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ABSTRACT

The impact of faith on individuals has been described in research for many years, yet counseling programs often do not address issues of spirituality. Little has been documented about how to integrate spirituality and religious issues into counseling programs and practices. In an attempt to address the need for more discussion on issues of spirituality, this paper outlines the basic premise of Fowler's Stages of Faith Development. It then applies these premises to counseling education and supervision, and suggests interventions that supervisors might use to encourage awareness and growth in faith development of their supervisees. The paper notes that research is needed to determine the validity of Fowler's stages and the effectiveness of using them to promote the faith development of counseling students. (Contains 16 references.) (JDM)

Running head: SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Encouraging the Spiritual Development of Counseling Students and Supervisees Using Fowler's Stages of Faith Development

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Abstract

Research clearly underscores the vitality of faith in this country and its impact on our citizens, yet counseling programs have been slow to address issues of spirituality. There is a paucity of research on spirituality in counselor education and supervision and little is known about how to integrate spiritual and religious issues into our programs and practice. In response to the need for more discussion on issues of spirituality, this paper attempts to integrate Fowler's Stages of Faith Development into student development in counseling programs. A brief discussion of Fowler's Stages of Faith Development is offered along with corresponding characteristics of students in each of the most common adult stages of faith development. Interventions for helping students move to higher levels of faith development are provided.

Encouraging the Spiritual Development of Counseling Students and Supervisees Using Fowler's Stages of Faith Development

Historically, counselors have had the attitude that religion and spirituality do not belong in the counseling setting. However there has been a recent surge of interest in spirituality among counselors arising out of increased focus on diversity (Griffith & Rotter, 1999). An exploration of research on the role of spirituality in the United States emphasizes the vitality of faith in this country and its impact on our citizens. A 1996 Gallup poll found that nearly all adults in the U.S. identify with organized religion, and more than half indicate that religion is very important in their lives. Ninety-two percent name a preference for a specific religion, and 69% indicate they belong to a specific church or synagogue. Fifty-eight percent of Americans consider religion "very important" and 32% say it is "fairly important" in their lives. Only 9% say it is "not very important."

There are nearly 500,000 places of worship in the U.S. that include no fewer than 2,000 denominations. Nearly all Americans express a belief in a universal spirit and most believe their god watches over individuals. Most believe their god performs miracles. The vast majority of respondents indicate they have felt their god's presence and believe their god has a plan for their lives. One-third of Americans report experiencing a profound spiritual experience that has changed their life. This experience is often the focal point in their faith development. Moreover, 44% of those who believe in God believe he/she has spoken directly to them. Virtually all Americans pray and believe their prayers are answered (Gallup, 1996).

One-third of U.S. citizens view religious television weekly and the most Americans want their children to receive religious training. And while professional sports events gross millions

of dollars, Christians and Jews give billions in free will gifts to their churches and synagogues (Gallup, 1996).

At least 74% of Americans say religion has strengthened family relationships either a great deal or somewhat. "Moral and spiritual values based on the Bible" outranked "family counseling," "parent training classes" and "government laws and policies" as key to strengthening their family. This was superseded only by "family ties, loyalty, and traditions" (Gallup, 1996, p. 7).

Almost eight out of ten Americans report their religious beliefs help them to respect themselves. Sixty-three percent say their beliefs prevent them from doing things they know they should not. Those Americans who indicate religion is important in their lives and who receive comfort from their beliefs are more likely to feel close to their families, find job fulfillment, and feel excitement for the future (Gallup, 1996).

In a 1991 Gallup poll, two-thirds of those surveyed stated that if faced with serious problems, they would seek assistance from a counselor with spiritual beliefs and values. Eighty-one percent indicated they wanted to have their values and beliefs integrated into the counseling process (as cited in Kelly, 1995).

Impact of Spirituality on Our Lives

Spirituality is a normal part of our pattern of socialization. The faith of most individuals is reflected in their daily attitudes toward sex roles, marriage, divorce, number of children, how their children are raised, sexual activity, friendships, and politics (Gallup, 1996). One's religious ideas can affect their dress, social activities, and diet—including consumption of drugs, alcohol, and smoking (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998).

Children are aware of their religious identity—Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish—by the time they are five years of age, although they tend to group religious identity in the same manner as national or racial identity. By the time they are nine years of age, they can distinguish between religion and irreligion and can identify the practices of various denominations (Greeley, 1982).

The *Bible*—or at least the Old Testament of the *Bible*—is held as sacred by most individuals who attend church regularly. Many individuals seek guidance from the *Bible* or other religious writings to determine how they must conduct themselves. Some individuals may use biblical writings to justify aberrant behavior ranging from the practice of slavery to Anti-Semitism (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998).

Religion influences political movements. For example, the boycotts, civil disobedience and nonviolent confrontations of the civil rights movement were centered in the Southern African American Churches. Intense and passionate debate surrounds many political issues including abortion, gay rights, school prayer, and censorship of textbooks in our schools. Some of these issues have resulted in split communities and individuals being beaten, shot, or killed (Gollnick, & Chinn, 1998).

Recently, in response to rigid fundamentalist ideologies, there has been a rise in the New Age movement of the 1960s. Rooted in nineteenth-century spiritualism, this movement rejects materialism and favors spiritual experience over organized religion. Some practices of the New Age movement include reincarnation, biofeedback, shamanism, the occult, psychic healing, and extraterrestrial life (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998).

Spirituality and Counselor Education Programs

Although we have come a long way in the inclusion of multicultural and holistic approaches in counseling, the curricula and content of our profession appears to neglect, omit, or avoid religious-spiritual issues (Okundaye, Gray & Gray, 1999). Plato wrote:

> As you ought not to attempt to cure the eyes without the head, or the head without the body, so neither ought you to attempt to cure the body without the soul . . . for the part can never be well unless the whole is well . . . And therefore, if the head and body are to be well, you must begin by curing the soul.

Few counselors would argue against Plato's wisdom, yet in a survey of 354 department chairs of counseling departments, Kelly (1994) found that fewer than 25% of the programs surveyed offer a course or significant non-course component that addresses religious-spiritual issues in counseling. Moreover, most programs provided no internship supervision on religious-spiritual issues as they relate to the client or to the intern.

In contrast, Kelly (1994) found that almost half (45.3%) of counselor education chairs considered spirituality "very important" or "important" in the preparation of counseling students, while an additional 41.2% considered religious-spiritual issues "somewhat important." This study highlights an interesting discrepancy between perceived importance of spirituality and the paucity of attention given to the subject in our counselor education programs. One might speculate that counselor education leaders believe that spiritual issues are inappropriate or may intrude on students' religious rights. Yet, these issues are deeply relevant to the lives of both our students and our clients. Kelly argues that further study and dialogue are crucial to determine how best to incorporate issues of spirituality into our programs.

A recent survey of members of the American Counseling Association found that 64% of those surveyed believe in a personal god and 25% believe in a transcendent or spiritual dimension. Seventy percent had some affiliation with organized religion and nearly 45% indicated they were highly active or a regular participant in religious activities (Kelly, 1995).

Students in the helping professions also see the need for integration of spirituality into curricula and training. In a survey of marriage and family therapy (MFT) graduate students, researchers found that all of the students studied defined themselves as spiritual, with 72.6% feeling strongly about their spiritual beliefs and 66.7% regularly practiced their spirituality. Approximately 76% of the students indicated that their spirituality was influential in their career decision. Most of the students believed that spirituality should be considered in the clinical setting. A significant number of students believed that all psychosocial problems have a spiritual dimension and that there is a relationship between spirituality and physical/mental health. Over 86% of the students believed they must address spirituality issues if they are to help the client (Prest, Russel & Souza, 1999)

MFT students surveyed reported using spirituality to aid their clients, including using spirituality to help their clients develop coping skills, praying in private for their clients, and discussing the meaning of life or death with their client. Most of the students (72.6%) expressed interest in learning about the integration of spirituality into their practice and 52.9% believed clinicians should receive supervision and training dealing with spirituality. Yet, fewer than one in 10 (7.8%) had received training in their clinical program regarding integration of spirituality into their practice (Prest, Russel & Souza, 1999)

A spiritually sensitive helping relationship may be defined as one in which the helper assists the client in integrating personal and professional growth, discusses with clients how they

make meaning of their lives and the basis for their moral decisions, embraces both religious and nonreligious spiritual expressions, supports the resolution of crises in creative ways, and draws from a variety of spiritual resources that are relevant to the client (Canda, 1997). Yet, counselor trainees are not receiving training or supervision in their clinical programs regarding how to develop a spiritually sensitive helping relationship with their clients. One might reason that the first step toward reaching the goal of developing a spiritually sensitive helping relationship would be to help the counselor trainees understand the role of religion-spirituality in their own lives. Only then can they develop the understanding and sensitivity necessary for providing spiritually sensitive intervention to their clients.

In response to the need for effective ways of helping counselor trainees understand the role of spirituality in their own lives, this article outlines the basic premises of Fowler's (1981) Stages of Faith Development, applies those premises to counselor education and supervision, and suggests interventions that counselor educators and supervisors might use to encourage the spiritual development of their students. This article is the first known attempt to integrate Fowler's Stages of Faith Development into counselor education and supervision. These ideas presented are intended as a starting point from which others may critique or expand upon.

Fowler's Stages of Faith Development

James Fowler (1981), a theologian influenced by Piaget's work in cognitive development and Kohlberg's work in moral development created a developmental model he calls Stages of Faith Development. Fowler's model emerged as he listened to the life stories of 357 individuals interviewed between 1972 to 1981. From these life stories, he developed one pre-stage and six stages of faith development. Fowler believed that movement from one stage of the hierarchy to another does not occur automatically as one matures. Individuals may reach chronological and

biological adulthood, yet remain in a stage of faith associated with early or middle childhood. The levels are described below.

Pre-stage: Undifferentiated (Primal) Faith—Infancy

Children in this stage form a basic outlook on the world. The foundation of strong faith development in this stage is dependent on the child's relationship with caregivers. Two problems can develop at this level. First, an excessive narcissistic pattern can emerge for children whose experience of being the center of attention dominates or distorts their relationship with their caregivers. Second, experiences of neglect or inconsistency can leave the child locked into patterns of isolation or failed relationships with their caregiver. The transition from the Pre-stage to Stage 1 comes about through the child's use of symbols in speech and ritual play activities brought about through the development of language and thought.

Stage 1: Intuitive-Projective Faith—Early Childhood (3-7 years) During Stage 1, children's imaginations are unrestrained by logic. They develop powerful and permanent images and feelings, both positive and negative that they will need to sort out as they mature. These images result from the examples, moods, actions, and stories of significant others in children's lives. During this stage, children develop an egocentric awareness of themselves. They become aware of death, sex, and cultural taboos. The dangers of this stage arise when a child's imagination becomes overwhelmed by images of terror or destructiveness or when their imagination is exploited to reinforce taboos or moral expectations. The main factor in the transition to the next stage is concrete operational thinking. Key to this transition is clarification of what is real and what only seems to be.

Stage 2: Mythic-Literal Faith (Childhood and Beyond)

Along with the ability to perform concrete operations comes the individual's ability to reconstruct earlier views of the world. These constructs take on a linear, cause-and-effect perspective of making sense of the world. Individuals are increasingly able to understand the perspective of others in their life. Personal meanings and beliefs are incorporated into stories, dramas, or myths about their community and meanings are taken literally. The transition to Stage 3 occurs with the transition to formal operational thought. This is marked by the ability to note and reflect on conflicts or contradictions in stories. During this transition, individuals begin to develop mutual interpersonal perspective taking.

Stage 3: Synthetic-Conventional Fair (Adolescence and Beyond)

Stage 3 generally corresponds to the cognitive stage of formal operations. The individual's experience of the world extends beyond their family to other realms including school, work, peers, and religion. They develop a personal identity that is reflective of how others respond to them. Individuals are concerned about solidarity with significant others. They are other-directed and have not attained the confidence or ability to maintain an independent perspective. Individuals form a personal myth during this stage that incorporates their past and anticipated future. They begin to assume responsibility for personal commitments, attitudes, and beliefs culminating in an overall personal lifestyle. The dangers of this stage are twofold. First, expectations and evaluations of others can become so internalized that autonomy in judgments and actions are jeopardized or they feel their existence is senseless or useless. The transition from Stage 3 to Stage 4 is significant and does not occur for all adults. Many may remain at permanently at Stage 2 or 3. Factors that contribute to the failure to transition to a higher stage include contradictions between valued authorities, changes by those in authority in practices

previously deemed sacred, experiences that lead to critical reflection on the formation of one's beliefs and values and how relative they are to the individual. Often, however, the experience of independent living can bring about the kind of self-examination that leads to transition to Stage 4.

Stage 4: Individuative-Reflective Faith (Young Adulthood and Beyond)

For many, Stage 4 emerges during the mid-30s and early 40s. During this time, one's identity or personal view of self and the world become differentiated from others—personal ownership occurs. While the views of others are considered, they are not necessarily accepted.

This is a time of high personal tension when the individual makes difficult decisions regarding group identification and self-actualization. The strength of this stage lies in the critical reflection of one's self and one's outlook. Dangers are inherent in the strengths; excessive confidence and a kind of second narcissism results in the over-assimilation of reality and the perspectives of others into one's worldview. The transition leads individuals to what may feel like disturbing inner voices. Individuals may feel disillusioned with compromises. The recognition of the complexity of life may lead one toward a more dialectical and multileveled approach to truth.

Stage 5: Conjunctive Faith (Mid-30s and Beyond)

The task of Stage 5 involves integrating into oneself those issues previously suppressed or unrecognized in Stage 4. A "second naiveté" occurs in which symbolic power is reunited with conceptual meanings. Critical recognition of one's social unconscious occurs as we become aware of myths, ideal images, and prejudices rooted within systems such as social class or ethnic group. There is a commitment to justice that moves beyond social class, religion, ethnic group,

community, or nation. A seriousness arises as one seeks to conserve and cultivate the generation of identity and meaning for others.

A sort of "ironic imagination" emerges in which one can see powerful meanings while simultaneously recognizing the fact that they are relative, partial, and distorting. One can appreciate symbols, myths, and rituals from all traditions. The divisions between individuals in a global community are seen in vivid contrast against the possibility of an inclusive community. Although individuals have transforming visions and loyalties, they often live and act in an untransformed world. Only a small number of individuals heed to the call of radical actualization seen in Stage 6.

Stage 6: Universalizing Faith (Midlife and Beyond)

Few individuals reach Stage 6. Some examples of individuals who have reached this stage include Gandhi; Martin Luther King, Jr.; Mother Teresa of Calcutta; Dag Hammarskjöld; Dietrich Bonhoeffer; Abraham Heschel; and Thomas Merton. These individuals are disciplined, activist incarnations of absolute love and justice. They are heedless to self-preservation, transcending existing morality and religion. Consequently, their actions and words are extraordinary and often have an unpredictable quality. Their devotion to universal compassion may offend parochial ideas of justice and threaten standards of righteousness, goodness and prudence. Their leadership may involve nonviolent suffering and ultimate respect for being. They may become martyrs for the visions they incarnate. Life is loved, yet held loosely. In fact, many individuals in Stage 6 die at the hands of those they hope to change and are often more honored or revered after their deaths than while they were living. Individuals in Stage 6 may be described has having a quality that makes them seem more clear-minded and simple, yet more fully human than others. They embrace a universal community composed of individuals of all

other stages and from all other faith traditions. They support an inclusive community, a radical commitment to justice, and love and selfless passion. They envision a transformed, divine and transcendent world.

The Application of Fowler's Stages of Faith to Counseling Supervision

Fowler's Stages of Faith Development are applicable to students from the time they enter a counseling program, throughout their practicum and internship, and beyond. Regardless of the developmental level of the counseling student, counselor educators and supervisors can start at the student's stage of faith development and proceed through the subsequent stages to help students move to a level of faith development that matches other developmental stages. Most individuals fall within stages two through five. Therefore, only these four stages will be discussed.

There are parallels between the relationship between therapist and client, and faculty and counselor education students (Biaggio, Paget, & Chenoweth, 1997). Consequently, as counselor educators it is important that we approach student faith development from an ethical framework in which students participate in developmental changes willingly and with full knowledge of the possible repercussions of these changes in much the same way we would obtain informed consent from our clients.

Stage 2: Mythic-Literal Faith

Student Characteristics. Fowler (1981) found that although children ages two to seven dominate this stage, adults are found in this stage as well. Based on Fowler's ideas, students in Stage 2 may be concrete thinkers who are unable to see salient themes or adapt their thinking or behavior. These students may believe theirs is the only explanation. They may have difficulty seeing the perspective of others and may be rigid in their personal beliefs. These students may

cling to a definition of reality based on a universal set of assumptions that, although outdated and ineffective, offer the student continuity. They may be insensitive to cultural variations among individuals. Students in Stage 2 may accept unreasoned assumptions without proof or regard to rationality. They may fail to evaluate the viewpoints of others and make little attempt to accommodate the behaviors of others. They may be trapped into one way of thinking that resists adaptation and rejects alternatives. These students may be unable to generalize or to reflect on themselves. They may be able to name emotions, but are unable to reflect on them. These students may fail to accept responsibility for their behaviors and blame others.

Students in this stage may believe individuals are to blame for their plight in life. They may believe that the most able, meritorious, ambitious, hardworking, or talented individuals will acquire the most—achieve the most. They may accept the inequalities faced by the oppressed as tolerable, fair, or just consequences. They may believe achievement is proportionate to merit.

Intervention. Fowler (1981) believes a key factor that may initiate transition to Stage 3 is formal operational thought. Research has found that between 40% and 60% of college students fail Piaget's formal operational problems (Keating, 1979). This may be due to the fact that individuals are more likely to think abstractly in situations where they have had extensive experience. Lehman & Nisbett (1990) found that simply taking college courses led to improvements in formal reasoning in course content. Therefore, interventions geared toward moving counseling students toward Stage 3 should begin by assisting students in the development of formal operational thought in their counseling coursework. Promising theories have been developed using Bloom's Taxonomy to improve counseling competences and critical writing skills of counseling students. These theories provide clear and concise guidelines for intervention (Granello, 2000; Granello, 2001).

Other helpful interventions for Stage 2 counseling students include: (1) exercises that assist students in first recognizing themes in their own lives, then in the lives of others; (2) small group work with other students toward integration and acceptance of other ways of knowing; (3) awareness activities that encourage students to think beyond outdated and ineffective assumptions; (4) cultural sensitivity activities; (5) exercises that challenge students to evaluate the meanings behind their language patterns; (6) activities that assist students in first recognizing, then exploring feelings; (7) exercises to assist students in moving beyond linear, cause-and-effect thinking; (8) assigning carefully chosen readings that explore other ways of knowing the world, and (9) exercises that assist students in applying new knowledge to a variety of situations. All interventions should attempt to build on student's strengths, such as ability to recall details.

Stage 3: Synthetic-Conventional Faith

Student Characteristics. Adolescents in their formative years are often found in Stage 3. However, adults can also find equilibrium in Stage 3. In fact, Fowler (1981) found that much of church and synagogue life can be described as predominantly Synthetic-Conventional. Students in Stage 3 are formal operational thinkers with the ability to formulate and test hypotheses. They can conceive of ideals, and may be harshly judgmental of individuals who do not meet these ideals. While the capacity for formal operational thinking may help the student focus on their commitments and values, there is a danger that the student may become overly dependent on authority figures. Although they may believe they are independent decision makers, their decisions may, in fact, be deeply rooted in the ideas of individuals they revere. Consequently, these students may appear to be unquestioning of their core beliefs about themselves and others. They may trust charismatic external authorities to provide a paradigm for constructing social and

political relationships. Moreover, they may canonize theorists without questioning theoretical assumptions made by these theorists in much the same way the have canonized other authorities.

Coherence may come from fitting into a network of expectations and duties established by others. They may seek to establish a sense of commonality or solidarity with others without examining their values or checking that their values are correct. Students in Stage 3 may limit their self-reflection to either comparisons with or the approval of others whom they perceive to be like them. Individuals with different outlooks are viewed as a different "kind" of person. Students in the stage may have us-them thinking, in which they make sweeping generalizations about other "kinds" of people. They may say "Some of my best friends are . . ." completing the sentence with a word describing some racial, ethnic, religious, or national "outsider" with no awareness of the social consequences of their binary constructs.

For some students in this stage, social organization and power are never questioned. "Natural," biologically-based, "common-sense" ideologies that define differences in social power while denying the possibility of change are tacitly accepted. Consequently, these meanings serve to marginalize women and other oppressed people whose attempts for change are viewed as "unnatural." Male and female students alike may accept traditional authority and trust traditional gender expectations without question. For example, they may accept issues such as wife beating as the "natural order of things." Or they may view macho male identities as biologically-based and use phrases such as "Boys will be boys."

For these students, meaning and symbols are bound together. Symbols of the sacred are related to the meaning in ways that are inseparable and connected. Strategies of demythologization of symbols are perceived as threats to the very sacredness the symbol

represents. For example, acts such as flag burning may be an incomprehensible sacrilege for these students.

Students in Stage 3 may appear to be self-absorbed. They may fail to take action. On occasions when they do take action, they may fail to consider others. Due to their tacit dependence on the opinions of others they frequently define themselves by how others view them. These students may be unable to examine their assumptions and may find themselves in a cycle of scheming, fantasizing, and worrying.

Interventions. Fowler (1981) recognized two critical features in the transitional movement from Stage 3 to Stage 4: (1) distancing from one's previous value system, and (2) developing internal processes of decision-making. For many students the very act of starting college may meet the first of these two criteria, yet some students may fail to suspend reliance on external sources of authority. Conversely, students may develop internal processes of decision-making, yet remain connected with early value systems. In these instances, students may reach an impasse somewhere between Stage 3 and Stage 4. When this occurs for counseling students, it is our job to help them move fully into Stage 4.

Students in Stage 3 may have reached the highest stage of faith development of their parents. Consequently, as they move to Stage 4, they may begin to feel alienated by their family and friends, yet not quite in step with individuals who have moved fully into Stage 4. In order to move to a higher stage of faith development than their parents, these students must be exposed to new ideas, and new and different people. We can encourage them to explore the roots of their values and ideologies—to develop independent ways of viewing the world. We can assist them in exploring such issues as: (1) individuality versus being defined by a group; (2) subjectivity and unexamined feelings versus objectivity and critical thinking; (3) self-fulfillment versus

service to others; (4) commitment to the relative versus struggling with the possibility of an absolute.

For nontraditional students, the transition to Stage 4 may be precipitated by changes in primary relationships, such as a divorce, the death of a parent, or children leaving home. It can be the result of new challenges such as their return to school. Or it can result from feelings of inadequacy in Stage 3. This transition can be an upheaval in anyone's life, yet the transition may be harder for older adults due to its impact on an established and elaborate system of relationships and roles that constitute their lives. For some, the transition to Stage 4 may last five to seven years or longer.

Students in Stage 3 must become disembedded from their Synthetic-Conventional, assumptive worldview. Counselor educators and supervisors can assist them in the transition to Stage 4 by helping them look with critical awareness at the assumptive system of values they share with most of their family and friends. We can help them understand the histories of others and how the worldviews of others grow out of their unique experiences and the conditions of living. We can help students understand that we are shaped by our social class, the histories we inherit, and by the economic conditions and opportunities with which we struggle. For successful transition, the tacit values and meaning system of Stage 3 must be replaced by the explicit system found in Stage 4.

Individuals in Stage 3 may find themselves uncomfortable with injustice, yet they fail to take action. Helping students identify and question those feelings and explore ways in which they may better respond to injustice in the future may help them in the process of individuating while developing an understanding of the worldview of others. We can challenge students to

explore individuation from their family and friends by encouraging them to move away from interpersonal groups that serve to form, maintain, and limit their identity.

The move to Stage 4 can be frightening and disorientating. Effectively making this move may be dependent on the character and quality of campus groups available for students to join. These groups may grow out of the counseling classroom or group supervision experiences. Students might also be encouraged to find groups outside of the counseling department such as fraternities, sororities, or campus political groups.

True individuation requires a sort of burning bridges with the past without full assurance of where the future will lead. Simply put, in order to move to Stage 4, there must be an interruption of reliance on external sources of authority. Authority must be relocated within the self. Of course, the ideas of others remain important, yet these ideas are internally reviewed and the student begins to accept responsibility for choices made.

Stage 4: Individuative-Reflective Faith

Student characteristics. Students in Stage 4 have reached the average stage of faith development for most adults. These students are genuinely aware of social systems and institutions. They take seriously the burden of responsibility for their own commitments, lifestyle, beliefs, and attitudes. They are active, purposeful individuals who make sense of their world, choose from their experiences, and determine their own learning. They understand that individuals impose their own interpretations and responses on the events of their lives. They maintain their Stage 3 ability to take the perspective of others, with two important differences. First, they understand that they have personal ideologies that are shaped and reshaped over time. Further, they understand that others also have ideologies shaped by their unique experiences. Second, students in Stage 4 understand systemic relationships. They no longer construct social

relationships as an extension of interpersonal relationships. They think in terms of impersonal imperatives of law, rules and standards that govern social roles.

Students in Stage 4 have the capacity for critical reflection. Inherit dangers in the capacity for critical reflection is an excessive confidence in the conscious mind and in critical thought. Students may overassimilate "reality" and the perspectives of others into their own worldview.

Unlike students in Stage 3 who view symbols as bound to the entity they represent, students in Stage 4 may interrogate and question these previously held ideologies. They may view symbols and meanings as separate from the entity they represent. They may ask, "What does it mean?" If the symbol is truly meaningful, it can be translated into useful propositions, definitions, or conceptual foundations. This demythologizing of symbols brings both gains and losses. In translating symbols into conceptual prose students may feel a sense of loss, dislocation, grief, or even guilt. For example, the student who learns that the various gods of religious or tribal groups are representative of the power-base of that group may never view their god the same again. Yet, in separating the symbol from its meaning, these meanings can be communicated separately from its symbol and comparisons more easily made.

Interventions. The student in Stage 4 who is ready to transition to Stage 5 may feel a sense of restlessness with the self-image and outlook that have developed in Stage 4. They may find themselves attending to disorderly or disturbing inner thoughts that indicate readiness for a move to Stage 5, including components from their past, reflections of a deeper self, or feelings that their lives are unproductive or fruitless. As counseling educators and supervisors, we can assure students that their feelings are a natural progression to a higher level of faith development.

We can assist them in evaluating ways in which they may feel productive within the counseling profession.

Students in Stage 4 may feel challenged by images of traditions that break in on the neatness of their current stage of faith. They may be compelled to move to Stage 5 by disillusionment—by their recognition that life is more complex and abstract than previously understood. The realization of the complexity of life can be overwhelming for a student and they may experience feelings of hopelessness or helplessness. We must be aware of the potential problems of this stage and provide intervention if the student's struggles affect school or clinical work. For example, we might check for issues of countertransference in students who are using insight-oriented methodologies in the clinical setting

As counseling educators and supervisors, we can help students in transition to Stage 5 see that they are not stagnant beings whose lives are determined by a particular chain events—that they are always evolving, changing and being influenced by the world around them. In the face of a complex world, students may be reassured by the one consistent and reliable factor that joins together the human race is change—that one can never step into the same river twice. Helping students deal with the ambiguities they face during the transition can move them to the highest level of faith development most individuals achieve, Conjunctive Faith.

Stage 5: Conjunctive Faith

Student characteristics. Defining the student in Stage 5 is complex. The student in Stage 5 has a way of seeing, of knowing, of committing that moves beyond the binary either/or logic of Stage 4. They are capable of seeing all sides of an issue simultaneously. The ccnjunctive faith of students in this stage moves them to believe that all things are organically interrelated. These students possess "dialogical knowing." That is, what is known is invited to speak in its own

language; the knower seeks to accommodate what is being known before imposing their categories upon on.

The student in Stage 5 is characterized by a "detachment" or willingness to allow reality to speak regardless of the impact on their sense of security or self-esteem. This student celebrates, reveres, and attends to the "wisdom" of others without seeking to modify, control, or order them into categories. Students in Stage 5 go beyond explicit ideological systems and boundaries of identity formed in Stage 4. They have come to terms with their own unconscious models that determine their actions and responses. They have learned to integrate the conscious and the unconscious.

Students in Stage 5 understand that truth is more complex than most theories can grasp, that all of our symbols, stories, doctrines, liturgies, and other traditions are incomplete and limited to our own unique experience. They may resist labeling the undesirable behavior of clients as pathological and question the validity of our mental health diagnostic system. They may challenge the assumption of inherent superiority of the dominant culture to which traditional counseling theorists belong. They may view traditional theories as narrowly focused and believe these theories draw universal conclusions about human nature from constructs that perpetuate the superiority of some individuals over others. They may choose to view clients contextually while integrating theories to best meet the unique needs of the client.

Students in Stage 5 have the capacity to view others in context of their history, geography and culture—to recognize and value their transitions and wisdom. They understand that the ideologies of others help them understand, interpret, and make order of their lives. They believe that clients are always doing the best they can in a difficult world.

They understand that religious traditions serve to mediate relation and have a radical openness to the truth. They seek encounters with traditions outside their own, seeking new truths that will be disclosed in ways that complement or correct their own truth in a mutual movement toward the real and the true.

The Stage 5 student critically recognizes their social unconscious—the myths, ideal images and prejudices held by virtue of the groups to which they may belong. They view truth as porous, permeable, changing, paradoxical and full of contradictions. And they seek new meanings that unite paradox and contradictions. Like the layers of an onion, truth that comes from the layers or stages of their faith development and is retold once more.

Conclusion

Although counseling education programs once believed religion and spirituality did not belong in the counseling setting, recent research emphasizes the need for counselors and counselor education programs to begin addressing these issues. Nearly all Americans express a belief in a universal spirit who affects their lives in profound ways. Moreover, both counseling educators and students in helping professions view spiritual issues as important in the clinical setting. Yet, fewer the one in ten counseling students received training regarding integrating spirituality into their practice (Prest, Russel & Souza, 1999).

One way of helping counseling students develop a spiritually sensitive helping relationship is assisting them in understanding the role of spirituality in their own lives and helping them grow to a level of faith development that complements their professional development. This article outlines the basic premises of Fowler's (1981) Stages of Faith Development, applies those premises to counseling education and supervision, and suggests

interventions that supervisors might use to encourage awareness and growth in the faith development of their supervisees.

This article is the first attempt to link Fowler's Stages of Faith Development to counseling education and supervision. It is part of a larger acknowledgement within the counseling profession for the need to integrate issues of spirituality into our counseling programs and ultimately into the clinical setting. It may serve as a useful tool for counselor educators and supervisors seeking interventions to encourage student awareness and faith development as one part of a comprehensive attempt to incorporate issues of spirituality into counseling education.

Although Fowler's (1981) Stages of Faith Development have been widely published in counseling textbooks, little to no research has been conducted to test the validity of these stages. Research must be conducted to determine the validity of Fowler's stages and the effectiveness of using these stages to promote the faith development of counseling students. Moreover, exploration into the effects of the level of faith development of the counselor educator or supervisor using Fowler's Stages of Faith Development to help students reach higher stages must be explored. Given these limitations, this discussion is only a starting point. It is intended as a springboard for critique and expansion by others for the development of effective interventions to assist counseling students in reaching satisfying levels of faith development as a first step toward integrating spirituality into clinical practice.

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