is actually studying theology now. So he is going to be a pastor and he is also, he has never had a girlfriend, he is also committed to courting, not dating. Uhhh, and also, just the morals and values that he is grown up with are really, really similar to what I've grown up with. Even things like movies and music, he doesn't listen to secular music. I don't really listen to secular music either, anyway that is not something, that is not a big thing that people usually think about. So ja, we are very, like our backgrounds are very similar.

12.67 Interviewer: Okay. Your friends that you have now, are they also Christian?

12.68 Participant: Uhhh, most of them are. I have like four/five really close friends and they are all Christian and I have a few other friends who are not Christians.

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12.69 Interviewer: Okay. And your friends who are not Christians, do they have another religion which they follow?

12.70 Participant: Uhhh, most of them are just atheists.

12.71 Interviewer: Okay, so what is it like being friends with somebody who has such a different belief system to you?

12.72 Participant: Uhhh, some of them, like the friends who I haven't had for that long who are atheist, I find it a little bit easier because this school that I am in has taught me to, uhhh, accept people more for who they are, and not to try and force God down their throats. But I do have one friend who we became friends in pre-school and she, then we went to different primary schools and now we're in the same high school but she didn't, she is not a Christian and I find, like in the beginning of high school, it looked like it was getting better because it was just me and her and two other friends and they were both strong Christians in our church and everything, so we were starting to influence her and she was coming to church and to youth and everything, and then we got two more friends, three more friends who are not Christian, and that sort of balanced it out, and ja. And then it looked like it was getting a little bit better again. So it has been tough with her but yes, we are really close and I don't want her to like not have Christ. So it has been difficult with her a lot.

12.73 Interviewer: What do you think about other religions?

12.74 Participant: Uhhh, I don't think I have ever been asked that (laughs)! Uhhh, I think obviously everyone is free to believe what they want to believe and if God doesn't, God will convert those somehow, and if they don't listen, then that will be unfortunate and that is an understatement. I have compassion for them and I feel sorry for them, because like, I want them to have this and I want them to have a relationship with God. And most of the time, it just seems like it is never going to happen. Especially in the school that we are in, where it is so diverse, and Christians are actually persecuted. So it is tough but ja, I don't know, I can't help but feel sorry for them.

12.75 Interviewer: What do you mean when you say Christians are persecuted? What have you noticed or what have you seen?

12.76 Participant: Uhhh, my physics teacher is a Muslim and he hates me (laughs)! Like, if I ask him a question in class because I don't understand the work, he will first make me seem like an idiot, like I have no idea what is going on and anything. Uhhh, so the teachers are actually really mean to Christians. In grade 9 I think, I had a geography teacher and I felt God say to put a bible verse in my book before I handed it in. So I put "Jesus is the way, the truth and the light", and when he gave me my book back, he was like "What was up with that

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scripture or the note?”, and I was like “What note?”, I had forgotten about it and I went looking through it, and he is like “Oh good, you got rid of it”, and it I was like “No, it’s here” (laughs). And he kind of ridiculed me after that. So between the students and the teachers, it is quite bad. Uhhh, between students and students it varies, some students are more like, accepting than others but the majority of the students think we are crazy so, which we are.

12.77 Interviewer: So your teachers, are they predominately Muslim?

12.78 Participant: No, they, I just know of the one who is Muslim. I think most of them are just atheist, my geography teacher, I think he is an atheist.

12.79 Interviewer: Okay. And you said that between students, would you say that the majority of the students in school are also atheist or?

12.80 Participant: Uhhh, ja, probably. A lot of the atheists have become kind of Buddhist in a way, because it is like, a cool thing to be some sort of new-age Buddhist or whatever. So ja, there are a lot of Muslim students as well, there are a lot of Catholic students, and then there are a lot of Christian students who do not act like Christians (laughs).

12.81 Interviewer: What does that mean?

12.82 Participant: Uhhh, they go to church, and on a Sunday in church they act like Christians, but when they get to school and swear and sleep around and stuff like that.

12.83 Interviewer: Okay. So at school, if people where to ask about you, would they know that you are Christian?

12.84 Participant: Yes. I am quite outspoken, ja people know. My friend and I started a bible study at our school, and ja, so a lot of people know and are part of that.

12.85 Interviewer: How is that, how did you go about starting that?

12.86 Participant: We went and spoke to the deputy principal, he said yes it is fine, so we did it. And at first, there was like no one that came, we were practically the only like, Jesus freaks in the school. And then slowly, people started coming and it was really huge at one stage. We had one girl come in who was like into Buddhism I think, but she really just came to like start debates and eventually she gave up and stopped coming. And then ja, there were also some guys from my grade who started coming, but that was just like to laugh at us. So eventually my friend asked them to either behave themselves or leave so they left, uhhh, because it was just distracting for other people. And now it is sort of, it feels like it is dying down because my friend is leaving at the end of the year, so she is trying to get people and I am too busy to take it over next year. So she is trying to get people in the younger grade to take leadership positions and keep it up, and I think there are three or four people who are

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trying to keep it going, but so many people come these days, so it is kind of dying down which is sad.

12.87 Interviewer: Okay. You mentioned those two boys that were coming in, just to sort of have a good laugh? What happened there and what was that like for you?

12.88 Participant: Uhhh, it was, they were, I was relatively good friends with them and I was trying to get them to go to church and stuff, but uhhh ja, that didn't work out. So then they said they would come to bible study, and they would come and just start laughing at random stages, and we would be like "What is going on?", it was really disruptive. And I wouldn't say that I felt ashamed, but I did feel like I was being looked down upon, or ja, it wasn't nice.

12.89 Interviewer: Being looked down upon by them?

12.90 Participant: Ja.

12.91 Interviewer: Okay. And then your friend intervened and then they decided to leave?

12.92 Participant: Yes.

12.93 Interviewer: Have you ever felt like that in any other situation?

12.94 Participant: Uhhh, no I don't think so. I went through a stage where I got into debates with atheists and people, other people all the time, to try and convince them about God, and one of my, she is kind of like a mentor or older sister person, the pastors daughter, she and I started speaking. And I don't know if it was her that told me to stop debating with them, or if God told me, I don't know. But I just decided that I was not going to win them over, so I stopped doing that. And I think it has made me more approachable, like people are more willing to come talk to me about God, about things that I believe in, than before, which is nice.

12.95 Interviewer: Okay. And do you find that people do, do they come and talk to you about things like that?

12.96 Participant: Yes. Like this one guy was asking about my ring that I got for my blessing ceremony, whereas before people did not talk to me at all. So now people are starting to open up to me more, which is nice.

12.97 Interviewer: Okay. Tell me about your ring?

12.98 Participant: Uhhh, it kind of just symbolises the commitments that I made and ja.

12.99 Interviewer: Okay?

12.100 Participant: It is like a purity ring.

12.101 Interviewer: So you have been wearing it for quite a while?

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12.102 Participant: I have, I didn't wear it during, right after I got it because I was in primary school and we were not allowed to wear jewellery or anything, but then when I got to high school I started wearing it.

12.103 Interviewer: And now? Every day you wear it?

12.104 Participant: Yes, I do not even know it is there anymore, it is just a part of me.

12.105 Interviewer: Part of you?

12.106 Participant: Ja.

12.107 Interviewer: Okay. So people see it and then they are curious and they ask you about it?

12.108 Participant: Yes.

12.109 Interviewer: And how do they respond when you tell them about it?

12.110 Participant: Uhhh, I think some people are honestly, like it's a very foreign concept, people don't know what a blessing ceremony is, like it sounds weird. Uhhh, and so, people take it differently. Some people who, especially Christians, well some Christians, some Christians think it is really good and some think that "Oh that is so cool, I want to do that, or I want to do that for my kids", or whatever. And then some people who are not Christians are very, they are the same either they go "Oh, that is very interesting" and want to know more or they think "Okay, that is weird".

12.111 Interviewer: Do your teachers ever ask about it?

12.112 Participant: I don't think so. I don't think they ever asked.

12.113 Interviewer: Okay. So how would you describe your relationship with God?

12.114 Participant: Uhhh, I have obviously had my ups and downs like, I mean everyone. But I think at the moment, it has been pretty good. I think at the time I had my blessing ceremony, it was pretty good and then when I got to high school, when I started high school it was amazing because I was just clinging to Him the whole time, because I had grown up being protected and when I got to high school, people were swearing everywhere and like doing crazy things, "Okay, this is the big one". Like for the first week, I came home and cried every day because I didn't know what was going on, and God just showed me pictures like that whole week. So during the beginning of high school my relationship with God was really good, and then it sort of, I wouldn't say died down, but it was just like good. And then ja, every now and then I just have to get back on. Ja, it has been good these past months, it has been really good.

12.115 Interviewer: Okay. What does a Christian, being a Christian mean to you?

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12.116 Participant: I think for a lot of people, it is just going to church and praying and stuff. But I think it is so much more than that. I think you need to have a relationship with God. And I don't think Christianity is religion, or you can make it a religion, but I don't think it should be a religion, I think it should be a relationship with God and about loving others and speaking life and love to them. And yes, not trying to, this is something I struggle with, not trying to come across as if you got it all together and trying to be perfect, especially in church. Like, saying the right thing, doing the right thing, like it is not like that. We are not perfect people, we are broken people, and that is why we come to God.

12.117 Interviewer: You were just saying just now that you don't feel like Christianity should be a religion although it can be made a religion? What do you mean by that? Can you tell me more about that?

12.118 Participant: I think a lot of people use God as an excuse, or like comforting. Like, a lot of people say that you just, like a religion is just used to comfort you and to know that you are going to heaven and whatever, and I think a lot of people make God that. Or whenever they have a problem, they're like "Oh God, help me" and I think then it becomes more of a religion. Like if you are doing things out of, out of like feeling like you need to do them out of obligation, then I think you are turning it into a religion. And if, even if you have a relationship with God, I think you can still have a religious spirit and still believe that. Like, that is something actually our pastors are going over in the past few sermons, talking about a religious spirit and how we all have a little pharacy who like condescendingly looks and says and goes "That is not right", even though it is the holy spirit or whatever. Ja, so I think if people try to, uhmm, make it all about going to church and reading the bible, but making it more about the works than the relationship, then it becomes more about the religion I think.

12.119 Interviewer: Okay. On a day-to-day level, how would you say that your relationship with God goes into play?

12.120 Participant: Uhmm, well if I don't spend time with Him in the mornings, then usually my day is not as good as it could be, and if I don't spend time with Him like right in the mornings before I go to school, if I don't find a moment in the day to spend with Him, I feel like really drained at the end of the day. So if I, like if I don't, also sometimes during the day, if I have a friend and I don't spend time with Him, read my bible and whatever, and especially after a like tough subject, a tough class or something, and that just fills my time, and obviously get through the rest of the day ja, and then ja.

12.121 Interviewer: Okay. So you have noticed a difference in days where you do that and in days that you don't? That you tend to feel better in days that you do that?

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12.122 Participant: Yes. And it is not even necessarily that my day goes better like good things happen, in fact they don't. But days when spend a lot of time with Him, they are usually bad days. But it just like usually that day, He will give me something specific and when that bad thing happens, if I had not spent time with him, it would have been terrible, but that thing would have probably not happened but it would have been terrible, and ja, He just helps me get through.

12.123 Interviewer: Okay so why do you think we are all here? Why are we all here on earth and what are we doing here?

12.124 Participant: I think we are here for God's pleasure, and not because some people messed up, we all messed up, so now we are just here to love God and to love others and to worship Him and to tell others about Him.

12.125 Interviewer: Okay. And your specific purpose?

12.126 Participant: I think, well I have for a while believed that God has called me to be an occupational therapist. And to either come back to X or work in a different rural area just to give O.T. to people who could not usually afford it or even know what it is to get to a place where there is O.T. and during that, minister to people. And now that my boyfriend is a pastor in training, so that works out well. So ja, that is what I think.

12.127 Interviewer: Okay. So you feel like your purpose, which is possibly to be an O.T., kind of fits in with your relationship with God and what you feel He is telling you?

12.128 Participant: Ja. And like, He has confirmed it so many times with pictures and stuff, that is usually how He speaks to me, with pictures and ja. I love kids, so I think He brought me to it because.

12.129 Interviewer: Okay. What other interests do have outside of school and outside of church?

12.130 Participant: Uhhh, I like outdoor stuff, so especially water sports. I like sailing and skiing and scoober diving. I like horse riding, I haven't been able to ride for a while because my Rhino got taken away. Uhhh, I like photography, uhhh ja, basically anything I can do outside, I enjoy.

12.131 Interviewer: Okay. And if you were to describe yourself to a group of people, so let's say you had to tell some people who you were and what you are all about, how would you, how would you do that?

12.132 Participant: Uhhh, well I am a really outgoing, crazy person and I think usually I scare people because I am a bit strange. And I love animals and I love people. And uhhh, I

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have a relationship with God and I live in X, usually people are like “Oh X” (laughs), and ja, that is what I think I would say.

12.133 Interviewer: Okay. Anything else you want to tell me? Just about your faith, and your beliefs, just about your thinking and your ideas at this point?

12.134 Participant: Uhhh, I can't think of anything specific.

12.135 Interviewer: Okay. Thank you!

12.136 Participant: You are welcome!

APPENDIX G

REFLECTIVE WRITING EXERCISES

Note:

The reflective writing exercises were re-typed by the researcher in order to be attached as an appendix. The participant responses were recorded verbatim.

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Reflective writing exercise: Jared (14 years old)

Introduction:

When we last saw each other, I explained that I would be in contact again in three months. Below is the exercise I was telling you about that I would like you to complete for me. But before you start, I just want to remind you of a few things. Please ask me as many questions as you would like to before you start the activity.

- This research project is being completed as part of my studies into child and adolescent psychology.
- Your participation in this project is voluntary and you can change your mind at any point if you decide that you no longer want to be involved.
- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

1.1 Biographical information:

Name: Jared

Current age: 14

Current grade: 10

1.2 Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

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1.2.1 Nothing has really changed since we last saw each other.

1.3 Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

1.3.1 I have many ideas in life but only a few of them make me whole.

1.4 How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

1.4.1 My ideas are influenced by great people doing great things.

1.5 Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

1.5.1 My ideas do fit into the way I see myself.

1.6 What does it mean to be you?

1.6.1 It means that I must stand up for my name and always be good.

1.7 What does it mean to be a teenager?

1.7.1 It means to me that I will be experimenting with different things but I should know my limits.

1.8 Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

1.8.1 I believe I am a Christian but I do have questions.

1.9 What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

1.9.1 It means I should always be Christian.

1.10 Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

1.10.1 They do

1.11 How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

1.11.1 They make me question.

1.12 Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

1.12.1 I do not really engage.

1.13 What do these mean to you?

1.13.1 It has a lot of different meaning.

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1.14 Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

1.14.1 I do sometimes pray but I rarely go to church.

1.16 What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

1.16.1 They make me think hard as to where is the proof.

1.17 What else would you like me to know about you?

1.17.1 There is nothing.

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Reflective writing exercise: Thato (15 years old)

Introduction:

When we last saw each other, I explained that I would be in contact again in three months. Below is the exercise I was telling you about that I would like you to complete for me. But before you start, I just want to remind you of a few things. Please ask me as many questions as you would like to before you start the activity.

- This research project is being completed as part of my studies into child and adolescent psychology.
- Your participation in this project is voluntary and you can change your mind at any point if you decide that you no longer want to be involved.
- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

2.1 Biographical information:

Name: Thato

Current age: 15

Current grade: 9

2.2 Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

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2.2.1 Yes I failed my Grad 9 then my mom changed to another school where I am doing Grade 9.

2.3 Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

2.3.1 I see life as an influence from other people. We doing what we are doing because so and so did that.

2.4 How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

2.4.1 No one influenced me but its just my observation.

2.5 Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

2.5.1 No I see myself as God created me. There was no influence in creating me but He just reatedvme because he knew me before I was formed in my mother's womb.

2.6 What does it mean to be you?

2.6.1 It means there is no one like me. I am unique in the way I think and in viewing life.

2.7 What does it mean to be a teenager?

2.7.1 Being a teenager means there is a lot of changes physically and mentally. With me I also see a lot of responsibilities like taking care of my mom and younger brother X. Decisions I make now will influence my adult life.

2.8 Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

2.8.1 I am created out of God s image and I believe in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

2.9 What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

2.9.1 It means I am a Christian.

2.10 Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

2.10.1 Yes they influence how I respond. More especial decision making.

2.11 How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

2.11.1 My belief influence my ideas because my ideas most of the time are sourounded through God.

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2.12 Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

2.12.1 Yes I do attend prayer meetings. We have tradition in my church like Shabbat meal.

2.13 What do these mean to you?

2.13.1 Gives me a sense of believing.

2.14 Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

2.14.1 I participate at church. I pray and read the bible and I am an usher at church and also participated in youth activities.

2.15 What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

2.15.1 I enjoy doing this it makes me connect with my Creator.

2.16 What else would you like me to know about you?

2.16.1 I have just appointed a class monitor in my new school and also in the rugby team at school. Having my first match with the school on the 5 March. I'm also left handed.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Reflective writing exercise: Tevin (16 years old)

Introduction:

When we last saw each other, I explained that I would be in contact again in three months. Below is the exercise I was telling you about that I would like you to complete for me. But before you start, I just want to remind you of a few things. Please ask me as many questions as you would like to before you start the activity.

- This research project is being completed as part of my studies into child and adolescent psychology.
- Your participation in this project is voluntary and you can change your mind at any point if you decide that you no longer want to be involved.
- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

3.1 Biographical information:

Name: Tevin

Current age: 16

Current grade: 10

3.2 Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

3.2.1 No response.

3.3 Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

3.3.1 Yes, being myself.

3.4 How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

3.4.1 No.

3.5 Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

3.5.1 Yes.

3.6 What does it mean to be you?

3.6.1 It means everything to me.

3.7 What does it mean to be a teenager?

3.7.1 It means everything because you learn a lot.

3.8 Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

3.8.1 Yes.

3.9 What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

3.9.1 Everything.

3.10 Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

3.10.1 Yes, the way I think.

3.11 How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

3.11.1 Positive.

3.12 Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

3.12.1 No.

3.13 What do these mean to you?

3.13.1 No response.

3.14 Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

3.14.1 Yes.

3.15 What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

3.15.1 I feel good.

3.16 What else would you like me to know about you?

3.16.1 I've changed a lot in a good way.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Reflective writing exercise: Shai (16 years old)

Introduction:

When we last saw each other, I explained that I would be in contact again in three months. Below is the exercise I was telling you about that I would like you to complete for me. But before you start, I just want to remind you of a few things. Please ask me as many questions as you would like to before you start the activity.

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- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

4.1 Biographical information:

Name: Shai

Current age: 16

Current grade: 11

4.2 Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

4.2.1 Nothing significant has changed except school has become much more pressurizing, and has therefore made me more stressed out and tense which reflects in my home environment.

4.3 Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

4.3.1 Life requires help, vision, friends and most importantly belief and faith in GOD. Religion provides a refined pathway to success and happiness. Religion saves peoples despairs and happiness and creates an opportunity of fixing.

4.4 How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

4.4.1 My school and homeland-Israel.

4.5 Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

4.5.1 In theory yes but in reality no. Perhaps one day they will but my answer should not suffice you currently, due to my answer being based purely on an adolescent reflecting his feelings on religion.

4.6 What does it mean to be you?

4.6.1 A person who goes through tough teenage occurrences but always prevails.

4.7 What does it mean to be a teenager?

4.7.1 Very tough and testing, many advantages as well, but on the whole probably positive.

4.8 Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

4.8.1 Strong Jewish identity and religious orthodox Jew.

4.9 What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

4.9.1 Ancestry, and provides a path of faith -that tomorrow will be a better day.

4.10 Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

4.10.1 I would be much more of a Western world party animal if not for my religion.

4.11 How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

4.11.1 I act more refined and am more restrained from things which also has negatives such as too much restraint cause rebelliousness.

4.12 Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

4.12.1 Traditions and rituals are pretty much apart of my belief.

4.13 What do these mean to you?

4.13.1 My religion.

4.14 Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

4.14.1 Yes shul, study and The Western Wall.

4.15 What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

4.15.1 Besides the constant routine they instil in me a model of a good and moral human being.

4.16 What else would you like me to know about you?

4.16.1 Note that teen's answer are very malleable and proportional to the age they going through as well as I believe generally one's home environment brainwashes a child into his ideas and beliefs.

Reflective writing exercise: Tylah (16 turned 17 year old)

Introduction:

When we last saw each other, I explained that I would be in contact again in three months. Below is the exercise I was telling you about that I would like you to complete for me. But before you start, I just want to remind you of a few things. Please ask me as many questions as you would like to before you start the activity.

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- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

5.1 Biographical information:

Name: Tylah

Current age: 17

Current grade: 12

5.2 Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

5.2.1 I just started with matric and been working hard but nothing has really changed.

5.3 Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

5.3.1 My ideas about life including being proactive, being in control of your own destiny, situating yourself in positive and uplifting environments and building a strong character. In order to be whole, it's essential you improve your spiritual, mental, and physical states.

5.4 How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

5.4.1 I tried forming my ideas based on the ideals of the Torah. Obviously then, my religion, rabbis, family, and primarily Torah books have influenced me.

5.6 Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

5.6.1 I like to think I live up to the ideals and beliefs of a Torah Jew. However, challenges are there and occasionally I can stray from the path I have chosen in terms of motivation, commitment and boundaries.

5.7 What does it mean to be you?

5.7.1 To be me means to try be an all-rounder in life, being smart and mindful in all my endeavours, and hopefully successful.

5.8 What does it mean to be a teenager?

5.8.1 To be a teenager means to find your identity, purpose, responsibility and experiencing the world in a healthy way.

5.9 Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

5.9.1 The spiritual part of me has to do with learning Torah, living Torah, personal development, loving and helping people and widening my world perception.

5.10 What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

5.10.1 It's the foundation of my life, as only G-d determines your wellbeing and is the source of life, so I try connect to that divine source.

5.11 Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

5.11.1 It influences all areas, my school life, social life, sports life, and my free time.

5.12 How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

5.12.1 My ideas teach me to be a free human being, truly free, who is not controlled by external factors and inner lusts and desires and weaknesses. My ideas teach me to control my thoughts and feelings, and being mindful of how that translates into my actions. I call the shots and not the other way round.

5.13 Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

5.13.1 I try follow Halachah, or Jewish law to the largest extent possible, including all rituals and beliefs. The rituals actualise the spiritual ideas behind them.

5.14 What do these mean to you?

5.14.1 Without the rituals, all my ideas would be just that – ideas. Rituals turn the ideas into reality.

5.15 Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

5.15.1 I do Jewish prayer three times a day, I try learn Jewish texts for an hour a day, I eat kosher food, I wear tassels and head coverings, I say blessings over my food.

5.16 What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

5.16.1 These religious activities are the fabric of my life. I would be confused, worried and directionless without them.

5.17 What else would you like me to know about you?

5.17.1 You should know that I'm trying to be a more sophisticated and wise individual.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Reflective writing exercise: Angela (15 turned 16 years old)

Introduction:

When we last saw each other, I explained that I would be in contact again in three months. Below is the exercise I was telling you about that I would like you to complete for me. But before you start, I just want to remind you of a few things. Please ask me as many questions as you would like to before you start the activity.

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- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

6.1 Biographical information:

Name: Angela

Current age: 16

Current grade: 10

6.2 Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

6.2.1 No.

6.3 Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

6.3.1 There are a vast variety of factors that contribute many important aspects toward my life like my school and home environment, family and friends, my spirituality and community but although these things contribute to the majority of my daily life I do not think these things alone are what make a human being whole because these things may not always be around to contribute to making me, me or you, you. I do think that these are the basis of the average human being including myself but I think it is more how you use them or how you let them influence you that really counts. I think we need to take advice and guidance from people like our friends, family, teachers and religious leaders but we also need to have a sense of self to be able to be a person without always being told how or why to act by someone else. We need to be independent people who can still rely on others for help but not be seen as weak or needy but rather intelligent and brave for being able to ask for help sometimes.

6.4 How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

6.4.1 All the aforementioned factors have influenced me in my choice of ideas.

6.5 Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

6.5.1 No because as I stated previously I think we need to have the right idea about who we are before we let other people or things influence us. I feel like I know who I should be and want to be but I don't think I am there yet and I think I still need to put a lot of effort into implementing these ideas into my daily life and making these idealistic ideas a reality. I feel like there is a lot of pressure put on young teenagers to know exactly who they are and who they want to be but rather I think that is one of the reasons that we are put on this earth. We are given the opportunity to find out exactly who we are over our entire lifetimes because that is how long it takes for us to realize who we want to be.

6.6 What does it mean to be you?

6.6.1 I think what it means to be you is that you follow your own ideas and beliefs with everything that you have to do in life and not stray from your own guidance.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

6.7 What does it mean to be a teenager?

6.7.1 I think being a teenager means that you are at the stage in your life where you start to realize more or less who you want to be and this is the time where you settle into your own beliefs and start trying to be the person you know you could be.

6.8 Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

6.8.1 My spirituality is closely linked to my religion. The one way that I know how to feel connected and to know what is right and wrong is when I look at my religion to help understand it. I have my own sense of these different things but they all stemmed from my religious beliefs and I don't know what I would believe if I didn't have my religion to show me. The reason I feel spiritual is because of my religious activities and beliefs.

6.9 What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

6.9.1 It is a very important part of who I am because I don't know where I would be without ever having that feeling of being spiritual and being connected.

6.10 Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

6.10.1 The Jewish religion encompasses and applies to all areas of life whether you are doing religious commandments or not. It gives ways to act around all types of people and all different scenarios and so it touches every area of life.

6.11 How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

6.11.1 My religion has been integrated into my life since I started having ideas about life or religion. My religion and lifestyle were there first and all my behavior and thoughts stem from that. Most of my behaviors and thoughts are based off of what I know from my religion because as much as it is a religion I also believe it is a guide to life on how to act and behave.

6.12 Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

6.12.1 I personally feel that question 12 and 14 are almost the same question for me because the Jewish religion is integrated very closely into our lives. We have religious activities everyday such as prayer or charity. We have religious activities every week like going to synagogue. There are religious activities every month like Rosh Chodesh which is celebrating the new month and there are religious activities throughout the year every year such as the festivals like Passover and The Jewish new year(Rosh Hashana) as well as all the fasts.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Therefore I find that religious activities and traditions are the same thing because as much as they are a commandment because I do them all the time they have become tradition and I really enjoy doing them even if they are commandments because I have been doing them since I was born and they have become like tradition for me.

6.13 What do these mean to you?

6.13.1 I love doing all the aforementioned things especially the festivals because they are almost like family traditions. Where one family might go to a restaurant every Monday night we have Passover or Sukkot. They have become as beloved to me as a regular family's traditions because they are my family's traditions and my religion's traditions. It is time to connect with your family and friends and G-d but there is also something spectacular about them that all my ancestors did the same things that I do and celebrate the same festivals that I do. They build a really strong feeling of community, unity and togetherness.

6.14 Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

6.14.1 See question 12

6.15 What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

6.15.1 See question 13

6.16 What else would you like me to know about you?

6.16.1 Before I was born my mother converted to Judaism. This affects me quite deeply because I feel as if I get to see both sides of the coin and didn't flip blindly. She was not religious before she converted but we still participate in certain Christian traditions for my grandmother like helping her put up her Christmas tree or going on an easter egg hunt with her. Even though I don't follow that religion I still do that for my grandmother and feel almost privileged that I get experience it with her.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Reflective writing exercise: Kaitlin (15 years old)

Introduction:

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- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

7.1 Biographical information:

Name: Kaitlin

Current age: 15

Current grade: 10

7.2 Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

7.2.1 Nothing has really changed since we last saw each other besides starting a new year in a new grade. This year I got to choose my subjects and now do 7 instead of 13.

7.3 Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

7.3.1 My ideas about life revolve around hard work. If you work hard towards what you really want, you will be happy. School is a really important part of life and has to be taken seriously if you want to be someone or something big one day, you have to do your best with your studies and ignore all the things that may discourage you or get you down.

7.4 How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

7.4.1 There are many people in my family who have given up huge opportunities to become very successful because they decided not further their studies for various reasons and regret not taking those opportunities that they had. This made me think about my personal views of life. The decisions you make now may affect you later on in life and you need to be serious now to achieve your goals and enjoy life later when you have all that you need.

7.5 Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

7.5.1 Yes they do. I take school seriously and make sure that I do my best where I can to make something of myself for me and to make my parents proud.

7.6 What does it mean to be you?

7.6.1 No response.

7.7 What does it mean to be a teenager?

7.7.1 A teenager is a child that reaches a stage when they start to develop their own ideas about the things around them and start to break away from the idea of being dependent on our parents for certain things because we think "we know it all." I think that it is the hardest stage of growing up and is a real learning experience before becoming an adult and stepping out into the real world.

7.8 Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

7.8.1 The Spiritual side of me isn't very developed. I do believe in God and have been born again but I still don't know how to connect with him and I don't know if it's because I haven't done something that I'm supposed to or if it's because I am afraid.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

7.9 What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

7.9.1 I'm not sure yet.

7.10 Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

7.10.1 No response.

7.11 How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

7.11.1 My beliefs affect the way I think, feel and behave a lot because as a Christian you know the differences between right and wrong but as a teenager choosing the right way is always harder.

7.12 Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

7.12.1 Communion

7.13 What do these mean to you?

7.13.1 It is very special because it is a way of remembering what Jesus did for us. It's like a personal way of saying thank you for what he has done for us.

7.14 Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

7.14.1 Yes. Going to Church every Sunday and reading the bible (but not as much as I probably should)

7.15 What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

7.15.1 Going to church is great for me but because I am usually forced into doing it seems like something I have to do rather than something I want to do. I do enjoy it but sometimes I really don't want to focus because I am there for the sake of my parents.

7.16 What else would you like me to know about you?

7.16.1 There isn't anything that I can think of.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Reflective writing exercise: Carla (15 years old)

Introduction:

When we last saw each other, I explained that I would be in contact again in three months. Below is the exercise I was telling you about that I would like you to complete for me. But before you start, I just want to remind you of a few things. Please ask me as many questions as you would like to before you start the activity.

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- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

8.1 Biographical information:

Name: Carla

Current age: 15

Current grade: 10

8.2 Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

8.2.1 This year I started with online homeschooling with the X program.

8.3 Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

8.3.1 We are created to live life for Jesus and Jesus is the only One who can make us completely whole.

8.4 How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

8.4.1 Growing up in a Christian home helped me form my ideas but I also realized and decided this for myself.

8.5 Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

8.5.1 Yes.

8.6 What does it mean to be you?

8.6.1 Being me is being who God uniquely designed me to be.

8.7 What does it mean to be a teenager?

8.7.1 Being a teenager is the part of your life where you're going from being a child to an adult.

8.8 Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

8.8.1 I am a child of God. Jesus is my Lord and Savior.

8.9 What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

8.9.1 Growing up in a Christian home, it's always been a part of my life. I think that because I, in the end, made the decision myself to follow Christ it makes up a whole different part of my identity and through Jesus I know who I am in Him.

8.10 Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

8.10.1 Yes, my beliefs influence every area of my life because for me Jesus is the center of my life.

8.11 How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

8.11.1 God's word says to take every thought captive, to make sure every thought is positive and for His glory. Believing in the Bible makes it clear how we should live as Gods people.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

8.12 Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

8.12.1 In our church we celebrate some Jewish festivals like Shabbat and Passover. As a family we do not celebrate Christmas.

8.13 What do these mean to you?

8.13.1 The Jewish festivals at church are always fun. We don't celebrate them very religiously and as for Christmas, God revealed to my parents before I was born that He didn't want us to celebrate it anymore so I have never celebrated Christmas in my life.

8.14 Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

8.14.1 As a family we go to church every Sunday we are around to go. I read my bible and have daily devotions as often as possible.

8.15 What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

8.15.1 I grew up with them, since I can remember we have been going to church and believing in the Bible as Gods Word. I enjoy them although sometimes it feels as if I am just going through the motions.

8.16 What else would you like me to know about you?

8.16.1 I don't date, I am waiting for the one God has chosen for me. I went through a tough stage at my previous school with friends and the contradicting beliefs between me and most of my peers, which is why I have started online schooling this year.

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Reflective writing exercise: Veronique (17 years old)

Introduction:

When we last saw each other, I explained that I would be in contact again in three months. Below is the exercise I was telling you about that I would like you to complete for me. But before you start, I just want to remind you of a few things. Please ask me as many questions as you would like to before you start the activity.

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- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

9.1 Biographical information:

Name: Veronique

Current age: 17

Current grade: 12

9.2 Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

SPIRITUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

9.2.1 I have started my final year of school, the school day has become shorter, I broke up with my boyfriend at the end of January and I am looking at UCT and UP as my next step in life.

9.3 Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

9.3.1 From the little experience I have of life, I have learnt the hard way, it is not fair. It constantly changes and it forces you to grow or react in certain ways. A person is made by the way he or she handles the situation he or she faces.

9.4 How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

9.4.1 My ideas came with time. I do look up to people and I want to live the way they do by thinking the way they do.

9.5 Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

9.5.1 They do fit in with who I am. I am very proud of the person I turned out to be.

9.6 What does it mean to be you?

9.6.1 It means you are strong willed, dedicated, clever, and mature.

9.7 What does it mean to be a teenager?

9.7.1 Being a teenager is the space of time where you are allowed to make mistakes you can't afford to make when you are an adult. It is also a time of self discovery.

9.8 Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

9.8.1 I believe God has a plan for my life and everything I have ever gone through is for a very good reason.

9.9 What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

9.9.1 It means a lot to me.

9.10 Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

9.10.1 Yes, they influence who I surround myself with, decision making and so on.

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9.11 How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

9.11.1 When ideas make up a part of your personality, you subconsciously behave or feel according to the way you think. It's how morals and principals work.

9.12 Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

9.12.1 No.

9.13 What do these mean to you?

9.13.1 No response.

9.14 Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

9.14.1 I go to church on Sundays.

9.15 What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

9.15.1 I want to be able to look after my spiritual being as I would my physical as it has this deep effect within me where I can have unexplained strength, joy, peace and wisdom in any circumstance which boosts my well being.

9.16 What else would you like me to know about you?

9.16.1 No response.

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Reflective writing exercise: Olivia (17 years old)

Introduction:

When we last saw each other, I explained that I would be in contact again in three months. Below is the exercise I was telling you about that I would like you to complete for me. But before you start, I just want to remind you of a few things. Please ask me as many questions as you would like to before you start the activity.

- This research project is being completed as part of my studies into child and adolescent psychology.
- Your participation in this project is voluntary and you can change your mind at any point if you decide that you no longer want to be involved.
- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

10.1 Biographical information:

Name: Olivia

Current age: 17

Current grade: Completed high school

10.2 Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

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10.2.1 Things have changed since we had last seen each other, I have now finished high school and I am deciding on what to do in my future. I am looking to go and study in Australia. But right now I am working as a volunteer at X. I am also studying International School of Ministry at my church along with a few other people. At home, we have just moved house, into a bigger house with much more space, which is great as we tend to get under each other's skin.

10.3 Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

10.3.1 I believe that life is a gift, a gift from the creator, God. We were chosen to live it to the fullest. We were chosen to be here on earth to make an impact, to do work for God. I believe that we can do anything we want and put our mind to, especially through God. We have the whole world at our fingertips, access to anything and everything. What I think contributes to a person being whole is, their faith. I think that we can't fully be whole without God and our faith in Him, He makes us whole. I find it sad how people can go around life, looking for someone or something to make them whole but they never truly feel whole because they are looking in all the wrong places.

10.4 How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

10.4.1 I formed my ideas by my opinions and desires, the way I see things. Which has all been influenced by my parents, friends and church. I also think that finishing school has kind of given me a whole new outlook on life, I see now that life has no limits, and we shouldn't put limits on our desires.

10.5 Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

10.5.1 I see myself as adventurous, I would hate to think that I have put a limit on life and on my desires. I believe I can do anything and everything. I like to put myself to the test of what I can achieve.

10.6 What does it mean to be you?

10.6.1 It gives me hope. Hope that all things can be achieved, all things you put your mind and faith to.

10.7 What does it mean to be a teenager?

10.7.1 To be a teenager, I think we are stuck between child and adult. We don't know whether we should be treated as a child or a teenage, no one really knows. I think as you grow

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out of being a teenager, you start to realise everything, what you should have done as a teenager (eg, helping out around the house) but there was always someone else to do it for you, but you should have done it anyway, just a growth for you. I kind of wish that we were back in the biblical times where there were no such thing as teenager, you became an adult where you would leave home and work when you were 12/13/14. I think it would be good for everyone, especially the growth of us.

10.8 Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

10.8.1 There is no spiritual part of who I am, I would like to think that my whole being is spiritual. I wouldn't be able to go on through the day without listening to God and speaking to Him. I sometimes wonder how other people do it. It's my daily routine, my go to. I've grown leaps and bounds these past months, spiritually and emotionally.

10.9 What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

10.9.1 It means everything to me. I wouldn't be who i am today if it wasn't for my spiritual life.

10.10 Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

10.10.1 I think my ideas influence many areas of my life. Such as my social life (who I hang out with), I've realised how pointless certain things are such as partying etc. I only want to do things that are going to have a positive and useful effect on me and my future.

10.11 How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

10.11.1 They influence my thoughts because it's not just me, thinking, my thoughts, I know that they are God's thoughts and it makes me kind of filter my thoughts through Him. eg, knowing He wouldn't like me to thinking about a certain thing and so having to stop thinking about it because you know it's the best for you. My feelings are also influenced, not as much though because it's a little more hard to control and filter but I always try to filter how I feel with how God may want me to feel. eg, I could be feeling really annoyed, upset and feel like it's going to such a bad day because of one bad thing that has happened, I could let those emotions and feelings control me resulting in me having a bad day or I could give them to God and therefore have help in not feeling those ways.

10.12 Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

10.12.1 No rituals or traditions.

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10.13 What do these mean to you?

10.13.1 No response.

10.14 Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

10.14.1 I believe that in order to have a good relationship with God we must take time every day to read His Word, the Bible. To spend time in prayer. I spend every day at church, because I believe that in everything that you do, you worship God. You don't have to be physically shouting praises to Him, but in everything, every action, every thought, worship him that it brings glory to Him.

10.15 What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

10.15.1 It's my choice. I know that it makes me a better person, It inspires me from the inside out, It humbles me.

10.16 What else would you like me to know about you?

10.16.1 No response.

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Reflective writing exercise: Aleeya (18 turned 19 years old)

Introduction:

When we last saw each other, I explained that I would be in contact again in three months. Below is the exercise I was telling you about that I would like you to complete for me. But before you start, I just want to remind you of a few things. Please ask me as many questions as you would like to before you start the activity.

- This research project is being completed as part of my studies into child and adolescent psychology.
- Your participation in this project is voluntary and you can change your mind at any point if you decide that you no longer want to be involved.
- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

11.1 Biographical information:

Name: Aleeya

Current age: 19

Current grade: No longer attending school

11.2 Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

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11.2.1 Yes, a lot has changed at home and at school since we last saw each other, I moved to live with my other brother in a different neighborhood. In the case of school, I didn't do well in my exams and as a result I failed the year.

11.3 Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

11.3.1 My ideas about life are quite simple, I think life is a precious give and what you do with it is entirely up to you, even though parents or family may try guide you, there is a point in time when your life is in your hands. You can either choose to make something positive of it or just live it as though it's pointless and it should be lived with every kind of happiness, so doing something you love every day. I think acceptance and love are the key things that contribute to a person being whole. I say this because everyone wants to be accepted in some way, either by family, school mates or even society. Love because love can overcome so many obstacles in one's life.

11.4 How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

11.4.1 I think my ideas were formed through being influenced by society, I used societies negatively towards some individuals and tried to look at the positive side of it all. I used the negativity to my advantage for example the aspect and believe that if you didn't complete school your of no use in life, I used that to motivate me at the things I'm good at artistically which can actually be used to make a very good living with.

11.5 Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

11.5.1 Yes I definitely, without a doubt believe that my ideas fit in with the way I see myself. Simply because I see every kind of human as myself with their own purpose in life. We cannot all be the same. My ideas make me who I am, they are my inspiration to pursue my dreams no matter how high or low the bars may be.

11.6 What does it mean to be you?

11.6.1 To be me, wow. To be me means a colourful splash of paint on a white wall. To be means, unique with no one like me. To be me means to have a big imagination with no boundaries, dreams for centuries. To be me comes with all the gifts I believe I wouldn't be me without them. I love being me because although I may not fit into societies idea of perfection, I may have something that society may need for an example imagination, seeing

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that our lives these days are so organized and imagination is wild, beautiful and out of this world in my mind.

11.7 What does it mean to be a teenager?

11.7.1 To be a teenager in my understanding is to be pressured by soo many things, like friends and family. To be a teenager is to try and fit in, be accepted by everyone around, maybe do some smoking, drinking because if you don't put out of the teen society like a person with leprosy. Try and hide your acne or try have a cheerleaders body shape. To be a teenager is to live for everyone else because at this point everyone wants a good future for you, even if it means sacrificing your happiness for life. To be a teenager is to wear the latest fashion trending clothes and shoes. To be a teenager is to experiment even if your putting your life in danger especially when you're really board or locked up in a closet at home or even emotionally captured.

11.8 Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

11.8.1 The spiritual part of who I am is quite understandable for me. Although I try run away from it because of my own desires or preferences I always find myself trying to help others or wanting to help others, to a point where it becomes like a hunger. I feel like a spiritual guardian angel, and yes I do fantasize myself with big angelic wings. Even if I want to misbehave that spiritual part of me says Aleeya, will you really be leading a good example if another young person like you sees what you're doing and copies you.

11.9 What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

11.9.1 The spiritual part of who I am, in my understanding means I have a great purpose on this earth, not just to live but to be of great assistance in any way possible, to me I understand it as a purpose of bringing back the youth, back to life away from all the negative things such as drugs, but doing it with love and patience as well as understanding. This part of me reassures me I'm the only one who sees it, it reminds me when I'm in my own worst state of depression, that I can't stay in this mood I have to help others, because if I don't who else will as young as me.

11.10 Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

11.10.1 Yes I do believe my ideas influence other areas of my life. These are areas in my life where I try and learn patience and try and pack away any form of negativity. They influence

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me to keep hope and faith in God. Especially when I find myself doubting him, I remind myself that he created the mind I have which gives me all these ideas.

11.11 How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

11.11.1 My ideas/beliefs influence my thoughts, my feelings and behaviours in many ways. For one my thoughts aren't as negative as before, my feelings towards certain situations, people are more calm, less judgmental and more understanding. My behavior is positive, I don't overact or act out my anger or frustration as much.

11.12 Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

11.12.1 Not really, when it comes to rituals surrounding my beliefs I would say youth on a Friday and a church service on a Sunday and maybe a bring-and-share lunch on Christian holidays. Not sure if that could be considered as ritual.

11.13 What do these mean to you?

11.13.1 To me these are of great significance as one is reminded of who what they actually believe in, also they kind of reassure one that this is no make believe faith, as there were even events recorded in the holy bible (sacred scripture for Christians) which are recalled in every Sunday service, they somehow grow ones faith much more and strengthen it.

11.14 Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

11.14.1 Yes I do participate in religious activity such as praying in the comfort of my own private space and I do go to church on a Sunday, which I consider a place of worship.

11.15 What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

11.15.1 I do think that participating in these religious activities are of great importance and assistance, but I only believe this if one is welcoming the idea of participating in them from want, rather than being forced to by family. Simply because if they are forced it will be like a form of punishment and the positivity of it all will be turned into a hate and dislike. We are meant to be free in or spirituality.

11.16 What else would you like me to know about you?

1.16.1 If I had to tell you a lot more about me, I would probably have to write you a novel hahaha. I will tell you though that I am a very hard worker and when I put a goal in front of myself it must be achieved. I believe actions speak louder than words. Thank you.

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Reflective writing exercise: Rose (18 years old)

Introduction:

When we last saw each other, I explained that I would be in contact again in three months. Below is the exercise I was telling you about that I would like you to complete for me. But before you start, I just want to remind you of a few things. Please ask me as many questions as you would like to before you start the activity.

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- Your name will be changed to protect your identity.
- There are no right or wrong answers and this is not a test. Whatever you say will help me to better understand you.
- This is the second time we are in contact. The first time was three months ago and we talked about a few things regarding how you understand yourself.
- You can take as much time as you need to complete this exercise.
- There are some questions I would like you to answer below. You can also write down anything else you would like to.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

12.1 Biographical information:

Name: Rose

Current age: 18

Current grade: 12

12.2 Relevant background information:

Has anything at home or at school changed since we saw each other?

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12.2.1 At home, not really, although I finally got my driver's license! So I have quite a bit more freedom. Most of my friends at school have left which is quite difficult. Also, school in general is a lot more stressful and busy. But, on the plus side, I have a few more friends outside of school, some quite a few years older than me, so I am really enjoying those friendships.

12.3 Would you be able to tell me about your ideas about life and what you think contributes to a person being whole?

12.3.1 I think life should be enjoyed and lived to the full, and that statement means different things from person to person. For me, that would mean living for Jesus firstly and also participating in adventurous outdoor activities, for example. I think to be whole would mean that your life is consumed by Jesus, that you've given Him control over your life and you're living it for Him. Obviously other things like friends and sports and a spouse help, but these should never make you feel complete because they are unstable and can be lost within seconds. Jesus on the other hand is forever, and He won't change or disappoint you. He is needed to truly make your life whole.

12.4 How did you form your ideas? Did anyone or anything influence you?

12.4.1 Many people have influenced me to form these ideas, such as my parents and my pastor, but I have taken their ideas and adapted them how I felt they applied to my life and what I believe God has called me to.

12.5 Do your ideas fit in with the way you see yourself?

12.5.1 Yes.

12.6 What does it mean to be you?

12.6.1 I am unique and an out-of-the-box person. I know that God knit me together in my mother's womb, and I am secure and have found my identity in Him. I love both creative and adventurous activities, such as scuba diving and horse riding. I love making and listening to music. I am a born again Christian, and I grew up in a Christian family.

12.7 What does it mean to be a teenager?

12.7.1 I personally don't really like the term "teenager" as it has turned into a demeaning word, as well as an excuse for people who fall into this category to have bad manners and a bad attitude. It's also a very confusing period for these people as we tend to be expected to act like adults and have responsibilities, but are still treated like children. Therefore, I think a

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term such as “young adults” is more fitting as it is much less vague, and everyone understands then that we are transitioning into becoming adults and should be treated in such a way, and not as children.

12.8 Would you be able to tell me about the spiritual part of who you are?

12.8.1 I don't think that there is just a spiritual part of me as I am a spiritual being. All of me is spiritual. My faith is a huge part of who I am. In fact, it is probably all that I am. Everything I do and believe revolves around God and being obedient to Him.

12.9 What does the spiritual part of who you are mean to you?

12.9.1 Everything. It makes up my whole life, all of who I am.

12.10 Do you think that your ideas influence other areas of your life? Which areas?

12.10.1 Yes, all of them.

12.11 How do your ideas/beliefs influence your thoughts, your feelings and your behaviours?

12.11.1 Usually in a positive way. Although I'm obviously not perfect, I try my best to let my thoughts, feelings and behavior in a positive way.

12.12 Do you engage in any traditions or rituals surrounding your beliefs?

12.12.1 I go to church, and celebrate Passover and Shabbat from time to time.

12.13 What do these mean to you?

12.13.1 I believe going to church is to learn more about God, worshipping Him, and serving and fellowshiping with other people. It is a time when we can build each other up. I enjoy Passover and Shabbat mostly for the fellowship and serving that takes place.

12.14 Do you participate in any religious activities? (for example visiting a place of worship, reading a holy book, praying)

12.14.1 I go to church, read my Bible and pray to God, however, I do not consider these “religious” activities.

12.15 What are your thoughts and feelings about participating in these religious activities?

12.15.1 I love it! I feel that it is such an honour and blessing to be loved by and able to communicate with the Creator of the universe!

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12.16 What else would you like me to know about you?

12.16.1 Mmmm..... I can't think of anything in particular.....

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APPENDIX H

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