An Introduction to Spiritual Development
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This paper provides an overview of spiritual development in children and youth and describes the role of schooling in this domain. The first section explains important terms and establishes the importance of spirituality in as a component of life success. The second section discusses some important issues regarding the development of spirituality. A review of how to stimulate and assess spiritual development is also included.

Spirituality is a difficult concept to define. While it has been explored throughout human history as one of the three fundamental aspects of human beings (i.e., body, mind, spirit) (Huitt, 2003), there is widespread disagreement as to its origin, functioning, or even importance (Huitt, 2000). However, in a broad perspective, spirituality deals fundamentally with how we approach the unknowns of life, how we define and relate to the sacred.

Spirituality is considered by many psychologists to be an inherent property of the human being (Helminiak, 1996; Newberg, D'Aquili, & Rause, 2001). From this viewpoint, human spirituality is an attempt to understand and connect to the unknowns of the universe or search for meaningfulness in one's life (Adler, 1932/1980; Frankl, 1959). Likewise, Weaver and Cotrell (1992) propose that spirituality "refers to matters of ultimate concern that call for releasing the passions of the soul to search for goals with personal meaning" (p.1). Other definitions include a relationship with the sacred (Beck & Walters, 1977), "an individual's experience of and relationship with a fundamental, nonmaterial aspect of the universe" (Tolan, 2002). Others view soul or spirit as a description of the "vital principle or animating force believed to be within living beings" (Zinn, 1997, p. 2) or "the very source of energy" that lives within each person (Chee, 2002, p. 11). Danesh (1994) suggests that when individuals study their human spirituality it provides an opportunity to connect to a larger source of energy and power, thereby impacting our ideas of who we are. It is this exploration of the meaningfulness of our lives and our relationships to ourselves, to others, to nature, or to a higher power that is considered the essence of spirituality (Hamilton & Jackson,1998; Hay & Nye, 1998). One can engage in a search in any or all of these areas simultaneously (Collins, 1998). This may or may not involve a relationship with God, Goddess, Creator, Great Spirit, Universal Mind, etc. However, it does involve a quest for a relationship with, or understanding of, the essential or non-material as compared to the concrete or material.

There are essentially three broad categories of belief regarding humankind's spirituality: naturalism, pantheism, and theism (Copan, 2001). Naturalists believe spirituality and definitions of what is sacred exist as a natural operation of the human mind and that our spirituality ceases to exist along with our physical body (Maslow, 1983). Pantheists believe that God exists in everything and that the entire universe is either God or an expression of His nature (Levine, 1997). Theists believe that humankind's spirituality results from a non-material soul, created by God, and destined to continue to exist after the material body ceases to function (Collins, 1998).

Solomon (2002) suggests that a belief in a Creator or Great Spirit is not necessary as atheists or skeptics can express their spirituality through a philosophical inquiry that is demonstrated in a thoughtful love for life.

This discussion of the essence of human spirituality links the topic to religion. However, there is an important distinction. Whereas spirituality is a consideration of meaning or ultimate purpose, religion refers to the organized, institutionalized set of beliefs, teachings, and practices that are established to connect groups of individuals to a particular expression of spirituality (Tolan, 2002). One can be spiritual without being religious (e.g., a seeker of a relationship with the Creator without belonging to a particular practice of that relationship). Alternatively, one can be religious without being spiritual (e.g., practicing a particular set of rituals or attending a specific worship service without establishing a relationship with the sacred, non-material aspects of the universe). This distinction is an important part of the discussion of spiritual development in the context of schooling. Coles (1990) provides extensive detail on the difference between children's interpretation of the signs, symbols, and rituals of their religious upbringing and their quest to provide meaning to their lives. He suggests, however, that these are not independent, as a child's spiritual journey is done within the context of an individual's religious (or non-religious) training.

Meeting the directive of the United States Constitution to maintain neutrality between secular and religious views (Segars & Jelen, 1998) does not mean that we must omit all discussions of human spirituality from our public institutions. That is hardly neutral. It does mean, however, that we must be careful to allow a full discussion of spiritual development that includes the views of both those who believe in a Supreme Creator, God, or Great Spirit and those who do not. It also means that we must treat the wisdom found in the various religious scriptures with equality, rather than in a parochial, biased manner. Wilson (2000) suggests this is possible by focusing on those spiritual and moral goals that are needed for lasting human happiness using findings from both science and religious scripture.

While this discussion of connecting spiritual development to a belief in a God or Universal Spirit may be an important issue to the majority of scientists who identify themselves as unbelievers (Larson & Witham, 1998), it is certainly not an issue for the majority of the American public. Gallup (1993) reports that 94% of adult Americans believe in God or a universal spirit, although less than 50% attend religious services on a regular basis (Gallup International, 1999). Similar results are found throughout the industrialized world (Huddleston, 1993). The number of people who identify themselves as believers but express no specific religious identification almost doubled in the U.S. in the 1990s (from 8% to 14%) (Gallup International, 1999). This now makes the unchurched 29.4 million American adults the third largest group of believers in America, after Roman Catholicism (50.9 million) and Baptists (33.8 million). It is interesting to note that measures of increased interest in spirituality have increased at the same rate as leaving organized religion (Marler & Hadaway, 2002). This discrepancy between beliefs and practice may be one reason that people seem to be seeking spirituality (Taylor, 1994). Hout and Fischer (2002) believe this growth of unchurched believers in the U.S. is a result of dissatisfaction with the manner in which Christian views have been expressed in the public discourse.

What is clear is that whether the topic of spirituality and its various interpretations is addressed from the perspective of science, religious observers, or unaffiliated believers, it is considered important by the American public. In addition, spirituality and related processes of

spiritual development such as a profession of faith, prayer, or regular attendance at religious services have been related to a wide-range of important outcomes such as:

- lower blood pressure (Koenig, 1999),
- improved physical health (Koenig, McCullough, Larson, 2001; Levin, 2001),
- healthier lifestyles and less risky behavior (Koenig, 1999),
- improved coping ability (Pargament, 1997),
- less depression (Koenig, 1999),
- faster healing (Dossey, 2002; Koenig, 2002),
- lower levels of bereavement after the death of a loved one (Walsh, King, Jones, Tookman & Blizard, 2002),
- a decrease in fear of death (Ardelt, 2000), and
- higher school achievement (Ginsburg & Hanson, 1986).

Similarly, Kass (2002) indicates that a lack of spiritual development leads to serious issues, such as overeating, risky behavior, low self-esteem, and poor health. In fact, Koenig (2002) reports that the data on the relationship of spirituality and health are so conclusive that nearly two-thirds of American medical schools taught required or elective courses on religion, spirituality, and medicine in 2001.

Educators today know the impact that issues such as health, levels of self-esteem, and choices in non-academic behavior can have on a student's ability to learn. Based on the connection between one's spiritual development and these various outcome measures, it might seem obvious that spirituality should be a topic addressed in schools. However, many activities normally associated with spiritual development are not the type that educators can advocate in a public school setting.

Fortunately, there are alternatives by which spiritual development can be addressed without crossing the critical line separating religion and public activity. We need only to look to modern business practices to see that this can be done. For example, businesses in this country are facing the need to address meaningfulness and important relationships with their employees (Gooden, 2000). Today's more educated and skilled workforce is increasingly demanding

> "more autonomy in work, more satisfaction from work, and more meaningful engagement at work. Those leaders who understand and are sensitive to the need for meaning, and who value environments that help workers realize their potential, are likely to be more in tune with the new environment than are those who are insensitive to these trends" (p.47).

Page (2000) reports that the most successful companies develop a vision for the business that is "holistic and congruent, encompassing the church, the family, the community, and the institution." (p.83).

Educators would do well to learn from these experiences. Attempts by schools to develop an approach to spirituality that does not consider all of the relevant influences on the lives of children and youth is doomed to failure as a result of conflicts among values and purposes that are certain to arise (Kessler, 2000). Fowler's (1981) faith development theory addresses the impact that spirituality has on learning. This aspect of the total being has been historically neglected in education theory and practice. Neglecting the spiritual nature of humans is to

"ignore an important aspect of human experience and avenue of learning and meaning-making" (Tisdell, 2001, p. 3). The implication is that learning must be made meaningful if it is to be relevant. The challenge lies in identifying what is meaningful for individual human beings and addressing it in a manner in our public institutions that is acceptable to all strands of our society.

In summary, spirituality addresses such questions as:

1. How can we increase meaning in our lives, in general, and my life, in particular?
2. Who are we as human beings? Where did we come from? How are we related?
3. Are we in control of our lives or is our destination a result of fate?
4. Where did the universe come from? What are its origins?
5. Is there a God (in whatever way we define or know a Supreme Being)?
6. What is our relationship to God or the Creator, if there is one?
7. Is there a continuity of life after this life? If so, what is it like?

These questions are fundamental to understanding human beings and our relationships to each other and the rest of the universe (Moody & Carroll, 1997). To the extent that we carefully consider these questions and answer them to our ability and satisfaction, we can say that we are in the process of developing in the spiritual domain. Of special importance, from the perspective of this paper, is the role of science in addressing these questions. At a minimum science should be able to identify the available choices in addressing human spirituality and provide evidence as to the impact of making different choices on the lives of individuals and groups.

The Development of Human Spirituality

As with every other area of human development there are diverse viewpoints on how spiritual development occurs. Hay (2000), a zoologist, believes that spiritual experiences are a part of natural selection because they hold some type of survival value. He cites data showing a spiritual dimension in every known human society or culture.

Alternatively, Sullivan (1993) believes that one component of spiritual development is the intimacy with which people are involved with their life experiences. "Many of the so-called larger-than-life people…are profoundly present to the continuum of their lives…Thus some die at seventy with an experiential age of seventeen while others are closer to a hundred and seventy, so intimate are they with the happenings of their lives" (p. 1). This theme has been studied extensively from the perspective of existential psychology (May, 1958). Some of the most important qualities of a well-developed adult are a willingness to take intentional control over one's life and to have the courage to put intentions into action. The development of these qualities must be addressed in early childhood (Erikson, 1950).

There are numerous outlines of spiritual development from specific religious traditions (Wilson, 1991). Differentiating the process of spiritual development from any specific religious development is challenging, but not impossible. A number of researchers have developed generic descriptions of spiritual (or faith) development that can be used in public schools (Moody & Carroll, 1998; Peck, 1998a, 1998b). Perhaps the most well-know description is by Fowler (1981). He uses the term faith which he defined as "a person's way of seeing him- or herself in relation to others against a backdrop of shared meaning and purpose" (p. 4).

Fowler (1981) takes an analytical approach to the development of spirituality with clear progressive divisions. While these six stages parallel Piaget's cognitive-development stages and

Kohlberg's stages of moral-development, progression through each stage is not a chronological guarantee (Gathman & Nessan, 1997). The attractive aspect of Fowler's theory for our purpose is that, while no specific higher power is the defining factor of whether one can apply these stages to one's life, a connection to something greater than self is a must (see Table 1).

According to Fowler (1981), prior to the development of faith, an infant has an undifferentiated faith where he or she is beginning to interact with adults and learn about the social, built, and natural environment. Stage I typically begins around age three to seven years, and involves the imagination of the inner-child, which is filled with fantasy and free of logic. An early awareness of life's mysteries (i.e. death, sexuality, and cultural taboos) exists at this stage, which is referred to as intuitive-projective faith. Ironically, the inner child concept promotes listening to one's inner thoughts. Nurturing this type of simplistic self-actualization is one aspect of spiritual development. The increase in the ability to think concretely is what brings this stage to a close. The image of a divine power being parent-like is symbolic of the child's limited experiences (Anderson, 2001).

As cognitive abilities increase with the development of concrete operational thinking, the child has the potential to evolve to stage II, the mythic-literal faith stage. It is in this stage that the world is viewed in terms of opposites like good and bad. In addition, authorities have unquestionable knowledge, and truth is provided in the simple form of stories that instill core beliefs (Gathman & Nessan, 1997). The focus on acknowledgement of authority indicates a low functioning of self-awareness and an increase in focus on the relationship with others.

Stage III, or the synthetic-conventional faith stage, is marked by the impact of external forces, such as school, work, friends, and media. Balancing these influences is the focus of this stage. The push to conform causes internal conflict, as conformity can mean going against core beliefs. Ironically, critical examination of beliefs and values does not exist. The aspect of spirituality that is being addressed in this stage is the relationship to others. The conflicts between self and the newly introduced relationships lead to the end of stage III, due to the development of critical thinking skills (Fowler, 1981). As one breaks away from authority, the need to think independently creates a search for validation by others who have similar views (Anderson, 2001). Self-actualization and increased connection to others is required in order to determine the similarities between self and sub-groups of society.

Individuative-reflective faith, stage IV, is a highly intellectual stage (Fowler, 1981). This marks the beginning of a unique and quirky worldview. The potential to be influenced by others is diminishing as thinking independently means the desire for peer approval has narrowed to a specific subgroup. Symbols have lost their mythical meanings as the person evolves into an abstract thinker, which leads to an understanding of just how complex life is. The newfound appreciation for the gray areas leads to the completion of this stage. It is the beginning of balancing the relationships between self, others, and a higher power.

The kind of understanding that is present in stage V is conjunctive faith. A second naïveté exists as an increased appreciation for the power of symbols and myths develops. A return to the inner-child that values direct experience, while learning to affirm other's beliefs, is indicative of conjunctive faith. The motivating factor at this level of faith is acquiring the rewards for personal dedication and obedience to the spiritual rules, or the carrot-at-the-end-of-the-stick (Gathman & Nessan, 1997). A new level of understanding leads to the resolution of black-and-white thinking, "which provides a sense of peace about the fact that there is no such thing as complete control

Table 1. Fowler's Stages of Faith

Stage	Typical Age	Defining Qualities	Influences	Major Antecedents to Transition
0. Undifferentiated Faith	Infancy	Mutuality, trust, and preimages of the background of life	Interaction with important adults and environment	Development of language and imagination
I. Intuitive-Projective Faith	3-7	Fantasy-filled, imitative phase; free of logic; focus on episodic interactions	Interaction with important adults through stories, role playing, etc. providing episodic knowledge	Development of concrete operational thinking
II. Mythic-Literal	7-15, although some adults remain in this stage	Concrete operational interpretation of beliefs and observances of community; worldview of good and bad	Authorities, including parents, teachers, religious and community leaders	Development of critical thinking
III. Synthetic-Conventional	15-21, plus some adults	Formation of personal identity and shaping of personal definition of faith	External sources such as school, work, friends, media and personal reflection	Internal conflict between personal beliefs and social expectations
IV. Individuative-Reflective	Young Adult	Unique, individualistic worldview	Independent critical thinking; beginning of balance of self, others, and higher power	Desire to integrate worldviews of self and others
V. Conjunctive	Mid-life and beyond	Value direct experience while affirming others' beliefs	Increasing appreciation of symbols and myths; meaningful learning experiences	Desire to reconcile the untransformed world and the personally-developed transforming vision and loyalties
VI. Universalizing Faith	Few ever reach	Disciplined activist seeking to make tangible impact on transforming the social order	Consciousness of complex universal issues; loss of egocentric focus	

and being right does not mean others must be wrong" (Anderson 2001, p. 2). The characteristics that a person possesses at this level of spiritual maturity are parallel with the type of maturity that comes with age. For example, according to Jung (1981) the first half of life is influenced more by biology whereas the second half of life is more influenced by culture. The cultural aims of mid-life and beyond strive to create a world of peace, justice, and beauty–a world fit for future generations–and have come to fruition by the maturation of the spirit (McFadden & Gerl, 1990). This is similar to Erikson's (1950) contention that generativity is an important issue in midlife. Again, the recurring theme of meaning motivates learning. Fowler (1981) states that few individuals attain the kind of consciousness of complex issues such as social justice and loss of egocentric focus that is needed to spiritually progress to universalizing faith, or stage VI. The above stated consciousness, plus a life dedicated to those issues, is what distinguishes those in stage six from stage five. Examples given by Fowler are Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, and Thomas Merton.

Several researchers such as Coles (1990) as well as Hay and Nye (1998) believe that Fowler's (1981) approach is too cognitive in its orientation. They support an approach that would put more emphasis on emotion and awareness. In fact, Hay and Nye suggest that "relational consciousness" describes the essence of spirituality. Relational consciousness is a type of metacognitive activity that describes ever increasing consciousness of growth and opportunity consequences for the individual. In this context, development is considered moving from simple to complex, from naïve to sophisticated, or from insecurity to confidence in terms of the relational aspects of self, others, nature, God, or universal unknowns. This is a continuous, rather than discontinuous, process as described by Fowler (1981). There is a similar discussion of continuous versus discontinuous development in cognition (Vygotsky, 1978; Piaget, 1950/2001) and emotion (Plutchik, 1980; Erikson, 1950) and it is no surprise that we see it in the discussion of spiritual development.

Spiritual Development Activities

There is little doubt that the development of the human spirit is an important issue to be addressed if we consider the individual in a holistic perspective. Götz (1997) and Palmer (1998) propose that the place to start is with the teacher's spiritual development. As with any other topic, one cannot teach what one has not developed.

Where should educators start in this process? One approach may lie in an analysis of one's development of faith as described by Fowler (1981). A second might be a consideration of the contexts of spiritual development defined by Hay and Nye (1998) [self, others, nature, God/Creator] or to the elements of spirituality defined by Hamilton and Jackson (1998) [self-awareness, interconnectedness, and a relationship to a higher power]. These are relatively complex tasks and likely to require some assistance from a knowledgeable mentor or at least involvement in a study group. This means that educators will require some specialized training to address the demands of developing and implementing a spiritual development curriculum. Teacher training institutions should consider making a course in spiritual development a part of the preservice teacher training program. For teachers who are already in the field, school districts need to provide inservice training programs through workshops or conference attendance.

One of the first steps educators can take to address the spiritual development of their students is to build an environment conducive to learning (Kessler, 2000). This would call for educators to reassess the ultimate goal of education. It would also require that schools coordinate

Table 2. Pathways to the Soul

Pathway	Description	Found in Other Theories
Yearning for Deep Connection	Describes a quality of relationship that is profoundly caring, is resonant with meaning, and involves feelings of belonging, or of being truly seen and known; may experience deep connection to themselves, to others, to nature, or to a higher power.	Erikson (1950) —Need for Belongingness (especially to something larger than oneself); Gardner (2000) —Interpersonal Intelligence (connection to others)
Longing for Silence and Solitude	As a respite from the tyranny of "busyness" and noise, silence may be a realm of reflection, of calm or fertile chaos, an avenue of stillness and rest for some, prayer or contemplation for others.	Gardner (2000) —Intrapersonal Intelligence
Search for Meaning and Purpose	Exploration of big questions, such as "Why am I here?" "Does my life have a purpose? "What is life for?" "What is my destiny?" and "Is there a God?"	Gardner (2000) —Existential Intelligence
Hunger for Joy and Delight	Can be satisfied through experiences of great simplicity, such as play, celebration, or gratitude; also describes the exaltation students feel when encountering beauty, power, grace, brilliance, love, or the sheer joy of being alive.	Csikszentmihalyi (1998) — Flow in Consciousness
Creative Drive	Is part of all the gateways; students feel the awe and mystery of creating, whether developing a new idea, a work of art, a scientific discovery, or an entirely new lens on life.	Sternberg (1988) — Creative Intelligence
Urge of Transcendence	The desire to go beyond perceived personal limits; includes not only the mystical realm, but experiences of the extraordinary in the arts, athletics, academics, or human relations.	Maslow (1983) —Transcendence
Need for Initiation	Deals with rites of passage for the young—guiding adolescents to become more conscious about the irrevocable transition from childhood to adulthood.	Campbell (1972); Schlegel & Barry (1980) – Initiation

with families, religious organizations, and other community institutions to provide a full range of spiritual development activities appropriate for the individual's developmental readiness.

Requirements of neutrality in public institutions suggests a division of spiritual activities into two categories, non-school and school. For children and youth, non-school activities can vary widely, depending upon one's parents' beliefs. As stated previously, Coles (1990) shows a child's spiritual journey is done within the context of an individual's religious (or non-religious) training. For the vast majority of Americans, this would mean a focus on building a connection between the individual and a Greater Being. Activities such as prayer, meditation, reading of sacred texts, singing songs, and rituals all enhance knowledge of the relationship between a person and the Creator (Stonehouse, 1998). While prayer, meditation, and rituals cannot be implemented into the public school setting, time and space can be allotted to allow the students to practice these activities if they wish. Silence (Kessler, 2000) is an excellent example of providing students with an opportunity to reflect on their accomplishments, lessons learned, personal moments, people served, or communicate with a higher power, all of which help the student develop the conscious relationships.

Activities that increase self-awareness, strengthen relationships with others, and build a connection to the universe, while remaining free of religious doctrine, are more appropriate for a school setting. Due to the current demands on educators, appropriate activities can and should be incorporated into all classrooms, regardless of subject area, rather than developing courses specifically focused on spiritual development.

Kessler (2000) suggests there are seven pathways to the soul that express a particular yearning on the part of the individual. Each individual is likely to express at least one of these yearnings if provided an opportunity in a conducive environment. Table 2 shows these seven pathways. As shown in the table, each separate pathway has been discussed by other authors. What makes Kessler's approach unique is that she advocates establishing an environment where a person's most intimate questions and desires can be addressed. While group activities can be implemented, it is more important to provide a wide range of activities that will allow the individual student preferences to emerge. From Kessler's perspective, we should be guided by individual expressions of students rather than focused on a particular theory. She also suggests that spirituality can be seen in a number of different curriculum areas when issues of meaningfulness and connectivity are addressed.

Each of the pathways described by Kessler (2000) can be used to address the different levels of faith development described by Fowler (1981) or the contents of spirituality described by Coles (1990) or Hay and Nye (1998). A key is to address each of the pathways in a manner appropriate for the developmental level of the individual. This can be done through implementation of a "spiral approach" as shown in Figure 1. Each of the pathways can be used at the intuitive-projective level, again at the mythical-literal level, and so on. As the individual explores the different pathways at increasingly progressive levels, the core pathway of deep personal meaning becomes more developed.

For example, if the teacher were addressing the pathway of creativity at the intuitive-projective level she could tell simple stories of connecting to self, others, nature, the Creator, or unknowns and have the child draw a picture and explain it. It is especially important to connect with the child's imagination at this stage.

At the mythical-literal level the teacher could have children read more complex stories that address children's specific concerns. The teacher would ask the child to look for logical consistencies and inconsistencies and try to explain them. Another activity that might be useful

at this stage is "gratitude-in-a-jar." Gratitude-in-a-jar can be purchased or created as a quick method for aiding students to showing appreciation for personal talents, positive experiences, or awareness of environmental issues. The jar contains small slips of paper that have comments printed on them designed to generate discussion, reflection, and curiosity. An example of a gratitude-in-a-jar comment is "Today I make a distinction between what I can control and what I can let go of." Language arts teachers can create gratitude-in-a-jar comments that utilize terms that will be covered during the year, or literary quotations from novels that will be read. Environmental Science teachers could create gratitude-in-a-jar comments that create an appreciation for elements of nature. Again, it is important to address the different contexts of spirituality at each stage.

Figure 1: A Spiral Approach to Spiritual Development
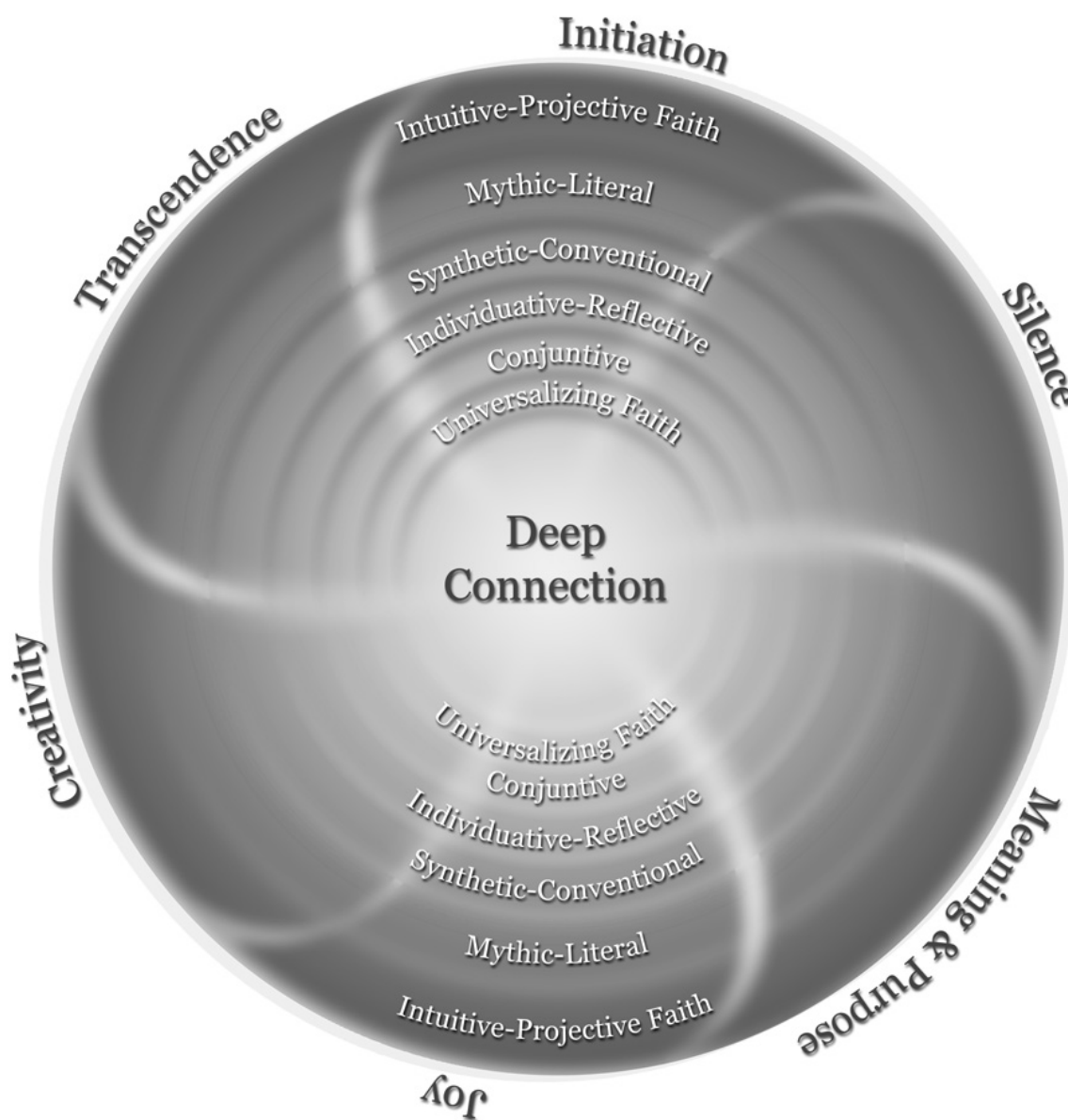
The thought for a day activity developed by Huitt (1999) is another lesson that could be used at this stage. The concept behind the thought for a day is "to demonstrate that our cultural/historical and religious backgrounds provide us with generic knowledge about how to think and behave in our modern world, and to practice learning to apply these in specific situations in our daily lives" (Huitt, p. 1). Quotations from a variety of sources, both secular and religious, can be discussed at the beginning of each day as a stimulus to encourage students to focus on developing a particular virtue or value for that day. This can be supported by discussions at home or in the community by having similar thoughts or quotations presented on billboards, on marquees, in newspapers, etc.

An activity at the synthetic-conventional that can help students develop meaning and purpose is for them to complete self-focused surveys. These can be fun while provoking the student to evaluate his or her self-knowledge. The Index of Core Spiritual Experiences (INSPIRIT) online evaluation is an excellent example (Kass, 1996). As the name indicates, this questionnaire measures the experiences of the spiritual core. In addition to the survey, students can review the spiritual boosters that are made available at the INSPIRIT website.

Another assessment that can provide insight into one's inner self is the assessment of signature strengths described Seligman (2002). Seligman and his colleagues have identified 24 strengths related to 6 categories of virtues found in all cultures: (1) wisdom and knowledge, (2) courage, (3) love and humanity, (4) justice, (5) temperance, and (6) spirituality and transcendence. Adult and youth versions of the assessment instrument are available.

Spiritual journaling, whereby students are encouraged to write their beliefs and experiential knowledge of themselves, can be used at any stage to increase and/or document spiritual progress. Ideally, this can be done in an English or Language Arts class to afford the educator an opportunity to assess writing skills. Integrating a spiritual journal into a career class could be a technique for increasing the student's awareness of personal tastes, views, and talents all of which are needed for making a career choice. The educator should guide the student by listing the purposes and grading criteria for the journal, providing the student with clear expectations. Questions such as, "What do you like most about yourself," can stimulate self-reflective critical thinking while providing the educator a view of how the students see themselves. Limiting or prohibiting classroom sharing may be necessary in order to create an environment conducive to meaningful contribution in the journal.

Individuative-reflective, conjunctive, and universalizing stages would normally be addressed in adulthood. However, the same concept applies. Different activities can be provided that encourage the individual to address increasingly complex issues to resolve (i.e., require increased levels of differentiation and integration). While it is important to provide opportunities for all children and youth to experience activities in all pathways, it is likely that mature adults will begin to select those pathways with which they have had some sort of positive experience. If parents and educators have done their job well, adults will be able to make their selections based on their own experiences rather than on only those promoted by their society or culture. Hopefully, this will result in the individual continuing to select activities that can impact spiritual development. If not, there is likely to be little growth beyond the mythical-literal or synthetic-conventional stages of childhood and youth.

All activities appropriate for use in the educational setting are meaningless if the climate is not conducive to learning. Having educators, administrators, and school boards that understand the impact a student's spiritual status can have on the student's ability to meet the school's

objectives is crucial. If these activities are implemented without a commitment and desire to truly touch the student in a meaningful way, then the activities are not likely to have the desired impact. Thus, prior to integrating any type of spiritual development program into the classroom, the foundation must be laid for a solid understanding of the value of, and the need for, spiritual development.

Measuring, Assessing, and Evaluating Spirituality

It is important that we address the question "Are students making progress in the spiritual domain?" Fortunately, "We can regard spiritual growth as having the same basis as any other form of growth, and can evaluate it accordingly, in terms of its contributions to our quality of life" (Lucas, 1999, p. 3).

Understanding the difference between assessing, measuring, or evaluating any aspect of learning is the precursor to implementation (Dietel, Herman, & Knuth, 1991). For the purposes of this discussion, assessment refers to any type of data collection process, whether qualitative or quantitative. On the other hand, measurement refers to the quantifying of data, and evaluation addresses the comparison of that data to a standard. All have a place in spiritual development and will be discussed.

One of the most important aspects of assessing spiritual development is making certain that there is a true representation of the full range of knowledge, attitudes, and skills that comprise this domain. That is one of the main reasons for providing children and youth with opportunities to engage each of the pathways discussed by Kessler (2000) and having students consider all of the contexts described by Coles (1990) and Hay and Nye (1998). If students are not provided an opportunity to express themselves in a pathway or context that truly interests them, our understanding of any particular individual will be severely restricted.

Another important issue relates to evaluating student progress. While we might expect that most children would begin to move from the intuitive-projective level to the mythical-literal at some time during the early elementary grades (Fowler, 1981), if some do not they should not be considered developmentally delayed. If Fowler is correct, and human beings evolve spiritually at different rates, then assessment must be based on individual progress rather than achieving a minimum milestone. It is, therefore, more important to establish methods of data collection and feedback that provide the student and parents with meaningful data to guide further progress than to use the data for comparison to a normative standard.

While Fowler (1981) did not write *Stages of Faith* to serve as a spiritual assessment tool, the very nature of the stages provides a framework for assessment. Spirituality can be evaluated by documenting the stage at which a student is currently functioning. Methodologies for creating an assessment to be used with Fowler's stages could be spiritual essays, stage-specific questions, or a combination of both. If the goal is for the student to advance through the stages, then assessing the current stage of faith could actually be a motivator for advancement to the next stage (Hodge, 2001).

There are several instruments developed by experts for assessing one's spirituality in a manner other than that described by Fowler (1981). Paper/pencil instruments are the most widely used methods of collecting data on spiritual development (Hodge, 2001). The dilemma with many assessment tools is that they can alter the reality of the person's perspective due in part to the limitations of the questions asked. In addition, questionnaires function under the premise that the participant has the literary ability to process the terms and understand the concept posed.

One example of a quantitative spiritual assessment tool is the previously mentioned Index of Core Spiritual Experiences (INSPIRIT) developed by Kass (1996). The focus of his study was the impact of spirituality on health. INSPIRIT is a self-test that provides quantitative results of a connection with one's spiritual core. While there are concerns with this type of assessment tool, the instrument is widely used and can bring the participant to a greater level of self-awareness. The test does refer to a Supreme Being, but provides the participant with a definition that can be applied to other belief systems. The INSPIRIT test does address the relationship between self and others. Integrating INSPIRIT into the classroom setting would be simple and the results possibly meaningful to the participants. However, the scope of the participant's spiritual knowledge may be limited.

Another established quantitative assessment tool is the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (Buffor, Paloutzian, & Ellison, 1991; Paloutzian & Ellision, 1982). This assessment tool has two dimensions: religious and existential. It is a 20-item self-administered test that yields a total score, a religious well-being summed score, and a summed score for the existential well-being. It has a test-retest reliability of .93; the internal consistency coefficients ranged from .94 to .89 in 7 different studies (Bufford, Paloutzian, & Ellison).

Berg (1997) developed an online assessment instrument based on the work of McSherry (1987). The instrument provides scores for strength of religious belief, spiritual injury, and a series of scores for types of stress. No reliability data are available for the instrument.

Qualitative measures that are more oriented to open-ended questions and focus more on process can be used to supplement forced-choice data. Kessler (2000) suggests having students anonymously ask "mystery questions" dealing with topics they are curious or worried about or simply wonder about. A first step when working with groups is to spend some time developing a sense of trust among the students. Rules must be established and practiced so that, when the facilitator reads an anonymously-provided question and solicits students' thoughts, others show respect and consideration. A review of student questions provides the facilitator with an overview of the types of issues that are of interest to a particular group. Having students reflect what they have learned about these important questions at the end of unit or course that deals with these topics can be a valuable resource for evaluating student learning.

Hodge (2001) provides an overview of qualitative assessment tools developed by Nino (1997), Pruyser (1993), and Fitchett's (1993). Nino's spiritual quest is based on 10 items that lead the participant to create a detailed autobiographical story. Pruyser's model includes seven categories: things that are sacred, hope and trust, commitment, thankfulness, guilt, connectedness, and purpose in life and work. When utilizing this instrument, the instructor listens to students' stories, asking questions that relate to the seven themes. Fitchett's approach also focuses on seven areas: beliefs and meaning, vocation and consequences, experiences and emotion, courage and growth, ritual and practice, community, authority and guidance, which provide an understanding of the student's spirituality in a broader context. In each case, the authors include items that relate to the three domains discussed by Hamilton and Jackson (1998): a relationship to one's self, a relationship to others, and a relationship to a Higher Power.

Hodge (2001) proposes a spiritual framework for the purpose of counseling. His two-dimensional framework has a narrative and an interpretive aspect. The narrative framework is composed of three questions that provide information on the subject's religious or spiritual tradition and experience. The interpretive anthropological framework is multidimensional and provides data on the subject's understanding or explanation of his or her spiritual beliefs and activities. The interpretive portion is made up of six topical questions that focus on affect,

behavior, cognition, communion, conscience, and intuition. The use of this framework requires a significant amount of time and commitment to explore the strengths of an individual as a spiritual being. However, the collection of the data and a person's identification of spiritual strengths is, in itself, a potentially successful intervention.

Hummel and Huitt (1994) use the phrase "what you measure is what you get" to convey an important relationship between assessment and instruction. If specific data are not collected, reviewed, and shared, it is unlikely that the outcomes related to the data will continue to be viewed as important. It is therefore critical that educators think about the type of data related to spiritual development that is both pertinent and available for sharing with others. Deciding exactly what is to be measured of a person's spirituality is challenging. Referencing the assessment to the five aspects of spirituality (self, others, nature, unknowns of the universe, and Creator) is a logical choice. Measuring a person's self-knowledge can be done with a self-administered survey or a one-on-one interview. This aspect of spirituality is likely related to the domains of personal style and affect or values. Assessing the development of the second aspect, relationships with others, can be more varied. Observing the way a student interacts and having the student reflect about those observations or utilizing surveys asking about an individual's views of one another are just two examples of tools that can be created to capture the development of that part of spirituality. This aspect is likely related to development in other domains described in the Brilliant Star model (Huitt, 1999) such as family, friends, and social/cultural. The third aspect, relationship to nature, and the fourth, relationships to the unknowns of the universe, can be assessed in similar ways through observation and personal reflection.

The last aspect (relationship to God, Creator, Supreme Being, Great Spirit, etc.) is far more difficult to address. Due to what has been interpreted as the constitutional demand of maintaining neutrality between organized religious and public policy as well as the reality of respecting diverse religious backgrounds in the United States (Eck, 2001), focusing on the development of a relationship between the human being and a higher power may be seen as inappropriate. However, the essence of this relationship can be addressed by looking at the connection between self and the unknowns. The teacher might organize surveys or interviews, or have students compose essays that can be used to foster an awareness of how a person feels about his or her personal fate or the future. Examining the relationship to a Greater Being could be an option for those individuals who have a desire to express that conviction.

A primary benefit of stating a desired outcome in measurable terms is for the teacher to stay focused on the goal and for the student to understand what is important. An example of this might be to have each student identify one new attribute or personality characteristic about him- or herself that was not previously identified and document how this quality affects the individual's self-concept. There are myriad issues to consider at this point. For example, does a measurable term mean an obligation to provide a score? Is it more appropriate to simply document thoughts, attitudes, and behavior using qualitative data?

After collecting all the information, what do the data mean to the process of spiritual development? One activity might be for the teacher to provide students and parents with data on student consideration of spiritual issues. For example, an instructor can demonstrate an impact on self-knowledge if it can be documented that 98% of all students completing the spiritual development assessment were able to identify one new quality of their personality of which they were not previously aware. Statements of how the self-actualization affected the student's perception of self, treatment of others, and a new found ability to deal with the future could be

indicators of how valuable spiritual education can be. Examples of behavioral outcomes of this consideration is the number of students who become involved in spiritually-related activities such as prayer, joining a group, or selecting and supporting social causes.

       In summary, there are a wide variety of approaches to assessing, measuring, and evaluating children's and youth's spiritual development that can be used in a public school setting. Probably more of an issue is whether there are appropriate activities that can be used in schools to address development in this domain.

Summary and Conclusions

       Humankind's spirituality has been an element of every known society and culture. This paper has provided an overview of empirical research that demonstrates one's spiritual development leads to a variety of positive outcomes and its neglect can have a detrimental effect. Fowler (1981) indicates spiritual advancement is conducive to becoming more accepting of others, more confident, and more caring. The development of student's level of faith or spirituality can be documented and assisted using classroom-based activities that are neutral with respect to any specific religion or belief system. Other social institutions, such as private businesses, are seeing a need to address worker's spiritual needs in the workplace and are finding ways to do so.

       If one of the goals of education is to stimulate the desire of the pupil to continue seeking knowledge after leaving the formal school setting, connecting the need for that knowledge to one's essence and existential meaning is an important activity (Weaver & Cotell, 1992). Postman (1995) believes that engaging in learning activities without meaning has no purpose and it is our spirituality that provides the meaningful need to learn. Reaching the spirit of a person during the formal educational process would increase the chances that the individual would make learning a custom spanning the entire lifespan.

       To omit the topic of human spirituality completely from our public institutions separates those institutions from the very people who support them. Addressing spiritual development in a manner that is constitutionally appropriate and acceptable to a wide variety of parents will require much wisdom and tact. However, the potential impact on the preparation of children and youth for successful living in the 21st century would suggest a need to get started immediately.

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