ENGAGING THE SACRED:
RELATIONAL SPIRITUALITY TRAINING FOR
DIRECT SUPPORT STAFF OF CEDAR LAKE LODGE

By

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Virginia Young Lay, who taught me to respect the power of faith interwoven with loving relationships. It was written in honor of my beautiful congregants. May this work communicate a portion of divine truth that each of you have breathed into my life. Thank you for showing me the Sacred that lives alongside me in all of God’s children.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION AND APPROACH</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background Information</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question and Purpose</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology and Procedures</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study: Why It Matters</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theological Foundations</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL, AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF RELATIONAL SPIRITUALITY</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Roots of Relational Spirituality</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Theology of Human Connection</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology of Community in Covenant Relationship</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology in a Different Language</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God Made Known in Harmony</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God Alive in Giving and Receiving</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued) .................................................................Page

3. METHODOLOGY .......................................................................................48
   Tools for Recording Observations .......................................................53
   The Instrument: Spirituality Vocational Integration Survey ............54
   Ranking Observations .........................................................................64
   Program Details and Communication ...............................................65
   Perception of Spirituality in the Context of Cedar Lake Lodge Direct Support .................................................66
   Perception of Functional and Interactive Support in Spiritual Life Support at Cedar Lake Lodge .........................66
   Perception of Integration and Personal Engagement in the Context of Spiritual Life Supports ......................67

4. OBSERVATIONS AND OUTCOMES .........................................................68
   Data Collection ....................................................................................69
   Thesis Application and Outcomes .....................................................86

5. CONCLUSION ..........................................................................................88
   Unexpected Revelation .......................................................................92

REFERENCES ..............................................................................................98

APPENDICES ..............................................................................................101
   A  MERCER IRB DOCUMENTATION .................................................102
   B  REFERENCE MATERIALS ...............................................................114
LIST OF TABLES

TABLE #1: Comparison of Peer Support Plan and Relational Spirituality Support Program .................................................................28

TABLE #2: Before and After Comparison of All Survey Response Questions ........................................................................................71
LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: Measurement Scale for Spirituality Vocational Integration Survey ..............................................................60

FIGURE 2: Measurement Scale for Spirituality Vocational Integration Survey ..............................................................64

FIGURE 3: Program Detail and Communication ...........................................65

FIGURE 4: Perception of Spirituality in the Context of Cedar Lake Lodge Direct Support ........................................66

FIGURE 5: Perception of Functional and Interactive Support in Spiritual Life Support at Cedar Lake Lodge ..................67

FIGURE 6: Perception of Integration and Personal Engagement in the Context of Spiritual Life Supports ....................67

FIGURE 7: Visual Setup for Data Participation ........................................70

FIGURE 8: Survey Statement 1 .................................................................72

FIGURE 9: Survey Statement 2 .................................................................72

FIGURE 10: Survey Statement 3 ...............................................................73

FIGURE 11: Survey Statement 4 ...............................................................74

FIGURE 12: Survey Statement 5 ...............................................................74

FIGURE 13: Survey Statement 6 ...............................................................75

FIGURE 14: Survey Statement 7 ...............................................................75

FIGURE 15: Survey Statement 8 ...............................................................76
LIST OF FIGURES (Continued)................................................................................................. Page

FIGURE 16: Survey Statement 9............................................................................................. 77
FIGURE 17: Survey Statement 10........................................................................................... 78
FIGURE 18: Survey Statement 11......................................................................................... 79
FIGURE 19: Survey Statement 12.......................................................................................... 80
FIGURE 20: Survey Statement 13.......................................................................................... 80
FIGURE 21: Survey Statement 14.......................................................................................... 81
FIGURE 22: Survey Statement 15.......................................................................................... 83
FIGURE 23: Survey Statement 16.......................................................................................... 84
FIGURE 24: Survey Statement 17.......................................................................................... 84
FIGURE 25: Survey Statement 18.......................................................................................... 85
ENGAGING THE SACRED: RELATIONAL SPIRITUALITY TRAINING FOR DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS AT CEDAR LAKE LODGE
Under the Direction of Dr. Denise Massey, Associate Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling

This doctoral project focuses on the effectiveness of Relational Spirituality training administered to the direct support professionals at Cedar Lake Lodge, an intermediate care facility for adults with severe intellectual and developmental disabilities. The effectiveness was tested through administration of a survey prior to and following a professional training session offered by the researcher. The results seem to demonstrate an increase in spiritual integration for direct support professionals who participated. The reframing of spiritual life supports as an element of recognizing the individuality of each person supported at Cedar Lake Lodge seemed to have a positive effect on professionals of various age, religious, and cultural affiliations. The expanded perspective of spiritual support holds the potential for cultivating rich, person centered care that is mutually beneficial to the people offering and receiving care in the intermediate care facility setting.
I have found the opportunity to engage many audiences in dialogue throughout my research of spirituality as a central element of the human creature. Within the industry of intellectual disability service providers, the concept of ‘person centered care’ is more than an interest; it is now a standard of care. In the conferences and trainings I provide, I refer to the human spirit as the ultimate difference between simply meeting goals and supporting a human being. While offering training as a guest clinician for an agency similar to Cedar Lake, I came face to face with the reason I feel compelled to teach spiritual support as an essential element of the care provided for those with intellectual disabilities: support that honors the Divine Investment within all human beings.

My colleague and I were in the midst of a tour of a nice, reputable agency. We were gaining some sense of context before we were to offer our training session with staff. We entered one of the homes on their campus. The homes were clean with bright lighting and current décor. Things were aesthetically pleasing. The staff seemed busy and focused on their tasks. Most things seemed to be ‘good’ in this setting, but there was a very important element lacking. At the end of a beautiful hallway, there was a
young woman, small in stature. She was wearing pink sweatpants, a lavender sweatshirt, and a pink football helmet. She was repeatedly banging her head against the wall by a window, leaning on the window frame for support. This does occasionally happen in the working with those with severe intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), usually due to extreme pain or frustration that they cannot readily communicate. I asked the staff who walked past her why she was banging her head. Their only answer was, “That’s normal for her. It’s why she has that helmet. She’s fine.” My heart sank at the thought of this being ‘normal’ for this young lady. I walked over to the young woman and placed my flat hand between her head and the wall as a cushion, just as I have done hundreds of times for my daughters as they crawled too close to a table’s edge. She pressed her head into my hand and held it there for a moment. She looked up at me with bright, glass-blue eyes. It took a few seconds for her to focus on my face and process my presence with her. When I could see that she was with me, I smiled and said, “Hello.”

She smiled back and then leaned away from the window and into my arms, steadying herself on me, taking hold of my arm for stability as she walked. She then finished our tour with us. I thanked her for letting us see her beautiful home. Then I received a child-like hug with that pink football helmet laid upon my chest. She never spoke, but offered a clumsy “thank you” in American Sign Language. After the group had finished the tour of homes, I retreated to the nearest restroom. It was in the community
center next door. I entered quickly, locked the door behind me, and bowed my head in a sorrowful, wordless prayer. I felt a resonant kinship with this beautiful, young woman locked inside her own frustration was ‘normal’, everyday life. I was humbled by her response to my simple smile and hello. I had invited her into a more peaceful, engaging circumstance; she was not invisible to the world around her. I was devastated by the thought that anyone could look past those eyes and that smile and not be spellbound.

I could see her. Certainly, I could see her. I could see her struggle and I wanted to help. I walked into the middle of her life. It was only right that she should walk alongside. It seems that type of respect and grace are not a lot to expect from this life, but I may have an errant presumption. My heart was broken when I realized the implications of my ignorance relative to the world some people had to endure. Goals and objectives can be accomplished without acknowledging the whole person; an investment in the spirit is required to nurture a human being toward his or her best self. So, through sloppy tears, with the picture of an invisible-become-visible young lady burned into my mind, I pleaded to the God who can accomplish more than I can fathom. “God help me be part of a world that does not need pink football helmets. Help me teach what I see that is different. Help me understand how we can overlook a whole ‘person.’ I know we can do better by You. Help me help them; Help me help us all. Amen.” That prayer is where my doctoral journey began.
Offering spiritual support to the people with intellectual disability living at Cedar Lake Lodge is my vocational focus. My calling is to provide this support in a way that honors God’s investment in the lives of all people, I refer to this concept of ‘Imago Dei’ as ‘Divine Investment.’ On September 16, 2011, I became part of the Pastoral Services Department at Cedar Lake. Cedar Lake is an organization, founded in 1970, to support people with intellectual disabilities, with various levels of support ranging from twenty-four hour clinical and medical support in intermediate care facilities to evening supports in homes that we own to weekly visits from job coaches. We support approximately two-hundred and fifty-four people throughout Louisville, Kentucky and surrounding counties. We employ nearly one thousand people and operate with an annual budget of approximately eleven million dollars. We are a Christian based organization, rooted in the Missouri Synod Lutheran tradition. We serve individuals of all faiths and cultures. Three-hundred and fifty thousand dollars of the annual budget is allocated to Pastoral and Spiritual Life supports. There are now three people in our Pastoral Services Department providing services across the entirety of Cedar Lake in various capacities.

My primary focus is assessment, training, and spiritual life program design within the setting of our intermediate care facilities. Cedar Lake Lodge was the first functional property for our organization. It is classified as an intermediate care setting. We are a facility with educational programming, medical care, and clinical therapies provided on
our campus. Cedar Lake Lodge is home to seventy-one adults with intellectual disabilities who also have significant health complications. The individuals we support at Cedar Lake Lodge, in particular, have standardized classifications of “severe” or “profound” cognitive impairment. While many factors contribute to differential assignment of these classifications, the most familiar understanding for people to reference is that of their IQ. The majority of the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge have a measurable IQ between thirty and forty, a score between ninety and one-hundred fifteen is considered average. I should mention that there are some individuals served at Cedar Lake Lodge who have IQs that are not measurable. This is usually assumed to be a score of less than twenty. Many assume that this type of intellectual impediment would limit all comprehension of abstract concepts of faith and spirituality; they are mistaken.

Early in my tenure, I was asked to provide pastoral assessments for these individuals. The standardized assessments I found in pastoral care literature did not have adequate accommodation for the special needs of the people I had come to know and cherish. I did utilize some templates and standardized assessments for reference, but none contained the details of information I learned from interviewing and observing the seasoned Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) who had upheld the work of Cedar Lake Lodge for decades. My supervisor, Rev. Dr. Mark Whitsett, provided resources for
research, time, and space to synthesize what I found, and guidance for me. My pastoral care training led me to look deeper than standard assessments.

I was looking to clinically identify the details that my intuition allowed me to see. Dr. Whitsett and I spent years looking at various models of intermediate care facilities (ICF), acute care, long-term care, special education program structures, and psychiatric institutional settings. Nothing that we found encompassed the full depth of care we felt was necessary to provide a quality, holistic approach to meaningful nurture for the human soul for the people we served in our context.

With the help of Dr. Whitsett and in relationship with those working and living at Cedar Lake Lodge, I formulated an assessment that held communicating personhood as its primary focus. The template for that assessment is included in Appendix B of this project. It is followed by a sample assessment for reference. The root of this assessment was found in an approach of pastoral care support identified as Relational Spirituality by Steven Sandage and LeRon F. Shultz in their 2006 publication Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology. LeRon Schultz is Professor of Theology and Philosophy at the University of Agder in Norway. Dr. Steven Sandage is a licensed psychologist and Professor of Psychology and Religion at Boston University. Relational Spirituality suggests “a person’s spirituality is the form of his or her life, whether anemic
or energetic, anxious or peaceful, in relation to self, other, and God.”¹ Where I serve, the fewer words that are attached to something tangible the better for communication. This definition leads to an understanding of God that does not mandate believers to work so diligently on articulating everything in theological vernacular. At Cedar Lake, the theological banter I gained at seminary gets in the way of transcendent truth.

Spirituality can play a significant role in the support of people with intellectual disabilities. It is the one portion of this people that is perfectly imperfect, just like everybody else in the world. The people in my congregation teach me about trust and strength. Many have a simplistic naiveté regarding spirituality that makes no presumption of status, understanding, or control. The simple prayers we offer communicate the essence of what we all really want in life, “God help me to remember I’m lovable”; “God help me to be ok when I don’t understand”; “God heal my soul’s hurt.”; “God help me not be scared.”; “God help me be strong until I am with you.” To the people I kneel beside, God’s truth is truth, whether words can be used to express it or not. A dear friend who lived at Cedar Lake until she died said it well a few days after the death of her life-long best friend, “I cry sometimes because some things are so sad. I cried for her. I’ll love her always. But eventually I stop cryin’ because some things just are and God says that has to be OK. So we stop cryin’ and hold on to faith.” Shortly

after that conversation, she said she was going to be alright because she got to go next. She died quietly three weeks later. I was sitting beside her, holding her hand as she smiled and exhaled for the last time. I work diligently to explain this connection that is not easily communicated in words. God abides in the souls of all people. When we are able to connect with the Divine Investment of another human being, we have actively engaged something that is beautifully Sacred. Once that type of connection is established, it is seldom, if ever, severed from the composition of our identity.

The tangible manifestations of a spiritual support program founded in Relational Spirituality may seem negligible to outside observers. However, the subtle nuance creates a lasting difference in the relationships of our residents and staff. The education and training aspects create an environment full of nuanced grace. In working with staff and the people we support, we emphasize the Divine Investment that is within every life. I define Diving Investment as the energy put forth by the Creator in the existence of each creature. It is a concept that I closely align with Socratic theology, but without the implications of dualism or definitive identification of ‘a portion’ of identity that is separate from the human soul. When communicating the concept with the people we support, I offer this definition of spirit/ soul:

Our sparkly part is that part of somebody you meet that shows you the bright spots in their eyes or that tickling in your gut when you hug somebody you love. That is the magical part of us that God made. It does not die. Seizures or diseases
or differences can’t hurt it; our sparkly part is how God shines through us and teaches the world about the good stuff we have to give.²

The definition is simple because it must be in this context. How our residents live out their ‘soul’ identity makes the largest difference in our programming and systemic function. How our staff understands the definition of spirituality holds just as much weight.

The individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge have waivers and funding to support our work because they need intensive support to survive and function in their world. That dependence is something our clinicians hold with great care. We emphasize personal liberties, choices, empowerment, and life outside of our walls. Consequently, the ‘spiritual’ aspect of our support is something that is interwoven with daily life, continuing education, and relationship. The Pastoral Services Department works in conjunction with members of an interdisciplinary team. We review monthly trips, recruit spiritual life companions for those who have no remaining family, and we initiate the ‘favorites’ in focus and activity throughout the workings of Occupational, Physical, Behavioral, and Speech therapies. The recommendations and suggested special services from our extremely detailed assessment provide a tool for our clinical support areas to use in constructing a unique, person centered support for the residents we support. Our programmatic framework provides freedom of spiritual nurture for individuals who

² Kate Anderson, “What God Made,” sermon given at Cedar Lake Lodge, LaGrange, KY, September 6, 2015 (transcript) Cedar Lake Lodge, LaGrange, KY.
never had the opportunity to develop a personal religious culture. Many of the individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge have significant sensory defenses and experience tremendous discomfort in a congregational setting. For these individuals, we schedule individualized spiritual nurture with pastoral staff. The specific preferences or needs of an individual instruct how to utilize the structured pastoral time such as walking nature paths, singing hymns in the chapel, or running laps around the facility. The formula for this program is not difficult, but is difficult to translate into a blanket course of action. This type of support focuses upon the personhood and relationships of people, not around objectives and compliance. There is no single formula for anyone, but there are building blocks to construct a formulaic function for each person. Those essential building blocks are our life story, how we communicate and engage the world around us, and the most effective way for each of us to nurture meaningful relationships.

Early in our program reconstruction, I discovered that the story of people we support helps me formulate a deeply held connection and sense of respect for their person. I was fortunate to be one of a few staff members who had the opportunity to look deeply at every person’s life story. I discovered that sharing the stories I found, and the details jotted down by their parents at the time of admission also helped my colleagues develop a relationship with our residents. A primary emphasis in implementing this framework is that the God who created the human soul created it with an innate inclination toward the soul of others. That is a prominent theme in the
Relational Spirituality construct. Consequently, implementing this structure has required training on self-awareness, interpersonal communication development, and definition of obscure concepts within the realm of spirituality.

Recognizing the various methods of communication in every relationship is imperative. A significant number of the people we support at Cedar Lake Lodge are considered ‘non-verbal.’ This is a classification that simply means that standard, articulate conversations do not happen with these folks. While working for these individuals I develop a short-hand guide to deciphering non-verbal communications and demonstrations of anxiety, excitement, sadness, etc.

How do any of us receive kindness and interaction? It is essential in the process of getting to know all people better, including those with disabilities. These adaptations are helpful social engagements. Every individual supported by Cedar Lake Lodge has an ‘interpersonal notation’ section with his or her Spiritual Life Assessment. This section of the assessment lets an unfamiliar person know if someone requires extra personal space due to sensory defenses or if there is a specific posture that helps ease anxiety. It teaches the reader if the individuals are people who prefer playful banter or quiet time with those who matter. It is an emphasis on the personalities and social preferences that are most conducive to success.

All of these elements are important to care and hold a significant place in the spiritual life training offered to the Direct Support Staff (DSP). Staff education
surrounding the Relational Spirituality framework is the basis for this project. The training I offered contains information on the definition of spirituality, the different perspectives of religious and spiritual practice, and the foundations of the Relational Spirituality framework. The intent of the training was to bring the importance of ‘presence’ and ‘awareness’ into the focus of the direct support staff, creating a change in their measurable spiritual integration in the support we provide.

To gather supportive information for this investigation, I have designed an in-service training program for all direct care staff. I developed a measurement tool, The Vocational Spiritual Integration Survey, to offer quantifiable measures to communicate how frequently Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) consider spirituality in doing their daily work or getting to know the people we support. The survey was designed to be administered prior to The Spiritual Life Program Training in-service and then again after the training session has been completed. The Vocational Spiritual Integration Survey can be referenced in Appendix B. The construction and application of underlying concepts are based upon Spiritual Life Programming objectives for achieving relational spirituality. The ultimate goal of this framework is to create a spiritual consideration in all of the support provided by Direct Support Professionals and make certain that we do not isolate ‘spiritual matters’ to the attendance of church services.
Research Question and Purpose

What are the effects of Relational Spirituality training on the integration of spiritual life programming for the staff supporting the residents of Cedar Lake Lodge?

After years of preparation, trial, and error, the Pastoral Services Department of Cedar Lake Lodge has laid a foundational framework of Relational Spirituality at the administrative level, as well as within the collaborations with the interdisciplinary team members who provide clinical supports for the people living at CLL.

Now that a thorough and solid foundation is established, it is time to create the path of ‘hands on’ implementation. However, the implementation of this training is going to be difficult due to the diversity of experience, education, and culture of our support staff, DSPs. Cedar Lake Lodge employs approximately three hundred and fifty direct support staff to sustain the wellbeing of the seventy-one individuals who live here. We function on a rotation of eight or twelve hour shifts throughout each week. State compliance requires specific ratios for staffing which are dependent on the designated level of supervision for every individual. We must weigh these factors with budgetary concerns and the individual personalities of the people who live at Cedar Lake Lodge.

The requirements for employment as a Direct Support Professional are a high school education or GED, a clean drug screen, and a criminal background check that is free of felony indictments. Our staff members begin with an hourly salary of ten dollars
per hour and achieve regular health and disability benefits once full-time employment is established. Full-time DSPs are expected to cover at least forty hours each week, but many work more shifts to accommodate the changing needs of support and staff transitions.

Methodology and Procedures

This doctoral project is focused solely on the Relational Spirituality training provided for the Direct Support Professionals at Cedar Lake Lodge. Years of corporate structuring and program implementation have been done, but there has never been an intentional training regarding the specific focus of the spiritual life programming. The necessity of the collaboration of every staff person has not been addressed before this training session, either. The training was scheduled with the coordinator of Direct Support Professionals as well as each shift supervisor. The training was classified as mandatory by the human resources department because it encompasses necessary compliance elements surrounding cultural competency. I would also like to acknowledge the fact that the training was scheduled and rescheduled three times during the final course of my thesis writing process. The training session was held on October 12, 2016. During this training session each attendee was asked to complete the Vocational Spiritual Integration Survey (Appendix B) prior to presentation of the material and then again after the training was completed. All of these surveys were completed anonymously. A consent form (Appendix B) was provided and placed in a
separate folder for my research records. The individuals who agreed to provide numerical data for the research placed their completed surveys into a folder marked “for data consideration” and the remaining surveys were submitted in a folder marked “decline data consideration.”

Once all pre-training surveys were completed I offered a training session on Relational Spirituality as the foundation for the spiritual support provided at Cedar Lake Lodge. The Spiritual Life Handbook containing the information for that training session is included in Appendix B. At the conclusion of the training session, employees were asked to fill out the same survey again. After the surveys were completed, the scores were compiled into an excel sheet for comparison. Further discussion of this analysis will be done in chapters three and four of this doctoral thesis. While I captured all of the scores provided, for a sense of quality assurance in the training process the project itself only focuses on the scoring of five individuals who have offered their consent to participate. The change in scores may shed light on how the training effected the employees’ integration of spirituality in the work they do from day to day. I also did some anecdotal research to gather more input from staff volunteers. The questions I asked during those interviews are listed in Appendix B for review. My hypothesis was that there would be some demonstration of a change in perception of spirituality between the surveys completed prior to the training and the surveys completed after the training was administered.
Limitations

Several factors affect the data collected for this project. Each member of the direct support staff was required to complete the training and pre/post surveys for the training session. However, the data collected for the purposes of this project was only collected from volunteers who do not mind offering their responses for educational work. I have been on staff at Cedar Lake for almost five years. Consequently, the individuals who volunteer their responses and participation will have an attitude concerning the training offered because I am the individual offering it. During my tenure I have officiated at weddings, baptisms, and funerals for their family members and knelt by many employees as we watch someone we love and support pass from this life to the next. I care a great deal for most of my colleagues and they hold care for me. Complete objectivity in this research is impossible to obtain.

The culture and life experience of staff members also plays a part in the perceptions recorded in the spiritual integration survey. The training required that I reframe the content into a structure of cultural competence and self-awareness. I have training to navigate work with individuals who do not have a cultural experience of faith as well as those who may have a negative experience of religious culture. Despite that training some bias toward my culture of faith and my identity as a member of clergy is inevitable. These concepts are woven throughout the entire spiritual framework. This is
a healthful measure of competence in my calling as a minister, but the human connectedness is not conducive to objective data collection.

Significance of the Study: Why It Matters

This study measures how effectively I have communicated the framework of Relational Spirituality to our staff. Comprehension is not sufficient in laying this type of framework for care. It is essential that there be a minimal engagement of programming elements to make certain the relationships form healthfully to carry out the nuanced objectives. It is essential that the people who live alongside those we support know how integral they are in the work of the spirit. It is also essential that they realize that a Relational Spirituality framework does not make allowances for some lives to be valued more than others are; their lives and presence are just as important as those we support. This element is not always consistent across shifts, buildings, or supervisors, but it is a necessity for a permanent change in our organization’s culture.

Recognizing ‘relationship’ in the service provided lays a foundation to improve the quality of life for those we support as well as my colleagues. The change is subject to monitoring through a quality assurance process designed to monitor spiritual wellness of our residents on a quarterly basis. It will take some time to evaluate the correlation, but the process of formalizing the structure has begun. The ultimate goal of this project is to offer support for other agencies in the field of support for our population. In collaboration with my God, there should be a replicable process of implementing
Relational Spirituality in programming structures. With the grace of God and clarity along the journey, may we get rid of pink football helmets and the sin of ambivalent regard for human beings in specialized care settings. This spiritual platform is very current and dynamic. It is conducive to the cultural awareness and sensitivities that are so prominent in this post-modern age. It is as solid as the ministry of Jesus on the dirt streets of Jerusalem in that it holds the Greatest Commandment at its very core. Love God with every gift invested in your being. Love your neighbor in like kind.

Theological Foundations

The theological foundations of Relational Spirituality should be as apparent as the recognition of the Incarnation himself, but further deliberation will be explored in chapter two of this thesis. Within scripture, caring has been a cornerstone of the human experience. The first thing that the Creator deems “not good” in all of His creation was the loneliness of his creature, Adam.

Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him. Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God cause a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, ‘This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife,
and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.\(^3\)

It is ‘not good’ that human beings should live alone. This is a universally accepted truth. The construct of humanity mandates that connection be present in order to perpetuate the existence of our race. It is a foundational element to survival. However, there is a qualifying process that takes place in forming relationships. We look for people who are like us or who possess characteristics that make us feel acceptable in our identity.

The language that transcends culture and biological predisposition is that of love. Giving and receiving care is a necessity of the human experience. Even when sensory defenses and traumas make connection painful, there is an innate draw toward relationship. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities comprise roughly two percent of the population. That does not leave much room for ‘community building’ among similar persons. Everyone wants to belong; it is part of the human condition. In her text, *What it Means to Be Human*, Molly Marshall wrote,

Cultural and social anthropologists are in agreement that we as human beings are social creatures. We do not just live; we live together. Humanity, from its earliest times, has lived in families, tribes, and ever more organized forms of social and political alliances. One cannot be human in isolation. Individual human stories interlock; we are always political and social animals.\(^4\)


Herein lays the disparity of the situation: isolation occurs because of difference; people with intellectual disabilities are inherently different. This is not a separation of God’s making. The desire to be a part of relationship does not cease simply because someone is given a medical or neurological diagnosis; the human hunger for connection remains. The irony is that if you look past the physical presentation of those with IDD, you will often see a purity of spirit that is born of submission to a Higher Power, a submission to “things as they are.” This perspective offers a great appreciation for genuine, caring relationships.

A relationship with the Sacred is no exception! The spirit of a person living with significant disabilities is the only part of them which they identify as perfect. The people living at Cedar Lake Lodge have much to teach this world about living in the present moment. They have a lot to teach us about sacrifice, acceptance, and trust. They have a lot to teach us about staying true to our identity even when outside forces make it difficult.

Relational Spirituality provides an opportunity for people with intellectual disabilities to engage in meaningful relationships and understand that they are valued. Relational Spirituality requires reciprocity within caring relationships. There is an absolute invitation into authenticity and freedom that is seldom present in this world; it is a precious liberation. Many of the people who have accepted that they will never be equal in this world do not engage in the petty struggles of relational hierarchy. They
offer wisdom in their refusal to compete. Without games of ego building and status, the topics of conversation become much more real and formative. What remains beneath social contract is the real ‘you.’ It is an uncomfortable vulnerability to engage in the beginning of these relationships, but it is also liberating and treasurable. Theological exploration of the interactions might argue that they teach us how to see others and ourselves with the ‘eyes of God.’

Conclusion

The final chapter of this thesis will address the outcomes and awareness that blossomed from this exploration. Relational Spirituality requires a certain amount of awareness and intentionality before implementation. It requires a functional system that encourages emotional connection and investment. Most clinical perspectives that emerge from a psychoanalytic framework will not be successful with this foundation. Relational Spirituality cannot take place within a structure that is not willing to embrace a cultural transformation. Authentic relationships cannot happen in one direction. The Divine blueprint does not allow for that dichotomy. Authentic relationships require intentional agreement to make way for vulnerability.

Relational Spirituality programming requires interdisciplinary collaboration. If any segment of the care team does not embrace the value of intentional relationship building within the caring structure the cynicism will create a formidable crack in the foundation that muddies the process for the whole. Even if members are uncomfortable
with the concept of softer emotional boundaries, their respect for the value of emotional attachment in caring relationships must be present.

It is not happenstance that these are the relational strengths of the people supported by the Cedar Lake Intermediate Care Facility support system, the individuals this world labels ‘disabled.’ The residents I serve taught me how to provide spiritual support for them by teaching me how to receive the same gift from them. In this truth, the grace of God flows equally between His children; all are equal in matters of the soul.

Definition of Terms

- **Divine Investment** is a theological expression for the *Imago Dei* that is within each human creature. This expression is not intended to be considered a separable portion, but similar to the concept of Platonic “light.”

- **Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID)** services are an optional Medicaid benefit. Section 1905(d) of the Social Security Act created this benefit to fund "Institutions" (four or more beds) for individuals with intellectual disabilities or other related conditions, and specifies that these institutions must provide "active treatment," as defined by state regulation.

- **Spiritual Wellness**, for the purposes of this project, is defined as demonstrations of participation of relationship to the God/ higher power, participation in relationship to peers and staff, and participation in relationship to self or differentiation. These are theologically bound to the concepts of joy, peace, contentment, and being.

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These components will be measured by preferred, familiar direct care staff using an assessment tool developed for this project.

- **Relational spirituality**, for the purposes of this project, is “the way in which people relate to the sacred,” as described by Steven Sandage in his exposition on the contemporary framework for spiritual care.  
  
- **Severe Intellectual Disability**, or Intellectual Development Disorder, is a “disorder with onset during the developmental period that includes both intellectual and adaptive functioning deficits in conceptual, social, and practical domains.” 
  
- **Spiritual Life Inventory** is a measurement tool of observable, non-verbal demonstrations of joy, peace, contentment, and self-differentiation throughout daily life. The inventory is an adaptation of the Spiritual Life Assessment inventory Hall and Edwards. It is commonly accepted as a spiritual wellness tool in long-term care settings.

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CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL, AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF RELATIONAL SPIRITUALITY

This chapter will examine historical, biblical, and theological elements contained in the Relational Spirituality foundations of pastoral care and human relationships. There are several aspects of the field suitable for consideration in this approach to pastoral care. This chapter will address the theological themes surrounding human relationships and pneumatology with persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Relational Spirituality is a concept of integration of theology and psychology within the study of the soul. Concepts addressed in this chapter will put various elements of theology and behavioral sciences in dialogue, but delineation of each would only serve to neutralize the powerful application of the concept in reframing perspectives on theology. Biblical, historical, and theological themes will be explored through a lens of integrated application.

The relationship the Church has held with individuals living with disabilities is complicated, to say the least. Many members of the early Church deemed deformities, illness, and disabilities as a byproduct of sin, regarding their difference as a curse from a
vengeful God. However, as understanding of the medical nature of many of these anomalies became more prevalent, an attitude of compassion and embrace emerged from Christian populations before it became popular in the secular realm. The tangible compassion of the Incarnation pressed against the issue and people with disabilities were invited into the community of faith, at least more than they had during recorded history leading up to the modern age. Instances of redemptive care made way through the history as mimicry of the Incarnate Christ.

These are the instances that I choose to embrace in this project’s theological exploration, as they speak more truth into the theological aspects of inclusion and relationships as God intended. Ignorance has its place in the conversation, but ignorance cannot be identified as part of God’s identity; it is a contradictory force.

Historical Roots of Relational Spirituality

Relational Spirituality is a field of spirituality that integrates theological and psychological elements of the human existence into a common theme of identity. The concept has been verified for over a decade, finding its origins in the writing of a clinician by the name of John Heron in 2001. Heron wrote, “A person manifests the creative process of divine becoming as an autonomous being, embedded in

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connectedness, and in cooperative, transformative relations with other persons similarly engaged.”

Heron’s perceptions and theory were elaborated upon by LeRon Schultz and Steven Sandage in 2007. Sandage and Schultz described the concept in terms of integration.

Our interdisciplinary approach is an explicit attempt to engage the broader turn to relationality that shapes the conceptual space within which most contemporary philosophical and scientific discourse now occurs. The shift away from reliance on the category of ‘substance’ and toward an emphasis on the category of ‘relation’ has registered an effect on late modern epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics. We explore the implications for psychology and anthropology... Although it is not our focus here, it is important to note that in the discipline of theology, we should more properly speak of a return to relationality. Many of the most significant theological proposals in the 20th century attempted to retrieve resources in the Biblical tradition that privileged relational and dynamic categories... Many contemporary theoretical paradigms in the social sciences are emphasizing relationality and contextualization in contrast to a modernistic focus on the de-contextualized individual subject. Social scientists have increasingly construed the self as constituted in and through relationships. The emerging field of interpersonal neuroscience is mounting evidence that our limbic brains are imprinted with relational templates that pull us toward familiar relational patterns, for better and for worse... Relational integration is the method we are using to facilitate our interdisciplinary work, which is based on ‘differentiated relationality.’ We respect the differing languages and boundaries between our respective disciplines, but we have also attempted to bring our disciplines into the desegregation of mutual influence without sacrificing the integrity of our differing disciplines, and also without establishing hegemonic power relations between our equally hermeneutical disciplines... We are not simply integrating abstract bodies of knowledge in psychology and theology but creating a personal relationship as a psychologist and theologian. So the integrative process

challenges our own relational spirituality as we surrender the ideal of disciplinary omnipotence and move toward the goal of mutual recognition.⁴

Prior to the implementation of the Relational Spirituality framework at Cedar Lake Lodge the concept had never been implemented in a strategic fashion. However, there have been descriptions of a similar approach, dubbed as relationship building and inclusion. Educational specialist Erik Carter in his work at Vanderbilt University described this strategic implementation of relationship nurture in educational settings. Dr. Carter refers to his intentional support structure as “Peer Support Arrangements.” Carter writes,

Peer support arrangements differ somewhat from other peer-mediated interventions in their focus and logistics. First, they emphasize support of both academic and social engagement. This differs from peer tutoring, which adopts a more instructional focus on academic skill building, and peer buddy programs, which tend to emphasize social and leisure activities. Second, peer support arrangements are individually tailored interventions that involve a small number of peers rather than an entire class. Peer support arrangements can usually be implemented without changing instructional approaches for the whole class.⁵

Carter describes five steps in the implementation of peer support relationships in the educational setting. The steps have been adapted to fit the context of Cedar Lake Lodge and the holistic approach of the Spiritual Life Support Program. Carter’s structural

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map is overlaid with the emotional connections described in Relational Spirituality theory. The relationships formed are a part of the work and well-being of the DSPs at Cedar Lake Lodge.

**TABLE 1: Comparison of Peer Support Plan and Relational Spirituality Support Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peer Support Plan</th>
<th>Relational Spirituality Supports</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Develop a Peer Support Plan</td>
<td>Step 1: Develop a Spiritual Life Assessment and Support Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Select and Invite Peer Partners</td>
<td>Step 2: Form Collaborative Relationships Across Disciplines to Foster Global Effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: Orient Students to Their Roles</td>
<td>Step 3: Orient DSPs to Their Roles as Support and Advocate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4: Work Together During Class</td>
<td>Step 4: Intentional Engagement with DSPs to Gain Input/Feedback for Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 5: Facilitate Interactions and Support</td>
<td>Step 5: Continuous Facilitation of Support and Interactions (Taking into Account Attrition and the Dynamic Nature of the Human Condition)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This project described the implementation of Step 3: Orientation of DSPs to Their Roles as Support and Advocate. This work establishes an approach to professional responsibility that incorporates an intentional emotional attachment. Whether it is a deeply held emotional connection or a recognition of the humanity of each individual, the intentional emphasis of personhood should create a heightened potential for friendship and empathy. The human connection also creates a neuronal connection that allows for a change in identity, no matter what the capacity of cognition may or may not be for each person.
The Theology of the Human Connection

The effects of human connection are intricately woven into our being. The theological ties are established in the handiwork of our Creator. Each of us has a need to survive this existence in active relationship with others we encounter on the journey.

Dan Siegel describes the connections between our relational awareness and our brain as the ‘mind.’ He has done a great deal of research surrounding the neurobiology of human interaction and awareness. In his book, *Pocket Guide to Interpersonal Neurobiology: And Integrative Handbook of the Mind*, he writes,

> Once we say that the mind is both embodied and relational, it means that to know our mind is both embodied and relational, it means that to know our minds we need to know about the body, including the nervous system that is distributed throughout, and interacts with, the entire body... The mind is influenced by, indeed fundamentally created in part by, our social interactions as well as our relationships with entities beyond our bodily selves, with experiences we have with the environment surrounding us. In this way we can say that the mind is both embodied and it is embedded in our relational worlds.\(^6\)

Part of the human design includes the necessity for human relationship. Relationship and caring are cornerstones of the human experience within the body of Christian scripture. Human connection is necessary to survive. We are made to need one another. In the twelfth chapter of Paul’s letter to the Romans there is a framing of this interconnectedness.

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For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.7 (Romans 12:3-8, CEV)

The introductory chapter of this project established the framework for interconnectedness of the human race which is recorded in the Creation epic. The authors of our history note that isolation is so cataclysmic to human beings that Godself deemed it the first imperfection in need of repair. Throughout the Judeo-Christian story there have been several theologians who offered perspectives on the interconnectedness of human beings. Theologian Thomas E. Reynolds offers commentary regarding human beings in relationships as part of a Divine process of co-creation. He writes:

Humankind is fundamentally relational. We are caught up in a web of interdependence with the created world, inescapably dependent upon creation for sustenance and well-being. As the creative power of God extends itself in relationship with others, so does the Imago Dei. Creative power essentially is a relational power.

Fundamental to human relationality is a material, bodily existence. We do not have bodies; we are our bodies. Human beings are living souls, not souls trapped in a material body, but organically unified, embodied creatures. And our bodies define our limits. To deny this is to deny our relationship to other

creatures, for relationships depend upon the differentiation created by bodily limits. Furthermore, denying the body denies the God who lovingly sculpted it from the earth. God is invested in our bodies, near to us bodily in that God forms humans directly as part of a creation within which God is immanent. It is God who knits us together in our mothers’ wombs, fearfully and wonderfully making us, intricately weaving us from the depths of the earth (Psalm 139:13-15). Our bodies are woven into the fabric of creation, connecting us to the elements in a way that makes us a part of the dynamic interdependence of all things.8

Reynolds’s theological concepts point to a critical interdependence between all people, extending to all of Creation. Throughout his book he offers implications of the interdependence on our emotional, spiritual, and physical wellbeing. This interdependence is accentuated in the lives of individuals with disabilities because of their physical and social dependence while functioning in daily life. Throughout the book, Reynolds challenges many presumptions regarding ontological value and productivity that are related to Western culture. The motivation and rewards relative to doing ‘good works’ in Christian culture have only served to reinforce this concept of valuation for people. In this schema, people living with significant disabilities are considered to be lesser human beings because of their lack of tangible productivity. Reynolds challenges this concept by positing a different metric of value altogether, that of equitable, intrinsic value for every person made by God.

Jesus’s ministry embodies divine love through what we have been calling a metaphorical reversal. The center is not the strong but the weak, not those who

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have it all but those who are without, not the privileged but the disinherited, not the insider but the outsider. This reversal is unseemly and foolish if we operate within the sway of the cult of normalcy, for the integrity of personhood here is measured according to productive ability and bounded space. That is, health and wholeness are appraised in terms of physical, cognitive, and emotional abilities which correspond to the capacity to control one’s body and authorize actions that stay within proscribed boundaries. These boundaries outline what counts for purity and more integrity; they mark body capital in an economy of exchange... The ‘out of control’ body is thus stigmatized because its behaviors reflect what is taboo. Jesus’s ministry upsets the order. Through Jesus the creator God comes to us not as what we might expect - a possessing, domineering, displacing, or controlling presence- but rather in the form of self-giving love, inviting or luring us into relational creativity and wholeness.

The power of Jesus’s presence in this way is received as a liberating gift as well as provocative demand. It is the promise of a reconciling and emancipatory love upon which those who follow set their hopes in the expectation of an ultimate fulfillment. And it is this promise that in turn elicits a metanoia, a transformative allegiance and repentance which obligates persons to accept and themselves embody that love... His is a love without borders, trafficking in an economy of grace incapable of being measured by economies of exchange, based as they are in the ability to produce and purchase welcome. In the kingdom of God all persons are gifts to be welcomed, not simply because of neediness but because each human being is loved into being by God in the image of God- authorized by God and given unique abilities by God. It is not scarcity that governs the kingdom of God but abundance. God’s love knows none of the conventional distinctions between ‘pure’ and ‘impure’ or ‘good’ and ‘bad.’ The kingdom of God is radically inclusive.  

Reynolds offers a challenge to a cultural perspective that elevates social perception, or position, based upon a hierarchical structure related to productivity. This unique perception is found in Jesus’ blessing of the children, the infirm, and the disenfranchised throughout the Gospels. It is a radical inclusion that intimates an

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integrated evaluation of the behavioral sciences and theology because it seeks to elevate the value of internal process and potential to be equivalent with the relative external processes.

Theology of Community in Covenant

Paul was the first, outside of Jesus the Christ, to offer an authoritarian regard for our need to remain in community. In the twelfth chapter of Romans, there is a different framing of the Church’s understanding of community. In this passage Paul is bringing a tone of Grecian philosophy and Judaic theology into the scaffolding of his ecclesiology. According to the *Mercer Commentary on the Bible*, the new perspective on ‘love’ and connection is rooted in a transformative, sacrificial comprehension of what it means to be a Christian. Richard F. Wilson writes:

> That love should be genuine takes on here a thematic significance. Heretofore in Romans Paul has used the term agape of God’s love in its surprising concern for the radically underserving. Now Paul uses agape for the love that believers should extend both to fellow members of the body and to enemies of the outside. The love that believers have received they are to share. For Paul love as an ethical disposition and mode of action means to see the good or advantage of the other person rather than one’s own. Paul expresses this in a number of places and with different vocabulary. This central ethical norm is an open or formal one. What constitutes the good of the other is left undefined and is to be determined in differing social contexts. In this particular passage seeking the advantage of the other takes such expressions as showing honor, meeting physical needs, emotional identification, living in harmony, and renouncing vengeance. Love does not passively accept evil but overcomes it.  

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The twelfth chapter of Romans is one of the epistle passages that help human beings gain a greater understanding of their identity when they enter into covenant with other members of the faith as well as the Body of Christ, the Church. In this passage of scripture, there is an identification of self-less love that requires a mutuality to be genuine. Prior to this point in history, the concept of sacrificial love has not been widely addressed outside of the gospel and prophetic moments of Old Testament scripture pointing toward the Incarnation. The Pauline identification of love’s reciprocal responsibility between members of the human race helps establish a new platform for caring in community. This interconnectedness is highlighted in relationships with individuals living with IDD. There is a blatant vulnerability present when engaging relationships with individuals, who have severe intellectual and physical disabilities. They need help to survive, but they do not apologize for their open need. Neither do they consider their need for support a major flaw in their identity, at least not often. There are no apologies for the need of support because it is a given assumption that every person needs other people. Whether it is opening a door, putting away dishes, offering a hug, or saying a prayer with someone there is an act of caring kindness offered to by individuals as a sign of the relational equality they have experienced. It is a subtlety that is imperative to recognize, one that is easily missed if the recipient does not slow down to recognize the gift. At the core of Cedar Lake Lodge, God reveals a secret beauty when human beings recognize the spectacular Divine Investment of every
person. Divine Investment is defined as the investment of the Creator’s energy and imagination in the formation of each living creature. Recognizing and engaging this semblance of Imago Dei in its fullness, we are invited to respond with a tapestry of multi-faceted grace that develops our own faithing process.

**Theology in a Different Language**

The concept of Relational Spirituality is even more suitable for the context of Cedar Lake Lodge because of some of the congregation’s limiting cognitive processes relative to intellectual disability. These cognitive differences have no bearing on the value or presence of the soul. The cognitive struggles of those in my congregation simply point to the necessity for a different understanding or manner of communication. Theological concepts and abstract ideology may not lend themselves well to individuals with significant intellectual disabilities, but the process of faithing and relationship building is a means of communicating what articulated terms cannot relay.

At Cedar Lake Lodge, the language of God’s identity, investment, and care is communicated through actions of supportive, nurturing relationship. Our program design is fine-tuned to the individual need of each soul we support.

Temple Grandin writes about her experience of information synthesis as an autistic person in *Thinking in Pictures: My Life With Autism*.

I am a person who learns by concrete examples. Depending on how I was brought up, I could be taught to be a good person or taught to be bad... When I was in elementary school, the Lord’s Prayer made little sense. It was too abstract. If there is no picture in my mind, I cannot think. There were two things
we did at church that had meaning to me. Every Christmas, each child had to take one of his or her really nice toys and wrap it up as a Christmas gift for a poor child. At the service the minister stood in front of a manger filled with presents and said, ‘It is better to give than to receive.’ This made a big impression... The autism/ Asperger’s mind often has a tendency to get obsessed with the negative. Teach the autistic child positive religious values. Instruct the child to live a good life where others are treated with kindness and respect. Use examples where the child participates in an activity... They must be taught that they should do things to make the community a better place... Abstract religious concepts will not be understood by many individuals on the spectrum. It is better to teach them how to be good citizens through a series of hands-on activities. 11

Grandin makes the concepts of spirituality relative to human experience and tangible application, in a fashion similar to those described by Dan Siegel. She points out the necessity to create tangible evidence for individuals who struggle with abstract concepts. In the Relational Spirituality construct, those tangibles are connected with more than just understanding, they are also reinforced with emotional experience. This reality makes their impact even more profound for all participants.

God Made Known in Harmony

The Relational Spirituality framework offers a conscious focus on the intentional integration of this theology and psychology in the training of every employee. Much of this framework was present in cultural subtleties prior to their formal incorporation by the Pastoral Services Department.

Cedar Lake was born out of a dire need of six families who had children with severe intellectual disabilities. These families scrimped, saved, and advocated their way to create a safe, healthy environment for their children, which was not what they found when they sought out placement in state facilities at that time. This group established Cedar Lake Lodge in 1970. These families worked diligently to raise funds, create awareness, and form collaborative partnerships that became the foundation of our organization.

Much of the culture of Cedar Lake is a direct result of the failures of the institutional setting as it was in the late twentieth century. The quality of medical interventions improved so that more complicated medical processes were no longer seen as terminal diagnoses. Conditions such as Downs’ Syndrome, Autism, and Cerebral Palsy were still significant, but the infants, adolescents, and adults with significant disabilities were surviving at a higher rate. The funding provided for institutional settings was not sufficient enough to provide adequate resources for growing populations of the institutions in the United States.\(^\text{12}\) It is not uncommon to find employees of Cedar Lake who have been on staff since the time it opened its doors. Many of our direct support staff can tell the stories of the people we support because they were welcomed into the families who built the organization. There are many who have become guardians of the

individuals we support after their retirement and the death of all other family members.

The difference in our organization is the distinctly intimate, emotional connections that are held by those offering care as support staff. Their ability to recognize and receive the gifts offered by the people we support is the sacred element that separates this organization from many others of its kind. It is easy to witness the connection and relate that lovingkindness to God, but it is a difficult concept to articulate in theological terms.

LeRon Schultz describes the theological quandary:

The ‘personality’ of God in the New Testament is not depicted in terms of the autonomous self-sufficiency of a divine individual but in terms of the loving relations among the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Finally, the Spirit of the Biblical God is not described in mechanical terms as a first efficient cause but as a promising presence that calls creatures into being and toward fellowship in the arriving reign of divine peace. The best way to conserve the intuitions of the Biblical tradition about the concept of ‘spirit’ is to liberate them for transforming dialogue in our cultural location. As we participate in this ongoing task, we remain committed to upholding the distinction between finite creaturely spirit and infinite Creator Spirit, to integrating the Trinitarian relations within our understanding of the Spirit, and to accounting for the eschatological dimension of redemptive experience—being called toward a share in the eternal life of God. 13

In Schultz’s depiction of our task to process relationships in a theological framework he incorporates a parallel process of joining in a relational kinship with the Trinitarian God. There is me and there is you, and in our midst, a Holy connection, that is

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God. Anyone who has loved and been loved can recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit within the relational connection.

This concept of spirituality is similar to harmonic structures in music. There is one note and there is another note; each having their own identifiable note name and pitch frequency. They are singular and whole as they are, but when they are joined together there is a connection formed by their relationship to one another: harmony. The frequency of each note is still present, the recurrent soundwaves maintaining their identity. When they are played simultaneously, a miraculous connection of mathematical magic takes place and a congruence forms as each set of sound waves dance in concert with one another. The sound may be crystal clear and uplifting in timbre or it may be tight and dissonant to the ear, but the notes that were just one identity and another identity entirely become a third identity: harmony. This is how the connection of relationship functions at its basic level. Human beings experience God and life as their own, experts on their understanding and experience. Then we are drawn toward a connection with others who have their understanding and experience. When we meet with the expertise of one another in healthful community, God creates a consonant third thing that fuels the identity and faithing of each. Sandage and Schultz go on to identify the effects of interpersonal connection in the process of faith formation. There is a dance of awareness that can only be described as Sacred when the effects of relationship are considered to be in parallel process with self-identification.
and our understanding of identity in relationship to a higher power. The authors offer a description of the dance of intimacy.

Personal attachments emerge within an interpersonal field of mutual binding and being-bound in relation. In this general sense, the human spirit is formed in the context of ‘faith’- in the pensive struggle to bind oneself to trustworthy relations. This is what Erik Erikson referred to as the ‘basic trust’ that is a condition for the emergence of healthy identity throughout life, and the longing for intimacy that drives human knowing is transformed precisely in and through these relations. Christian faith is an experience of the gracious transformation of this natural longing for truth, an intensification of the desire for intimacy in relation to the Spirit of wisdom, who holds all things together and invites us into the mutual knowing of the Son and the Father. The dynamic process of becoming wise is transforming spirituality. The Colossians are ‘filled with the knowledge of God’s will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding’ as they ‘grow in the knowledge of God’ (Colossian 1:9-10). Having been clothed with a new self, ‘which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator’ (Colossian 3:10), they are urged to live together, teaching and admonishing one another ‘in all wisdom’ as the world of Christ ‘dwells’ in them richly (Colossians 3:16).14

The dance creates a drive toward knowing and being known, a part of the human condition. If addressed in terms of faith communities and relationships that mold our understanding of our own identity, the component of reciprocal revelation through dialogue and shared faith experiences is clearly seen. Members of the Christian faith comprehend the identity of God relative to experience. We know the God that lives in our experience. In like kind, we are able to gain a greater insight into the identity of the Almighty when we receive the depiction from another’s experience. In this moment, our

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presence, our relationships, and creative empathy helps us gain a multi-dimensional understanding of God’s identity. The clearest demonstration of this theological concept is revealed in the Incarnate Christ who offered an invitation to see God’s character made flesh.

This is an element of pneumatology that addresses the aspects of God present within every life, even the lives of individuals who live with significant disabilities. Their experience is quite different from our own and their depiction of God, though the language may differ, is beautiful. The described personal experience lacks many of the assumptions made by people who do not share in their unique perception. In this reality, God cannot be revealed without relational connection to others, lest our perspective be unfairly blinded by a narcissistic bias of God in our own image. Sandage and Schultz write:

The human spirit longs to understand its relation to the sacred, to interpret the ultimate meaning of its identity in relation to that which is beyond its comprehension. Wisdom has to do with the desire for truth, but this quest is for more than simply a quantitative increase in objective intellectual content or even increased functional competence in the utilization of knowledge. The longing for wisdom ultimately has to do with the quality of our concrete relations in lived community. If we merely stress the importance of the individual’s cognitive assent to propositions, we can easily fall into a limited definition of spiritual maturity that is correlated to how much a person knows ‘about’ God. This can obscure the much more intimate understanding of wisdom in Scripture and the Christian tradition, which emphasized the intimacy of knowing and being known by God in the Spirit.\(^{15}\)

\(^{15}\) Steven Sandage and LeRon Shults, *Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academy, 2006), 132.
In this framework, there is a wisdom found in relationship with adults with IDD, a naïveté that helps clarify the obscurity and constraints placed upon God in the work of academic scaffolds concerning systematic theology. In my congregation, God does not have to make sense to remain God; my congregants do not have to define God’s identity in order to uphold their faith or their love. In this experience, I gain invaluable understanding of God by experiencing a life of faith alongside the members of my congregation. One man said to me, “Pass-a Kate (pas-ah keːt), I love you for no reason at all. I love you just ‘cause you is.” This is the love of God that humanity needs desperately.

At Cedar Lake Lodge I am not loved for my degrees or appearance or giftedness. I am loved because I am, which my congregation is able to clearly articulate to me. They do not shy away from telling their pastor that she is enough and that God loves her, too. There is no presumption of expertise for one who holds several degrees and certifications in theology. I am the sister of my congregants, the friend, the pastor, the helper, and the servant. In the relationships formed at Cedar Lake there is a strange dichotomy of power. There is very little regard for hierarchy, assumed or stated. The revelation of God’s equitable investment in every life is clarified over and over throughout my five years of service at Cedar Lake. Did God elect my congregants to be cursed with a malady that would permanently separate them from knowing the true nature of the Divine? Their impassioned faith and love for God does not intimate this as
truth. Does my intellect, that seeks to understand everything before committing to trust, create a stronger foundation of faith? The impassioned faith of those I serve tells me that it does, in fact, limit my capacity to release my fear so that I may trust in a God I can never fully comprehend. This is the paradox of my ministry at Cedar Lake Lodge; I offer the wisdom and teaching of God as I am able, but I recognize God is being simultaneously revealed through the questions and care offered by those who call me their pastor. This truth is also present for the direct support staff who support the individuals at Cedar Lake Lodge through their daily lives.

God Alive in Giving and Receiving

The thought of superiority of clinician over client or guardian over the people we support seldom plays a part in the tangible relationships. Legalities and liability are a different matter. In the day to day interactions, the people who assist residents in taking their baths, dressing, and using the restroom receive and offer more respect from the individuals we serve than the clinicians who design program plans. The difference in esteem is rooted in the level of relationship. There is indescribable beauty found in relationship with the individuals supported at Cedar Lake Lodge. The stereotypes of ‘innocence’ and ‘naiveté’ of people with disabilities are contradicted by the cantankerous, lively, unbreakable spirits who call our facility Lodge their home. Make no mistake, our population clings to their inner self and strength of spirit with fervor, but there is not a competition surrounding values of productivity or status. In the midst of
these relationships, reciprocal authenticity is the greatest value. Living life in the midst of this culture is truly a sacred experience.

The primary emphasis of the Pastoral Services Department at Cedar Lake is the innate value of human beings, their identity, and the respect of their personhood. This concept is not focused solely on the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge, but on employees as well. The implementation of Relational Spirituality does not provide room for one-sided intimate connection. Human beings were not created to exist in relationships without balanced contribution, evidence of the nature of a loving God to be loved and to give love simultaneously. Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson describes it as a kinship of the human spirit and the nature of God.

God relates to humanity primarily through love— the inviting power to surpass ourselves and to risk growth and innovation. Indeed, God’s vulnerability and dynamism are both a manifestation and a consequence of God’s love for us and for the world. Recognizing that all living creatures are in a continuing pattern of engagement and connection, we become who we are by our courage to love and to nurture. And we, like God, remain vulnerable and self-surpassing because of our resilient loves.¹⁶

Understanding God in terms of relationship and connection provides a foundation that every participant can embrace. The relational aspect helps build a bridge of collaboration between believers and non-believers for the implementation of Spiritual Life Supports. They do not necessarily hold fast to the existence of the Judeo-  

Christian “God.” They will easily affirm the presence of a “higher power” that is present while they are providing care alongside the individuals we serve at Cedar Lake. There is an energy present in the necessary vulnerability and attunement that requires an intentional “presence” in the work we do.

Pastoral care primers teach that human beings cannot fathom the abstraction of God in moments of survival or crisis. The human mind cannot cling to concepts held in abstraction in moments of crises, but we are drawn toward caring, compassionate, outstretched arms to remind us of our place in the realm of all humanity. The reptilian brain is built for survival; even in desperation it will reach for the grasp of a safe ally. This is true for individuals who do not have the cognitive capacity to grasp abstraction. Consequently, the smiles and support of those who care become a tangible reinforcement of God’s care for and with the people of Cedar Lake Lodge. Likewise, it is very difficult to relay the experience of God in tangible language for others to understand. The struggle demonstrates some of the dichotomy present in the faithing of the individuals that comprise my congregation. We are active and involved in the world, for certain, but the culture and existence of Cedar Lake Lodge are different from any other I have ever experienced in this world.

It is very difficult to understand the identity of God with words that surround concrete concepts or analogies, but it is very easy to understand the identity of God in silence. Many of the individuals in my congregation have limited verbal abilities, some
are completely non-verbal. These individuals still value time with their pastor, but they seldom seek dialogical interaction. With these individuals a pastoral meeting may consist of a walk through the wooded area behind the Lodge or just sitting in the stillness of our chapel holding hands. My time with beautiful souls who live in silence has taught me that the words we utilize in our description of God may be valuable, but they can never relay the fullness of the God’s identity. Words and academic speak can help people feel a little less powerless. God makes concession for our frailty in this need. This concession is unnecessary for people who are comfortable with the situation of powerless. To these individuals the power of presence and vulnerability is a reciprocal invitation to worship that is truly free of humanity’s frailty.

The theological aspect of the ministry done alongside individuals with significant IDD is not bound by questions surrounding theodicy or human suffering. Those are theological questions that surface repeatedly, but they are not central to the work done as a minister in my context. The theological questions that lead my pondering focus on cultivating the simplistic trust and freedom that is carried by many of the individuals I support. Why do they trust so easily? How can I lean into the limitless love of God with as much certainty as they do? Is the love of God as pure and innocent as the love I encounter here? How do I tame my jealousy surrounding their understanding of unconditional love, untainted by the competitive hues of my experience? In all these
questions the answer is the same. A simple prayer that I offer every day, “God, help me to be more like the congregation I serve.”

The knowledge of God that is gained in the midst of the ministry done at Cedar Lake Lodge is one of reciprocity, one of relationship. I show up, as I am, offering who I am; my brothers and sisters who offer the same presence greet me. Together, in relationship, we understand God’s love and the intrinsic value of one another just as we are. This reciprocity is the foundation of this project’s title, “Engaging the Sacred.”

Ministry in the community of Cedar Lake cannot be offered ‘to’ the people, it cannot be offered ‘for’ the people. The only way that God’s care can truly be invested in this community is to be offered ‘with’ the community. This is the sacred breath in the midst of my theology.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In September of 2011 my task as the Spiritual Life Program Assistant was to complete assessments for every individual supported by Cedar Lake. My supervisor, Rev. Dr. Mark Whitsett, provided a great deal of resources for research, time and space to process what I found, and guidance through spiritual growth for me in the process. My pastoral care training led me to look deeper than the standard assessments I found to fill out for the people we support. I was looking for something to uncover what my intuition allowed me to see, something that could prescribe the care offered by seasoned Direct Support Professionals who had loved and nurtured those we support for decades.

Dr. Whitsett and I spent years looking at various models of ICF, acute care, long-term care, special education program structures, and psychiatric institutional settings. We engaged every mentor, spiritual advisor, and pastoral care professional within our circles of influences. Nothing that we found encompassed the full depth of care we felt was necessary to provide a quality, meaningful nurture of the human soul. With the help of Dr. Whitsett and in relationship with those working and living at Cedar Lake Lodge, I formulated an assessment that held communicating personhood as its primary focus. The root of this assessment was found in an approach of pastoral care support
identified as Relational Spirituality. As part of God’s providence, Cedar Lake experienced a change in leadership during our search process. Mr. Christian Stevenson became the President and CEO of the agency. Chris’s approach to faith and leadership focused on unity, cooperation, and intentional collaborations, and this emphasis laid fertile ground for the emphasis in Relational Spirituality to take root.

The greatest difficulty in working toward a functional framework of Relational Spirituality is the multidimensional aspect of the implementation. Relationships must be authentic in order to deliver spiritual nurture as intended within this program structure, to cultivate a healthful climate of support for all members of the system. Corporate structures rarely foster authentic relationships without intentional investment in collegial relationships. Authentic relationships do not happen in a corporate structure without intentional investment in growing collegial relationships. Competition and hierarchy are generally the status quo. We were blessed to be seated in the midst of an exception to that rule when we were granted the freedom to attempt something unique and distinctive in the way we provided care.

In the 2006 publication, *Transforming Spirituality: Integrating Theology and Psychology*, LeRon Shulz and Steven Sandage provide the foundation of our program by
defining spirituality. They write, “A person’s spirituality in the form of his or her life, whether anemic or energetic, anxious or peaceful, in relation to self, other, and God.”\(^1\)

The first stage of developing an effective model of Relational Spirituality programming was to identify the complex foundation that needed to be in place for implementation. We needed to find a way to be proactive in communicating a system-wide value of humanity and the value of investing in the process of vulnerability and honor that understanding demanded. Much of this foundation building took place before we recognized the necessity to have groundwork laid. God was working all around us before we recognized the work He would be doing through us.

Chris and the team of senior administrators worked diligently to even the playing field within the social hierarchy of Cedar Lake Lodge and the organization at large. Teams were assembled and events were scheduled that celebrated the contribution and value of every member of Cedar Lake’s staff. A shadowing program was initiated that meant our corporate vice-presidents were, literally, working shoulder to shoulder with people in maintenance, dietary, housekeeping, and direct care. These experiences created new dynamics of inclusion on every level of our organization, those we employed and those we supported. Cultural shifts have to work in reciprocity, the

application to base interpersonal skills needs to be universal or any attempt toward social equity could not stand.

The first phase of intentional structure for the Pastoral Services Department was to sculpt an assessment that would be a meaningful tool for relationship building, not just for the people we support, but with the people we support. We constructed a Spiritual Life Assessment that represented a holistic approach to personhood and spirituality (See Figure B1, Appendix B).

Figure B1 provides a visual template of the assessment that was designed for the spiritual support of every individual. Compiling the elements of the assessment was a rigorous, tedious process. However, the assessment has become a tool for several staff members and clinicians within our system. We utilized several therapeutic and spiritual elements in constructing the final document. Narrative therapeutic processes are present in the personal history section of the assessment. This process promotes emotional attachment with staff providing support. Descriptions of non-verbal cues and communication along with sensory needs are included in the interpersonal skills section. Important relationships, preferred activities and places, means of comfort, and suggested special services comprise the antepenultimate section. These are details that are useful in various areas of individual support. Frequently, we assist in providing support for some of these special services because they are not within the assigned clinical area of any particular department. The inclusion of these elements is a
byproduct of care, not just clinical practicum. The final section of the assessment includes notes regarding religious and or faith practice that are consistent with the individuals’ culture or request. A sample Spiritual Life Assessment is included within the appendix of this document for reference (See Figure B2, Appendix B).

There are several tools for spiritual assessment, even spiritual assessment in the context of long-term care settings. However, none of the tools I encountered encompassed the full spectrum of support our organization envisioned for the individuals we support. With the support of the Director of Pastoral Services, Dr. Mark Whitsett, and the cooperation of our new CEO, I endeavored to create something that was suitable for our organizational identity. The program structure I found encompassed work from academic works in pastoral care, exceptional education programs, and long-term mental health support facilities.

The elements were drawn from Spiritual Care models utilized in educational, psychotherapy, and long-term care settings. Various elements of each were woven with the others to create appropriate structural components to establish an effective map for implementation. The designs encompass the full personhood of each individual we support. The depiction creates an interwoven system of support that is built upon their culture, relational style, faith tradition, and sensory needs. The program required interdepartmental work and extensive research for each individual. The full outline of
the program focus can be reviewed in the Spiritual Life Support Handbook located in Appendix B of this thesis.

The formalized implementation of the program required a foundation for tracking spiritual wellness of the individuals we support, a means of tracking program effectiveness, and an operational training structure for every member of the staff at Cedar Lake Lodge. This project focuses on the training procedures and evaluation for this program. The specific program construction is outlined in the preceding chapter for reference. The implementation process has been an effort of intentional enculturation of the whole Cedar Lake system. The implementation has taken place in conjunction with the administrative efforts to create an atmosphere of collegial cooperation and healthful communications.

Tools for Recording Observations

The tool designed to assess the considerations of our Relational Spirituality framework through the eyes of Direct Support Professionals of Cedar Lake Lodge was needed to collect data relative to changes in perception of spirituality after a training session was completed. The tool asks staff to rank the importance of statements designed to reflect the consideration of intimate, relational connection throughout the particular parts of directly supporting the individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge.

Some of the statements relate to how the staff relate to our department, how they participate in our area of support, how they relate to themselves, and how they
relate to the individuals we support as a team. A gradient scale was applied to these questions to infer a measurable change in perceptions regarding spiritual considerations prior to and following the training. The scores were collected from a large group of employees, each direct support professional in our employ is required to participate in the training session, and those who elected to participate in the anonymous data collection for this project signed informed consent forms (Figure A1, Appendix A) and placed their completed surveys in a folder marked “Project Data Consideration.” Those who declined participation placed their surveys in a folder labelled “Decline Project Data Consideration.” Five surveys were selected, at random, from the project data consideration folder. These randomly selected surveys were used for data comparison in the global change in perception prior to the training as related to the perception after the training was complete.

The Instrument: Spirituality Vocational Integration Survey

The Spirituality Vocational Integration Survey (Figure 3B, Appendix B) was devised to establish a statistical baseline for inferred changes in the spirituality consideration of Direct Support Professionals at Cedar Lake Lodge. The questions surround the perceptions of spirituality are molded to incorporate the specific requirements of our system, our program communications, and the supportive services required of the DSPs specifically.
The survey contains statements that address the communication and relationship between Direct Support Professionals and the spiritual life department. This is an essential element in establishing interconnectedness and collaboration. There is an assumption of authoritarian leadership made by many of the clinicians within our system. Their expertise creates a formula regarding supportive services that enhances the wellbeing and safety of the individuals we support. In every other clinical field at Cedar Lake, there is a prescription of action and approach that is passed down to be followed in a very specific, professional manner. Spirituality does not have the same type of explicit instructions and prescriptive action. Spiritual supports require collaboration between the Direct Support Professionals and the pastoral staff, we have an interplay of action and inference that must be shaped by the giftedness of each department working in concert for the spiritual wellbeing of each specific individual. We need the DSPs’ knowledge and they need ours to create an effective support. Communication and awareness of that relationship is necessary to create a functional synergy between both professional areas. There are four statements that address this interplay:

- I am familiar with the Spiritual Life Programming for the individuals I support.
- I am aware of where to locate the full Spiritual Life Assessment for the individuals I support.
- I am familiar with the details of the full Spiritual Life Assessment for the individuals I support.
- I am aware of where to direct questions or concerns I have regarding Spiritual Life programming.
The next survey items on the Spirituality Integration Survey addresses the common perceptions of spirituality. The Cedar Lake culture has historically held a focus on religiosity and traditional religious expression that is congruent with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod theological definitions. Federal funding is now a part of the financial support for each individual we serve, which mandates cultural compliance and observance of individual, religious liberties. This adaptation requires that Cedar Lake broaden its approach to religious culture and spirituality. In light of this change in the approach of pastoral services and the unique experience of the individuals we support, the perception of spirituality must be broadened. Two statements address the traditional understanding of spirituality and any measurable change that took place in that understanding after Relational Spirituality training.

- *Spirituality is measured by practice of prayer and religious service attendance.*
- *Worship and religious rites are most meaningful when done in the setting of a church, chapel, or temple.*

The next statements address the interplay between the traditional understanding of spirituality and the vocational responsibilities of the Direct Support Professionals in the implementation of Spiritual Life Programming. These questions create an invitation to consider the spiritual identity of the DSPs as it intersects with the individuals we support at Cedar Lake Lodge. This is a springboard for conversation surrounding differentiation, professional ethics, and faith practices.
• It is my responsibility to support the chapel attendance and engagement of the individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge.
• It is my responsibility to support the prayer practices of the individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge.
• Spirituality is a part of my work at Cedar Lake Lodge.

Three items in the Spirituality Integration Survey address the awareness of identity and cultural awareness for the individuals we support. Since many of the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge are unable to articulate their life story, a biographical narrative constructed from psychosocial history, observation, and family interview is given. The collection of narrative biographies is available for check-out at each nurse’s station in our facility. Direct Support Professionals are encouraged to review these materials by the Pastoral Services Department and the Behavioral Health Department for improved communication and relationship building. The information and identity described within the narratives help establish relational connections between staff and those we support. It helps to point the DSPs toward the Relational Spirituality Framework. The statements contained in this portion of the survey highlight the availability of these resources as well as their place in the overarching function of the programming.

• Knowing significant transitions and history is important to the spirituality of the people I support at Cedar Lake Lodge.
• The religious heritage of an individual is not as important as their frequent attendance of congregational worship.
• I am familiar with the relationships that matter most to the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge.
Three following statements relate to the revised perception of spirituality, as it may be present in the day-to-day interactions with those who live at Cedar Lake Lodge. These questions highlight the necessity of intentional awareness and present focus while engaged in support of the individuals we support. The questions seem random and obscure to the field of spirituality until the concept of Relational Spirituality is applied to the response. Each of these questions represents a level of intentional, intimate, emotional presence with the individuals receiving support. Each question addresses the vulnerability that may or may not be taken for granted until consideration of relationships and trust are integrated into the perception.

These response statements identify elements of healthful, relational connection in social interaction. Knowing and truly seeing the people who are receiving incredibly intimate care from DSPs is essential in maintaining reciprocal respect in caring relationships.

- *Spirituality is part of hygiene support of the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge.*
- *I know the eye color of most of the people I support from day to day.*
- *I am familiar with the preferred activities of the people I support at Cedar Lake Lodge.*

The final three statements of the survey press the issue of self-awareness and differentiation in the context of the professional caring relationship. These questions highlight the presence of spirituality in the self-perception of the staff that provide support for the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge. The final element of the Relational
Spirituality model is relationship to ‘self,’ which is frequently overlooked in theoretical models of pastoral care. However, the comprehension of every person as a spiritual being is essential for successful outcomes of our program structure. Each participant must be aware of their identity, presumptions, and emotional attachment in caring relationships in order to create an environment of deep, spiritual nurture.

These statements also highlight the health of collaborative relationships in our community. This provides a springboard for awareness and dialogue surrounding healthful communications and conflict resolution. Conflict is unavoidable in an environment that requires dynamic, creative solutions to challenges. However, healthful differentiation and communication can transform these moments of conflict into occasions for deepening relationships instead of breaking them. Cultivating this type of communication is essential in maintaining the emotional engagement of every participant; a necessity for cultivating relationships and spiritual wellbeing.

- I consider spirituality when I am talking with someone I support at Cedar Lake Lodge.
- My personal spirituality does not matter in the spiritual life support programming of Cedar Lake Lodge.
- My collaborations with staff do not play a part in the spiritual life support programming of Cedar Lake Lodge.

The instructions provided for the survey invite a numeric, concrete response to each statement included in body of the survey. The responses indicated by marking the box correspondent to the selected response.
Though the responses are not specific, they do offer a means of measuring the application of spiritual considerations to the areas of relationships explained in the previous sections. A gradient for change created a tool for measuring implicit change in the level of integration according to the individual perceptions of spirituality. These measures elicit some consideration surrounding the concepts that require a gradient of agreement. The consideration is what fuels dialogue in the training and models healthy conversation style for the community at large.

The Spirituality Integration Survey was administered in conjunction with a professional development in-service that was deemed mandatory by the Director of Direct Support Professionals for Cedar Lake Lodge. This designation requires that all DSPs (we employ approximately three-hundred) attend the in-service or complete commensurate training for the Spiritual Life Program in the event of absence. The training is mandated for adequate implementation of the Spiritual Life program and also qualifies for state and federal cultural competency training. Three trainings were held throughout the different shifts of November 2, 2016.

Disclosure requires that I acknowledge that this training was rescheduled three times due to facility crises and administrative sessions altering the facility calendar. The trainings took place at 7:30 am, 2:00 pm, and 3:15 pm. The first session was recorded in
order to provide an alternative means of attending the session for those who were not in attendance that day. The training itself took approximately forty-five minutes. Periods of ten to fifteen minutes were given prior to and following the training session for participants to complete the distributed surveys and consent forms.

Each training session had few people in attendance, despite the mandatory designation. The participants seemed engaged by the material and were able to respond to the questions posed during the dialogue. The sessions were held at the appointed time in the chapel of Cedar Lake Lodge. Our chapel is a warmly lit, large meeting space with industrial carpet, padded chairs, cedar plank walls and ceiling. The décor is consistent with mid-twentieth century, Christian worship spaces. Chandeliers line the center aisle, high windows line each wall, and a large cedar inlaid cross is molded into the wall directly behind the communion table. This space is utilized for weekly Protestant worship services, Catholic Eucharist services, educational settings, administrative meetings, individual pastoral counseling sessions, and various clinical training sessions. It is a space designated for worship, but was also utilized for practical purposes throughout the daily life of Cedar Lake Lodge.

The training session incorporated training regarding locations of files and electronic charting procedures. I also addressed the contact information for all members of the Pastoral Services staff. After the communications web information was offered, the definition of Relational Spirituality was laid out for the DSPs. I communicated the
foundation of our Spiritual Life Program in terms of the various relationships functioning within the framework. A PowerPoint presentation offered visual reference for the various perspectives addressed in the Relational Spirituality perspectives, these points of emphasis addressed in the Spirituality Integration Survey (See Appendix B).

The training session was set up in a dialogical circle of chairs and conversational prompts were offered throughout the session to encourage conversation around different perceptions of spirituality. There were moments of tension surrounding differences in spiritual and religious culture, but the conversation never became personalized or hostile. We engaged in dialogue surrounding responsibilities to and for the wellbeing of the individuals we support, as well as the preservation of personal religious liberties. We engaged in conversations surrounding effects of cultural details in our communications and approach to one another. We engaged in spiritual dialogue and we did so with authenticity and personal investment. We lived out the purpose of the Relational Spirituality Program in the process of formalized implementation. There was individuality and harmony in our midst.

The first phase of intentional structure for the Pastoral Services Department was to sculpt an assessment that would be a meaningful tool for relationship building, not just for the people we support, but with the people we support. We constructed a Spiritual Life Assessment that represented a holistic approach to personhood and spirituality. (See Appendix B)
Figure B1 provides a visual template of the assessment that was designed for the spiritual support of every individual. Compiling the elements of the assessment was a rigorous, tedious process. However, the assessment has become a tool for several staff members and clinicians within our system. We utilized several therapeutic and spiritual elements in constructing the final document. Narrative therapeutic processes are present in the personal history section of the assessment. This process promotes emotional attachment with staff providing support. Descriptions of non-verbal cues and communication along with sensory needs are included in the interpersonal skills section. Important relationships, preferred activities and places, means of comfort, and suggested special services comprise the antepenultimate section. These are details that are useful in various areas of individual support. Frequently, we assist in providing support for some of these special services because they are not within the assigned clinical area of any particular department. The inclusion of these elements is a byproduct of care, not just clinical practicum. The final section of the assessment includes notes regarding religious and or faith practice that are consistent with the individual’s culture or request. Reference Appendix B for the Spiritual Life Assessment template utilized to gather information. A sample Spiritual Life Assessment is also included within the appendix of this document for reference.
Ranking Observations

The statements the survey addressed three different points of perception for each staff member. The responses were designed to be ranked on a numeric scale from 1 to 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not True at All 1</th>
<th>Not True 2</th>
<th>Unsure 3</th>
<th>True 4</th>
<th>Very True 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Figure 2. Measurement Scale for Spirituality Vocational Integration Survey*

The three areas of focus for the response statements are awareness and access to Spiritual Life programming information, perceptions of classical concepts of religiosity, and the subtle awareness of holistic spirituality in the lives of people we support at Cedar Lake Lodge.

The statements are not grouped together on the survey sheet in order to achieve accurate responses without presumption by category. The first, and most important, area of emphasis for the survey questionnaire pertains to the accessibility of the Spiritual Life Programming information and resources for the DSPs. The hands-on professionals of Cedar Lake do not have access to company email or the virtual server we use to maintain appropriate records for the care plans of the individuals we support. Consequently, the information must be accessible through alternative means. Our programming is part of the orientation process at Cedar Lake Lodge and a ‘short-form’ of the Spiritual Life Assessment is available through our staff documentation kiosks.
However, the full Spiritual Life Assessment is only accessible to the direct care staff through a large, three-ring binder kept in the nurse’s station of each building. There is a single, hard-copy collection of the full Spiritual Life Assessment bound in a binder with fluorescent yellow cover.

Program Details and Communication

Knowing the programming details, how to access support plans, and how to interact with the clinicians responsible for their design is imperative to program implementation. It is essential that the staff interacting with residents feel empowered as full participants in the context of a Spiritual Life Support Program that is based on Relational Spirituality. Though education and training assist in providing awareness of the program details, the sense of inclusion cannot be achieved without continued dialogue and interaction from the Spiritual Life staff to cultivate trust and lines of communication with direct care staff.

- I am familiar with the Spiritual Life Programming of the individuals I support.
- I am aware of where to locate the full Spiritual Life Assessment for the individuals I support.
- I am familiar with the details of the full Spiritual Life Assessment for the individuals I support.
- I am aware of where to direct questions or concerns I have regarding Spiritual Life Programming.

*Figure 3. Program Detail Communication*
Perception of Spirituality in the Context of Cedar Lake Lodge Direct Support

It is necessary to address the intersections and differences between traditional Pastoral care programming and the Relational Spirituality programming to address the perceptions of spirituality that have been in place at Cedar Lake Lodge for four decades. Addressing these differences also provides a bridge of engagement for the direct support individuals who do not consider religiosity and traditional, Christian practice part of their personal culture.

- The chapel attendance of the individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge are my responsibility.
- The prayer practices of the individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge are my responsibility.
- Spirituality is a part of my work at Cedar Lake Lodge.
- Spirituality is measured by practice of prayer and religious service attendance.
- Worship and religious rites are most meaningful when done in the setting of a church, chapel, or temple.
- I am familiar with the preferred activities of the people I support at Cedar Lake Lodge.

Figure 4. Perception of Spirituality in the Context of Cedar Lake Lodge Direct Support

Perception of Functional and Interactive Support in Spiritual Life Support at Cedar Lake Lodge

These questions provide direction to the intimate knowledge of individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge. Relational Spirituality requires an emotional connection that can only be established in the reciprocity of care. Empathetic investment requires interaction with the personhood of an individual, not just programming details. These
points highlight ways to access that awareness for the direct care staff being trained in this session.

- Spirituality is part of the hygiene support of the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge.
- Knowing significant transition and history is important to the spirituality of the people I support at Cedar Lake Lodge.
- The religious heritage of an individual is not as important as their frequent attendance of congregational worship.
- I am familiar with the relationships that matter most to the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge.

**Figure 5. Perception of Functional and Interactive Support in Spiritual Life Support at Cedar Lake Lodge**

Perception of Integration and Personal Engagement in the Context of Spiritual Life Supports

Relational Spirituality also requires personal awareness and integration in the work of hands-on support. This portion of the training requires communications surrounding the human connections that are within us all. There will inevitably be a few resistant staff members who find the concept uncomfortable, but the majority of the employees responsible for direct care possess a respect for the concept or they would not have selected a caring profession.

- I know the eye color of most of the people I support from day to day.
- My personal spirituality does not matter in the spiritual life support programming of Cedar Lake Lodge.
- I consider spirituality when I am talking with someone I support at Cedar Lake Lodge.

**Figure 6. Perception of Integration and Personal Engagement in the Context of Spiritual Life Supports**
CHAPTER 4

OBSERVATIONS AND OUTCOMES

I collected data prior to and following the Relational Spirituality training session in order to gain some insight into a possible changed perception of spirituality occurring within those in attendance. The training session took place on November 2, 2016. It was rescheduled twice for conflicting meetings and conferences held by administrative officers of the corporation. There were also some challenges with data collection related to difficulties in staff retention and systemic communication. The Director of Direct Support Professionals position transitioned forty-two days prior to the training session. The change in management personnel created some discontinuity in expectation and communication streams. Despite the challenges facing the completion of this project, there was sufficient participation to collect the data necessary for comparison.

Fortunately, the established relationships I have with the members of our direct support staff were alive and present in the space. The setting of the training session was the chapel at Cedar Lake Lodge. The environment is where I can be frequently found when needed. I have an office, but spend much of my time working in the quiet of the sanctuary. So this space is a familiar conversation spot for pastoral engagement. The responses utilized for data analysis were obtained from the first training session held on November 2 at 7:30 am.
Participants of this particular training session were third shift employees finishing up their work day and first shift employees who elected to participate in the training prior to beginning their work day. The DSP pool at Cedar Lake Lodge is comprised of minimal diversity. The majority of our direct care staff are Caucasian, females between the ages of eighteen and fifty. Spanish and African-American ethnicities are also present, but make up approximately two percent of our direct care workforce. A majority of our DSPs reside in the surrounding rural counties in North-Central Kentucky. Among this population, spirituality is frequently viewed as synonymous with religiosity. The prevailing faith traditions in our local community are conservative Baptist, Roman Catholic, and agnostic. These traditions and their theological leanings are a dominant force in the culture of our Christian organization; non-Christians and non-believers make accommodations for the specifically Christian culture of Cedar Lake.

Data Collection

No identifying information was on any of the surveys collected. The In-Service sign-in sheet was given to the Director of Direct Support Professionals as a record of attendance; signatures were on that sheet without any indication of choice to participate in data collection. Three red file folders were placed at the rear of the chapel space. Each was marked with permanent, black marker on the front.
Consent forms were collected in a separate folder from surveys, the assumption made that all who wished to have their responses included in this project would offer their consent accordingly. (See Appendix A) All responses were entered into an Excel document to compile them for ease of access. An average score was calculated for each set of survey responses, those administered before the training session and those administered after the training session. This average gave me a rough idea of my effectiveness in communicating key themes in defining Relational Spirituality as it related to the work of DSPs at Cedar Lake Lodge.

The survey I constructed offered twenty-three questions related to tangible demonstrations of systemic communication and emotional presence. Each respondent was then offered a numeric value to the involvement of ‘spirituality’ when considering those questions. The numeric score is designed to offer a scale of spiritual integration related to the daily work of the Direct Support Professionals who provided answers for the survey. The calculation of average indicates that there is some type of changes in perception after the participation in the training session which helps me verify that there is some validity to my projected thesis. The relational spirituality training did have
some impact on the understanding of spirituality for the direct care staff of Cedar Lake Lodge, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Before and After Comparison of All Survey Response Questions

The overarching analysis indicates that the spiritual life training based around the concept of Relational Spirituality did have some effect on the perceptions and awareness of the employees who participated in data collection. This difference is demonstrated through the change in average score ranking that difference between series 1 and series 2 in the table above. The remainder of this chapter will describe a comparison of five participants, selected at random, and the changes in their scores. Questions will be addressed individually in order to offer insight into their purpose and function concerning the focus of this project study.

The surveys were administered on a single sheet of paper. The Spirituality Integration Survey was printed on both sides of that paper. The header of one side read “Pre-Training Survey,” the other side of the sheet with the header “Post-Training.
Survey.” This method of distribution insured that the responses of each individual were kept together for comparison despite the anonymity of their participation. At the conclusion of the training sessions I selected five sheets from a stack of participants for data analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 1</th>
<th>5 Very True</th>
<th>4 True</th>
<th>3 Unsure</th>
<th>2 Untrue</th>
<th>1 Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am familiar with the Spiritual Life Programming for the individuals I support.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 8. Survey Statement 1*

The first question of the survey establishes a connection between the Direct Support Professionals and the Spiritual Life Program at Cedar Lake Lodge. In the training session DSPs were given the location of each Spiritual Life Assessment and were offered information surrounding their role in facilitating that plan.

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question one prior to training was 4.4, the mode response was 4, and the response range was between 4 and 5. After completion of the training the average was 5, the mode was 5, all responses were 5. The change indicated an increased awareness and capability of spirituality engagement for the Direct Support Professionals in the response sampling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 2</th>
<th>5 Very True</th>
<th>4 True</th>
<th>3 Unsure</th>
<th>2 Untrue</th>
<th>1 Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of where to locate the full Spiritual Life Assessment for the individuals I support.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 9. Survey Statement 2*
During the training session DSPs were informed about the two types of Spiritual Life Assessment files available, abbreviated and full. The full Spiritual Life Assessment is kept in a binder in the nurse’s station of each building within our facility and is a file attachment available through our digital charting system. The full assessment contains the biographical narrative of each individual, their specific religious heritage, and the description of their interpersonal interactions. The full assessment is roughly two to four pages in length. The abbreviated version of the assessment includes only details relevant to compliance and facilitation. It was created to provide a quick reference version for status audit and quick staffing transitions. The full assessment contains imperative information for relationship building.

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question two prior to training was 3.4, the mode response was 5, and the response range was between 1 and 5. After completion of the training the average was 5, the mode was 5, and there was no range because all responses were 5. The change in scores seems to point toward an adequate communication of where Spiritual Life Programming plans may be located.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 3</th>
<th>5 Very True</th>
<th>4 True</th>
<th>3 Unsure</th>
<th>2 Untrue</th>
<th>1 Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am familiar with the details of the full Spiritual Life Assessment for the individuals I support.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 10. Survey Statement 3*

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for statement three prior to training was 3.4, the mode response was 5, and the response range was between 1 and
5. After the completion of training the average score was 4.8, the mode was 5, and the response range was between 4 and 5. The change in scores indicate an adequate description of the details included in the full Spiritual Life Assessment and where to locate those documents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 4</th>
<th>5 Very True</th>
<th>4 True</th>
<th>3 Unsure</th>
<th>2 Untrue</th>
<th>1 Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of where to direct questions or concerns I have regarding Spiritual Life programming.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 11. Survey Statement 4*

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question four prior to training was 3.6, the mode response was 4, and the response range was between 3 and 4. After the completion of the training the average was 5, the mode was 5, and there was no range because all responses were 5. The change in scoring and the unanimous scoring of question four indicate that adequate information was given concerning the contact information of Pastoral Services staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 5</th>
<th>5 Very True</th>
<th>4 True</th>
<th>3 Unsure</th>
<th>2 Untrue</th>
<th>1 Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is my responsibility to support the chapel attendance and engagement of the individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 12. Survey Statement 5*

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question five prior to training was 4.6, the mode response was 5, and the response range was between 4 and 5. After the completion of the training the average score was 4.6, the mode was 5, and
the response range was between 4 and 5. The lack of change in scores indicates that there was little or no change in perceived responsibility for the DSPs relative to supporting the individuals we at Cedar Lake Lodge in the attendance of religious services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 6</th>
<th>Very True</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>Unsere</th>
<th>Untrue</th>
<th>Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is my responsibility to support the prayer practices of the individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 13. Survey Statement 6*

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question six prior to training was 4.4, the mode response was 5, and the response range was between 3 and 5. After the completion of the training the average response was 4.8, the mode was 5, and the response range was between 4 and 5. The increase in score indicates that there is an increased awareness of professional responsibility to facilitate the individual prayer practices that are consistent with individual cultures for the people who call Cedar Lake Lodge their home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 7</th>
<th>Very True</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Untrue</th>
<th>Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality is a part of my work at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 14. Survey Statement 7*

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question seven prior to training was 4, the mode response was 5, and the response range was between 2 and 5.
After the completion of training the average was 4.8, the mode was 5, and the response range was between 4 and 5. The increase in the reported score indicates a change in the perception of spirituality and professional responsibility to engage the spiritual life support program. One of the DSPs stated, “I never thought about spirituality that way before. I had always thought it was like church and stuff, not about who the person is.” This statement offers insight into the shift in spirituality emphasis for supportive services we are able to offer the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 8</th>
<th>5 Very True</th>
<th>4 True</th>
<th>3 Unsure</th>
<th>2 Untrue</th>
<th>1 Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality is part of hygiene support of the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 15. Survey Statement 8*

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question eight prior to training was 3.2, the mode response was 3, and the response range was between 2 and 4. After the completion of the training the average was 4.4, the mode was 4, and the response range was between 4 and 5. The increase in score indicates a change in the level of integrated thought concerning the spirituality of the individuals we support, which is a manifestation of a Relational Spirituality framework. Hygiene supports include assistance in toileting, bathing, and dressing. While these areas of focus are for occupational therapy, they are also included in the concept of spirituality because they are some of the most tactile, vulnerable interactions that take place between direct care staff and the people we support. It is necessary to consider the needs, life experiences,
and comprehension of sexuality while offering this type of supportive service. Relational Spirituality rest on relational engagement that is supportive of awareness, attunement, and dignity between human beings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality is measured by practice of prayer and religious service attendance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very True</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 16. Survey Statement 9*

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question nine prior to training was 1.8, the mode response was 2, and the response range was between 1 and 2. After the completion of training the average was 3.8, the mode was 4, and the response range was between 2 and 5. The change in scores indicates an increased emphasis on the spiritual value of prayer and worship participation for the individuals supported by Cedar Lake. It should be noted that in the course of training I offered different qualifications for prayer and meditation that are generally accepted by Western culture. In the training session prayer was framed as any time in which an individual engages in verbal or non-verbal communication with a perceived higher power. Meditation was defined as any time utilized for gaining inner calm, whether in the chapel or the sensory room, the ultimate goal of this practice is to gain a sense of inner peace.
Worship and religious rites are most meaningful when done in the setting of a church, chapel, or temple.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Very True</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Untrue</th>
<th>Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 17. Survey Statement 10

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question ten prior to training was 2.6, the mode response was 3, and the response range was between 1 and 4. After the completion of training the average was 3.8, the mode was 4, and the response range was between 2 and 5. The change in the scores indicate a change in perception surrounding the value of worship and religious rites as related to spirituality. The direct care staff seemed to place more significance on the practice of worship attendance after the training session.

In the course of our dialogue surrounding church attendance it was clarified that no individual who did not have a religious heritage prior to coming to live at Cedar Lake Lodge would be coerced to attend. They would be offered invitation, but the choice of participation is solely up to the individuals we support. It was also stated that individuals who struggled with significant sensory defenses should not be asked to tolerate the worship setting at Cedar Lake Lodge unless they request participation. The setting would not be considered worshipful for an individual who experiences extreme anxiety or harm. One of the women in attendance stated, “Well, yeah church is important if it is something they have loved all their life. I thought you meant that everybody had to go because we are a Christian organization and I didn’t think that was right at all. It ain’t
fair to make somebody go through that if it ain’t doing them any good. That ain’t God or faith or nothin.’”

In this portion of the training service there was some significant conversation surrounding the role of religious liberty in the spirituality department and how that right was upheld by our organization, which staff and with those we support. It was a valuable discourse for the staff and for their understanding of expectations surrounding religious practice in our context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 11</th>
<th>5 Very True</th>
<th>4 True</th>
<th>3 Unsure</th>
<th>2 Untrue</th>
<th>1 Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing significant transitions and history is important to the spirituality of the people I support at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 18. Survey Statement 11

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question eleven prior to training was 4, the mode response was 4, and the response range was between 3 and 5. After the completion of training the average response was 5, the mode was 5, and there was no response range because each survey response was 5. The increase in the score for question eleven suggests an increase in the emphasis on personal experience and culture as it relates to individual spirituality. This awareness is the cornerstone of Relational Spirituality put into practice. It is also the most significant awareness bridging the change in perception of spirituality. I was grateful to see this change in perception because it inferred a significant shift in relationship dynamics between staff and supported individuals.
The religious heritage of an individual is not as important as their frequent attendance of congregational worship.

Very True 4 True 3 Unsure 2 Untrue 1 Not at All True

Figure 19. Survey Statement 12

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question twelve prior to training was 2.4, the mode response was 2, and the response range was between 2 and 3. After the completion of training the average was 4.8, the mode was 5, and the response range was between 4 and 5. The change in scores signifies an increased emphasis on the value of consistent attendance of religious services for the individuals we support. This is consistent with a portion of the Relational Spirituality training session that focused on the necessity of consistent participation as part of relationship building. The population we serve frequently struggles with sensory issues, changes in routine or environment, and lack of social skills. These challenges are not part of religious experience, but may very well be detrimental to the future of nurturing religious heritage. In order to establish valuable relationships, the individuals we support need time and familiarity to gain comfort with new surroundings and community. These are the focal point of routine religious practice in this framework, not

I am familiar with the relationships that matter most to the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge.

Very True 5 True 4 Unsure 3 Untrue 1 Not at All True

Figure 20. Survey Statement 13
necessarily the perfect attendance award we used to receive in Sunday School.

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question thirteen prior to training was 4, the mode response was 4, and the range was between 3 and 4. After completion of the training session the average score was 5, the mode was 5, and there was no response range because all respondents indicated 5 as their response. The difference in score for question thirteen can be attributed to the value placed on relationship as a tangible representation of God in the world. In the course of the training session I discussed the particular value of a relational spirituality paradigm because of the difficulties many of the people we support experience with abstract concepts. Many staff who attended the training understood how that perception worked and then related the religious experience and loving family culture of many who call Cedar Lake Lodge their home. The DSPs drew the inferences together once they were given basic concepts of development and emotional connection. It was rewarding to see the evolution of understanding take place in their independent dialogue. It became clear that there was some identification with the concept from many of the staff members in attendance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 14</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know the eye color of most of the people I support from day to day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very True</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untrue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at All True</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 21. Survey Statement 14*
Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question fourteen prior to training was 3.4, the mode responses were 2 and 4, and the response range was between 2 and 5. The eye colors were communicated during the training. After completion of training the average was 4.4, the mode was 5, and the response range was between 3 and 5. The change in score on this question demonstrated a heightened awareness on non-verbal communications and facial expression and that I offered the names of the five individuals living in our facility with brown eyes. This awareness will lead to a process of relating that Daniel Siegel identifies as “attunement.” He writes,

When we attune with others we allow our own internal state to shift, to come to resonate with the inner world of another. This resonance is at the heart of the important sense of ‘feeling felt’ that emerges in close relationships. Children need attunement to feel secure and to develop well, and throughout our lives we need attunement to feel close and connected.\(^1\) The concept of attunement is generally referred to as the concept of ‘presence’ in the field of pastoral care, the ability to engage vulnerability and emotional connection in the midst of an interaction with someone. Contemporary Pastoral care expert, Carrie Doehring offers this description for the concept of ‘pastoral, or compassionate, presence.’

Empathy is about stepping into the religious world of another while monitoring what is going on in one’s own world; compassion is about stepping into worlds of pain and reaching out to those who are suffering. God or a sense of the sacred can be experienced as a transcendent presence within compassionate caregiving relationships. For those in theistic traditions, this sense of presence resonates

with stories describing exodus, incarnation, suffering, and resurrection...This kind of presence helps to establish a relationship of trust.²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My personal spirituality does not matter in the spiritual life support programming of Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 22. Survey Statement 15

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question fifteen prior to training was 2.8, the mode response was 2, and the response range was between 1 and 5. After the completion of training the average was 3.8, the mode was 3, and the response range was between 2 and 5. The increase in this score is a surprise to me because the training session was intended to devalue the necessity of religious heritage of the staff. The complaint pastoral staff has received from direct support staff in the past is that they do not value religious tradition and they refuse to engage in any type of support that presses against their freedom of religion. It is possible that the reframing of spirituality provided a foundation of relationship which was much more comfortable for the staff members who identify themselves as ‘non-believers’, atheists, or agnostics. If that is the case then there is a means of continuing the dialogue to discover deeper elements of spirituality which may be healthful for all participants in our community.

### Statement 16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My collaborations with staff do not play a part in the spiritual life support programming of Cedar Lake Lodge.</th>
<th>5 Very True</th>
<th>4 True</th>
<th>3 Unsure</th>
<th>2 Untrue</th>
<th>1 Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Figure 23. Survey Statement 16*

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question sixteen prior to training was 3, the mode response was 4, and the response range was between 1 and 4. After the completion of the training the average was 4.3, the mode was 5, and the response range was between 1 and 5. The elevation in the score after the training indicates a change in staff perception surrounding the importance of their demeanor and social interactions with colleagues throughout their work day. In our setting, it is important to create an atmosphere of safety and respect. The subtleties of creating this environment are imperative to keeping the motional environment consistent throughout all communications.

### Statement 17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am familiar with the preferred activities of the people I support at Cedar Lake Lodge.</th>
<th>5 Very True</th>
<th>4 True</th>
<th>3 Unsure</th>
<th>2 Untrue</th>
<th>1 Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Figure 24. Survey Statement 17*

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question seventeen prior to training was 4.4, the mode response was 4, and the response range was between 4 and 5. A discussion of people’s preferred activities was included in the training. After the completion of training the average was 5, the mode response was 5, and there was not
range of response because all five respondents answered 5. The increase in the score after the training session indicates a rise in the value of knowing interpersonal connection of the people we support. During the training I was able to offer examples of preferred activities, as they are related to the wellbeing of the people we support. Small things like sitting on the patio, watching the bird feeders outside, speaking into a microphone were all listed as preferred activities that the staff already had in their awareness. Within a Relational Spirituality framework it is necessary to know the important figures in a person’s history. Knowing their story helps supportive staff know how the individuals we support have come to see themselves. Knowing these relationships also helps staff members to facilitate consistent communication with the people who are important to those who live at Cedar Lake Lodge. In many instances, this communication is invaluable to maintain the spiritual wellness of the people we support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement 18</th>
<th>5 Very True</th>
<th>4 True</th>
<th>3 Unsure</th>
<th>2 Untrue</th>
<th>1 Not at All True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I consider spirituality when I am talking with someone I support at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 25. Survey Statement 18*

Among the five selected surveys, the average score for question eighteen prior to training was 3.8, the mean responses were 3 and 4, and the response range was between 3 and 5. After the completion of the training the average was 4.8, the mode was 5, and the response range was between 4 and 5. The increase of ranking after the
training session indicates a shift in the perception of spirituality related to conversation between staff and individuals we support. The change may indicate a reframing of what takes place in the process of our communications with one another. In the field of Relational Spirituality, communication is not just about messages transitioning from one individual to another, but the sharing of identifying preferences, needs, and feelings. In our setting this intentional focus on being with someone helps create an environment that nurtures more communication and independence.

**Thesis Application and Outcomes**

In the review of the data comparison it is evident that there was some change in perception regarding spirituality by those in attendance. Overall, the change in scores indicate that the teaching of a different perspective helped to incorporate the concept of spirituality throughout many services provided by direct care staff and by pastoral services staff. This change validates my hypothesis, reframing spirituality in terms of a relational spirituality framework will have an effect on the integration of spirituality for direct support staff in their daily work. Many elements of soul to soul connection take place at Cedar Lake Lodge, but they had not been identified as relative to anything spiritual. The dialogue of the training session helped reframe the definitions or spiritual practice in terms of caring relationships. This is the foundational premise of the conversation surrounding a Relational Spirituality framework. Ultimately, the training successfully equipped direct support staff to participate in nurturing the spirituality of
the individuals we support. My intention was to create a vernacular of spirituality, spoken or implicit, that included our reliance upon each other for spiritual wellbeing. While it is not my desire to create an atmosphere in which pastoral care has an increased authority or responsibility within our corporate structure, I do hope that there will be an increased awareness of how the breath of the Holy Spirit surrounds us all in our daily lives at Cedar Lake Lodge. If I can be a help, if I can offer my care of advocacy, then I am doing the work of God. And I am doing this work beside an expanse of gifted, caring people who minister just as well as I ever have, without the liturgical robe or title.

The implications for this type of spirituality are somewhat uncomfortable for those of us who have struggled to identify and claim our pastoral authority in seminary studies. In relational spirituality there is a necessary recognition of the equitable value of each soul. In relationships, particularly relationships of the twenty-first century, it is necessary to minister ‘alongside’ people, even if their denominational tradition dictates a pastoral authority of hierarchy. The most prominent and notable religious figures of our generation are those who have advocated for the weak or those who have been among the weak. We live in a generation that wants a Jesus who will wash their feet, not condemn their failed attempts at piety. This framework provides opportunity for this type of faithing. It may be a key component to reawakening an authentic faith in this age.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The data outcomes of this project offer a great deal of hope surrounding the future possibilities of Relational Spirituality within the context of caring, supportive professions. These vocational areas are the calling of many people who find fulfillment in offering compassion and empathy for the good of others. Recognizing the human soul in the midst of these relationships provides an avenue for incorporating faith practice into cultures that have not traditionally embraced spirituality due to the presumption of western, Judeo-Christian religiosity. While I uphold these traditions as invaluable to my identity and survival in this world, I am sensitive to the distance or indifference of others who have not had my experience of faithing. This approach to spiritual support offers a bridge for the differing perspectives that highlights the common sense of connection to the people offering and receiving care.

The preliminary data from staff training provides an impetus for us to engage in further study of the effectiveness of the programming in the lives of those we support. When offering a platform for program structure it is essential to have supportive data in place to communicate the benefits of the programming in terms of productivity and economic factors. Spirituality is an invaluable area of support, but it will not have
support without some type of statistical information, as it will be difficult for
administrators to invest the capital for program implementation otherwise.

Why invest in a spiritual program in an untested setting? Why initiate such a time consuming, intricate foundation for Spiritual Life Programming? Our souls demand nurturing. The classifications of this world make no difference in our souls. The measurable capacity to be productive members of society does not create favor in the vision seen only through the eyes of God. This generation craves something more than technology and research can provide. Intimate, emotional connections are at the foundations of our being. Recognizing the Divine Investment within human beings, the energy spilled out of an Almighty Creator in the birthing of every soul, draws us closer to the heart of God. Recognizing and nurturing souls is the work of good, the work of God, in this tangible realm of existence. Outside of the calling toward a more healthful engagement of humanity, there are indications that this type of programming may provide changes in the cultural climate that are beneficial on the administrative level.

Relational Spirituality provides a synergy within functional systems of employees. There is an increase in the means and methods of collaboration. Members of communities relate with each other and collaborations of agencies in the community as well. The relationships formed within the care setting may then be amplified in the relationships of systems that collaborate to provide the ultimate goal of support. Supports from area churches, ministries, and non-profit agencies may work together to
achieve supportive activities and relationships that neither entity is capable of providing on their own. In these situations, the Relational Spirituality model demonstrates the presence of the Spirit within the balance of strengths and weakness of organizations. This is the presence of the Holy in the support of God’s children created for one another. This is a large part of why this initiative began. The people living at Cedar Lake Lodge offered direction to a greater understanding of spiritual wellbeing. This research project is the culmination of connections they have helped us all see through their lives and passion.

Where do we go from here? There is a new clarity, a blueprint for application of a different way of implementing spiritual care in the setting of our intermediate care facility. What comes next for this approach to pastoral support? The natural next step would be to increase the scale of research to include the system as a whole. This process has been initiated as part of the quality assurance programming of the Pastoral Services Department at Cedar Lake Lodge.

There will be a collection of data contained in the Spiritual Wellness Inventory (Appendix B) for all people who call Cedar Lake Lodge their home. Cedar Lake’s Qualified Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Professionals, QIDDPs will complete the inventory twice each year. The assessments will be completed for every individual supported under the roof of Cedar Lake Lodge. QIDDPs have the most familiarity with the individuals we support, as they are trained advocates for each individual in our
system. Baseline scores will be gathered at the onset of the New Year and we will gather scores for comparisons each quarter of the calendar year. These scores will help us discover areas of growth or decline for each individual and brainstorm about ways we might accommodate the needs highlighted by our data comparison. The continuance of our data collection may not provide any definitive answer relative to the programming in and of itself, there are too many factors to place this much weight on a fairly subjective scale. The wellness inventory, however, should offer some insight into the quality of life for the individuals we support, even if it only provides an opportunity for our team to spend time evaluating the relationships that matter for the individuals we support.

The overarching goal of creating a replicable structure for a Relational Spirituality scaffold for pastoral care is to teach a better, more healthful model of support. The truth of leadership taxed beyond their capability is common to long-term care settings and congregations alike. A Relational Spirituality model is one that empowers every participant to give and receive care in the context of professional ministry. While this model of spiritual care does muddy the boundaries necessary to provide pastoral support by requiring a deeper reciprocity of emotional investment, it facilitates an authentic attachment that is more akin to the teaching and support offered by Jesus during his life on earth. Internal awareness is what maintains our professional identity, not a façade of impenetrable piety.
At this point in my ministry, in my life, I understand why we kneel to pray. Submission to a Calling is not a process of being raised to any distinguishable height in our time here in this life. It is a process of becoming who we were made to become. There is a great fear that walks alongside the journey of becoming, but then again, there is also great fear in the darkness of never having dreamed of something more. The difference is that one of these strengthens us to hope; the other slowly convinces us that hope is a waste of time. The freedom found in engaging the sacred within ourselves and within others is fuel for hope. It also helps us understand that hope may be rooted in a future that does not involve our happiness, wholeness, or even survival. Hope is a greater thing, a divine thing that is enlivened when we seek it out for those we love, for those that we hate. Hope is rooted in the faith that God is present in all things, in all circumstances, and that we are welcomed as companions and co-creators along the way. Sometimes the value of hope is only that we question a possibility too daunting to imagine for a future we may never see. That is the beauty of understanding God alive in relationships: we see hope in the very breath of us all.

Unexpected Revelation

The purpose of this project is twofold. First, the implementation of a structured data collection will help to build a means of quality assurance for the current program structure. The training at the heart of this doctoral project is the first step in the formal implementation programming that has been under development for five years. The
training initiates employees as members of the collaborative care team. It also offers introduction to a documentation system, communication channels, and program intention. The introduction provides a means of quality assurance for the spiritual life programming. The quality assurance will help monitor the program effectiveness and tweak details as the implementation progresses. The quality assurance will also know if this programming has the potential to improve the quality of life for individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge with the potential to do the same in other settings. Adaptive function scores after the informal implementation of pastoral approach seem to indicate an increase in adaptive function, the way those we support engage their world. Across the population of Cedar Lake Lodge, adaptive function scores increased with a range of 2% to 48% over a twenty-four month period. That is an impressive change to notice. The ultimate goal of this study and articulation of a Relational Spirituality framework in the field of pastoral care is to replicate this type of spiritual support in other settings. Analyzing the difference in perspective provides a route toward integration for pastoral care providers and their colleagues within other professions. The elements of pastoral care may not be of interest, but the byproducts of healthier relationships within the professional system most certainly are relevant.

An unexpected outcome of this type of spiritual life programming has been the deepened emotional investment of the employees who are part of our system. Many have made commentary surrounding their gratitude for the tools gained in the spiritual
life assessments. The process of discovering the life stories of individuals we support provides a stronger basis for interpersonal connection. The cues surrounding the non-verbal communications and personal preferences allow for meaningful communications to take place earlier in caring relationships. This depth of relational connection helps improve the emotional feedback DSPs receive, because they can hear what others may not be able to speak in words. This seems to be an impetus for improved morale and employee retention in a field that struggles endlessly with attrition. Theory would suggest that the reciprocity of relationship necessary for this model of care would create a global nurturance of spiritual wellbeing, which would definitely be part of a sense of job satisfaction. It would also increase performance in caring professions, as they are not evaluated on objectives but intentional investment in the quality of life of those supported. Administrative and corporate professionals would gladly participate in outcomes that further these objectives in their workplace, whether pastoral care is of interest or not.

The second outcome of this project is much more valuable than the first; it surrounds the interconnectedness of the human race in this generation. When I began my doctoral adventure three years ago, I did so with some reluctance and some relief. We had entered new territory at Cedar Lake Lodge. We were attempting to implement a new way of providing spiritual support, particularly for people whose disabilities and sensory defenses had never allowed them to participate in traditional congregational
worship. I felt an internal struggle to place the elements of nurturing a human spirit
down on paper at all, much less submit these ‘objectives’ up for approval or denial in
light of state and federal regulations. I hoped that working through the dialogue and
concepts in the Doctor of Ministry in Christian Spirituality would help me find the words
to express an intuitive awareness that I had been given in the pastoral care.

The outcome is much more complex than I anticipated three years ago, but it is
also more valuable. I entered this program to learn how I might teach the skill of seeing
the beautiful spirits of those we support at Cedar Lake Lodge, a skill that I learned from
watching seasoned, loving Direct Support Professionals support people into living up to
their full potential.

The culmination of this project is not what I wanted it to be, but it is a portion of
the work. This project contains a portion of a greater writing that I will offer for
publication once data is collected from the quality assurance process. I began this
course of study in order to formulate a replicable structure of pastoral care. I wanted to
offer some perspectives to assist others in customizing their pastoral care approach that
could be sculpted to each specific context. I have not accomplished this task, but I have
certainly made progress, and so have the people who joined me in the conversation.
The concept of Relational Spirituality has become a part of its own clinical definition.

I have also joined the executive board of the Religion and Spirituality Division of
the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. This
organization facilitates cooperative relationships with many of the clinicians I have consulted along the journey of this program design. The questions I needed to ask for this project gave me a new courage, one I had not known before. I was fighting for the good of people I dearly loved. I was fighting to teach something beautiful and sacred, as best I could, to make sure the rest of the world could see it too. So I began asking questions of the ‘professionals’ I came across in my research. I called them. I emailed them. I had lunch with a couple of them. I entered the professional dialogue of my teachers. I have taken opportunity to learn from the people who I have read and recognize that my theological perspectives are applicable to me too. God does not have favorites and it is my privilege to contribute to the dialogue of my theological questions with professionals who are human beings sorting through a messy, beautiful, human existence too.

I will continue to be an ally in the work of dialogue and caring in the name of God. I will offer what I am able in further developing the concept of nurturing spirituality through tangible care in our world; this is the calling of the Christ. “As much as you have done it to the least of these, you have done it to me” (Matthew 5:40, CEV). We are each the least of these in tandem, our strengths and weakness intermingled in the journey of surviving this life. None are absent of giftedness. None are without the capacity to change my life or yours; the most profound and beautiful change can be found in places we never expect. Henri Nouwen wrote about this type of change in his book *Adam:*
*God’s Beloved*, a text based on his time supporting a companion with IDD in a community much like Cedar Lake Lodge. His sentiment identifies a precious experience that I have also lived in my time as pastor alongside, not over, the congregation I serve.

L’Arche became my community and Daybreak my home because of Adam—because of holding Adam in my arms and touching him in complete purity and complete freedom. Adam gave me a sense of belonging. He rooted me in the truth of my physical being, anchored me in my community, and gave me a deep experience of God’s presence in our life together. Without having touched Adam, I don’t know where I would be today. Those first fourteen months at Daybreak washing, feeding, and just sitting with Adam, gave me the home I had been yearning for; not just a home with good people but a home in my own body, in the body of my community, in the body of the church, yes, in the body of God.

I have heard about and read about the life of Jesus, but I was never able to touch or see him. I was able to touch Adam. I saw him and I touched his life. I physically touched him when I gave him a bath, shaved him, and brushed his teeth. I touched him when I carefully dressed him, walked him to the breakfast table, and helped him to bring the spoon to his mouth. Others touched him when they gave him a massage, did exercises with him, and sat with him in the swimming pool and Jacuzzi. His parents touched him. And what is said of Jesus must be said of Adam: ‘Everyone who touched him was healed.’ Each of us who has touched Adam has been made whole somewhere; it has been our common experience.  

As I begin the journey’s final stage I still find the task daunting, but for vastly different reasons. The task is not so centered around proving my competence, as it was in the beginning of this journey toward spiritual education. That goal was a mask that camouflaged, something that drew out my inmost being through this process of growth. Through this journey I have learned from beautiful souls who have invited me to myself

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and others with the eyes of God; to slow down and hear a truth that words cannot speak. I will teach others to see the beauty of the Spirit within us all because that is the gift I have been given by those I love at Cedar Lake Lodge. The responsibility of this gift is the same as the responsibility attached to any gift offered out of love; we are responsible to teach its value and to pay it forward.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

MERCER IRB APPLICATION

APPROVAL LETTER

STAMPED CONSENT FORM
Application for IRB Review
Student Cover Sheet

Project Title: Engaging the Sacred: Relational Spirituality Alongside Adults with Intellectual Disabilities in the Intermediate Care Facility Setting

Primary Research Investigator: Rev. Katherine Anderson

Doctoral Candidate ☒ Resident ☐ Post-Doctoral Fellow ☐ Master’s Candidate ☐ Bachelorette Candidate ☐

Program/Department: Doctor of Ministry/ McAfee School of Theology

Cell Phone: 502-758-2112

Email Address: katieanderson7@yahoo.com

Research Advisor’s Name: Dr. Denise Massey

Program/Department: Doctoral Supervisor/ McAfee School of Theology

Advisor’s Phone: 678-547-6428

Advisor’s Email Address: massey_dm@mercer.edu

Date Application Submitted: April 18, 2016

Projected Project Start Date: May 24, 2016

Expected Duration of Project: One Month

Study’s Purpose: Demonstrate the affects of Relational Spirituality training on the integration of spirituality in the work of Direct Support Professionals within the Intermediate Care Facility setting

Completed CITI Human Subjects Training: ☒ Yes ☐ No

I certify that I am qualified to conduct my research based on the following information:

I have read and understand the IRB policies and procedures governing research activities involving human subjects.

I have completed the CITI Training for Human Subjects (http://www.citiprogram.org/default.asp?language=english)

I acknowledge my obligation to:

1) Accept responsibility for the research described, including work by students under my direction.

2) Obtain written approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Parents, and Administrator of the study site.

__________________________
Primary Investigator’s Signature

__________________________
Date
**MERCER STUDENT RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS**

( Minimal Risk Studies Involving Human Subjects )

The information provided should address a specific project in its entirety. For assistance in determining whether your project is considered research, please review Mercer’s IRB website at the following link:  
http://orc.mercer.edu/irb/

**PLEASE TYPE AND ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS AS COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Investigator Name</th>
<th>Rev. Katherine Anderson</th>
<th>Degree: Graduate or Undergraduate Graduate</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School/College</td>
<td>Mercer University</td>
<td>Cell phone 502-758-2112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E-Mail Address <a href="mailto:katieanderson7@yahoo.com">katieanderson7@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Department McAfee School of Theology</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Campus Address 3001 University Dr., Atlanta, GA 30341</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Phone 888-471-9922</td>
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<tr>
<th>Co-Principal Investigator/Faculty Advisor Name:</th>
<th>Rev. Dr. Denise Massey, PhD</th>
<th>Degree: Doctorate of Ministry</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office Phone</td>
<td>678-547-6428</td>
<td>Cell phone 770-856-9693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>E-Mail Address <a href="mailto:massey_dm@mercer.edu">massey_dm@mercer.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Address</td>
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**Project Title:**  
Engaging the Sacred: Relational Spirituality Training for Direct Support Professionals Alongside Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

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<td>Does Sponsor offer indemnification?</td>
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**Purpose of Research:** (Check all that apply)

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<td>Letterhead</td>
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<td>Assent Document (if minor subject included)</td>
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<td>Data collection instrument(survey, questionnaires etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data collection as word doc. for online survey set up</td>
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<td>Advertisement, Recruitment Materials, Scripts</td>
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<td>Letter of Permission from Administration(e.g., school)</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRB Approval from Applicant Institution</td>
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<td>Online Survey Informed Consent Document</td>
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Publication/use in thesis/dissertation

Poster/presentation to scientific audience

Results will not be published

Other

Which status applies to this application?

New (first submission for application)  ☑  Revised (documents for application)  ☐

What is the purpose of the project?  ☐ Research  ☑ Teaching  ☑ Training

Does this research involve video or audio recordings?  ☐ Yes  ☑ No

Does research involve online surveys?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No  Start Date: ___________  End Date: ___________

What online survey software will you use?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No  *Mercer provides FREE Survey set-up and technical assistant with Survey Monkey*

All IRB training is required every three (3) years. Provide date of last certification training: __/__/____

CITI Training: http://www.citiprogram.org/

*Accepted Training with DHHS/PHS funding--NIH: Provide copy of NIH certificate to ORC.

1. Briefly state, using easily understandable LAY TERMINOLOGY the Objectives and the Relevance of the study in advancing scientific knowledge, and/or benefits to human health or wellbeing. (Note: A scientific abstract from a grant application using highly technical terms is not acceptable.)

2. Briefly describe methods and/or procedures that involve human subject participation and briefly describe how confidentiality of subjects will be established and maintained.

3. Describe your research design, data collection strategies, and specific factors (such as independent variables), conditions or groups in your study and any control conditions. Include the setting in which the interaction occurs, and your relationship to this setting.

4. Describe characteristics of subject population (include selection criteria and any age, sex, physical, mental and health restrictions):

5. Does the project specifically target subjects who are?
   (a) Minors (less than 18 years of age)?
       Recruited ☐   Excluded ☑   Permissible/Not Recruited ☑
   (b) Pregnant women?
       Recruited ☐   Excluded ☑   Permissible/Not Recruited ☑
   (c) Prisoners?
       Recruited ☐   Excluded ☑   Permissible/Not Recruited ☑
   (d) Intellectually or emotionally impaired (mentally retarded/disabled, psychiatric patients, etc.)?
       Recruited ☐   Excluded ☑   Permissible/Not Recruited ☑
   (e) Physically Handicapped (uses wheelchairs, walker, etc.)
       Recruited ☐   Excluded ☑   Permissible/Not Recruited ☑
(e) Institutionalized?
- Recruited ☐
- Excluded ☒
- Permissible/Not Recruited ☐

(f) Mercer University students?
- Recruited ☐
- Excluded ☒
- Permissible/Not Recruited ☐

*If study requires student information such as emails, grades, etc. there MUST be a request to the Registrar’s office for release of the information. (See Request for Research Use of Student Records Form)

(g) Mercer University Faculty?
- Recruited ☐
- Excluded ☒
- Permissible/Not Recruited ☐

(h) Mercer University Staff?
- Recruited ☐
- Excluded ☒
- Permissible/Not Recruited ☐

Example: If children are involved then minors are recruited. Pregnant women are permissible/not recruited if they can be part of study population, i.e. an interview with female coaches. There is a possibility that one of the ladies could be pregnant. C, D, and F should be excluded unless you are targeting those populations. Contact the Office of Research Compliance for further assistance.

6. Does the study:
   (a) Require the obtaining of parental/guardian consent and/or institutional authorization for access to the subjects if minor, intellectually or emotionally impaired, or institutionalized?
   - Yes ☒
   - No ☐

   (b) Involve information gathering procedures (personality tests, questionnaire, inventories, surveys, medical record review, observations, etc.) where the subject can be identified by name or code?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☒
   If Yes, Please Explain:

   (c) Involve procedures specifically designed to directly modify (coerce) the knowledge, thinking, attitudes, feelings, or other aspects of the subjects’ behavior?
   - Yes ☒
   - No ☐
   Justify: Relational Spirituality training is intended to provide skills for providing culturally competent spiritual support for individuals of various backgrounds and cognitive abilities.

   (d) Involve giving any false information (deliberate deception) to the subject?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☒
   Justify:

   (e) Involve collection of blood samples?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☒
   If Yes, Type of collection: finger stick ☐ ear stick ☐ heel stick ☐ venipuncture ☐ other ☒

   (f) Involve collection of tissue or biological samples?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☒
   If Yes, Type of collection: skin ☐ hair ☐ nails ☐ sweat/saliva ☐ other ☒

   Where did you acquire your samples: hospital ☐ tissue bank ☐ other ☒

7. List all off-campus study sites to be used during this study:
   Study Site: Cedar Lake Lodge
   Address: 3301 Jericho Rd., LaGrange, KY 40031
   Contact Person: Rev. Dr. Mark Whitsett
   Phone Number: 502-645-6548

8. If subjects will:
   (a) Receive any payment for participation (e.g., money, course credit, medication, free examinations) give details: not applicable
(b) Be solicited explain how. (Attach copy of all advertisements i.e., brochures, flyers, newspaper, radio, television, videos, etc.) The IRB committee must approve advertisements at time of review.

(c) Be exposed to any procedures that cause any degree of discomfort, harassment, invasion of privacy, risk of physical injury, or threat to their dignity, or if the procedure may cause any potentially harm, state what provisions have been established to respond to the harmful or adverse conditions that may arise:

9. Will individuals other than the principal investigator, co-investigators, governmental review agencies, and sponsoring IRB’s be able to identify the subjects in the study? (For example, will editors, general public, colleagues, etc. be able to identify the subjects in reports of publications?) Yes ☐ No ☒

(a) If yes, explain why the confidentiality of the subjects cannot be maintained.

(b) If no, describe how you plan to codify the subjects to maintain their confidentiality. Subjects will be members of the Cedar Lake staff. All data recorded will be volunteered by the test subjects at the time of the training in-service. (Note: Completed surveys will be compiled in two different file folders, “volunteer my answers” and “please do not volunteer my answers,” without identifying information. Since program training is part of state compliance, all employees will fill out the survey to provide evidence of their attendance and offer commentary to the in-service facilitator (myself).

(c) HIPAA Privacy: In obtaining the data, please cite authority (subjects’ permission to release protected health information (PHI), or right to review patient data) for all individuals who will have access to protected health information (PHI)^{(1)} (e.g., study coordinator, psychometrics, statistician, or other non-healthcare providers)

10. In your opinion, is the risk to the subject greater than any of the potential benefits that the subjects will obtain? Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, explain why the risk is greater:

11. Fill in the number or estimate:

(a) The average amount of time required for subjects participation (in hours per week)

1- 2 (Attach copy of questionnaire)

(b) If questionnaires are involved, the total number of items? Twenty-five questions will be answered prior to in-service training, twenty-five questions will be answered after the completion of the in-service training

(c) The number of subjects to be involved in study:

Locally 5
Nationally not applicable

12. Please state your qualifications to do this project (Note: even if you have filled this out before, this information needs to be on each application that you submit as a matter of record.) I hold a Masters of Divinity in the field of Pastoral care and Counseling. I hold national, board certification through the Association of Professional Chaplains. I am a student clinician of the American Association of Pastoral Counseling, and I have been an active member of the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education. I also serve as the Spiritual Life Coordinator at Cedar Lake Lodge & Residences where I am responsible for the spiritual support programming for 254 clients as well as the spiritual life support training for approximately 1,000 staff members.

13. Attachments required for completing the application: Items in BOLD (if applicable) must accompany your application or it will be returned.

Please check (√) the attachments included with your submission.

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^{(1)} 45 CFR 164.501, 164.508(f), 164.512(l), HIPAA Privacy, Office for Civil Rights, HIPAA Technical Assistance - Research
Protocol Narrative (a paragraph or two describing goals, objectives and methodology)

Informed Consent Document on Mercer Letterhead (unless exempt, closed to enrollment, or requesting waiver of written consent)

Assent Document (if minor subjects will be included)

Data collection instrument (surveys, survey invitation letter, questionnaires, data log sheets, etc.)

Letter of Permission or IRB approval from Off-Site Institution/Off-Site Research Agreement

If research occurs within a school, does the school district/system require IRB approval prior to giving school approval? Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, what is the name of the school system?

Advertisement, Recruitment Materials, Scripts

Request for Research Use of Student Records (If requesting student information)

NOTE: If you already know that there are items you will need to submit for this protocol that are not yet available (e.g., letters of permission from off-site institutions, data collection instruments, advertisements, etc.), please describe below your anticipated timetable for obtaining and/or developing these documents.

THE PROJECT WILL REQUIRE ADDITIONAL: ☐ Space ☐ Equipment

☒ Professional and/or staff time ☒ Resources

How will this proposal be supported? ☐ Grant ☐ Contract ☒ In-house support

Has the grant or contract been submitted to a funding agency? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Date submitted (or to be submitted): ______________________________

Name of Agency or Sponsor: ____________

Cedar Lake Lodge

I CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS APPLICATION IS COMPLETE AND CORRECT.

I CERTIFY THAT I WILL FOLLOW MY IRB APPROVED PROTOCOL.


I WILL COMPLY WITH ALL APPLICABLE, FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LAWS REGARDING THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH.

I WILL ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL PERFORMING IN THIS STUDY ARE QUALIFIED AND ADHERE TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS MERCER CERTIFIED PROTOCOL.

I WILL NOT MODIFY THIS PROTOCOL OR ANY ATTACHED MATERIALS WITHOUT FIRST SUBMITTING AN AMENDMENT TO THE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PROTOCOL AND RECEIVING SUBSEQUENTLY IRB APPROVAL AS WELL AS REVIEW AT MERCER UNIVERSITY.

I WILL PROMPTLY REPORT SIGNIFICANT OR UNTOWARD ADVERSE EFFECTS OR UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS TO THE IRB IN WRITING WITHIN 10 WORKING DAYS OF OCCURRENCE.

I WILL OBTAIN WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM THE DEAN OF MY FACULTY ADVISOR AT MERCER UNIVERSITY.
IN ACCORDANCE WITH 45 CFR 46.112, MERCER UNIVERSITY EXPRESSLY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVIEW FOR APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL RESEARCH APPROVED BY THE IRB.

ALL STUDENT RESEARCH MUST BE SIGNED BY THE DEAN OR DESIGNEE PRIOR TO IRB SUBMISSION

Signature of Student Investigator Date

If this project is being internally funded (Mercer University) it also requires the signature of the Dean / Dean’s Designee and Faculty Advisor.

REQUIRED SIGNATURES: SUBMISSIONS WITHOUT SIGNATURES WILL BE RETURNED

I AM AWARE OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH AND THE LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENTAL FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENTS, AND/OR FACILITIES.

I AGREE THAT THIS RESEARCHER CAN ACCESS OUR FACULTY, STAFF, OR STUDENTS.

Signature of Faculty Advisor/Co-Principal Investigator Date

Signature of Department Chair Date

This project is consistent with departmental objectives; and adequate space, equipment, professional and staff time, and other resources as stated in this application will be made available if the research is approved.

Signature of Dean / Dean’s Designee Date

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2 Review by institution. Research covered by this policy that has been approved by an IRB may be subject to further appropriated review and approval or disapproval by officials of the institution. However, those officials may not approve the research if it has not been approved by an IRB.
Facility Research Request Form

Name of Facilities: Cedar Lake Lodge
Name of Researcher: Rev. Katie Anderson
Position: Spiritual Life Coordinator

A. Research Project
   a. **Title:** Engaging the Sacred: Relational Spirituality Training for Direct Support Professionals Alongside Adults with Intellectual Disabilities
   b. **Statement of Problem and research question:** Relational Spirituality is a difficult framework to implement in any long-term care facility, but may function as an anchor for person centered planning. This project will investigate the impact Relational Spirituality training has on considerations of spirituality in the work of Direct Support Professionals working alongside individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge.
   c. **Population for the study:** 5 Volunteer, Cedar Lake Lodge Direct Support Professionals (3 shifts, 5 volunteers from a pool of approximately 350 employees)
   d. **Reason for doing this research:**
      - Theological Graduate Study at Mercer University/McAfee School of Theology
      - For Presentation to the Doctor of Ministry in Christian Spirituality Committee
      - For Use in Teaching a Relational Spirituality Approach of Pastoral care
   e. **Dates research will be conducted:** May 24, 2016 to June 26, 2016

   All research and researchers must a) protect the rights and welfare of all human subjects b) inform individuals and guardians that they have the right not to participate in the study, and c) adhere to board or corporate policies and applicable laws, which govern the privacy and confidentiality of individuals’ records.

B. This request applies to research conducted by the researcher listed only. All other research requests must be submitted to the appropriate administrative office for separate approval.

C. Administrators approve local facility research requests only.

______________________________
Mark Whitsett  
Director of Pastoral Services, Cedar Lake, Inc.

______________________________
Date of Approval
Informed Consent  
Engaging the Sacred: Relational Spirituality Alongside Adults with Intellectual Disabilities

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you give your consent to volunteer, it is important that you read the following information and ask as many questions as necessary to be sure you understand what you will be asked to do.

Investigators
This study is being conducted as a component of the degree of Rev. Katie Anderson, M.Div/ PCC, BCC. The outcomes are the final component of Rev. Anderson’s doctorate of ministry in Christian Spirituality degree program through the McAfee School of Theology of Mercer University. Dr. Denise Massey, PhD is also participant in this study, serving as the academic advisor for Rev. Anderson. If you have any questions regarding programming or the research itself you may contact Katie Anderson at kanderson@cedarlake.org or (502) 758-2112. You may also refer questions to Dr. Massey at massey_dm@mercer.edu or (678) 547-6428.

Purpose of the Research
This research study is designed to measure the effectiveness of Spirituality training at Cedar Lake Lodge. The study will document any impact made by the training offered by Rev. Anderson. Employees who participate will respond to an anonymous survey before and after an in-service training. Those who volunteer their responses, without identifying information, will place their responses in a separate folder marked “data collection.” Responses will then be recorded and offered to Rev. Anderson to improve her future training sessions as enhance her continuing professional development. No identifying information will be included other than the note that participants were individuals who were employed by Cedar Lake Lodge. Anecdotal information may be contained in the project as well. These sections will not contain identifying information either. The results of this study will be submitted as the project thesis for Rev. Katie Anderson, in partial completion of the degree of Doctorate of Ministry in Christian Spirituality. The results will also inform and shape the quality assurance of Pastoral Services programming at Cedar Lake Lodge in the future.

Procedures
If you choose to participate in this study, there will be no changes in your job responsibilities or training.

Potential Risks or Discomforts
There are no foreseeable risks, discomforts, costs, or inconvenience relative to research project. If you wish to withdraw from the research pool at any time, communicate that desire to the researcher, and you may remove your information if it has not yet been consolidated in to the sum total of data. Removing your data after all of the information is combined for comparison will be impossible.

Potential Benefits of the Research
There are no anticipated benefits to volunteering your data responses in this research project.
I do not have to sign this authorization. If I decide not to sign this authorization it will not affect my employment, performance evaluation, or employee status.

**THIS AUTHORIZATION EXPIRES DECEMBER 15, 2016**

**Participation and Withdrawal**
Your participation in this research study is voluntary. As a research subject you may elect to discontinue participation at any time. To withdraw from the study, please contact Rev. Katie Anderson (502) 758-2112 (mobile), (502) 222-7157 ext. 1125 (office), or kanderson@cedarlake.org (email). Every effort will be made to accommodate your request as quickly as possible.

**Questions about the Research**
If you have any questions about the research, please speak with Rev. Katie Anderson at kanderson@cedarlake.org or (502) 758-2112. If you questions later, you may contact Rev. Denise Massey at massey_dm@mercer.edu or (678) 547-6428.

This project has been reviewed and approved by Mercer University’s IRB. If you believe there is any infringement upon the rights of a research subject, you may contact the Chair, at (478) 301-4101.

You have been given the opportunity to ask questions and they have been answered to your satisfaction. Your signature below indicates your voluntary agreement to participate in this research study.

**Authorization**
I authorize Rev. Katie Anderson to use my survey responses in the data collection for her Doctorate of Ministry project. I am aware these responses will be part of a published work detailing the Spiritual Life Support Program at Cedar Lake Lodge. These responses will not contain any type of identifying information.

*Please return one copy of this consent form to Cedar Lake Lodge, c/o Katie Anderson, using the pre-stamped, addressed envelope enclosed with this document. Please keep one copy for your records.*

______________________________  __________________________
Signature of Research Subject               Date

______________________________  __________________________
Participant Name (Please Print)               Date

______________________________  __________________________
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent         Date
17-Jul-2015

Ms. Katie Anderson
Mercer University
McAfee School of Theology
3001 Mercer University Dr
Atlanta, GA 30341

RE: "Engaging the Sacred: Relational Spirituality Training for Direct Support Staff of Cedar Lake Lodge" (HL.007100)

Dear Ms. Anderson:

Your application entitled: "Engaging the Sacred: Relational Spirituality Training for Direct Support Staff of Cedar Lake Lodge" (HL.007100) was reviewed by the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research in accordance with Federal Regulations 45 CFR 46.100(b) (for expedited review) and was approved under Category 7 per 45 CFR 46.101(b).

Your application was approved for one year of study on 27-Jul-2015. The protocol expires 26-Jul-2016. If the study continues beyond one year, it must be re-evaluated by the IRB Committee.

Item(s) Approved:
New application for research study designed to measure the effectiveness of Spirituality training at Cedar Lake Lodge

Please complete the survey for the IRB and the Office of Research Compliance. To access the survey, click on the following link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/K77178

"Mercer University has adopted and agrees to conduct its clinical research studies in accordance with the International Conference on Harmonization’s (ICH) Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice."

Respectfully,

Ana Chamblo-Richardson, M.ED., CIP, CIIM
Member
Institutional Review Board
Mercer University IRB & Office of Research Compliance
Phone (478) 301-4301
Fax (478) 301-2329
IREC梅花@mercer.edu

1501 Mercer University Dr. | Macon, Georgia 31207-0001
(478) 301-4101 | FAX (478) 301-2329
Potential Risks or Discomforts
There are no foreseeable risks associated with this study. There is potential for minor social discomfort during the conversation related to spirituality and cultural differences in the supports we offer. There will be opportunities to dialogue around these differences and gain assistance for any internalized tension relative to the subject matter.

Potential Benefits of the Research
The refractive spirituality presentation is required for your position at Cedar Lake, but the permission to use your data in the research study is not. The responses and dialogue throughout this training session will provide important information regarding spiritual life programming at Cedar Lake Lodge. These responses will facilitate growth of spiritual life programming.

Confidentiality and Data Storage
All data collected for the research portion of this study will be anonymous. There are no identifiers on the surveys completed. The only information shared will be in numeric value. However, the data will be protected in the office of the Spiritual Life Coordinator prior to calculation and after calculation is complete. The survey responses will be coded with alpha-numeric identifiers in order to maintain accuracy while entering the responses into a database. This database will be created and stored on the virtual network at Cedar Lake Lodge. This network is encrypted and secured for the wellbeing of all people employed and supported by Cedar Lake Lodge. This data is available to all persons who have access to the VPN of Cedar Lake Lodge as well as the Information Technology Department of Cedar Lake, Inc.

The relational spirituality training session will be recorded. The recording will emphasize the information provided by the presenter alone and will be used for training purposes alone. The video information will be kept on the Cedar Lake Lodge virtual network in the folder marked "media." This folder is available to all persons who have access to the VPN of Cedar Lake Lodge. Eliminating the possibility of visual recognition of attendees cannot be guaranteed.

Participation and Withdrawal
Your participation in this research study is voluntary. As a participant, you may refuse to participate in the data collection of this research study. However, since all submitted data will be anonymous upon receipt, there will not be a way to remove your responses from the data pool once the training session has been completed.

Questions about the Research
If you have any questions about the research, please speak with Rev. Katie Anderson (kanderson@cedarlake.org or 502-758-2112) or Dr. Denise Massey (massey.dm@mercer.edu or 678-547-6428).
APPENDIX B

SPIRITUAL LIFE ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE
SAMPLE SPIRITUAL LIFE ASSESSMENT
SPIRITUAL LIFE TRAINING MANUAL
VOCATIONAL INTEGRATION MEASURE
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STAFF RESPONSE
**Spiritual Life Assessment**

This assessment is a presentation of information gathered from a person’s records. It is gathered to create a full context understanding of personhood. It also contains information gathered from family and staff interview. Any statements of clinical/medical information are notes of data from professionals trained in the appropriate field of care, not assessment by Pastoral Services. All recommendations are rooted in the practice of individualized spiritual nurture for the wellbeing of God’s children with the consideration of their unique identity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident Identification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name, Date of Birth,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender, Eye Color</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This section facilitates the staff process of ‘centering’ on the individual being assessed.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagnoses Pertinent to Environmental and Social Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This section contains information that effects how staff communicates with and walk alongside the person they are supporting. Seizure disorders, diabetes, significant allergies, cardiac and/or pulmonary conditions are also in this section as valuable information for staff supporting individuals outside of Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This section is intended to help staff be aware of needs present in their interactions with the person they are supporting. Spiritual Life staff also use this information in the preparation for daytrips or in planning community congregational worship.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This section includes interpersonal interaction notes (non-verbal expressions of anxiety, discomfort, and/or happiness), communication styles with specific details (volume, timbre, and pitch of speech preferred), and environmental considerations for this person (e.g. aversion to crowds, fear of severe weather, etc.).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This section is intended to be a “translation key” for staff engaging this person in all forms of communication and relationship.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social/ Faith History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This section includes details of birth, early life, milestones, and diagnostic history if it is pertinent to the developmental process of the person being assessed. Individuals diagnosed with degenerative disease processes require continual grief support surrounding the independent functions they have lost through their life. Education history, faith/religious details, meaningful relationships for this individual for staff reference help to provide distinct cultural awareness. This section may also include soothing methods that are effective for this person.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All of this information is most effective when composed in a succinct biographical narrative format. Neurological synthesis of the information presented as narrative includes more emotional engagement by the reader and creates an effective invitation for staff into relationship.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Special Services/ Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This section contains notes regarding familiar relationships and the routines associated for the individual described. It is a valuable tool all members of the support team. Favorite past times, hobbies, activities, places, and artistic expressions are included for use by the care team.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Spiritual Life Assessment**

This assessment is a presentation of synopsis information taken from the resident’s cumulative clinical information on record. It is gathered as such to create a full context understanding of personhood. It also contains information gathered from family, education, and clinical research. All statements of clinical and medical information are reiterations of data from professionals trained within each particular field of care, not assessment done by Pastoral Services staff. Recommendations are rooted in the practice of individualized Pastoral care for the wellness of God’s children through the lens of their particular needs and experience as it is assessed by the Spiritual Life staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident Identification</th>
<th>John Doe, DoB: <strong>/</strong>/1958</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presenting Diagnoses</td>
<td><strong>AXIS I:</strong> 298.9 Psychotic Disorder, NOS; 307.22 Chronic Motor/Vocal Tic Disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>AXIS II:</strong> 318.2 Profound Mental Retardation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>AXIS III:</strong> medical (cardiac issue, scoliosis, dysphasia, visual impairment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>AXIS IV:</strong> N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>AXIS V:</strong> Global Assessment of Functioning= 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Relational Considerations | Mr. Doe can easily be described as a pleasant, social man. He very much enjoys socially engaging persons around him, particularly those who are very familiar. John is considered ‘non-verbal’, but does speak a few phrases and has throughout his recorded history (i.e. ‘OK’, ‘He’s the Man’, ‘Yeah’, ‘No’). John will also gesture and whine for destinations or items if he wants them. John engages in self-abusive behavior and yells when he is frustrated. He will also yell and make a fuss when a friend or staff seems to be in need of assistance. John loves to be greeted with specific, energetic welcome. He smiles and laughs as people call out his name or refer to how handsome he is on a given day. John also enjoys offering hugs when he is in amicable moods. It should be noted that John will ignore any greeting or attempt to engage if he is in a moment of frustration. He will walk past a person, ignore instructions, or give an intense glare if he is being asked to comply with a request that does not match his |

**Recommendations for Spiritual Support**

This section contains recommendations specific to the Pastoral Services Department. Recommendations are given for invitation to participate in worship services, as chosen, at Cedar Lake Lodge or in an appropriate community congregation. Congregations are determined by applying the individuals faith history, sensory needs, and cultural preference. We also recommend some type of interaction with Pastoral Services staff that facilitates familiarity and comfort (Prayer, walking, laughing, coloring, music making could be components of this recommendation, depending on the preference and past experiences of the individual being supported. This section may also contain the recommendation for a Spiritual Life Companion the individual does not have a family/community relationship actively engaged in their weekly life. We may also incorporate recommendations for specific mindfulness practices that may help to soothe some general anxiety for this person (e.g. Mandalas, walks outside, enjoying the view from their back porch swing, etc.)
preference. (Note: John will become hostile, even physically aggressive toward others in some of these moments. Instructions for re-direction and preventing these behaviors may be found in Mr. Doe’s Behavioral Support Plan through Behavior Services. Accumulating and hording paper seems to be a frequent catalyst for this type of behavior.) One can generally read Mr. Doe’s affect by judging his physical stature in a given moment. When he is amicable, John stands up right with a large smile across his face. One or both hands will be out of his pockets and drawn in close to his chest when he’s not reaching for an individual or gesturing for communication. When John is in a more challenging place, he will generally have his head hung, looking toward the floor if not fussing with/about another person in his immediate environment. He will usually have his hands in his pockets, if he is not slapping his chest/stomach. John will also be grinding his teeth and may even place the fingers of his left hand in his mouth, biting on them as he tries to communicate his frustrations by gesturing. His shoulders will be more drawn inward and he rocks and walks around. Again, reductive strategies may be found in his support plan from Behavior Services.

Social/Faith History

- Mr. John Lee Doe, Jr. is the only son to Ms. Jane Doe and Mr. John Doe, Sr., Jane’s maternal uncle. Prior to her pregnancy with John, Mrs. Doe had six children with her first husband, Aaron Doe, John Sr.’s brother. Her other children were [Redacted] (1/2 sister, born 12/10/1939 - did not finish schooling, married at 16), [Redacted] (born 2/18/1945, did not complete high school, now deceased after accidental electrocution at age 33), [Redacted] (born 10/6/1943, did not finish high school - estranged from family), [Redacted] (born 5/4/46, brain damage secondary to meningitis at age 5, left high school after 10th grade, functionally employed as of 2004), [Redacted] (born 3/21/48, graduated high school, married at age 18), [Redacted] (born 2/12/1951 at Louisville General Hospital, dx cerebral palsy and severe mental retardation, enrolled in ICF at age 4, died at Hazelwood secondary to a congenital heart defect in April 2000).
- The records for Mr. Doe’s educational training are not detailed, but are listed in his transition documentation.
   - Kentuckiana Children’s Center (1966- ??)
   - TIP Home (no resources/information found)
   - Henry Clay Elementary School (Trainable Mentally Retarded placement)
   - Churchill Park School (TMR placement)
   - Frankfort State Hospital and School (formerly “Kentucky School for the Feeble Minded” & “Kentucky Training Home”-
11/27/1958 to 8/30/1966
- Respite and evaluation at the Kentucky Department of Mental Health Center for Diagnostic Services, Diagnostic and Evaluation Unit in Frankfort, KY (8/3/1976 to 8/30/1976)
- Oakwood in Somerset, KY (8/22/1977 to 10/2/1978 - admitting dx was Mental retardation, severe, etiology unknown)

- Mr. Doe was also enrolled in the Connelly Work Activity Program through Central State Hospital.
- Mr. Doe is natively Baptist, though regular, congregational worship attendance has never been a part of his life. He did choose to attend chapel while at Central State, but struggled in maintaining focus and quiet during that time. Consequently, he frequently left prior to the conclusion of services.
- It should be noted that throughout the course of his life, John has been through a great deal of transition. His mother struggled with significant mental illness, being institutionalized several times for her psychiatric maladies. Consequently, John and his brother Aaron were institutionalized as very young children, John was likely placed at Frankfort State Hospital as an infant (11/27/1958; records list “11/27/1956,” but John was not yet born). There are very few reports of troublesome behavior aside from his loud verbalizations and self-injury. It should be noted that throughout a three year period at Central State, John was taken to the emergency room six times with injuries that were the result of a suitemate. He had stitches four times (lip, eyebrow, nose), a broken nose, and two removals of nickels from his nasal cavity (one required surgery). When it was discovered that his suitemate was the culprit, he was moved into the unit for geriatric patients for his safety (per request of guardians). Family members have done their best to be advocates for Mr. Doe throughout his life, though records indicate he had very little interaction with them throughout his life. Documentation records that John has always been a social, loving individual, following preferred individuals throughout most of the time. John reportedly LOVED coloring, especially with markers, throughout his childhood and adolescence. Institutional settings and limited resources resulted in paper hording so that he could continue his favorite activity when he chose to do so. John also had a pet, a goldfish, that he purchased and helped to care for throughout his transition from Oakwood to Cedar Lake. He loves pizza, people watching, looking out windows, individualized attention.
| Suggested Special Services/ Activities | Suggestions for Spiritual Life Support and Special Services are based on family interview, records research, preferred staff interview, and multiple observations throughout daily life of Mr. John Lee Doe, Jr. at Cedar Lake Lodge. These are the suggestions offered by the Pastoral Services Department as a means of nurturing John’s soul and the investment God made therein:  
- Continued participation in familiar relationships with preferred staff and residents (visiting on/ off the suite)  
- Active participation in community activities as prescribed by Cedar Lake Lodge staff and programming.  
- Continued support of his/ her favorite past times: walks outside, shopping adventures with preferred staff, one on one interaction, art activities, and music (not necessarily making music, but listening to it and dancing playfully)  
- John would likely benefit from involvement with a facility aquarium, if the purchase and presence are considered to be safe and healthful in our context.  
- John has spent most of his life in an institutional setting, thus, staff are and have always been his ‘family.’ Though professional boundaries must be maintained, care, attention, and affirmation mean a great deal to him. He seeks eye contact and interaction nearly all of the time. Whenever possible, please engage Mr. Doe with focused attention. |
| Recommendations for Spiritual Support | - Continued participation in weekly worship rites (protestant/ Baptist) as decided upon by offering to John. In the past twelve months he has attended chapel **% of the time.  
- Additionally, it is recommended that occasional offerings of individualized conversation be offered to John by the staff of the Pastoral Services Department. He thoroughly enjoys playful conversation and will generally welcome a hug when one is requested. John also enjoys walks out of doors, which could definitely serve as a pastoral offering for his particular context. |
Spiritual Life

Goals and Objectives
Spiritual Life Goals and Objectives

The Spiritual Life program at Cedar Lake exists to provide Christ-centered care that consistently enables people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to have a faith-life that is in keeping with their choices and that is meaningfully expressed in their daily living.

Our organization is “Christ-Centered”. We exist on the principles of faith and identity that are part of our Christian heritage. However, we recognize that not all of our residents are Christian, neither are many of employees of our agency. With those points in mind and focus, we celebrate the parts of life that are common to every person.

- People need people, we support this for residents and employees in many different ways.
- People need to know that they are important and that their choices matter to us as we support them in living their lives.
- People need safety and trust. These are the foundations of Cedar Lake’s purpose. While we do not directly implement these parts of daily life, we recognize the tremendous effort and coordination that goes into the support our administration and interdisciplinary teams make to the care of the people we support. We offer consistent support, pastoral and collegial, to DSPs, Managers, Housekeeping, Maintenance, and Senior Management as part of our offering of grace to the culture of Cedar Lake.

The Spiritual Life department focuses on the identity of each individual we serve. We look at where they have come from, who they care about, the struggles they have faced (spiritual, physical, and otherwise). We seek out what Cedar Lake can provide to offer each person we serve the utmost joy, peace, and freedom possible in the living of their lives.
Spiritual Life

Staff and Communication Information
Pastoral and Spiritual Life Staff

Pastor Mark Whitsett
Director of Pastoral Services

Pastor Mark Whitsett serves as the head of Pastoral Services. He works among senior management to promote the voice of faith and spiritual life in the overarching operations of Cedar Lake. In addition to administrative responsibilities, Pastor Mark functions as the CEO/P for Oaks Road at Cedar Lake Lodge. He is the chair of the Human Rights Committee, keeping watch over the freedoms and rights of our residents alongside our compliance officer. He is also the chair of the Employee Benevolence Committee, providing support for staff and their families in moments of life’s crises. Pastor Mark leads Devotional services at Cedar Lake Lodge, Park Place, and Cedar Lake Enrichment Center the majority of the time. Due to the many, varied responsibilities that Pastor Mark carries on his shoulders, he is seldom anywhere for an entire day. Pastor Mark is best reached via email or his Cedar Lake cell phone.

Email: mwhitsett@cedarlake.org
Cell: (502) 645–6548

Tara Clark
Spiritual Life Facilitator

Tara Clark is serves as our Facilitator of Spiritual Life. Her direct job responsibilities focus mostly on working within the community to promote the spiritual wellbeing of our Community-based clients. She also works with area churches and organizations, offering education, care, and motivation in the work businesses and congregations do to support Members who have some struggle with issues surrounding ISS. Tara offers a portion of her time to one on one support of the residents of Cedar Lake Lodge and Park Place, as well. Much of this time is allocated to spiritual life support within our resident spiritual life programming, but she also expends a great deal of energy interacting with volunteers or Spiritual Life Companions. Tara is open to communication surrounding the support of our residents, but also very excited about conversation surrounding theology and faith alongside staff who may have questions. Her passion is seeing the faith of others grow out of their own exploration and discovery, no matter where you are coming from or what your point of view, Tara wants to have that honest dialogue.

Email: tclark@cedarlake.org
Cell: (502) 487–1355

Katie Anderson
Spiritual Life Coordinator

Katie serves as the Spiritual Life Coordinator for Cedar Lake. Her primary responsibilities surround the continued maintenance and administration of Spiritual Life programming at Cedar Lake Lodge and Park Place. She spends much of her time working through training and documentation for the spiritual life supports that are specifically allotted to the Pastoral Services Department, working alongside residents, coordinating their scheduled participation in community worship settings. She also provides crisis support to residents, resident families, and staff. She maintains records for pastoral care support that is offered and does a detailed Spiritual Life Assessment for each resident within the ICF setting of Cedar Lake. Katie enjoys participating in community training and education sessions for clergy, chaplains, and seminary students. Her passion is recognizing the investment God made in the lives we encounter and encouraging others to nurture that within themselves and within those we support.

Email: kenderson@cedarlake.org
Cell: (502) 730–2112
When to Contact Pastoral Services:

- Questions about Spiritual Life Assessments or programming
- To offer information regarding a concern or question relative to Spiritual Life programming for a resident
- To ask for additional support in providing the support that is in the spiritual life recommendations
- To offer up a suggestion of a spiritual life support that you think would mean a lot to a resident
- When a resident loses someone they love or are very attached to
- When a resident goes into the hospital
- When a resident has a major transition in their living situation, their ability to engage in programming, and the way they are interacting with the world around them
- When you have a question about spiritual life, in general
- When you’d like to ask for some type of spiritual support for staff
- When you have EXPRESS PERMISSION from a co-worker who has asked for us to contact them for support
Spiritual Life

As A Part of Cultural Compliance
SPIRITUALITY IS A PART OF EVERYONE’S CULTURE

- Cedar Lake is an openly Christian organization. This means we acknowledge our connection to the Christian faith and the theology that is bound to that identity. This does NOT mean that we force Christian standards and doctrine on to residents or staffs, but it DOES mean we acknowledge the soul of every human being.

With that statement in mind, we recognize and offer spiritual life support for EVERY person within our organization. We may not be able to meet every religious need for every resident, client, and/or staff person, but we will attempt to offer what accommodations are possible and support along the way.

- If an individual has practiced prayer before bedtime all of their life, then they will be supported in continuing that practice within their home.

- When an individual has appreciated being part of community worship and/or mass throughout their life, we will do our best to facilitate that practice when they live at Cedar Lake Lodge.

- When there is a crisis or trauma, Pastoral staff are notified so that they may provide pastoral support, if it will be healthful for the resident, client, and/or staff in the midst of the struggle.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO TAKE OWNERSHIP OF SOMEONE ELSE’S CULTURE TO RESPECT AND HONOR IT!

- We each live our lives in line with our culture: what we believe and where we come from shapes how we see things in this world. In supporting the needs of residents it is important to recognize that you may be put in situations that require you to go through the motions alongside an individual while they worship or pray.

This is not Cedar Lake asking you to believe or behave any certain way. We simply ask you to support our residents as they live their life according to their beliefs. If you need a scripted prayer text to follow with a resident or if you can trade out this specific task for another with a co-worker, then please feel free to do so with appropriate respect toward the resident’s culture. All this being said, please be aware that Cedar Lake supports the freedom of every person to take ownership of their own belief system and the perspectives surrounding faith contained therein.

CAN I INVITE A RESIDENT WITH ME TO CHURCH?

Every resident has a Spiritual Life assessment that is based upon their individual life history, their sensory preferences, and the culture of their family of origin. We ask that you look at the suggestions and recommendations in that plan with the resident’s preference at the very front of your mind. If you would like to invite a resident to church with you or for a religious event, we welcome the conversation. We have to be careful about subtle coercion that is a part of every caregivers relationship with the persons they support. It is, however, a welcomed conversation.

- The “Cultural Competencies” addressed in the College of Direct Support modules you have worked through are heavily founded in the area of religious and/or spiritual life. Please hold these matters up as part of your operation within the guidelines of the NDSR Code of Ethics.
Spiritual Life

Assessment: Content and Structure
**Spiritual Life Assessment**

This assessment is a presentation of synopsis information taken from the resident’s cumulative clinical information on record. It is gathered as such to create a full context understanding of personhood. It also contains information gathered from family, education, and clinical research. All statements of clinical and medical information are restorations of data from professionals trained within each particular field of care, not assessment done by Pastoral Services staff. Recommendations are rooted in the practice of individualized Pastoral Care for the wellness of God’s children through the lens of their particular needs and experience as it is assessed by the Spiritual Life staff.

The spiritual life assessment is completed by staff from the Pastoral Services Department. All of the information is compiled from different sources. It is designed to be a easy, usable source of information that can describe who a resident is, how they communicate with the world around them, where they have come from, and what they value most. The main focus of the assessment is to nurture a ‘person’, not just a set of programming guidelines. If you have information or questions to add to the assessment, please connect with Pastoral Services staff and go over those details so that we can have the most accurate reflection of the individuals we support as is possible.

| Resident Identification | NAME: DOR: 
| GENDER, HAIR COLOR, EYE COLOR |

What you see on the outside of the individual, when you look at them. This just helps to ensure that we are keeping the ‘whole person’ in our frame of reference.

| Relational Considerations | MEDICAL NOTATIONS THAT MAY EFFECT HOW THIS RESIDENT ENGAGES THE WORLD AROUND THEM
| INTERPERSONAL INTERACTION NOTES
| COMMUNICATION STYLES/DETAILS
| PERTINENT ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS |

There are minimal, non-specific medical notes on the assessment. These serve to inform individuals supporting our folks of what they have overcome, in terms of the injuries and illnesses of the body. It also helps us to recognize some factors that may play into how this resident interacts with the world around them. If they are blind or deaf, some adaptations will need to be made in how we support them. We also make notes about diabetes and or seizure disorders. If a special activity or outing is planned by the Spiritual Life Department, we need to know if it is necessary to have a CMT alongside us to provide any type of care that this resident may need.

In this section we also attempt to describe the manner and method of communication of the resident being assessed. Everybody has their own preferences about talking, not talking, lots of things going on, times of quiet, etc. This section describes non-verbal cues for residents who cannot or do not choose to speak. It also offers information about their preferred environments and activities. This helps us all to know when we should be ready to provide additional support during transition or activities, as well as how we might best provide that support to fit their individual needs.
In the social/faith history section of the assessment we tell the life story of this resident. We try to let supporting staff know about their family, their education, their favorite activities, and their history of faith practice. This story tells you whether a resident grew up in a rural area or a suburb. Did they attend public or private school? Did they attend school at all? For some, it also tells you the history of the progression of their disease process. Some of our residents were born with few limitations and slowly lost their ability to see, hear, speak, walk, or move at all over the course of their lives. This process definitely has an effect on how anyone would be able to engage the world around them. This part of the assessment helps us know their journey and respect the strength of someone we will be supporting.

| Suggested Special Services | Suggestions for special services offered by Spiritual Life Support are based on family interview, records research, preferred staff interview, and multiple observations throughout daily life of NAME at Cedar Lake Lodge. These are the recommendations offered by the Pastoral Services Department as a means of nurturing this soul and the investment God made therein. |

Many of the suggestions that come from Spiritual Life Assessment effect far more than 'religious life'. Consequently, we have added this section to note our communications and collaboration with other departments. Pastoral Services works in conjunction with therapies and community support programs to create a well-rounded application of an individual's preferences throughout the living of their daily lives. While we are not responsible for implementing these suggestions, we are happy to work with the members of the care team to help fine tune programming for every individual we support.

| Recommendations for Pastoral Services | Recommendations surrounding worship, prayer, meditation, and individual interaction with Pastoral Staff. |

In the final section of the Spiritual Life Assessment we detail the recommendations that are under the pastoral services oversight. We make suggestions about worship attendance, or the omission of that attendance when appropriate. We also offer information regarding what types of worship services are most suited to the resident, or the ones this resident has expressly stated they prefer. Are they Catholic? Are they Protestant? Do they prefer worship at Cedar Lake Lodge? Do they prefer worship within a community congregation?

This section also details the specific notes surrounding Pastoral interactions with this resident. This section of the assessment also offers information about preferred prayer text, preferred hymn, or preferred activity. Because Pastoral staff rotate through suite assignments, it is necessary to keep a record of everyone's specific needs. We want to make certain our presence is consistent across the board, even if the individual offering pastoral care is different each month.
Spiritual Life

Documentation Responsibilities
As part of Cedar Lake’s investment in the support of Spiritual Life and new federal regulations, documentation will now be an important part of your participation in every resident’s Spiritual Life programming.

Every resident has a Spiritual Life Services tab in CareTracker. This button contains the regulated recommendations from Spiritual Life programming. It also contains prompts surrounding every resident’s choice to attend worship or not.

Depending on plan and culture, residents may choose to not worship, to sometimes worship, to worship one on one with pastoral staff, or to spend time in quiet peacefulness as worship. These activities are all recorded under the spiritual life services tab. Your responsibility is to offer invitation, when appropriate, to residents you are supporting and record their choice to attend worship or not. RESPECTING RESIDENT CHOICE is the utmost goal of our program.

Some residents require “contextual invitation”, which is noted in their programming. Contextual invitation is for residents who may not be able to understand a verbal invitation and will need to be escorted to or toward the chapel. Some residents observe worship in the gym beside the chapel so they do not have to feel the anxiety of so much motion in the congregational setting. Some residents prefer to sit in the hall when they choose to join in worship. Other residents would really rather not worship in a traditional fashion at all.

Please document the resident’s choice to attend or not, so that we may keep accurate records of their religious preferences. We need this data to make certain their spiritual life programming is specifically tailored to their choice.

Each resident will also have an annual Spiritual Wellness Survey for DSPs and QIDDs to fill out. It is a simple form with multiple choice answers. We only ask you provide honest responses to the questions. Spiritual Life survey questions have also been added to the resident monthly floor-check sheets. In this document you can help us keep track of trends and choices for the residents we support.

Documentation is how you can help keep us accountable to the best interests of our residents. There are three members of the Pastoral Services Department. There are over four-hundred employees and over two hundred residents and clients within the Cedar Lake system. We need your help to do our jobs and provide the best life for the individuals we support as is possible.
Spiritual Life

Supports for Staff Persons and Families
Cedar Lake is a Christian organization. With that in mind, we hold supporting every person that is within our system with compassion, resources, and care as a part of our very identity. Our culture is one that is Christ-centered and we conduct ourselves accordingly. Whether a resident, a resident’s family member, or staff person, Pastoral Services offer their pastoral presence and emotional support during life’s struggles and celebrations.

Pastoral staff are here if you, or a coworker, has an emergency or a need. We have limited funds available through the Employee Benevolence Fund. We have a crisis ministry referral guide to help connect people with agencies and/ or ministries that can support them during their need. Our department does not look past the humanity of anyone; it is literally against our very nature.

If you have questions surrounding faith, scripture (Christian or otherwise), or communities of faith in our area we are happy to address those questions with you. We can also help find resources to help you answer them outside of work, if you prefer.

When a resident is hospitalized or sustains a significant change in ability please let us know immediately. We will do our best to be present for the resident, their family, and/ or their staff during the time of transition.

If a resident family member, or your family member, passes away and a pastoral conversation would be helpful, please contact us.

If you are celebrating a graduation, a marriage, or a birth, we are happy to celebrate with you. Each of the members of Pastoral Staff have also performed weddings, baptisms, and funerals for staff, residents, and resident families. We are “on call” for emergencies for this very reason. Our contact information is always available for the support of Cedar Lake family.
### Vocational Spiritual Integration Measure

**For Support Professionals at Cedar Lake Lodge**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Very True 5</th>
<th>True 4</th>
<th>Unsure 3</th>
<th>Untrue 2</th>
<th>Not at All True 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am familiar with the Spiritual Life Programming for the individuals I support.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I am aware of where to locate the full Spiritual Life Assessment for the individuals I support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am familiar with the details of the full Spiritual Life Assessment for the individuals I support.</td>
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<td>I am aware of where to direct questions or concerns I have regarding Spiritual Life programming.</td>
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<td>It is my responsibility to support the chapel attendance and engagement of the individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is my responsibility to support the prayer practices of the individuals living at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
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<td>Spirituality is a part of my work at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spirituality is part of hygiene support of the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spirituality is measured by practice of prayer and religious service attendance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship and religious rites are most meaningful when done in the setting of a church, chapel, or temple.</td>
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<td>Knowing significant transitions and history is important to the spirituality of the people I support at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The religious heritage of an individual is not as important as their frequent attendance of congregational worship.</td>
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<td>I am familiar with the relationships that matter most to the people living at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
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<td>I know the eye color of most of the people I support from day to day.</td>
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<td>My personal spirituality does not matter in the spiritual life support programming of Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My collaborations with staff do not play a part in the spiritual life support programming of Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am familiar with the preferred activities of the people I support at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
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<td>I consider spirituality when I am talking with someone I support at Cedar Lake Lodge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
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Interview Questions for Staff Response

These questions are foundational, open ended questions presented to Direct Support Professionals who have gone through the spiritual life training program. The interviewer may alter the focus of questions presented if the responses of the participant warrant further exploration in alternate subject areas.

1. How does the spiritual life programming of Cedar Lake effect the work you do from day to day?

2. How does knowing the story of the people who live at Cedar Lake Lodge change the support we offer?

3. What elements of the Spiritual Life Assessment do you find most helpful?

4. What responsibilities do you take on in the spirituality of the people we support?